A Thousand Years of Jihad

 ISBN: 978-1-7337196-0-5

…videte itaque fratres quomodo caute ambuletis non quasi insipientes sed ut sapientes redimentes tempus quoniam dies mali sunt
— Ephesians 5:15,16

COLOPHON

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Publisher	The Fleming Foundation
Date	Spring 2019

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Introduction

Over the past 14 centuries, it is estimated that there have been roughly 270 million non-Muslim victims of Islamic aggression. This translates into nearly 93,000 per annum. Americans can be pardoned for their ignorance of Islamic violence against the West in ages past, but it is hard to understand the contemporary response to the mounting evidence of Islamic violence in our own time.

In the United States, affection for Islam is often blamed on the Democratic Party, which will embrace any cause that harms the American people. Thus it hardly comes as a surprise to learn that Congressional Democrats have worked hard to prevent President Trump from carrying out his threat to exclude terror-loving Muslims from the US.

The Republicans, unfortunately, can never be expected to stand up for Christian Americans. Former Utah Senator Bob Bennet, almost with his dying breath, apologized to Muslims for Trump's proposed temporary ban on Muslims immigrants: On his hospital deathbed, Bennet asked if there were any Muslims in the hospital: "I'd love to go up to every single one of them to thank them for being in this country, and apologize to them on behalf of the Republican Party for Donald Trump." As a Mormon, perhaps, he felt a special kinship with members of a religion that claimed to honor Jesus, while imposing a new set of fairy tale Scriptures as a higher authority than the Old and New Testaments.

Christians and Jews have been dealing with Muslims since the days of Mohammed. Their first response was to welcome him as a monotheist trying to lift Arabs out of the mire of their primitive paganism, but when the Prophet insisted that they acknowledge him as a higher and more absolute authority than Moses and Isaiah, Christ and St. Paul, they naturally demurred. The Islamic response was

swift, violent, and genocidal. In 627, when Mohammed and his forces were defeated in battle, they decided to scapegoat the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayzah on the pretext that they were not faithful allies. Besieged and conquered, the tribe was virtually exterminated: The men were executed, their goods stolen, their women and children enslaved.

A few years later, the misguided Arabian Christians of Najran sent an embassy to Mohammed, whom they regarded as a co-religionist, because he claimed to acknowledge Christ and revere his mother. But when these Christians refused to acknowledge him as the ultimate prophet, Mohammed sent one of his cruelest henchmen to tax and oppress the Christians of Najran. The baptism of their children was forbidden, and Christians, so it was proclaimed, would take the place of evil Muslims in Hell.

Historians inevitably debate exactly what happened in Najran, but it goes without saying there are no Christians there now to give their version of events. In 630 Muhammed sent out an expedition to force the conversion of Christians in the Holy Land. That any remain there is little short of a miracle. Middle Eastern Christians are on the endangered species list. Christians who escape Islamic terrorists have to live under the government of Israel that puts landmines around churches and denies routine civil liberties to Christians–all done with the apparent blessing of the Christian-persecuting government of the United States.

In the nearly 1400 years since Muslims burst out of Arabia, this pattern has not changed. Flash forward to the end of 19th century, as Ottoman Turks were being driven out of the Balkans. Reports on Turkish atrocities shocked the civilized world, and not long after, right after World War I, the new regime set up by the Young Turks embarked upon a genocide of Armenians, Jews, and Greeks. In massacring the Christian Armenians, the Turks hardly had to bloody their own hands (though they were active in slaughtering

Greeks): They simply let the blood-thirsty Kurds know that they could kill Christians with impunity.

Ever since the ill-advised Iraq Wars the Bushes dragged America into, these same Kurds have been massacring Christians and cleansing them from areas of Iraq where they have been living since the days of the Apostles–all under the protection of the US army.

These are the same Kurds that Republican conservatives love so much that they are constantly demanding that they be given the arms and money they need to finish the job. In the Republican primaries of 2016, the conservative candidates–Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio, Carly Fiorina, and Jeb Bush-were unanimous in their calls to arm the Kurds. Alas, even Donald Trump who probably knows as much about Kurds as he knows about the Scriptures, has also been tricked into expressing support for Kurdish terrorists. However, this is one of those bi-partisan priorities–a policy that appeals to both the evil and the stupid parties–on which the Democrats agree, though Bernie Sanders' close ties with Kurdish separatists have alarmed even some of his reddest supporters.

Why are American politicos always on the wrong side? Bob Dole and John McCain–among many others–joined the bloodthirsty Clintons in supporting the Christian-murdering Kosovo Albanians–and the GOP leadership has made unflinching support for the Islamic terrorist regime in Pristina a permanent plank of Republican platform.

America's support for Islamic terrorism is one of the reasons for arranging a Summer Seminar to look at some aspects of 1000 years of Jihad. The presentations by Frank Brownlow, James Patrick, Srdja Trifkovic, and Christopher Check, along with my own contributions, provide a series of sketches of the conflict. Emerging out of these detailed examinations of specific conflicts are certain general features of Islamic aggression.

The most distinctive feature of Islam is the intolerance of other religious traditions. Muslims portray themselves as fellow-travelers of the "world's great monotheisms" and defenders of Children of the Book, namely, Jews and Christians. If true, this could be very reassuring to Christians and Jews, though it would give small comfort to Hindus and Sikhs in India, or animists and pagans in Africa, whom Muslims do not even pretend to tolerate.

Of course, this oft repeated assertion is not at all true. When Muslims claim to honor the "children of the book," they do not explain that the Christianity and Judaism they respect are versions they have invented, stripped of historical and supernatural claims, and refashioned to make them compatible with Islam. Any aspects of Christianity that are in conflict with Islamic teaching had to have been introduced by liars. In the Koran, Jesus–who was never crucified–has to apologize to God for the liars who have made him out to be the divine Son.

If Christians and Jews have been to some extent tolerated in Islamic societies, it is because Muslims were exempt from taxation. It was obviously counter-productive to kill or force Christian and Jewish tax-payers to convert. Their legal position became that of the Dhimmi, a second-class status inferior even to that of women under Sharia–and they could not testify in person against Muslims, own weapons, ride horses, or build places of worship above the height of Muslim buildings. Many of their most important churches were confiscated and turned into mosques. There was little uniformity in enforcing such legal principles in Islamic regimes, which were typically unstable and corrupt, and, while in some places Christians and Jews enjoyed more privileges, in others they were subject to barbaric mistreatment that went beyond Islamic law.

Today, of course, strict Islamic law is not the norm in the Middle East. In the past 100 years, most states with a

Muslim majority population have been more or less secular: Turkey and Egypt are the most obvious examples, Iran under the Shah, Syria under the Assad family, Iraq under Saddam Hussein, Libya under Moamar Khadafi. Naturally the United States has done its best to undermine these secular regimes.

Religious intolerance is a basic Muslim principle, and one of the most typical means of translating that principle into actions is terror. There is a good deal of misunderstanding of this word "terror." In the popular media, terrorists are individuals or small groups and networks of fanatics who like blowing things up and killing people who belong to different religions and cultures. Such groups exist, but they are insignificant. We used to know that Terror was primarily the instrument of a regime. 'The Terror', imposed by the French Jacobins, was a systematic attempt to destroy all resistance to their revolutionary program.

Similarly, Stalin's Great Terror–Bolshoy Terrór–(1936-38) was a deliberate program to purge the Communist Party and Soviet regime of elements that Stalin felt he could not rely on–Jews, in particular–and to eliminate the resistance of the peasant class by the simple expedient of eliminating the peasants themselves. During such revolutionary outbreaks, free-lancers will appear on the scene to rob and murder to their hearts' content, but they are a superficial phenomenon.

Since the days of Mohammed, Muslims have systematically practiced terror on populations that resisted conversion or refused to submit themselves to their rule. The slaughter of Christians and Jews in Arabia, which set the pattern, has already been mentioned. The conquest of the Middle East was preceded by first threats and harassment, and then raids facilitated by Muslim allies in the region.

When Muslims do finally enter and occupy a territory, the population, worn out by the incessant pillaging, might

actually feel a sense of relief. That, after all, is the point of terrorism, to terrify and exhaust a target population in order to wear down their resistance.

Non-Muslims are the enemy, and it is never safe to allow enemies to make a united stand. The Ottoman leadership did its best to foment divisions in the Christian world. The papacy had quite foolishly bullied the Byzantine Emperors into accepting papal authority as the price of military and financial aid that never came. The Emperor's acceptance of papal supremacy was very unpopular and drove a wedge not only between the last Emperor and the monks but between the imperial family and the vast majority of its subjects. The Ottomans understood the situation and used it to their advantage, claiming, on the one hand, that they were heirs to the Caesars and, on the other, that they would protect the Orthodox from the rapacious Catholics in the West.

This was not a new Islamic policy. Muslim rulers had been using the divide and conquer strategy from the time of their early conquests in Egypt and the Middle East, where Monophysite and Nestorian sectarians were smoldering with resentment against the Byzantine regime that had been perhaps too eager to pronounce on matters of theology and to persecute those who disagreed with them.

In Western Europe, the Ottomans were able to exploit the differences between Catholics and Protestants. Martin Luther famously declared his unwillingness to fight for the idol-worshiping Pope against a religion no more false than Catholic Christianity. "To fight against the Turk is the same thing as resisting God, who visits our sin upon us with this world." In the condemnation issued by Leo X–perhaps the worst Pope of all time, though there is some new competition–Luther is explicitly cited for preaching non-resistance to Islamic control of the Holy Land.

Protestants were understandably unwilling to make sacrifices to resist Islamic invasion of Catholic Europe. Suleiman the Magnificent, the Sultan who led the attack on Vienna, sent letters to Lutheran princes seeking their support and gave special protection to Protestants as he marched through Hungary and Transylvania. It was no accident that, in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, there were found among the Ottoman forces, Lutheran and Calvinist allies from Holland and England.

European treachery did not disappear after Lepanto, and in the Battle of Vienna in 1681, the leader of the Protestants in Hungary, Imre Thokoly joined with the Ottoman forces that were attacking Vienna. In the great naval campaigns between Holy Roman Empire and the Ottomans, Dutch and English renegade sea-captains and pirates served the Muslim Turks.

Catholics and Protestants not only weakened resistance by their eternal bickering and feuding, but some of them more actively collaborated with the enemy. There is an old joke about Lenin, who is supposed to have been asked how Communists were going to destroy the capitalist West. In the various versions of the joke, Lenin says they will give the capitalists the rope to hang themselves. Where will Communists get the rope? Capitalists will compete for the rope contract.

Whatever the historical truth of the anecdote, it does capture the capitalist mentality, in its relations both with the Communists and with the Turks. At the Ottoman sieges of Belgrade and Constantinople, Turkish cannons were designed and constructed by Western Christians. Renegade soldiers and seamen served in Ottoman navy and Islamic pirates ships. These renegades included not only Protestants but Catholics and Orthodox whose only god was Mammon. When the Emperor Charles V took the pirate-terrorist

base of La Goletta (the port of Tunis) he found cannonballs stamped with the French *fleur-de-lys*.

The was only the first sign that the French king François I was collaborating with Barbarossa, king of the Barbary pirates of those days and the Sultan Suleiman's naval commander. The French joined forces with the Muslim pirates to sack Nice, a French city within the Holy Roman Empire. Barbarossa's fleet took shelter in the French port of Toulon.

Power and money are strong incentives, but there Islam also a strong attraction for certain sorts of men who are not content with either monogamy or the peace and humility enjoined by Christianity. For whatever reason, there has been a steady stream of Europeans who sought their fortunes in Constantinople or Algiers. In 1797 the Dey of Algeria asked for American aid to help build up his pirate fleet. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who had the wisdom to appreciate the threat presented by the Barbary pirates, vigorously opposed the aid, but Congress approved.

For Muslim rulers, there has always been a difficult balancing act. In public and in private they profess hatred and contempt for the West and its diabolical inventions, but they are also eager to secure the weapons that keep them in power. They appear unable to realize that European science and technology came out of a tradition completely alien to the Islamic world whose very existence was threatened by Western ideas.

Muhammad Ali, an Ottoman who seized power in Egypt in the early 19th century, was particularly adroit in lying to the West. As he expanded his power base into Africa and the Middle East, he had the aid of George Bethune English, a Harvard divinity student who adopted the name Muhammed Effendi along with his new religion. English commanded the Egyptian artillery in 1823, along with two other renegade Americans, Khalil Aga, and Ahmed Aga. When he said that Muslims have been part of American his-

tory from the beginning, President Obama accidentally told the truth for a change: From the beginning of the American republic Christian traitors and renegades were accomplices in the spread of Muslim terrorism.

Even when they do not go personally to fight for Islam, Europeans and Americans have aided and abetted the expansion of Islamic terrorism. Our statesmen and business leaders have been trained to look only to the quarterly profit statements and not to the long term-interests of their countries. This is the essence of US and NATO policies since the end of WWII. As a result, the American government has repeatedly betrayed the Greeks in the vain hope of maintaining good relations with "secularist" Turkey, a country that is turning even as we speak into an Islamist dictatorship.

The United States picked up this policy from Britain, which throughout most of the 19th century backed Turkey against Russia, notably in the pointless and tragic Crimean War. When the Balkan Slavs liberated themselves from the Turks, the treaty of Santo Stefano gave them quite reasonable terms, many of which were "walked back" at the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

A key player was the British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, who consistently supported Turkish interests throughout his career. Even as a young man, Disraeli, traveling through the Middle East, volunteered to fight for the Sultan against the rebellious Greeks. He was a forerunner of the British and American statesmen who have supported Islamic terrorist regimes in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, and most recently in the "Arab Spring" engineered by Hilary Clinton and the Obama State Department, which armed and trained the insurgents who overthrow secularist regimes in Tunisia Libya, and Egypt.

All these Jihadi techniques are being employed today by the governments of the United States and its allies. The Great Lie, that Islam is a religion of peace, was first told

publicly following the attacks on September 11, and it is repeated endlessly by rich Americans like the members of the Bush family, who are in cahoots with the Saudi leadership and the Bin Ladens. Equally to blame are the gullible Evangelicals and Fundamentalists, who believe it when they are told that Middle Eastern Christians–who are being exterminated by the Kurds in Iraq and Isis in Syria and Iraq–are not really Christians.

The same lies are told about the Russian Orthodox by groups like the Slavic Gospel Association. Our government continues to support the terrorist regime in Kosovo and oppose the continuation of a Serbian Orthodox mini-state in Bosnia. And, despite the many volumes telling the truth about Islam, we are constantly assured that there are moderate and liberal Muslims who only want peace, prosperity, and democracy. Progressive Muslims do use such language, though it often seems to mean they want the consumer luxuries and protections offered citizens in the West, but they have not the slightest notion of the discipline and hard work required. To the extent that Muslims do adopt Western values, they are viewed as aliens and enemies by their own people.

In every Islamic revolution, the first victims are the naive liberals who think they can collaborate with believing Muslims–not radical Islamists, as the turn-coat Western media describes them, but simply people who believe what their religion teaches. If we are looking for the world's number one supporter and enabler of Terrorism, we need look no farther than Washington DC and the American voters who gave terrorist-lovers like Robert Dole, John McCain, Lindsay Graham, Hillary Clinton, and Barack Obama the power to persecute and exterminate Christians around the world. It is not that the terrorists are winning–they are hopelessly incompetent–but that we, who have lost all faith–in our God, our traditions, in our very identity–refuse to fight.

The current successes of Islam derive largely from the West's failures: the failure to maintain the Christian faith and rejection of any aspect of Western civilization that is not based on either material gratification or the absurd theory of international human rights. To fight a spiritual enemy, we must first put on the weapons of faith.

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Byron Among the Turks

Adolescent Liberalism & Near-Treasonous Dissent

by Frank Brownlow

America's first declared war, the first Barbary war, ended in 1805 and the second Barbary war began in 1815. Midway between those two dates, on 30 June 1809, a young English nobleman set sail from Falmouth on the Lisbon Packet on the first stage of a long tour into Muslim-occupied Greece that took him as far as the city he was still calling Constantinople. His name was George Gordon, and he was the 6th Baron Byron of Rochdale. He was twenty-one years old, and had just taken his seat in the House of Lords. By the time he set off on his travels he had published a collection of lyric poems and a satire, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*; nonetheless, very few people outside his circle of old school friends and his family knew anything about him.

At the time of his travels, he was an extremely hard-up young man. He had succeeded to the title in 1798 at ten years old on the death of his crazy great-uncle, the 5th Lord, who had systematically ruined the family properties out of hatred for his son who, however, predeceased him. There was hardly enough money on hand to bury the old lord, let alone to keep the new one and his mother.

The reason he decided to go traveling in the eastern Mediterranean was that England was at war with Napoleonic France, and so western Europe was closed to the English. As for his reasons for traveling at all, he originally told his attorney, Hanson, that he needed to economize, and wished to learn something about "Asiatic policy and manners"; but being Byron, even at twenty-one he could not resist hinting that he had secret reasons for leav-

ing England and never returning (Marchand, 1973, vol. 1, p. 175, 232). As it was, his unbelievably dilatory agent Hanson failed to come up with the money he needed, and he would not have been able to go at all had not his friend Scrope Davies won £4,000 at cards, and lent him the money.

Byron and his great friend John Cam Hobhouse traveled via Portugal, Spain, Gibraltar, and Malta to Prevesa in Greece, and once there Byron decided to visit Ali Pasha, the governor of the pashalik of Yanina or Ioannina. Ali, son of an assassinated ruler of Tepalena, where he was born, was Albanian, not Turkish. He began life as a brigand, then rose through the Ottoman military ranks until, in 1788, he took control over Ioannina, which became his power base. He then steadily expanded his territories until, thirty years later, he and his sons Veli and Muhtar ruled most of Albania, western Greece, and the Peloponnese or Morea as a semi-independent province. The reforming sultan, Mahmud II, finally decided to remove Ali, and sent an army against him. In 1822, deceived by an offer of pardon, Ali left his uncaptured fortress at Ioannina, was assassinated and beheaded, his head sent to Constantinople.

Byron never explains just why he wanted to visit Ali, but according to Peter Cochrane, the editor of Hobhouse's Diary, British naval and diplomatic intelligence sources in Malta had encouraged them to travel north into Albania to see Ali.[1]

Byron reached Ioanina after a three-day overland journey, and found his arrival had been anticipated. Ali was off with his army attacking Ibrahim Pasha at Berat, some

1 Their visit coincided with the British attack on, and subsequent occupation of, the Ionian islands. The Cochrane edition of Hobhouse's Diary is at present available online at: `https://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/00-introduction.pdf`

thirty miles north of Tepelene;[1] but having heard—from Leake, the British representative there—that an Englishman of rank was in his country, left orders that he should be provided with a house and given everything he needed. Byron visited Ali's family palaces, which he thought splendid but gaudy, and then set off north to find Ali, and after a nine-day trek over difficult terrain, arrived at Tepelene at sundown.

He described the scene before him, which he never forgot, in a long letter to his mother:

> "The Albanians in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long white kilt, gold worked cloak, crimson velvet gold laced jacket & waistcoat, silver mounted pistols & daggers), the Tartars with their high caps, the Turks in their vast pelises & turbans, the soldiers & black slaves with the horses, the former stretched in groups in an immense open gallery in front of the palace, the latter placed in a kind of cloister below it, two hundred steeds ready caparisoned to move in a moment, couriers entering or passing out with dispatches, the kettle drums beating, boys calling the hour from the minaret of the mosque, altogether, with the singular appearance of the building itself, formed a new & delightful spectacle to a stranger (Marchand, 1973, vol. 1, p. 227–9)."

The next day, duly dressed for the occasion in "full suit of Staff uniform with a very magnificent sabre," he was introduced to Ali Pasha himself, who received him standing ("a wonderful compliment from a Mussulman") in a marble-paved room with a fountain playing in the center. Captain Leake, British resident at Ali's court, had told him

1 The attack was successful. Ali annexed the pashalik of Berat to his other territories.

that Byron was "of a great family," and now Ali, to Byron's intense delight, sent his compliments to Byron's mother, and told him that he knew he was a man of noble birth because he had small ears, curling hair, and little white hands. They then had coffee and pipes together, and Byron withdrew, Ali assuring him that he considered him like a son, and sending fruit, sweets, and sherbet to him "twenty times a day."

Byron saw Ali four times altogether. His reception flattered him, especially Ali's praise of his small ears and white hands, a compliment he could not resist passing on to his friends in letters. After a short stay at Tepelene he returned to Yanina, and a week later when he left Prevesa for Patras, he and Hobhouse took passage on an armed galleot that Ali Pasha provided for them. Unfortunately, owing to the Turkish crew's incompetence this vessel almost sank in a sudden storm—the captain, said Byron, burst into tears and ran below deck. Then the wind died down, and they came aground off the coast of Suli. After making their way back to Prevesa, helped by the Suliots, Byron and Hobhouse made their way over land to Missolonghi, protected by an armed escort of about forty that Ali provided (Marchand, 1973, vol. 1, p. 233). From there they made the short crossing of the gulf to Patras. By now Byron had bought some of the splendid Albanian clothes he took back to London with him.[1]

On 4 December he and Hobhouse set off for Athens, where they intended to spend the winter, but instead of taking the shorter route through Corinth they went over the central massif of the Pelopponese in order to visit Delphi, the Castalian spring, and Mount Parnassus. They arrived

1 There is a famous portrait by Thomas Phillips (1813) showing him wearing Albanian dress. The outfit, which he gave to Miss Margaret Mercer-Elphinstone to wear at a masquerade, is now on view at Bowood House.

at Athens on Christmas Day, and took lodgings with the widows Theodora and Tarsia Macri, the latter the widow of a British vice-consul. Byron fell sentimentally in love with all three of her daughters: the youngest, Theresa, became the subject of his lyric, "Maid of Athens."[1]

They stayed in Athens for a couple of months, enjoying the city, and visiting nearby places—the plain of Marathon, for instance. One very peculiar incident occurred in Athens. In early January the pair complained to the governor that a renegade Spaniard had insulted them. The governor's response was to have the Spaniard bastinadoed on the soles of his feet (a standard punishment in the Muslim world for slaves). "His master," wrote Hobhouse in his Diary, "for he was a slave, wished to kill him, but was prevented, but the man is to be sold outright." After it was all over, the captain who administered the punishment "came afterwards and took a pipe and a present with us."[2]

The explanation of this incident, along with the armed escort from Prevesa to Missolonghi, is that, as the guests of Ali Pasha, Byron and Hobhouse were honorary Turks. In fact, the day after the bastinadoing, Hobhouse had a Turkish haircut, wearing afterwards a black velvet cap with a handkerchief over it, turban-fashion. Even though Byron and Hobhouse had had a strong hint of real Greek feeling when they were staying with the young Greek official, Andreas Londos, in Vostitza, they were remarkably slow to catch on to the truly appalling conditions of life under Ot-

1 Hobhouse's Diary, 12 January 1810, mentions Theresa as being only twelve, but nubile. At the end of their stay in Athens, on 3 March, Theresa was brought to Hobhouse's room "to be deflowered, but Byron would not." A sordid incident. Therersa's mother was trying hard to pimp or sell her daughter to Byron (Marchand, 1973, vol. 2, p. 13, 46).

2 There's an implication in Hobhouse's words that Byron paid for the punishment.

toman rule, and both seem to have preferred the company of Turks to Greeks.

In March, having received an offer of passage from Captain Ferguson of the sloop-of-war *Pylades*, they left for Smyrna en route to Constantinople. After a few days in Smyrna, Captain Bathurst, commander of the frigate *Salsette*, took them on to Constantinople.

The Turks proved to be so slow in granting Captain Bathurst a firman to enter the city that the two travelers had time, accompanied by Bathurst, to visit what they took to be the plains of Troy. The next day Byron and Lt. Eckenhead of the *Salsette* made their first attempt to swim the Hellespont from the European side, Leander-style, but the cold forced them to give up about half way across. When they tried again, 3 May, they succeeded. Byron made the crossing in an hour and ten minutes, Lt. Ekenhead arriving five minutes ahead of him. Byron was inordinately proud of this feat, and announced it repeatedly in letters to his mother and his friends without, however, mentioning Lt. Eckenhead's role in the adventure.

Salsette eventually put in at Constantinople on 15 May, and Byron and Hobhouse stayed there for two months. They left 14 July on *Salsette* with Ambassador Adair, after accompanying him to his final audience with the Sultan, Mahmoud II. At the port of Zea, Byron left the frigate and Hobhouse, who was returning to England, and went back to Athens. There he stayed nearly a year, living in the Capuchin convent, though he also went touring in the Morea. On a visit to Cape Colonna he had his one near brush with pirates, but he was in an armed party of fifteen and was never in real danger. He also visited Ali Pasha's son Veli Pasha, governor of the Morea for his father. Veli gave him a beautiful horse, but embarrassed him by putting his arm around him, and squeezing his hand. Byron eventually left

Greece in May 1811. He arrived home on 14 July, after two years away.

Byron wrote a lot of letters, and enough of them survive to fill eleven volumes of the collected edition. There is an excellent index to that edition, too, and it reveals that Byron, despite his reputation for political and social interests, had nothing at all to say of any importance about the Islamic world, including the Barbary states and their slavery. Even although he sailed the length of the Mediterranean twice during the later years of the Napoleonic wars, he has nothing to say on that subject, either.

One explanation is that he was young, and self-absorbed. Another is that he was an extremely privileged young man who was never at any time in real personal danger either from the French or the Muslims. The Battle of Trafalgar, four years earlier, had left the English navy in effective control of shipping in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. When Byron and Hobhouse left Falmouth on the Lisbon packet on 30 June 1809, they could be fairly certain that they would have an unmolested crossing, and even if they'd run into a French privateer, by then the packets were armed, and well able to take care of themselves. The Malta packet took them from Gibraltar to Malta, but all their other sea-crossings were on English warships. They sailed from Cadiz to Gibraltar on the frigate *Hyperion*. The brig-of-war *Spider* took them from Malta to Greece. The sloop-of-war *Pylades* took them to Smyrna, and the frigate *Salsette* took them to Constantinople, then took Byron back to Athens and Hobhouse all the way home to England. For the first leg of Byron's journey home, the frigate *Hydra* took him to Malta. Then the frigate *Volage* took him to England.

The reason *Volage* was at Malta was that she had been one of the squadron of four English ships that had defeated a French-Italian squadron of twelve off the island of Lissa just two months earlier, in March, 1811. *Volage* had suffered

thirteen men killed and thirty-two wounded in that battle, and taken a good deal of damage. She was in Malta for repair and refitting. Byron certainly knew about the Battle of Lissa, which was a very important engagement, but if he took the slightest interest in the experiences of *Volage* and her crew he has nothing to say about it in his letters, even though he told Hobhouse that *Volage* sailed home in a group of four, including prizes from the Lissa fight.

In 1809-11, too, the Barbary privateers were still raising ships and launching coastal raids; but not only were English merchant ships protected by treaties and tribute, even the most aggressive Barbary commander would have kept well away from warships. Byron had nothing to fear from the piratical Muslims of the Barbary coast, and equally he had no reason for fear as a traveler in the Ottoman Empire. During their stay in Athens, Hobhouse had made the mistake of traveling alone to Negroponte where, although he had letters of authorization from the governor of Athens, he was treated with what seems to have been elaborate contempt, and forced to part with a good deal of money. One suspects this would not have happened to Byron.

Byron knew that Ali Pasha was a monster, guilty of appalling atrocities, yet he liked him, and considered him a man of ability. He knew all about the Turkish habit of drowning ladies suspected of even the smallest impropriety under their rules. He and Hobhouse heard from their Christian servant Vasilly as well as the artist Lusieri about Ali's drowning of a dozen ladies suspected of distracting his son Muchtar's attention from his wife. Not only that, but Byron himself intervened in Athens on behalf of a young Turkish woman about to be drowned for flirting with a giaour. Ali's son Veli Pasha was every bit as bad as he was, but Byron's interest in him went no further than bragging about the horse he gave him.

Byron and Hobhouse knew, too, all about the endemic violence of the Ottoman system. The first thing they saw, entering Ioanina, was a human arm torn off at the shoulder, hanging from a tree.[1] Constantinople had its horrors, too, as when they came upon the recently executed and beheaded body of a Greek *Cogia basha* or provincial governor. The head was between the legs of the corpse, and dogs were lapping the blood (Hobhouse tells us that Byron turned his head away, and said, "Good God."). Their attendance at the Sultan's audience, too, would have told them all they needed to know about the Ottomans' contempt for, and arrogance towards, the Europeans. One therefore suspects Byron of what he called "quizzing" or even of a kind of bravado in the few comments he makes on this kind of thing, e.g., the following, in a letter to his friend Hodgson, a clergyman:

> "The Russians and the Turks are at it, and the Sultan in person is soon to head the army. The Captain Pasha cuts off heads every day, and a Frenchman's ears; the last is a serious affair. By-the-bye I like the Pashas in general. Ali Pasha called me his son, desired his compliments to my mother, and said he was sure I was a man of birth, because I had 'small ears and curling hair.'"

The one thing neither Byron nor Hobhouse understood, though they had the evidence before them wherever they went, was that the whole Islamic system was parasitic, dependent entirely upon the work of people enslaved either by conquest or by capture and sale. Hobhouse was interested in the different methods and rates of taxation and extortion, but the fundamental truth seems not to have dawned on him. Neither he nor Byron showed the least curiosity about

1 It belonged to a priest, executed as an insurrectionist.

the Spanish slave who insulted them, how he came to be in that plight, how he had been taken and sold.

Hobhouse kept his diary. Byron wrote poems: some lyrics, a satire, *The Curse of Minerva*, on Lord Elgin and his removal of the marbles from the Acropolis, and *Hints from Horace*, a satirical imitation of Horace's *De arte poetica*. Neither of these satires was published in Byron's lifetime.[1]

The reason for that was that Byron's satirical persona was at odds with the spokesman-hero of his other, far more important poem written in Greece, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a kind of romantic travelogue with comment, composed in Spenserian stanzas. The reason for the Spenserian stanzas was that Byron's original idea was to produce a narrative that combined seriousness and comedy in the manner of Ariosto. But he was not yet ready for anything as sophisticated as that, and so he abandoned the comic or jocular stanzas—although a few remain to puzzle the unprepared reader. He began *Childe Harold*, Canto I, on 31 October 1809 in Ioannina, and he finished Canto II five months later in Smyrna on 28 March 1810.

Back in England, Byron gave his manuscript to Robert Dallas, a kind of remote cousin, who put himself forward as Byron's literary agent. He placed the poem with John Murray, one of London's most astute publishers, who maintained close relationships with London's established poets and critics. As soon as he had the poem in sheets, he let some of these people have a preview of it—over Byron's prohibition. And so the gossip began, and the poem came out, 10 March 1812, to a buzz of anticipation. It was an immediate, huge success. Byron had not expected that: "I awoke one morning and found myself famous," he said.

1 There was a tiny edition of eight copies of *The Curse* that Byron had printed for himself.

The sudden vogue of *Childe Harold* is the first example of a cultural craze. At the very time that Byron was discovering that he had prodigious gifts as a writer, the publishing trade, under the combined pressures of rapid industrialization and twenty years of war with France, had developed a capacity for printing, publishing, and marketing all kinds of material, but especially news, at a speed and on a scale that had no precedent. Thomas De Quincey's essay "The English Mail Coach" conveys the excitement of the new methods of communication as well as the nightmarish forebodings that the irruption of such speed brought into an imaginative mind (see especially the section in Part I "Going Down with Victory"). As we have since learned, in the industrial world appetites grow by what they feed on. As De Quincey's mail coaches took the news of Wellington's victories through England, they distributed more than facts; they also distributed the parts people were invited to play in a new mass drama. That was where the excitement lay. The situation was ready, therefore, for a writer who could turn himself into news, creating around himself the kind of drama on which the new publishing methods throve, portentous, exciting, mystifying, and informative. The Byronic manner satisfied this appetite, justifying the parallel Byron liked to draw between himself and Napoleon, surely the first modern hero-figure whose reputation and success was to a considerable extent based on publicity.

Walter Scott's lightly-written Highland tales paved the way, combining readability and narrative excitement with a remarkable amount of sheer information about remote times and places; but Scott's gentlemanly northern Toryism was no competition for Byron, who was ready, even eager, to play the adversary. Byron's protagonists, whatever their literary origins, are the first examples of the bad boy as hero. As one can tell by the comic strain in the first parts of *Childe Harold*, Byron was not at all sure of his approach at first;

but as the narrative passes through Portugal and Spain, the theaters of present violence, out into the remoter world of Greece and the Levant, his voice comes clear, and with it his theme.

A young nobleman of ancient ancestry but bad character, spoiled by the corruptions of the present time and his own misbehavior, passes lamenting and scornful through the battlefields of modern Europe out into a sunlit, radiant country: there he mourns and celebrates a glorious past, exults in the dynamic barbarism of the present, and, always, implies a yearning for new paradises of love and content:

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.
(II.828-36)

Notice how Byron's language in that stanza ("hill and dale," "glen and wold") translates his image of Greece into a dream of an ideal, pastoral Britain. Notice, too, the revolutionary undertones in the diction: "Defies," "power," "crush'd." The result is a powerfully emotive style, forming new combinations of familiar words and images, and it must have worked upon its first readers in ways of which they were largely unconscious.

Such personae as the shadowy Childe and his emotions would not in themselves have made Byron the literary Napoleon of his day. There is more to *Childe Harold* than oratorical power and metrical energy. A succession of

sharply observed scenes reveals Byron's real quality as a writer. Every reader will remember "the staid Lieutenant" keeping watch on a warship's spotless deck (II.164), or the "little shepherd in his white capote" watching his goats on a mountain in Albania (II.466). One suspects, too, that his fellow Whigs formed the nucleus of his audience, and that for them his sympathy with the Revolution, his disgust with contemporary politics and the war, was all very acceptable.

In fact, what we have in Byron, for the very first time, is the kind of adolescent liberalism that enjoys all the luxuries of near-treasonous dissent while simultaneously enjoying the benefits of his own social privileges and his country's power.

Having become the star of literary and social London, Byron followed up *Childe Harold* with a series of oriental tales, set in Turkish-occupied Greece. There are four of them written in two years between 1813 and 1815: *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, and *The Siege of Corinth*. *Lara* (1814) is a sequel to *The Corsair*, and although it is not set in Greece, it has the best description of the Byronic hero.

No two of the tales are quite alike, Byron being a constant experimenter with form and meter, but they all deal with a typically Byronic situation: the hero is a wronged man who feels sorry for himself. What motivates him is not so much revenge as a wish to recover what he has either lost or been denied. In *The Giaour*, the first of them, the pattern is not completely clear. The giaour is the hero, a mysterious *klepht* or brigand who, alone among his countrymen, remains hostile to the Turks. When his love, a Circassian slavegirl called Leila, is killed by her owner-lover Hassan, the giaour and his band ambush and kill him. There is little doubt that in Byron's mind the drowned slavegirl symbolizes Greece: lines 68-102 compare Greece to a dead girl. But the giaour's act confuses revenge, patriotism, and his own

responsibility for the girl's plight, and leaves him suffering from guilt that Byron does not explain.

Selim in *The Bride of Abydos* represents more neatly the curious Byronic balance between guilt and innocence. He is supposedly an effeminate dreamer, the son of a Christian slave; but he is really the vengeful son of a murdered father, driven into piracy and violence by his uncle the Pasha Giaffir, his own father's murderer who pretends to be his father. Conrad of *The Corsair*, "Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school" (Marchand, 1973, vol. 1, p. 253), wages war by piracy against his Muslim rulers, sustained by devotion to his love, Medora.

In the last of the Greek tales, *The Siege of Corinth*, Alp, the renegade hero, is another of these Byronic characters. He has turned against Venice because his love Francesca has been taken from him. We have no doubt that he acts barbarously, or that his attitudes are lawless and destructive. Nonetheless, we are continually reminded that he is a wronged man.

My own favorite of these tales is *The Bride of Abydos*, both for the quality of its writing and for its decidedly goofy plot, which is a kind of allegory of the Byronic quandary. The tale's real subject is the conflict between the Pasha Giaffir, standing for society, prison, and sanctified evil, all horrid but apparently moral, and its James Dean-like hero Selim, standing for the antisocial life of rebellion, freedom, and spontaneity, all noble but equally horrid.

As a Whig and libertine aristocrat Byron was happy to deploy ideas of romantic, spontaneous love as weapons against Tories, authoritarians, and Christians; but with Byron as with most radicals there were well-defined personal thresholds across which the radical ideas he recommended to the world at large were not allowed to cross. He would not give an inch where his social position was concerned—this,

after all, was a young man for whom gun salutes were fired when he went on board a naval ship.

For Byron's contemporaries one of the attractions of these poems was the sheer exoticism of their settings, all of it based on experience and observation. There are all the Turkish names for clothes, weapons, and people, including the unpronounceable title of the first, *The Giaour*. There is the Muezzin's call to prayer at evening, and the feast of Ramadan, that Byron calls Ramazani. Nor did Byron gloss over the sheer nastiness of the Turkish world. Ali Pasha's venerable appearance concealed a terrible history, and Byron's fictitious pashas are very like him: Hassan has had Leila drowned, and Seyd intends to have Conrad killed by impalement. We also encounter the Greek pirate-rebels in *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, and *The Corsair*, and one of them, the perfectly real Lambro Canziani, turns up in *The Bride*, and makes a full-dress comeback in *Don Juan* as Haidée's father.

Insofar as the Turkish system was a tyranny, Byron disapproved of it as he disapproved of all tyranny; but whereas Europe's homegrown tyrants were boring, the Turks had all the fascination of the exotic. Byron's only real political judgment of them was that they should not be governing the Greeks, even though, as one reads his letters and poems it emerges that, like his friend Hobhouse, he actually preferred the Turks to the Greeks.

The exotic Greco-Turkish settings, then, are there for their own sake, and not to make any kind of point except to be interesting. When Byron brought slavery into *Don Juan* he began by making it a Greek pirate's business, not a Turk's, and proceeded to treat it as a kind of joke by introducing a troupe of Italian opera singers sold by their impresario. As for his hero Don Juan and his English friend Johnson, they consider being sold as slaves to be one of life's disagreeable vicissitudes. When he comes to treat the Siege

of Ismail, which was an episode in the long Russo-Turkish wars mentioned tangentially once or twice in the tales, his sympathies are definitely with the Turks, even though Juan and Johnson fight with the Russians; and insofar as there are implied comparisons between Islam and Christianity, the differences, again, are a matter of interest and observation, not of judgment. In Byron's mind, one suspects, one religion is much the same as another.

In the not-so-long run, Byron's popularity in England proved to be short-lived, not only because of the scandal surrounding the break-up of his brief marriage, but because people began to find his politics, especially his disloyalty, offensive. It's a very odd fact of the Byronic phenomenon that in England—and America—his writing had no influence at all on the mainstream of poetry.

It was a different story on the continent, where his name and reputation spread first to France. *The Bride of Abydos* was translated into French as early as 1816; M. Amedée Pichot's prose translation of the collected works appeared from 1819 to 1825, and by 1830 Byronism was a kind of religion for the younger romantic generation in Paris. His life and poems influenced Victor Hugo, Alphonse de Lamartine, Alfred de Musset, Alfred de Vigny, and George Sand. The young Hector Berlioz composed a symphony with viola obbligato, *Harold in Italy*, and Franz Liszt, resident in Paris in 1830, ended up owning Byron's works in English, French, and German, and quoted him, for choice, in English.

The poets and the musicians, though, were more interested in Byron's personality and his politics than his orientalism—his own word for it. The case was very different among the artists. By the time Eugène Delacroix first went to Morocco and Algiers (as a diplomat, incidentally), he had already visited England, propelled by an interest in English painting and Shakespeare (English actors had begun performing Shakespeare in Paris in 1828: Harriet

Smithson, who became famous in her first role there as Ophelia, became Hector Berlioz' first wife). Delacroix began painting scenes from both Shakespeare and Byron, the Byron scenes being taken from the oriental tales and *Don Juan*.

Through Delacroix's interest in Byron's poems, and helped along by the actions of the French and British governments, Byron became responsible for a truly extraordinary and long-lasting vogue in orientalist painting. Byron, we remember, at a time when the Barbary states and the Turks were still taking slaves, had been able to travel safely in fairly wild, dangerous country because his position allowed him armed escorts on land and the protection of the royal navy at sea. Others had to be more careful. Even Lord Exmouth's demolition of Algiers by bombardment in 1816 by no means solved the problem of Islamic slaving because the Algerines quickly rebuilt and refortified their city. There was only one solution to the problem available: overwhelming and lasting force. When the Battle of Navarino in 1827 sank or burned almost the entire Turkish fleet, and ensured Greek independence, that went a long way to solving the Turkish end of the problem. Then the French invasion of Algiers under the last Bourbon king, Charles X, followed by French occupation of Tunis, not only ended the slave-raiding, but began to make that part of the world safe for European travelers, tourists, and artists—for all the people who wanted to go where Byron had gone, and see the sights that he had seen.

It stayed safe, too, as long as the French managed north Africa, the British managed Eqypt, and the French and the British between them kept their eyes on the Middle-Eastern countries, now Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. When, after the second World War, the French and the British (under American pressure) began their withdrawals, those Islamic societies began their reversions to type, and as they did so it became

increasingly obvious that their former victims had completely forgotten—still operating, I guess, under Byronic influence—what that type was. How many Americans today know that their first six warships were built to fight Barbary pirates who were capturing and selling Americans as slaves? How many of today's Irish know that the pirates abducted virtually a whole Irish village? How many of today's English know that the pirates raided Cornish villages, occupied Lundy Island, and even sailed up the Thames? Do the Sicilians remember the recurrent horror of the Turkish raids? The Sardinians? The Portuguese? The Spanish? The slave markets have been quite forgotten, along with the million-plus slaves who found themselves on sale there.

Let me now introduce to you a name some of you will know, but some of you will never have heard, Edward Said. He was born in Palestine to a Christian family, but he was an American citizen through his father, who had fought in the American army in the first World War. The family moved to Egypt, where they led a prosperous and privileged life. Edward attended Victoria College, the English school in Alexandria that educated the Middle-Eastern upper-crust, including Hussein of Jordan and the actor Omar Sharif. From there he went to Northfield-Mount Hermon school in Massachusetts. Success there took him to Princeton, Harvard and an academic career at Columbia. We are not speaking, therefore, of one of the underprivileged and downtrodden.

In 1978, Professor Said brought out a book called *Orientalism*, which made him famous, and proved to be extremely influential. I read the book when it came out, and found it thoroughly offensive because it seemed obvious to me that it was a kind of resentful, probably mendacious, autobiography masquerading as scholarship. Briefly, what Said did was redefine the word "Orientalism." Instead of using it to mean every kind of western interest (linguistic, historical,

cultural) in the Muslim countries, it now meant the forms that ineradicable white racism and imperialism have taken in the encounter with the Islamic "other."

It would take a long time to deal adequately with Said's career and influence. Let me just say, very briefly, that not the least revolting aspect of our present plight is that the squadrons of historical amnesiacs teaching postcolonial dogmatics in our classrooms or administering policy in the State Department, all under the influence of Said's *Orientalism*, now hold us responsible—all of us, Brits, Frenchmen, Italians, Spaniards, Americans; in a word, white Christians—for the long oppression of all those virtuous Muslims in the Middle East and north Africa. That being so, it follows, in their minds, that we are also responsible for all of Islam's current neuroses: and that is why people like John Kerry cannot even name the thing we now find ourselves having to fight all over again. So between Byron's sentimental romanticizing of the Muslim world and the modern academics' ideological romanticizing of it, we are left with an acute shortage of truth-telling. Let's begin by pointing out that France and Britain did not intervene in the Islamic world because they were neurotic imperialists driven by racist fantasies, but because massive intervention was the only solution to a thousand-year problem that is still with us.

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Cowboys and Muslims

John Smith on the Ottoman Frontier

by Thomas J. Fleming

John Smith was born in the late sixteenth century in Willoughby, near the town of Alford in Lincolnshire. Ironically, Willoughby is about twenty-five miles from Boston, which we visited a few years ago and saw the town stocks still standing in that town in Puritan East Anglia. Though Smith's father was a modestly situated freeman, his family claimed descent from an ancient and prominent family in Lancashire. The Smiths rented their farm from Lord Willoughby, a soldier and diplomat. Unfortunately Smith's parents died in his teens (he was a little confused about the dates), and through his imprudence he lost his inheritance and wandered in search of employment and adventure.

He tried working as an apprentice in trade, but routine work did not suit his temperament. He served as a mercenary, first in the French army of Henry IV, then in the Dutch army that was defending the Low Countries against against Spanish control. In France, he served in the entourage of Lord Willoughby's two sons, Robert and Peregrine Bertie, but the young Berties lacked financial resources to help Smith, and Smith lacked the experience to be of much help to the aspiring adventurers. Smith returned to England and to Alford, where "being glutted with too much company wherein he took small delight," he retired into seclusion at Tattershall, where he moved into a dwelling in a wooded pasture and began preparing for his future career as gentleman adventurer. His taste for frontier life was already showing itself.

The young John Smith had studied at the free Latin schools of the neighborhood, and he tells us his favorite writings during his rustic retreat were the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius and Machiavelli's *Art of War*. At this point, however, the woodsman was brought out of his hermitage and was taught horsemanship by the rider to the Earl of Lincoln, "Theodore Palolga," whom he describes as a noble Italian gentleman. This Theodore Paleologus was descended from the branch of the Byzantine family that had produced the last emperors. After the fall of Constantinople, the remnant of the family moved to the island of Chios, then controlled by Genova, and one of them eventually married into a noble family of Mantova. Theodore the riding master married Eudoxia Komnena, a descendant of an earlier Byzantine dynasty.

Theodore Palaeologus, not long after his wife's death in 1596, came to England, and in 1600 he was named "Rider to Henry Earl of Lincolne" at Tattershall Castle. Apparently, Smith's friends "perswaded one Seignor Theadora Polalga…a noble Italian Gentleman, to insinuate into his woodish acquaintances" and gradually drew him back into normal society. These conversations with a Paleologus exercised a profound influence on the twenty-one-year-old. In the great contest raging between the Ottoman Turks and the Austrians and Hungarians, England's Virgin Queen stayed aloof, partly for reasons of trade but perhaps partly from the common feeling that the Catholics of Eastern Europe deserved no sympathy. If Popes had the power to call Crusades, then Crusades had to be unChristian.

Martin Luther famously declared his unwillingness to fight for the idol-worshipping Pope against a religion no more false than Catholic Christianity. "To fight against the Turk is the same thing as resisting God, who visits our sin upon us with this rod." In the condemnation issued by Leo X—perhaps the worst Pope of all time, though there

is some new competition—Luther was specifically cited for preaching non-resistance to Islamic control of the Holy Land.

Years later, in his address, "Vom Kriege wider die Türken", Luther justified his position, arguing that "the popes had never seriously intended to make war on the Turk," but used the Turkish war as a pretext "for robbing Germany of money by means of indulgences." This was an improvement on his earlier stand, but it somewhat resembles the rather ineffective line now taken by many Americans, that we should fight not in the name of God and religion but for a secular state.

Older and wiser than he had been—and faced with the Turkish invasion of German lands—Luther went on to reject all Muslim teaching and habits. Nonetheless, many Protestants were unwilling to make sacrifices to resist the Islamic invasion of Europe. At the same time as the pamphlet "Vom Kriege," Suleiman the Magnificent was preparing to lay siege to Vienna in 1529. Suleiman—and later Sultans such as Murad III—sent letters to Protestant princes seeking their support, and during his invasion he gave special protection to Lutherans and Calvinists as he marched through Hungary and Transylvania.

It was no accident that, in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, amongst the Ottoman forces were to be found Lutheran and Calvinist allies from Holland and England. The treachery continued, and in the Battle of Vienna in 1681, the leader of the Protestants in Hungary, Imre Thokoly, in conjunction with the Ottoman forces, was attacking Vienna. In the great naval campaigns between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottomans, Dutch and English renegade sea-captains and pirates served the Ottoman Empire, though it is scarcely credible that their religion had much to do with their decision to turn renegade.

Smith's imagination, however, had been fired by his mentor Theodore Paleologus. In his *True Travels*, here is what he says of himself at this point of his career:

> "Thus when France and Netherlands had taught him to ride a horse, and use his arms, with such rudiments of war as his tender years in those Martial schools could attain unto; he was desirous to see more of the world, and try his fortune against the Turks, both repenting and lamenting to have seen so many Christians slaughter one another."

At 21, Smith had been taught to understand what few Englishmen would ever learn.

Back in the Netherlands, Smith fell in with four French gallants, who persuaded him to go with them to meet the Duchess of Mercouer whose husband was general for the Emperor Rudolf, then engaged in fighting "the long war," an ineffective Crusade to push the Turks out of Europe. The four frenchmen turned out to have been more interested in robbing Smith's trunk than in fighting the Turks. Destitute, he hitched his way across France to Marseilles and took passage to Italy and took service with a French trading vessel. The French had the good luck to be fired on by a small fleet of Venetian merchant ships. The French counterattacked and Smith came out with a windfall.

He did not, however, lose sight of his goal, which was to take part in the struggle to keep the Turks out of Europe. Smith made his way to Livorno, where he once again ran into the Bertie brothers. Still searching for a means of acting out his Islamophobia, he went to Rome, where he was reckless enough to meet with the infamous English Jesuit and spy, Robert Parsons: The meeting was probably the object of his visit. Parsons, with his Jesuitical fingers in every pie, had contacts in the Holy Roman Empire, and Smith made his way, first to Venice, and then to the Dalmatian Coast,

and finally to Graz in Austria, where he met an Irish Jesuit who was his contact man.

Going from one Austrian nobleman to another, Smith finally took service under the Count of Modrusch or Mödritsch, whose name the Englishman rendered as Earl Meldritch. The counts of Modrusch were members of the Croatian noble family of Frankopan, and the army was composed primarily of the Count's subjects. Philip Barbour, in his fine book *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith*, incorrectly describes them as Slovenians, but in fact the region was not Slovenian but a specific part of Croatia, the Kraijina, or frontier region.

It had always had a mixed population of Croats, Serbs, and Vlachs, but by the sixteenth century the Krajina was dominated by ethnic Serbian refugees from Kosovo and Bosnia, who guarded the Austrian frontier against the Ottomans. Along the coast, many in the local population made their living as pirates and brigands. These were the famous Uskoks, who gave trouble to both the Ottomans and Venetians.

Modrusch's first operation with Smith was to relieve the fortress of Limbach/Lendva (which Smith called "Olimpach") in Slovenia on the borders of Hungary and Croatia. The engagement is little known to history, but it was there that Smith first put to use his extensive reading in military science. He devised a signaling system, that had been known to the ancients and later to Italians, but of which the Empire's generals had no knowledge. Smith added a new detail: lighted pieces of tow that misled the Turks into thinking the Austrians had a diversion so they charged off in the wrong direction. For his contributions, Smith was promoted to captain.

In a subsequent attack on the old Hungarian capital, Alba Regalis (Hungarian Szekesfehérvár), just south of Budapest, Smith added effective pyrotechnic and explosive

devices to the Imperial artillery. These were pots, filled with burning brimstone, pitch, gunpowder, and bullets, that were cast by slingers over the walls. In storming the city, Captain Smith had his horse shot out from under him. The cold rains of winter discouraged both sides from continuing the hostilities.

After Alba Regalis, Smith's account becomes confused. His own unit, under Count Modrusch, was assigned to the Third Imperial Army and sent to Transylvania. Smith can be pardoned for not comprehending the complicated political and military objectives that the Emperor had in mind. Fighting the Turks was a minor purpose: the main object was to bring Transylvania back under Imperial control.

Smith's adventures have to be understood within the broader context of the Ottoman drive into the Balkans that resulted in the conquest of Constantinople and Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, most of Hungary and a good deal of today's Romania. One important theater in this confusing series of campaigns was Transylvania, the borderland between Hungary and Wallachia, in present-day Rumania. Even if the details are confusing, the overall pattern of Ottoman expansion and the general spread of Islam is clear enough.

Islamic expansion in the Middle East and into Europe has several constant features:

1. The pretense that Christians and Jews are better protected by Islamic rulers than by rulers of feuding Christian sects.

2. The exploitation of religious and ethnic differences—a *divide et impera* strategy. In Europe, this meant pitting Catholics against Orthodox and Protestants against Catholics.

3. The use of terrorism, raiding, and looting as a means of softening up peoples targeted for conquest. Such terrorism can make subjugation seem inevitable, even desirable.

4. The selection of local rulers to set up as Ottoman puppets in transitional stages. This not only saves manpower and resources—why not let the Serbs and Hungarians collect the taxes and keep order?—but it is a way of easing the victims into thinking of themselves as subjects of the Islamic power.

There are other elements—such as the use of religious conversion and the payment of the blood tax—but these four elements are the most important in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Transylvania and Hungary.

In the Middle Ages, Hungary was a powerful force to be reckoned with, not only in Eastern and Central Europe, but even in Italy. Hungary had absorbed Croatia and contended with Venice over who would rule the Dalmatian Coast. In the fifteenth century when Murad II and Mehmed II were conquering Greece and Serbia, Hungary was the only power that stood in the way of Turkish expansion into Austria. The Hungarian commander, Janos Hunyadi, and his allies stopped the Ottomans at Belgrade, and his son Mathias Corvinus—a fine classical scholar and a brilliant ruler—reconquered Bosnia from the Turks and nearly took over Bohemia, where the Hussite heretics were fomenting disorders that would plunge the Holy Roman Empire into disastrous wars.

Hungary began to fall apart shortly after the death of Mathias Corvinus, when the Estates of Hungary elected Vladislas the King of Bohemia as King of Hungary. This led to a prolonged struggle for power and a weakened central authority that shared power with the feuding Hungarian

noblemen. The Ottomans, never slow to take advantage of Christian divisions and disorders, began raiding Hungary in earnest, not only the southern territories that bordered Turkish-held Serbia but also on the northern part of the Dalmatian coast, which they seized. By now, the Hungarians were paying regular tribute to the Turks.

At the death of Vladislas, his young son Louis/Ludvig became king. Sultan Suleiman the Lawgiver, aware of the weak border defenses and weakened Hungarian military, demanded tribute as a first move toward conquest. The situation in Hungary was made still worse by a conflict between the nobles and peasants. Strong kings had disciplined the rapacious nobles, but under Vladislas and Louis, the Hungarian magnates rode roughshod over the peasants. This class conflict led to a collapse in resistance, and the Hungarians suffered a disastrous defeat in 1526 at Mohács.

The disaster could not have come at a worse time, since the country was being split between Catholics and Calvinists who spent more time killing each other than in fending off the Turks. A civil war broke out between rival claimants to the Hungarian throne, the one a Catholic Hapsburg and the other a native Hungarian Calvinist, and the Ottomans grabbed most of the country. To the East, Transylvania—which held a mixture of Wallachian Romanians, Hungarians, and Germans—was equally divided. East Hungary/Transylvania became a principality under Ottoman suzerainty.

Under the Báthory dynasty, the Hungarian princes of Transylvania achieved a quasi-independence and joined forces, initially, with Croats, Serbs, and Hungarians who were rising up to halt the Ottoman advance. A focal point was the region known as Banat, a multi-ethnic stew of Rumanian, Serb, Croat, Hungarian, and Slovak villages on the frontiers of Serbia, Rumania, and Hungary. In 1594 the Serbs of Banat rose up under the leadership of their bishops

in a Holy War and fought under the banner of Saint Sava, the founder of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Ottomans responded by seizing Saint Sava's relics and burning them publicly. Along the way, they slaughtered any Christians they encountered.

Shortly thereafter, Pope Clement VIII declared a Crusade led by the Hapsburg Emperor, Rudolf III, who joined forces with the unreliable and unstable Transylvanian Prince Szigismond Báthory. They were joined by Michael the Brave, Prince of Wallachia, who fought heroically against the Ottomans. But ethnic and religious conflicts soon sent the allies into conflict.

Michael, who was both Catholic and Wallachian, did not find favor with the Calvinist Hungarians of Transylvania, who turned to Szigismond Báthory. In one key battle, the victorious Christians were so preoccupied with looting that the retreating Ottoman troops regrouped and won the day. In 1601, just as John Smith was entering the fray, Michael the Brave and his Wallachians, supported by an Italian general of imperial troops (Basta), defeated the Transylvanian Hungarians whose prince—Báthory—sought Ottoman protection.

But General Basta and the Emperor seemed to have played an ambiguous role, perhaps more immediately concerned with putting down Báthory, an erratic character from a mentally unstable family. Smith's commander, Count Modrusch, presumed to be also a Calvinist, was enraged and, as Smith tells us, urged his men to support Báthory and the Calvinists, denouncing Michael the Brave as no better than a Turk. Smith's narrative at this point is as confused as my readers must be.

Modrusch and his allies besieged a Turkish-held town, probably Alba Julia. During this siege there was a lull in the fighting. An arrogant oversized Turkish *bashi* (captain) challenged any Christian to fight him in a duel on horseback for

the prize of the other's head. The Christian champion was to be chosen by lot, and John Smith had the good fortune to be selected. Smith's own account is vivid:

Truce being made for that time, the Ramparts all beset with fair Dames, and men in arms, the Christians in Battalio; Turbashaw with a noise of Hautboys entered the fields well mounted and armed; on his shoulders were fixed a pair of great wings, compacted of Eagles feathers within a ridge of silver, richly garnished with gold and precious stones; a Janissary before him, bearing his lance; on each side, another leading his horse: where long he stayed not, ere Smith with a noise of trumpets, only a page bearing his lance passing by him with a courteous salute, took his ground with such good success that at the sound of the charge, he passed the Turk through the sight of his Beaver; face, head, and all, that he fell dead to the ground; where alighting and unbracing his Helmet, cut off his head, and the Turks took the body; and so returned without any hurt at all.

Smith presented the Turk's head to General Székely, who accepted it amid the cheering of his army. Another Turk, a friend of the headless horseman, then challenged the Englishman, but the Turk had so much trouble controlling his horse that, after an exchange of lances and then pistol shots, he was thrown to the ground and quickly despatched and decapitated. The Turks apparently had run out of challengers, but the next few days were slow on the front, and Smith obtained permission to challenge the Turks to find a champion—an officer, of course—who could reclaim the heads of their comrades. A tough guy whose name Smith renders as Bonny Mulgro, accepted his challenge:

> "The next day both the Champions entering the field as before, each discharging their Pistol (having no lances but such martial weapons as the defendant appointed), no hurt was done; their Battle-axes were

> next, whose piercing bills made sometimes the one, sometimes the other to have scarce sense to keep their saddles; especially the Christian received such a blow that he lost his battle-ax, and failed not much to have fallen after it; whereas the supposing conquering Turk had a great shout from the ramparts. The Turk prosecuted his advantage to the uttermost of his power; yet the other, what by the readiness of his horse, and his judgment and dexterity in such a business, beyond all men's expectations, by God's assistance, not only avoided the Turk's violence, but having drawn his falchion, pierced the Turk so under the Culets [armored backplates] through back and body, that although he alighted from his horse, he stood not long ere he lost his head as the rest had done."

As Philip Barbour comments, "Theodore Palaeologus' training had not been in vain."

General Szekely embraced Smith and gave him rewards, and Count Modrusch promoted him to captain. After the siege was successfully concluded with great slaughter, Prince Szigismond, properly acknowledging Smith's martial feats, dubbed him a gentleman and authorized him to adopt a coat of arms consisting of the three Turks' heads. Smith was later caught in an ambush with Modrusch, and sold into slavery in the Ottoman Empire, where he was starved and beaten. At the end of his rope, he killed the master who tormented him and made his way through Russians and Poles and Slovaks back to Prague, where he finally found the object of his pilgrimage: Prince Szigismond Báthory, who gave him a Latin document certifying him as an English gentleman—*Anglus generosus*—and praising him for his deeds and confirming his coat of arms.

John Smith spent the next year or so serving on what was more or less a pirate vessel, and he returned to Eng-

land in 1604. At the age of 25, he was already a seasoned adventurer on land and sea. Reviving his contacts with the Bertie family, he became involved in the Virginia Company and in December 1606 he set sail for the New World. The rest, as they say, is history. His self-assurance so irritated the leaders of the expedition that they actually hanged him, temporarily, to teach him a lesson and would probably have finished the job had they not opened their sealed orders revealing Smith as one of the designated leaders.

In Virginia Smith had to deal not only with Powhatan and his redskins but lazy and scheming comrades who preferred to search for gold instead of producing food. The London company had optimistically dictated an initial policy of communism, which failed as it always fails. When Smith was elected president, he issued his famous Biblical order that those who worked would eat, which produced a revolution in the colonists' work habits. John Smith's accounts of his doughty deeds did not go unchallenged. After the War between the States, a young Henry Adams decided to debunk the legend. Smith was an eyesore to New Englanders, not simply because he the first of the Old Dominion's gallant cavaliers, but also because he was representative of the long line of bold frontiersmen who actually made America—in contrast with psalm-singing Puritans who talked hypocrisy through their nose. Today, those same Northeastern intellectuals, if they knew any history, would hate Smith even more for his decision to fight the Turks.

Simple-minded conservative politicos are forever inspiring their even simpler-minded followers with dreams of restoring American greatness or of "Bringing America Back Home." We shall know that this homecoming has begun when John Smith replaces Dr. King as our national hero and his coat of arms—three Turks' heads—replaces the anti-Christian masonic emblem on the Great Seal.

The Barbary Corsairs: I

Scourge of the Mediterranean

by Frank Brownlow

As long as people have sailed in ships there have been pirates to prey upon them. In 75 B.C. Cilician pirates captured the ship in which Julius Caesar was sailing to Rhodes. In the Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer encourages us to infer that his Shipman often had to deal with pirates, and that he did it very effectively. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, changes in navigational science lead to the great voyages of discovery, and those voyages in turn lead to an enormous increase in the numbers of European ships sailing the newly discovered oceans as well as the Mediterranean. And with all those ships there came a plague of pirates, some of them freebooters, but many of them state-sponsored, and so claiming the more elevated status of privateer.[1] Piracy of both kinds flourished for three hundred years, from about 1530 into the second and third decades of the nineteenth century.

In the sixteenth century, all the European maritime countries produced pirates, but the English became especially notorious. Nests of freelancing pirates operated from the southwestern counties of England and Ireland, but under Elizabeth I, especially during the war with Spain, piracy became a national business, with ships being financed and outfitted by investors from the Queen herself on down. With

1 *The Oxford Dictionary* defines a privateer as "An armed vessel owned and crewed by private individuals, and holding a government commission known as a letter of marque authorizing the capture of merchant shipping belonging to an enemy nation." The word also describes the commanders and officers of such vessels.

the accession of James I, the war with Spain ended, and many English seamen, finding themselves out of a job, took to downright piracy, and headed for the Mediterranean. For a time English pirates sailing from ports in the Morea as well as from Leghorn and Nice were a scourge in the Mediterranean. These fellows, though, were vulnerable to capture by the Spanish and the Venetians. When the Venetian governor of Zante caught some English pirates in 1603, he hanged them on a high tower of the castle. Only a few years later, the Venetian galleys returned to Zante with thirty-six English pirates hanging from their yards. Police action like this had a discouraging effect, but English pirates who were prepared to turn renegade, become Muslim, or "take the turban," found a ready welcome from the Barbary states or regencies whose entire economies were based on piracy, and who needed the Englishmen's skills if they were to prosper.

There had always been pirates operating from North African ports, but the kind of piracy associated with the people we call the Barbary Corsairs originated with the careers of Hayreddin Barbarossa, the Ottomans' admiral of the fleet (ca. 1478-1546), and his brothers. In the process of establishing Ottoman control of the western Mediterranean, Barbarossa not only made Algiers a province of the Ottoman empire, he—and his brothers—introduced the combination of ship-on-ship, sea-based piracy with large-scale land raids or *razzias* for booty and prisoners for which the Barbary states became notorious.

The victory of Lepanto in 1571 put an end to Turkish mastery of the western Mediterranean and with it the large-scale mainland raids that had taken thousands of people into Muslim slavery at a time. It also so disrupted Turkish control of the North African provinces of Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers that they became virtually independent states, autocratically governed, and entirely organized for piracy, if

on a less than imperial scale. And in addition to these pirate nests on the Barbary coast, nominally under the authority of Istanbul, there was the Moroccan port of Salé, which became equally notorious for its pirates or "rovers."

Operating at first entirely within the Mediterranean from fleets of well-armed, well-manned gallies and lateen-rigged sailing vessels called tartans and xebecs, for three hundred years the Barbary pirates became a terrible scourge for people living in the coastal areas of Italy, Sicily, Spain, and Portugal, so much so that whole areas were abandoned or evacuated. In 1582 for instance, raids on Alicante, Sardinia, Corsica, and Sori near Genoa kidnapped 1,730 people to be sold as Christian slaves in Algiers. Robert Davis calculates that at any one time from 1580 to 1680 there were about 35,000 Christian slaves in the Barbary states, and that since the attrition rate from death, ransom, apostasy, and escape was about 25%, it required an annual intake of some 8,500 to keep numbers up. The total number of Europeans taken to Africa as Christian slaves during the three hundred years' dominance of the Barbary pirates can only be estimated, but the number seems to be well over a million, probably around a million and a half.

English and Dutch pirates had been selling their booty in North Africa for some time when, with the Anglo-Spanish peace treaty of 1604, they took themselves as well as their booty to Barbary. The most notorious of these renegades were an Englishman called Jack Ward and a pair of Dutchmen, Siemen Danziger and Jan Janszoon van Haarlem. All three took Turkish names, Ward as Yusuf Reis, Danziger as Simon Reis, and Janszoon as Murat Reis. All three came to command large pirate fleets. Ward became extremely wealthy, and died in Tunis. Janszoon, equally wealthy, eventually died as governor of a Moroccan fortress. Only Danziger came to a suitably bad end. Having accepted a French pardon, he was sent by Louis XIII to Tunis to ne-

gotiate the release of French ships, and when he made the mistake of going ashore, he was captured and beheaded for the crime of reneging on his conversion to Islam.

The major contribution that these and other renegades made to the Barbary states was to teach them how to sail the square-rigged, European kind of ship. With that knowledge, the corsairs moved far out into the Atlantic, and the Barbary raiders now joined the other pirates attacking shipping and coastal settlements in western Europe. The big difference between the Corsairs and common-or-garden European pirates was that their chief business was capturing Christians and selling them into slavery, "stealing Christians," as a British consul put it. Sadly, too, it seems that in the Corsairs' heyday about half of their ships were captained by European renegades who were often even more ferociously anti-Christian than the cradle Muslims.

To give you some sense of the range and extent of the Barbary raids, here are some examples. In 1613 they took seven hundred prisoners from the Canary islands, and in 1617 another twelve hundred from Madeira. The British Isles were no safer, despite England's reputation as a naval power. Throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, the Corsairs were a constant presence along the southern coast of England, even occupying Lundy island in the Bristol channel at one time. In 1617 they took seven English ships from the Grand Banks fishing fleet, and in that same year a Salé raider was captured in the Thames. In 1625 Corsairs captured twenty-seven English ships in ten days near Plymouth. In 1640, six Algerine sail were sighted off the south coast of England, and in 1645 Corsairs took two hundred forty prisoners in raids on the coast of Cornwall. They went further north and west than England, too. In 1627 Murat Reis himself sailed as far as Iceland; he only took fifteen captives there, but another Barbary raiding party arriving a little later took over three hundred Icelanders into slavery.

In 1631 Murat Reis took over one hundred prisoners in a nocturnal raid on the village of Baltimore in Ireland.

The effect of these long-distance voyages, however dramatic they were, was nothing compared to the long-term damage done by piracy to the coastal communities of the north Mediterranean. The sheer cost in lost lives and destroyed communities, in lost villages and towns, in the Italian peninsula, around the Adriatic, in Sicily, Spain, and Portugal is incalculable. In the early 20th century, people in Sicily were still remembering the almost daily attacks, and Sicilians still say *pigliato dai turchi* or "taken by the Turks" to mean taken by surprise or distracted by worry. Then in addition to the human cost, there was a three-hundred-year long financial drain, not only in the value of thousands of lost ships and their goods, but in the enormous loss of capital in every level of society to the cost of ransoms or redemptions.

According to one historian, the Algerines took over six hundred ships between 1605 and 1634, and seventeen hundred between 1641-44. The eighty ships they took between 1628 and 1635 alone were valued at 4,752,000 livres. As for the money spent on ransom: in one year, 1768, the French Trinitarians paid 3,500,000 livres to redeem one thousand slaves.

In short, Barbary piracy was nothing less than a gigantic European welfare tax, paid to support the Muslims, and extracted by violence.

During the first half of the seventeenth century no individual European power had either the naval or the military capacity to put an end to the Corsairs. Operating in coalition they might have done it easily, but they were far too mistrustful of each other and, from 1618 to 1648, far too busy making war on each other, to do anything of the kind. Some of them were even prepared to consider making allies

of the Muslims on the principle that "My enemy's enemy might just be my friend."

Take the English. Just as their religious quarrel with Spain was turning into open war, they established the Barbary Company in 1585 in order to trade with Morocco, and entered into diplomatic relations with the Barbary states. In 1600 the emperor of Morocco, Ahmad al-Mansur, encouraged by English successes against Spain, sent an ambassador to the court of Elizabeth I to propose a joint English-Moroccan invasion. Discussions between the two monarchs continued after the embassy (which lasted six months), and showed signs of producing some kind of agreement. The Moroccans wanted the support of an English fleet, and when Elizabeth I demanded £100,000 as payment for the fleet, al-Mansur's response was to demand that a ship be sent for the money. Fortunately for Spain and the future of Europe, the pair of them were dead two years after the embassy, and their plans went no further.

The English have always been vulnerable to tender feelings for Muslims, because Islamic iconoclasm and unitarianism have always struck a chord with some Protestants; but even the Catholic French were prepared to use the Muslims against the Spanish Habsburgs. In 1535, Francis I allowed the Turkish fleet under Barbarossa, with a complement of thirty thousand men, to winter in Toulon. The resident population were evacuated, and Toulon Cathedral was turned into a mosque for the time being. During Barbarossa's eight-month stay in Toulon, Christian slaves were sold there, and the Turkish fleet used the city as a base from which to attack the coastal cities of Spain and Italy. A French flotilla of five galleys accompanied Barbarossa's fleet on its return to Constantinople, and took part in its attacks on Italy, including the island of Lipari, where about six thousand people were taken as slaves.

In a Europe where a thug like Francis I was so desperate for any weapon against the emperor Charles V that he would sacrifice his own subjects and the lives of thousands of Italians to the Turks, there was no possibility of a concerted attack on the Islamic slavers. The only cheering note in this whole shoddy episode was that Francis had to pay Barbarossa 840,000 écus and release all Islamic prisoners in his galleys to be rid of him—and as a final gesture the departing Barbarossa ransacked five French ships in Toulon harbor for supplies.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, however, things began to change because the size and effectiveness of the individual European navies improved. In 1655 the English, who had already mounted a successful naval attack on Salé in 1637, sent a fleet to Tunis. Admiral Robert Blake sailed right into the fortified harbor of Porto Farina, destroyed the fort, and sank nine ships. The rulers of Tripoli and Algiers, followed by the Dey of Tunis—once he recovered from his rage—understood Admiral Blake's point, and quickly renewed treaties giving English shipping immunity from attack. In this same period, the English transformed the protection of merchant ships from piracy by introducing the convoy system. Henceforth merchant captains, if they wished, could sail with a naval escort. No Barbary raider could withstand broadsides from a ship of the line. (For the shippers, the drawback of the convoy system was that several shiploads would arrive simultaneously at their destination, thus reducing the price of their cargoes. For that reason some of them preferred to continue risking a solo voyage.)

Treaties with the Barbary states, however, were never effective for very long because individual pirates preferred to go freebooting, and because as soon as the naval patrols went home, the Deys, the Beys, and the Pashas resumed their old ways. Besides, even the English did not

have enough ships in the Mediterranean both to escort convoys and control the predators. The Algerines, therefore, continued to thumb their noses at the Christians, and despite the treaties, in the decade 1672-82 they took 353 English ships.

By then, the English had real battle fleets made up of ships of the line, and in 1679 Vice-Admiral Herbert, by transferring the organization of convoys to England, was able to take a whole battle squadron into the Mediterranean against the Algerines. He sank or captured twenty-eight Algerine ships, taking eight of them into the royal navy; and whereas back in the early years of the century English ships had been too slow to catch the Corsairs, Admiral Herbert's frigates were now too fast for the predators. More than ever, too, it was now obvious that no pirate ship, Barbary or otherwise, could fight off an attack by the disciplined crew of a ship of the line.

That was why, in 1683, the ruler of Algiers accepted the fact of English naval superiority, and signed a peace treaty with England that lasted until the nineteenth century. The rulers of Tripoli and Tunis did likewise.[1]

In fact the Barbary states became friends and allies of England, trading grain and livestock at Gibraltar for armaments and gunpowder, a trade that had the effect of benefiting the English and keeping the pirates active against England's competitors. Not that life was perfect, even for the English: as late as 1714-27 the Algerines took thirty-six English ships. Periodic visits from English warships were a

1 In 1681 and 1682-3 the French Huguenot admiral Abraham Duquesne bombarded Algiers, and the Dey in retaliation stuffed the French consul, the Lazarist Jean Le Vacher, into their huge cannon called Baba Merzoug, and shot him off towards the French fleet (July 1683). In 1688, when the Marshal Jean d'Estrées attacked Algiers, they did the same thing to another French consul, Piolle André. The cannon was renamed La Consulaire.

necessary reminder of English power, usually along with gifts intended to soothe easily irritated despots' minds.

The only real Muslim threat remaining to English shipping was from the Salé Rovers, who had very quickly reconstituted themselves after the attack of 1637. Despite many subsequent attacks, they remained a threat, although they could put fewer ships to sea than formerly. They mostly raided Portuguese and Spanish ships, but took the occasional English ship every now and again—there were still English sailors held as slaves in Morocco in the later eighteenth century.

The other two major naval powers, the French and the Spanish, also entered into treaties with the Barbary states to protect their ships. In all three cases, English, French, and Spanish, the real guarantee of the treaties was a large annual financial payment, all three powers arguing that the net profit from the safety of their shipping paid the cost of naval patrols and tribute money.

Historians argue over the Europeans' motivation for accepting the burden of tribute which, while protecting their own ships, did nothing to protect either the shipping of weaker countries or the domestic shipping and the populations of the long-suffering Mediterranean countries.

The Barbary pirates, of course, were by no means the only pirates in the world. In the early eighteenth century there were thousands of them operating in the islands of the western Atlantic; but by about 1725 a determined campaign by the English navy, whose ships the Barbary treaties had released from Mediterranean patrols, had eradicated those pirates completely.

The reason the war on those pirates was so successful was that the English were able to clean up the governments of the pirate-profiting islands, and so deny the pirates safe harbor. Once that was done, all that remained was to have the royal navy hunt them down, wherever they were, with

the right kinds of ships. This was not easy to do over such a wide expanse of ocean, but after some initial failures the navy was successful.

The case of the Barbary pirates was quite different. The European powers understood that the only way to eradicate them was to deny them safe harbor, and the only way to do that was to invade and occupy the Barbary states themselves. Even were such a campaign to prove successful—and Algiers in particular was extremely well-fortified—it would leave the occupier with the endless task of governing hostile populations that had no means of self-support once their piratical way of life was at an end. Understandably, all the European powers preferred patrols and tribute to that.

To some extent, too, the tribute system gave them some advantage from time to time against commercial rivals. So, although European naval supremacy in the western Mediterranean did not eradicate Barbary piracy, one good effect of it after about 1650 was that the Barbary fleets were smaller than they had been, and so the scale of their depredations was diminished.

The history of the Barbary pirates' last years is greatly enlivened by the entry of the Americans on the scene. One of the disadvantages of American independence was that American ships trading into the Mediterranean were no longer protected by the English royal navy under England's treaties with the Barbary states.

England recognized American independence on 3 September 1783. The news arrived in Philadelphia 22 November. Within a year the first American ship had been taken.

On October 1784, a Moroccan Corsair operating out of Salé took the *Betsey*. It turned out that this act was intended as a form of communication. The Sultan offered to release the ship, saying that what he really wanted was a trade agreement with the new country.

Serious activity began 25 July 1785, when an Algerine xebec, 14 guns, took the Boston schooner *Maria* off Cape St. Vincent, on its way to Cadiz, with six crew. A few days later another Algerine Corsair took the Philadelphian ship *Dauphin*, Richard O'Brien master, with fifteen crew.

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, as ministers plenipotentiary in Europe, had begun the long and for some time futile process of trying to negotiate with the Barbary states. They met with the Tripolitan ambassador, Abd Al-Rahman, in London, March 1785. When they asked him by what right the Barbary states preyed upon American shipping, enslaving crews and passengers, he told them that "it was written in the Koran, that all Nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon whomever they could find, and to make Slaves of all they could take as prisoners, and that every Mussulman who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise."

So now the Americans knew what they were dealing with, and the United States, without money, without credit, and without a navy, were in no position to negotiate as a confederation of 13 independent states; but when eventually they did, Adams wrote into the 1797 Tripoli treaty a statement that America was not a Christian nation. Perhaps he was running up the rationalizing, enlightened and Unitarian colors of himself and his founding friends; perhaps he was merely hoping to ingratiate Americans with the enemy, but whatever he meant, he set the tone for 200 years of American dealings with Islam.

Once the Constitutional Convention had convened, May 25 to September 17, 1787, and the Constitution had been signed, serious planning and negotiation could begin.

Between 1787 and 1793, the Portuguese protected American shipping. Then, in October 1793, a twelve-month Portuguese truce, arranged by the English for their own pur-

poses, let the Corsairs loose on American shipping from Algiers. By December 1593 the Algerines had taken five ships, four brigs, two schooners; eleven American ships altogether. One hundred and five American citizens were now Algerine slaves, and in 1794 Congress appropriated $1 million to buy a peace with Algiers. Thomas Jefferson, to his great credit, had argued from the start (against Adams) that America should fight the Barbary states; and so on 20 March, at his urging, Congress authorized the building of six frigates at a cost of $1 million plus.

The total cost of dealing with the Barbary states would be between 15 and 20% of the new nation's budget. The Algerine treaty which followed required a payment of $600,000, with $60,000 to be paid at the signing, plus annual payments in gold or military goods, also a 36-gun, American-built frigate. The total added up to almost $1 million, the largest item in the budget. A bean-counter called Joel Barlow, however, calculated that peace would bring an annual profit of $600,000 plus $450,000 in shipping income, thus paying the cost of the treaty. And so began the long delusion that war, diplomacy, and debt were good business.

The designers of the new frigates were Joshua Humphreys and Josiah Fox, an Englishman. At Humphrey's insistence the frigates were designed to be bigger and faster than was usual at the time:

United States (44 guns) Philadelphia
Constitution (44 guns) Boston
President (44 guns) New York
Constellation (36 guns) Baltimore
Chesapeake (36 guns) Norfolk, VA
Congress (36 guns) Portsmouth, NH

On 5 September 1795 the treaty with Algeria was signed, requiring $642,000 in a lump sum, $240,000 of it for the

Dey's own account. There was also $21,000 to be paid in annual tribute, in the form of guns, powder and shot, timber, and cordage—plus, of course, the American-built frigate.

With poor credit, America had great difficulty raising the money. But on 12 July 1796, Joel Barlow, now consul in Algeria, wrote announcing the release of the Algerine prisoners from slavery. Six of them had died a few weeks earlier from the plague; slave labor had killed another 31, and many of the survivors were in such poor physical condition that they were probably maimed for life.

In November 1796 Yusuf Karamanli, Pasha of Tripoli, signed a treaty: $58,000 plus naval supplies. Bey Hamouda of Tunis signed a treaty in 1797.

Corsair activity continued as usual in the Mediterranean. On 2 September 1798, Tunisians raided the island of San Pietro off the southwest coast of Sardinia. They took nine hundred prisoners, including one hundred fifty young girls, also treasures from the parish church, all distributed among Tunisian notables. This, of course, was how people like the Tunisians lived: on raids for slaves and tribute. It seems not to occur to people who go on about the financial collapse of places like Tunis in the later nineteenth century that the reason they went broke was that white slaving had been virtually their whole economy.

By the time America made the final deliveries under the treaty with Algeria, February 1798, she was sending the Dey of Algeria not only a 36-gun frigate, the *Crescent*, but a brig and two schooners as well. George Washington was disgusted, likewise secretary of state Pickering. The incoming president, John Adams, his mind changed by the realities, now considered the paying of tribute a national humiliation.

From 1798-1800, the undeclared Quasi-War with France intervened. The reason for the war was that after the demise of the French monarchy the United States stopped pay-

ments on its French debt because the money was not owed to the French republic. In retaliation, the French attacked American shipping. Between March 1796 and February 1797 they seized 316 ships. Congress responded, 27 April 1798, by authorizing the building of up to twelve warships, each of no more than twenty-two guns, and converting several merchantmen into fighting ships.

By the end of 1798 the United States had twelve ships in service: six built, including three of the new frigates, and six retrofitted merchant ships. Another fourteen were in various stages of construction. Congress even ordered the first ships of the line, seventy-for-gun ships that could match the most powerful European warships. By now America had a navy of about four thousand men, and growing fast.

The new navy did well in the Quasi-War. In winter 1798, a fleet of fourteen warships plus about two hundred armed merchantmen captured more than eighty French ships, and drove the French from American waters. Around the world, the French are supposed to have taken about two thousand American merchant ships, but the American navy acquitted itself extremely well, losing only one ship to capture (later recovered), and a revenue cutter, *Pickering*, lost with master and crew in a storm. The navy's performance revealed a high standard of training and morale.

Of the new frigates, *Constellation* captured *L'Insurgente* and severely damaged *La Vengeance* (both frigates). In an expedition to Santo Domingo, marines from *Constitution* captured the privateer *Sandwich*, and spiked the guns of the Spanish fort. The first signs of cooperation between the British and American navies appeared during this war, too. The British sold naval stores and munitions to the Americans, and the two navies shared a signal system so that they could recognize each other's warships at sea, and they allowed their merchantmen to join each other's convoys.

The war ended 30 September 1800 with the Convention of 1800. In that year, the rulers of Algiers and Tripoli began misbehaving again.

As we shall see in part two, their bad behavior inaugurated their final downfall.

The Barbary Corsairs: II

The Solution

by Frank Brownlow

In the fall of 1800, Captain William Bainbridge was given the unpleasant assignment of sailing to Algiers to deliver America's installment of the treaty payments. Once there, Bainbridge made the mistake of allowing the Algerine pilot to bring him to anchor under the shore batteries and within shot of the Algerine ships in the harbor. The Dey then ordered him to sail his frigate *George Washington* under Algerine colors to Constantinople, where he would deliver tribute goods to the Sultan.[1]

Under protest, Bainbridge had no option but to accept this national humiliation, though on his arrival in Turkey, 8 November 1800, the situation improved somewhat when the Sultan gave him an impressive welcome: he sent him gifts, had the proper salutes fired, and entertained him in the company of his grand admiral and his aides. For Bain-

1 Bainbridge has a good reputation, but his poor judgment led him into trouble more than once. In the Quasi-War, he lost his schooner *Retaliation* to a pair of French frigates because he mistook them for English, and approached them without first identifying them. In Algeria, he made the mistake of taking *George Washington* into the harbor and anchoring right under the guns, surrounded by warships and troops. At Tripoli he was to lose his frigate *Philadelphia* because he had sent his escort *Vixen* away, and pursued an Algerine prize too close inshore. One would have expected him to be courtmartialed for the loss of his ship and his crew, but he was evidently immune from punishment for poor judgment. His one bit of good luck came in the war of 1812 when, commanding *Constitution*, he met up with a 38-gun English frigate, *Java*, sailing with an inexperienced, untrained crew. For shooting *Java* out of the water and taking four hundred prisoners President Madison presented him a Congressional Gold Medal.

bridge's return voyage to Algiers, moreover, the Sultan gave him a firman guaranteeing him respect from all nations of the empire including the Barbary states.

The Sultan's firman proved to be very valuable. When Bainbridge arrived in Algiers he found that the Dey intended to seize the frigate and imprison the crew. Fortunately, the Sultan's firman had its effect. "The bloody thirsty tyrant," said Bainbridge, "became a mild, humble and even crouching dependent."

In addition to the Dey of Algiers' misbehavior, Tripoli, despite the treaty of 1796, declared war on the United States.

Back in Washington, Jefferson was now President, but, having originally argued for fighting Barbary, he proved a ditherer as a war president. Adams having concluded hostilities with France, Jefferson immediately set about economizing by reducing the size of the navy, even though the Algerine impressment of the *George Washington* enraged him. Consequently, the force that Jefferson sent to the Mediterranean in what became known as the First Barbary War was smaller than it need have been, and on top of that because he had no declaration of war, Jefferson restricted the small squadron to purely defensive activities. He also chose his first two commanders for bureaucratic or political rather than naval reasons.

The Commodore of the first squadron was Richard Dale, flagship the brand-new *President*, with only a few months' service. The little squadron also included *Philadelphia* (38 guns) under Barron, *Essex* (32 guns) under Bainbridge, and the sloop *Enterprise* (12 guns), commanded by Lt. Andrew Sterrett.

On 2 June 1801, the little fleet set sail. *Enterprise*, the fastest ship, arrived at Gibraltar on 29 June 1801, and found the brig *Betsey* there, now converted by the Tripolitans into a

28-gun schooner, *Mesbouda*, with their high admiral Murad Reis on board. She was attended by a 14-gun brig.[1]

A month later, on 2 July, Dale arrived in *President*, followed by *Essex* and *Philadelphia*. He left *Philadelphia* off Gibraltar, instructing Capt. Barron to wait for Murad Reis, "and take him when he goes out." He then left for Tripoli with *Essex* and *Enterprise* to face a navy of seven warships, mostly small felucca-type vessels and galleys, with a hundred guns and eight hundred men.

Barron bottled up Murad Reis's warships at Gibraltar, but the admiral bribed some local owners to carry his 366 men to the African coast, where they marched overland to Tripoli, and he persuaded the Gilbraltar authorities to let him take a British ship to Malta. Losing Murad Reis was Dale's first failure. His second was to send *Essex* cruising around looking for American ships to escort while he went to blockade Tripoli with just *President* and *Enterprise*. Then, with water running out, he sent Sterrett in *Enterprise* to Malta.

On 1 August 1801, Sterrett's lookouts spotted what looked like a Corsair, and Sterrett made for her under British colors. She proved to be the warship *Tripoli*, fourteen guns, commander Rais Mahomet Rous. Deceived by the colors, he responded to Sterrett's hail that he was cruising for American merchant ships, whereupon Sterrett ran up the United States Ensign, and a three-hour battle began.

Enterprise's broadsides soon had *Tripoli* in trouble. Outgunned, Rous tried to come alongside, grapple, and board; Sterrett's marines under Lt. Enoch Lane swept Tripoli's decks with fire, cutting down her fighting men. Tripoli bore

1 Dale's successor, Richard Morris, in a mistaken attempt to placate the Emperor of Morocco, gave him the *Mesbouda*. Captain John Rodgers, commanding the *John Adams*, captured her attempting to run the blockade of Tripoli, and brought her back to Gibraltar (Whipple, 1991b, p. 110–11).

away; Sterrett sent more broadsides into her, smashing the masts, and holing her above the waterline. Rous hauled down his flag, but as soon as Sterrett's men moved in, he put his flag up again and opened fire—a characteristic Muslim move. The result was another broadside. Rous tried to close and grapple again, and again Lane's marines sprayed them with musket fire. Once again Tripoli bore off, and once again Rous tried his surrender ruse. Sterrett not being fooled, Rous tried to close and grapple again, but Sterrett kept his distance.

Amazingly, Rous raised and lowered his colors one more time. Utterly disgusted, Sterret ordered the guns lowered to sink her. With that Rous finally surrendered. The boarding crew, led by Lt. David Porter, found thirty of eighty officers and men killed, and thirty more wounded, including Rous and his second-in-command.

Not a man or officer on *Enterprise* had been wounded, let alone killed. But under Jefferson's orders, no war having been declared, Sterrett had his surgeon and surgeons' mates tend the *Tripoli*'s wounded. He dumped *Tripoli*'s guns over the side, cut down what remained of the masts, dumped powder, cannonballs, small arms, cutlasses, et cetera into the sea, raised a stubby mast, rigged a sail, and left Rous and his remaining men to get home. (When he arrived, the Pasha stripped him of command, and sent him through the streets mounted backwards on a donkey with sheep's entrails round his neck. He gave him five hundred bastinadoes, too.)

That was it for Dale's mission. He shortly sailed for Gibraltar, sent *Philadelphia* to join the blockade, and sailed for home.

Jefferson now managed to get a near-declaration of war out of the Congress. He strengthened the squadron with five more warships (*Constellation*, *Chesapeake*, *New York*, *Adams*, and *John Adams*). *Essex* and *Philadelphia* were still

in the Mediterranean, and *Enterprise*, Sterrett still in command, returned to join them. Unfortunately, Richard Morris, Jefferson's new choice of Commodore, was even worse than Dale. Morris, the son of a signer, was a political choice. Even his promotion to captain under Adams' presidency had probably been politically influenced.

On being appointed, he asked Secretary Smith if he could take his wife on board with him, and Smith, unbelievably, consented. One is not surprised to learn that no ship with Morris on it fired a shot in anger. He refused to blockade Tripoli as ordered, and like Dale spent most of his time cruising around the Mediterranean. When he finally went to Tripoli, his attempt at a blockade failed, though he did allow an amphibious raid ashore to set fire to a dozen grain-boats. He sailed home 11 July 1803 to face a board of inquiry.[1]

Jefferson now appointed a Commodore who knew what needed to be done, Edward Preble. Under his command he had two 44-gun frigates, three 12-gun schooners, and two 16-gun brigs built to shallow-draft specifications.[2] Preble was a strict, but fair officer. Shocked by the youth of his officers, he said they were "nothing but a pack of boys," but "Preble's boys"—Stephen Decatur, Isaac Hull, David Porter, James Lawrence, and William Biddle all trained under him—became famous, and Preble's squadron proved to be the real "Nursery of the Navy."

He first had to deal with renewed trouble from Morocco (brought on by Morris's incompetence). In the fall of 1803, *Philadelphia*, sent ahead to Tripoli under the command of William Bainbridge, ran aground in pursuit of a Tripolitan ship. Bainbridge had made the mistake of sending her

1 Jefferson revoked his commission as a captain.

2 Frigates: *Constitution*, *Philadelphia*; schooners: *Enterprise*, *Nautilus*, *Vixen*; brigs: *Argus*, *Siren.*

escort, *Vixen*, off on her own, so he could not move *Philadelphia* off the reef. She was captured, her 307-man crew imprisoned. Just two days later, a storm lifted her off the reef, and the Tripolitans were able to take her into harbor.

She was the most powerful ship in their fleet. In February, though, Lt. Stephen Decatur brought off a commando raid into Tripoli harbor that destroyed *Philadelphia* and made him a national hero. Admiral Lord Nelson, no less, said that Decatur's raid was "the most bold and daring act of the age."

Jefferson, who had already made one bad decision by sending Consul-general Tobias Lear along with Preble to negotiate a peace if necessary, now made an even worse one. Although he sent five more frigates to enlarge the fleet, he replaced Preble with Barron as Commodore. But before Barron arrived, Preble mounted a tremendous bombardment of Tripoli.

The squadron suffered one more disaster when the ketch *Intrepid* (the former *Mastico*, taken flying Turkish colors), sent into the harbor as a fireship, exploded with all thirteen hands. Intrepid's mission was to have been the final episode of the bombardment, and its finishing touch. The explosion was never explained.

With Barron's arrival, 9 September 1804, Preble—who would now have been third in command under John Rodgers (whom he couldn't stand) and Barron—decided to leave. He took over the gunless *John Adams*, restored the gun carriages in Malta, and eventually passed through the Straits at Gibraltar, 6 January 1805. He came home to a hero's welcome. People in the streets cheered him, and Congress authorized a special medal to be struck, emblematical of the attacks on the town, naval force, and batteries

of Tripoli.[1] But his poor health—ulcers and malaria, then finally TB—got him. He died at home, 25 August 1807.

Jefferson had given Tobias Lear "full power and authority" to negotiate a peace treaty with Tripoli—which he did, even after the more Preble-like Rodgers had taken over command from Barron whose poor health had disabled him.

The *Philadelphia*'s crew were now released. Six had died, and five had turned Muslim. The Pasha offered to let the five renegades renounce their conversions and return to the squadron. One decided to stay. The Pasha, considering the other fours' decision an insult to his faith, had them marched off under guard. Lear made no protest. They were never heard of again.

Lear's treaty also wiped out the effects of William Eaton's extraordinary overland march and capture of the Tripolitan city of Derna. That was because Jefferson, again, had changed his mind: "Our interests soundly calculated will ever be found inseparable from our moral duties," he told Congress, having decided that Eaton's attempt to replace Yusuf Karamanli as Pasha of Tripoli with his older brother did not come up to his moral standards.

Lear's pusillanimity even affected John Rodgers's dealings with the Bey of Tunis, who was disputing the ownership of some Tunisian prizes Rogers had taken trying to run the Tripoli blockade. In July 1805, Rodgers had his entire squadron in the harbor, plus a frigate, a brig, eight gunboats and two bomb ketches on the way. Left to himself, he would have solved the Tunisian problem by pouring some broadsides into the city, but Lear insisted that he hold off while he arranged for a Tunisian ambassador to be escorted to America to discuss the prizes.

1 Fifty-three of his officers, "Preble's boys," who had come to revere him, signed a letter praising his command, and regretting his retirement (Whipple, 1991b, p. 171). (Had Commodore Preble been on scene, *Philadelphia* would not have been lost. Everyone knew that.)

On 11 December 1805, Jefferson submitted Lear's treaty to the Senate to general outrage. Senators wanted to know why *Philadelphia*'s crew had been ransomed, why the full power of the squadron hadn't been used first, and why Eaton's expedition had been so abruptly canceled. Nonetheless, they ratified it, 17 April 1806. By then Lear had acquired a reputation from which he never recovered, and a congressional committee wrote a damning report on his proceedings. But of course, Jefferson was the one really responsible.

The people at home treated the ending of the first Barbary war as a victory. In May 1806, Jefferson ordered Rodgers home, and set about mothballing the ships and laying off the crews, even though war with England was threatening over restrictions on American merchant shipping and the impressment of American citizens into service with the Royal Navy.

The returning sailors were greeted as heroes despite widespread disgust with Jefferson's conduct of the war and Lear's treaty. The serving naval men, "Preble's boys," as well as Commodore Rodgers, knew that they had not been allowed to finish the job. Now *Constitution* was the only capital ship left in the Mediterranean, under Hugh Campbell.

In May 1807, Jefferson appointed James Barron, brother of Samuel Barron, Commodore of what was left of the Mediterranean squadron, with *Chesapeake* as his flagship. At Norfolk he found the ship unready for sea, and although he knew there were English ships in the neighborhood, and knew that the English knew he had four American deserters from the English fleet among his crew, he left port. The English frigate *Leopard*, skippered by a distinguished, very experienced officer, intercepted him. When he refused to release the men and resumed course, *Leopard* fired a shot across his bows. A series of close-range broadsides then quickly disabled *Chesapeake*, which had gone to sea in no

condition to fight, and Barron surrendered. *Leopard*'s Captain Humphreys refused Barron's sword because England and America were not at war, and he did not consider *Chesapeake* a prize. He took his four men, and left *Chesapeake* to limp home, three dead, eight near death, and ten wounded, including Captain Barron.

Jefferson's response was to order the Mediterranean squadron home. *Constitution* left 8 September, and arrived at Boston 14 October (after Capt. Campbell suppressed a mutiny on board in Malaga by the crew, disgruntled on hearing that *Chesapeake* would not be relieving them).

By the time *Constitution* reached Boston, the Algerines were already back to seizing American ships. With no U.S frigates to fear, they took three ships: *Eagle* (New York), *Violet*, a brig (Boston), and *Mary Ann*, a schooner (New York). The crew of the *Mary Ann* overpowered the pirates, retook the schooner, and escaped; but the Dey demanded $16,000 reparations for the prize crew, and threatened to imprison Lear, who was still in Algeria as consul. Lear agreed to pay the money and remit two years' worth of past tribute as well in exchange for a pledge not to molest U.S. merchant ships.

After all the sacrifice of life and treasure, the United States was back to confiding the safety of its merchant marine to the words and whims of the pirates.

Madison took over in 1809, determined to retaliate against English violations of American shipping rights, and to end Barbary's "ruinous depredations." He called England's blockade of Europe "a system of monopoly and piracy," and he set about continuing Jefferson's economic war with England.

In 1812 the Parliament at Westminster rescinded the Orders in Council at issue between the two countries, but

Madison did not know that, and asked Congress for a declaration of war. The War of 1812 that followed was a draw.[1]

There were two notable bright spots on the American side. Fleet-on-fleet there could be no contest between the navies, but "Preble's boys" (Bainbridge, Hull, Decatur, and Porter commanding *Constitution*, *Constellation*, *President*, *Essex*, *United States*, and *Chesapeake*) shocked the English, accustomed to ruling the waves, with a series of ship-on-ship victories. On 19 August 1812, the *Constitution* (Isaac Hull, captain) defeated the British Frigate, *Guerrière*, and under two more captains, went on to defeat three more British ships. The navy's ship-on-ship victories were a tonic for national morale, but had no effect on the strategy of the war for the simple reason that the United States' had twenty-two commissioned fighting ships to the British navy's 85-ship fleet blockading the East Coast, which included ships of the line with over sixty-five guns.

Using the good offices of the Russians, Madison was able to arrange peace talks in Ghent, and the Treaty of Ghent was signed 24 December 1814. What had delayed agreement was England's refusal to give up impresssment. Madison, reasoning that the end of the Franco-British

1 The British easily defeated the American attack on Canada, forcing the surrender of the fort in the Mackinac Straits, and followed up with the surrender of General Hull's little army of 2200. Monroe, secretary of State, made peace overtures to Castlereagh, but was refused, and the war went on for two years, the British unable to send sufficient forces to launch a major offensive, and the Americans divided; Federalist Massachusetts and Connecticut refused to supply militiamen for the federal government. The British navy blockaded the Atlantic coast from New England to Spanish Florida. They also made damaging raids against coastal cities, especially in the Chesapeake. Admiral Sir George Cockburn sought out and destroyed American warships, and burned three Maryland towns, Havre de Grace, Georgetown, and Fredericktown. In August 1814, they captured and burned Washington.

Napoleonic wars, being negotiated at the Congress of Vienna, would render the question moot, dropped it.

Before news of the treaty reached America, Andrew Jackson's defeat of an English force of about 8,000 soldiers under Edward Pakenham, backed by Royal Marines, and a fleet under Sir Alexander Cochrane, with his mixed army of about 5,000—militiamen, some free negroes, some Indians, and Jean Lafitte's pirates—in the Battle of New Orleans, 8-18 January, gave America her one resounding victory.[1]

During the War of 1812 the Algerines, emboldened by the Americans' involvement in a war with the English, and encouraged by them, started attacking American ships yet again, capturing merchantmen and their crews. When the English consul in Algiers tried to arrange the American sailors' freedom, the Dey told him that its was his policy to increase, not diminish the number of his American slaves, and that he would not release them for a million dollars.

To his great credit, President Madison, on 17 February 1815, only a week after ratifying the treaty that ended the War of 1812, asked Congress for a declaration of war on Algiers. On 3 March, Congress obliged, and Madison immediately gave orders for two squadrons to sail to the Mediterranean. As secretary of State under Jefferson he knew the futility of half-measures in dealing with the Muslims. The first squadron of ten ships (three frigates, a sloop, four brigs, and two schooners) sailed under Stephen Decatur on

1 Cochrane had been contemptuous of the American opposition. What seems to have doomed the British was the death of most of their commanding officers, including Pakenham, leaving their men without direction, and exposed to fire. The result was over 2,500 casualties. American casualties for the entire campaign were 333 (55 killed, 185 wounded, and 93 missing). Incidentally, those who think this was an unnecessary battle are quite wrong. Pakenham had secret orders to continue fighting, peace or no peace. The Battle of New Orleans forced the British to keep the terms of the treaty.

20 March, flagship *Guerrière*, a 44-gun frigate. The second, larger squadron of seventeen ships under William Bainbridge sailed two months later.

Decatur and Bainbridge were empowered to negotiate peace, along with Consul William Shaler. Secretary James Monroe warned them not to be too hasty to sign agreements with people who had little intention of keeping them. Rather, they should leave no doubt of America's power, and willingness to use it. (By the time the squadrons arrived, the Dey, the Bey, and the Pasha would all have heard of the English failure to defeat the Americans.[1])

When Decatur arrived at Cadiz in June, he heard that the Algerine admiral Reis Hammida had just sailed for Cape de Gatte on the south coast of Spain to pick up Spain's tribute payment of $ 50,000. At Gibraltar new intelligence confirmed that Hammida was in the vicinity. Two days out from Gibraltar, Decatur spotted a large sail which turned out to be Reis Hammida's flagship, *Mashouda*. When Hammida made off south for Algiers, Decatur caught up with him and surrounded him. After twenty-five minutes of broadsides, Hammida surrendered. Decatur sent a prize crew on board, and sent the ship and four hundred prisoners to Cartagena.

Two days later, Decatur's forces took a 22-gun Algerine brig, *Estedio*, and with it another eighty prisoners. So Decatur had taken two Algerine warships and nearly five hundred prisoners in his first week's action. By 28 June, Decatur was off Algiers. On the 29th, when he sailed *Guerrière*

1 Having declared war on the Americans with English encouragement, the Algerines were understandably ticked off with the English. As one of them said to the English consul, as they looked at the American ships in the harbor, "You told us you would sweep them from the seas, and now they are making war on us with ships they captured from you." Two of Decatur's squadron had indeed been captured from the English in the War of 1812.

into the Bay of Algiers under a Swedish flag, the Swedish consul and the port captain came out to confirm the Americans' capture of the two vessels. The port captain asked Decatur to "state the conditions on which we would make peace." Decatur gave him the President's letter demanding peace. When the port captain suggested a truce during negotiations, and that authorized negotiators should go on shore, Decatur told him that any negotiations would take place on board, and that hostilities, "as they respected vessels," would not cease.

The next day, Decatur gave the consul and the port captain a model of a treaty which, he said, he would not depart from in substance. He told them that although the United States would not under any circumstances agree to pay tribute, it would offer customary gifts to the Dey and his officers on the presentation of consuls.

Decatur also agreed not to pursue the demand for the return of all American property, and since the current Dey had not started the war, as a goodwill gesture he returned the two captured ships; but he insisted that this concession be considered a favor, and not included in the treaty. He also refused the port captain's request for a truce to consider the terms, even when he reduced the requested time to just three hours. "Not a minute," said Decatur. "If your squadron appears in sight before the treaty is actually signed by the Dey, and the prisoners sent off, ours will capture them."

The port captain was back with the signed treaty in less than three hours, and the United States had a peace treaty with no pledge of tribute (For the details of the Algerian compain and negotiations see: Lambert, 2005, p. 191–94).

Decatur then sailed to Tunis to make a similar set of demands. During the War of 1812, the English had taken two American merchantmen and brought them to Tunis, where they were held as prizes. Again Decatur dictated

terms: the American flag would pass unmolested through the Mediterranean without tribute, and Tunis would pay the United States $60,000 for the two ships that they held.

From Tunis they sailed to Tripoli where Yusuf Karamanli was still ruling. Again Decatur demanded unmolested passage for American ships without tribute, plus an indemnity of $30,000 for vessels taken by England and held in Tripoli. He then demanded the release of prisoners from other nations. With that demand, he did what no European power had done: not only had he forced the Barbary pirates to disavow tribute, and to forgo ransom as well; his demand for the release of all prisoners from nations besides his own was unprecedented, too.

There was nothing left for Bainbridge to do. When his 17-ship squadron arrived in the British port of Gibraltar, he fired off a salute of 17 guns. In reply the lieutenant-governor fired 15. So Bainbridge sent an officer on shore to inform the lieutenant-governor that he had fired 17 guns, and expected his salute to be returned gun for gun, and therefore demanded that two more guns be fired. The lieutenant-governor apologized for the slight, and fired the other two guns. To the surprise of everyone, especially the English, the United States was now demanding respect as a naval presence in the Mediterranean.

The *Guerrière* was back in New York 12 November, and once again everyone—the President, the press, and the public—gave Stephen Decatur a hero's welcome home.

The Barbary powers, and their long-standing habits were still there, of course, and so Madison ordered *Constellation*, *United States*, and two sloops to maintain patrols in the Mediterranean.

This was not enough force to make a real difference. While American ships were still on their way home, in October 1815 the Tunisians raided the Bay of Palma in Sardinia,

also the island of San Antioco. They ran into resistance, and lost about 160 men, but they took 158 captives all the same.

After Napoleon's second abdication, and the real end of the Napoleonic Wars, in early 1816 the English government sent Admiral Sir Edward Pellew, Baron Exmouth, to negotiate treaties with the Barbary states that would end Christian slavery there. In the spring of 1816 Exmouth seemed to have succeeded in doing this and sailed home, but as usual Barbary treaties only lasted as long as the Christians' warships were in sight. On arriving home, he learned that the Algerines had just massacred some two hundred Christian fishermen.

There was outrage in England, and demands for condign punishment of the Algerines. The government therefore instructed Lord Exmouth to return for the purpose. He was a famous, extremely able officer. In the final years of the war with Napoleon, he had been commander of the Mediterranean fleet, the largest outside home waters. He now assembled a squadron of eighteen ships, including ships of the line of over one hundred guns. They sailed in July 1816, and when they arrived at Gibraltar in early August, a Dutch squadron of six frigates joined them. The combined fleets included five ships of the line and nine frigates, four bomb ketches as well as other smaller ships.

Taking out Algiers, though, would not be easy. After their experience with the Americans, the Algerines had increased their defenses. Then, having advance notice of the British fleet's approach, they made more preparations: a period of calm and adverse winds that delayed the fleet on its way to Algiers allowed them to erect even more defenses and bring in more troops. They had 450 cannon in shore batteries, and a large army that included janissaries brought in from distant garrisons as well an army of sharpshooters. Lord Exmouth, though, was a meticulous planner. He took on immense stocks of ammunition, and made sure his gun

crews were impeccably drilled. He had ordered a thorough reconnaissance of Algiers and its harbor, and all his captains were well briefed.

The fleet arrived at Algiers on 27 August. Exmouth sent a message to the Dey, demanding unconditional surrender and giving him one hour to reply. There was no reply. Exmouth declared war, and moved his ships into battle positions. The bombardment began between two and three o'clock after three shots were fired at the fleet from the mole, and it continued for over eight hours against a ferocious Algerine response. The marine batteries were quickly silenced, but it was not until about ten o'clock that most of the shore batteries were out of action. By then, Exmouth had turned his fire on the corsair fleet in the harbor, using fire bombs and shells. "All the ships in the port…were in flames," he wrote in his dispatches, "which extended rapidly over the whole arsenal, storehouses, and gunboats." The firing finally stopped at 11.30 p.m. By one o'clock in the morning, said the American consul, William Shaler, everything in the marine was on fire.

Lord Exmouth had intended to resume the bombardment with the dawn, but when the light came he realized there was no need for further action. The city had taken massive damage. Shaler reported in his dispatch home that there was hardly an undamaged house, and many were ruined. The effects on the harbor were even more extraordinary. Exmouth's interpreter, Abraham Salamé, wrote that the bay was full of the hulks of the Algerine navy, smoking in every direction, but the most shocking and dreadful sight was the number of dead bodies floating in the water.

Exmouth had taken severe casualties for a naval action, more, in proportion to the forces engaged, than in any of Nelson's victories: 128 killed, and 690 wounded. The Dutch squadron lost 13 killed, 52 wounded. Exmouth estimated the Algerine losses at between 6,000 and 7,000 men. He

was lucky to have survived himself—his coat was cut to ribbons behind with musket balls, his telescope had been broken in his hand, and he had three small wounds.

The Dey of Algiers surrendered unconditionally and agreed to all Exmouth's demands, which included the abolition of Christian slavery, and the release of all the slaves currently held in Algiers, 1,642 of them. Most of them were Sicilians and Neapolitans (1,110), but there were 226 Spaniards, 174 Romans, and even 18 English. There were no Americans. Having seen what the English fleet did to Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, and Morocco all renounced slavery.

After the battle, Lord Exmouth was a hero to all Europe. At home he was made Viscount Exmouth of Canonteign, and received the thanks of Parliament. Spain, Naples, Sardinia, and the Netherlands awarded him honors and decorations. Nonetheless, the Barbary problem was still not finally solved. As Consul Shaler reported, the Algerines set about repairing their defenses immediately, and even sent their remaining brig and schooner to sea in a few days.[1] The Deys had an immense accumulation of treasure on which they could draw to re-establish themselves. Piracy and the slave trade, after all, was their only real source of income.

Sure enough, they were soon back to raiding for slaves, though on a reduced scale, and the conferees at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818) discussed retaliation. In 1824, the English sent another, much smaller squadron under Sir Harry Neale to Algiers, but Neale was no Exmouth, and his force accomplished nothing.

A few years later, the Algerines started imprisoning and beheading French sailors, with the Dey giving a bounty of $ 100 per head and $ 200 per prisoner. The French therefore decided that the only real solution to the Algerine prob-

1 The reconstruction was so rapid that some writers have wondered whether the Dey released all his slaves.

lem was to invade the place, which they did, in 1830. They intended a temporary occupation, but found no alternative to staying permanently, eventually taking over Tunis, too. Christian slavery in the western Mediterranean was finally over.

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A considerable literature on the forgotten subject of European Christian slavery in the Ottoman empire and the Barbary states has come into existence since the Islamic attack on New York, 11 September 2001. I have taken the facts for these two talks mostly from the following list. Lambert's *The Barbary Wars* is included because it is useful for the political history of the wars, though it is spoiled by the author's peculiar insistence that religion played no part in the Barbary states' behavior. *Gunfire in Barbary* gives an excellent account of Lord Exmouth's 1816 attack on Algiers, though there is no substitute for reading Exmouth's own dispatches, now available online.

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The Song of Roland

God, how tiring is my life!

by Frank Brownlow

There are three great collections of stories in the repertoire of medieval European literature: the Matter of Troy, the Matter of Britain, and the Matter of France. All three originated in the memory of historical events, and all three ramified and developed over time into complex, sometimes extravagant fictions. All three of them, too, concerned the founding, the fall, and the dream of the recovery of the great empire of Rome. The knowledge that they had all once belonged to the empire ran so deep that even after all the incursions and conquests by barbaric tribes, all the countries of Europe that were once provinces of the empire, including even Britain, shared a legend or myth of origin that traced their beginnings, like Rome's, to an exile from Troy.

The matter of France was, historically speaking, based on fairly recent events, and it forms a collection of about one hundred surviving poems known as *chansons de geste* or songs of deeds. *The Song of Roland* is the earliest of them, and virtually as soon as the young French scholar Francisque Michel first discovered it in a manuscript at Oxford in 1835, it began to be considered the national epic of France, and as such the embodiment of the essential French spirit. In fact, French nationalists have always been chagrined that the manuscript was found at Oxford, and that it was written, moreover, in Anglo-Norman French.

As one would expect, the newly discovered national epic quickly made its way into the French educational curriculum—though one has to wonder whether it is still

there, and if so how contemporary French schoolteachers are handling it. An article recently uploaded to the website Academia.edu begins, "Teaching the Song of Roland in the twenty-first century entails a confrontation with the poem's history as a product and instrument of French nationalism." No doubt it does.

From the standpoint of a student of English literature the odd thing about *The Song of Roland* is that although it is written in Anglo-Norman French of the twelfth century, its subject matter is the eighth-century Frankish warrior class in the time of Charlemagne, and the Franks were a Germanic people whose language was a variety of the old Western Germanic speech to which Old English and Frisian belonged.

Modern English, with all the changes of a thousand years, is still a Germanic language, and still recognizably the same language as the Old English of Beowulf, but there is nothing Germanic about the language spoken in Paris today. Yet even though there is no sign of the original Frankish language in modern Paris, it survives, much changed, in the languages of the Low Countries, Dutch and Flemish. Yet by the eighth century, the Franks who were living and ruling in the territories we now call France were already well along in their adoption of the post-Roman dialect of vulgar Latin that became Old French; and not only does no literature survive in the Franks' own language: until the composition of *The Song of Roland* there was no literature to speak of in French, either, and despite its author's mastery of his narrative, the art of *The Song of Roland* is bound to strike anyone who knows the far older poetry of the Anglo-Saxons as unsophisticated, even primitive. Consider its syntax, for instance. It is written throughout in the kind of syntax we call paratactic; that is, in short, simple, clauses or sentences.

Another thing about the poem that will strike a reader whose language is English is that despite the Franks'

French and their use of up-to-date twelfth-century military weapons and tactics, morally speaking they still inhabit the old Germanic heroic world. In that ethos fidelity to one's lord or "ring-giver" is everything, and infidelity and betrayal are the worst of crimes. That is why Roland, having been given charge of the rear guard by his lord, Charlemagne, refuses to blow his horn to bring help. To have done that would have been to signal his failure to carry out his lord's bidding. "Companion Roland, sound the oliphant, so Charles will hear and bring his army back," asks Oliver, and Roland replies, "Almighty God forbid my family should be reproved for me."

Roland is a magnificent fighter knight to knight, warrior to warrior; but although he understands immediately that offers from Saracens are not to be accepted, he has no conception—as Charlemagne most certainly does—of the larger strategies needed to defeat them. Nonetheless, *The Song of Roland*'s author, by giving the negotiations with the Saracen King Marsile and Ganelon's treachery as prelude to Roland's great fight, and the battle with the Emir Baligant as its sequel, has expanded the limited stage of a local, almost tribal heroic action to encompass events affecting the whole known world of its time.

Those events, and the larger story of them in which *The Song of Roland* is an incident, began 30 April 711, when Tariq ibn-Ziyad, a Muslim commander operating under the orders of the Umayyad Caliph Al-Walid, crossed with a large army into Spain from North Africa, landing at Gibraltar. The turning point of the subsequent campaign of conquest came with the defeat and death of the last Visigothic king, Roderick, at the Battle of Guadalete in July, 712.

With amazing quickness, the Umayad army went on to conquer most of the Iberian peninsula, except for small areas in the northwest. In 719 Al-Samh, the governor of what was now the new Islamic province of al-Andalus,

crossed into the former Roman district of Septimania (modern Provence). After setting up a capital there at the port of Narbonne, he set about moving northeast of the Pyrenees on the way to conquering France as well as Spain.

The Islamic conquerors ran into their first major setback when Odo, Duke of Aquitaine, in a surprise attack wiped out Al-Samh's army besieging Toulouse in the Battle of Toulouse, 721. Al-Samh himself was so badly injured that he died shortly after.

Not that this defeat stopped the Muslim advance. By 725 they had taken Carcassone, and reached as far north as Autun. In 732, having learned the lesson of their defeat at Toulouse, they defeated Duke Odo at Bordeaux, took and sacked the city, and began once again to think of conquering all of France. By then, though, Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace under the Merovingian kings of what is now France, and Duke of the Franks, who was one of history's military geniuses, had put together a permanent, disciplined army of well-drilled veterans. On the condition that Duke Odo of Aquitane accept his overlordship, Charles came to his help, and the combined force of Franks and Burgundians defeated the Muslim army in the Battle of Poitiers, 733.[1]

This was one of the world's decisive, historic battles, but it still did not stop the Umayads. They launched a second invasion in 735–39, crossing the Rhone, capturing Arles, and going on to take Avignon in Provence. Once again, it was Charles Martel who challenged them, and his subsequent victories at Avignon and outside Narbonne put a permanent stop to Muslim expansion in Western Europe. His son Pepin the Short took Narbonne back in 759, and his grandson Charlemagne took the first steps toward the

1 This is the more recent dating. See Lynn white, Jr., *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press Paperback, 1969), 3, n3.

recovery of Spain from the Muslims when he recovered Girona (785), and established the Spanish March (a defensive buffer zone) south of the Pyrenees.

In the process of doing all that, Charlemagne was returning to France across the Pyrenees when—according to the version told in Einhard's *Vita Karoli magni*, written about 820—as his rearguard was negotiating the pass at Roncesvalles, they were ambushed, killed, and plundered by a force of Basques. The many dead included Eggihard, overseer of the King's table, Anselm, Count of the Palace, and Roland, Prefect of the Breton Marches.

Einhard treats this attack as a minor event; but modern historians think that he may have downplayed a major disaster, and suspect that although the Basques were primarily responsible, they probably acted in combination with Saracens. The incident's persistence in memory, and its eventual development into the fully-developed narrative of *The Song of Roland* suggests that something far more portentous than Einhard's Basque raid took place at Roncesvalles in 778.

About two hundred fifty years later, the writer of a recently discovered note in the manuscript of a Visigothic chronicle, nota Emilianense, went into more detail than Charlemagne's biographer. (The dating of this note is by no means certain. It could be as much as one hundred years older. There is some inconclusive discussion of the date in Walpole. Walpole, 1956).

> "In era 816 [year 778], Carlo(magno) came to Zaragoza. In his days, he had twelve nephews, each one of whom had three thousand mounted knights with their loricas [infantrymen]. Their names were Roldán, Bertrán, Roger, Ogier "short-sword," Guillermo "curbed-nosed," Oliveros, and his grace the Bishop Turpín. Each one of them served the king a month with his retainers. It happened that the king stopped with his army in Zaragoza. After

> a time, they held a council and advised him that he should levy a large tribute so that the army did not perish from starvation, or if not, to turn back as was appropriate. This [latter] was done. The king wished that for the safety of the men of the army, Roldán, a mighty soldier, and his troops be at the rearguard. When the army traversed the port of Sicera in Roncesvalles, Roldán was slain by the Saracens."

Here we have evidence of a well-developed narrative based on memories of the attack at Roncesvalles. In this version, we find Charlemagne's twelve companions or peers, each with his accompanying vassals, and they include Roland, Oliver, Ogier, William, and Bishop Turpin. As in Einhard, the Carolingian army is making its way back home through the mountains when its rearguard is attacked, and Roland is killed. But the attackers are now the Saracens, a word deriving, incidentally, from the late Latin *Saraceni*, used of the nomadic people of the Arabian desert who harassed the bounds of the eastern empire in Roman times.

Then we learn from the English scholar William of Malmesbury, writing in about 1120, that before the Battle of Hastings in 1066 Duke William encouraged his soldiers by having the beginning of *The Song of Roland* sung.[1] About seventy-five years later than that, sometime in the twelfth century, probably in the century's second quarter, 1125–50 (though some people argue for a date as late as 1170), an Anglo-Norman scribe wrote out the poem we now have in an uncial script in a small, unpretentious, relatively inexpensive little manuscript book made out of the cheaper kind

1 The beginning of the poem we now have would not have excited William's soldiers very much. There is no way of knowing what, exactly, was sung at Hastings. Some versions mention a minstrel or jongleur called Taillefer as the singer, but whatever he sang, it was not *The Song of Roland* we know, though it may have been one of its episodes.

of parchment. Very early on, this little book was bound up with Calcidius's translation of a part of Plato's *Timaeus*.

In the mid-thirteenth century this book belonged to an Oxford scholar called Henry Langley. He gave it to the Augustinian canons of Osney Abbey, near Oxford, and there it remained until the dispersal of the abbey's properties under Henry VIII. It eventually came into the possession of a gentleman called Sir Kenelm Digby, and he gave it to the Bodleian Library. (Digby was an interesting man, a Catholic, the son of Sir Everard Digby who had been executed for his part in the Gunpowder Plot. Sir Kenelm put in a stint as a privateer under King Charles I, attacking French and Spanish shipping. During that voyage, he ransomed about fifty English prisoners from Algeria to replace lost members of his crew.)

In the manuscript, now known as Ms. Bodleian Digby 23, the poem has no title. In 1837 its first editor, Francisque Michel, gave it the title *The Song of Roland*, believing that it was the text of a minstrel's song. In fact for a long time people thought the manuscript was a minstrel's book, although nowadays most students think it was written for reading and have no trouble at all assuming that the Anglo-Norman canons of Osney Abbey enjoyed reading it, just as we know that Anglo-Saxon monks had enjoyed the old heroic stories of Ingeld.

Since the scribe who wrote the manuscript was not the author, he must have been copying something already in existence by about 1125.[1] It has become fairly conventional to believe that events and characters in the First Crusade, proclaimed by Pope Urban II in 1095, influenced the author; but since one of those characters, Archbishop Turpin,

1 In the poem's last line, "*Ci falt la geste que Turoldus declinet*" ("Here ends the *geste* that Turoldus sang"), Turoldus could be either the author or a performer. He is certainly not the writer of the manuscript.

appears in the nota Emilianense, written well before the Crusade, we are allowed to be skeptical about that and about other attempts to relate the poem to later history. The poem grows out of, and in its own way comments upon, the history that it narrates, even though (like other Medieval poems) it presents its materials in the "modern dress" of the time when it was written.

The great theme of *The Song of Roland*, then, is the struggle between the Christian people of early Medieval Europe and militant Islam. That struggle, in its first years, must have seemed like a lost cause, as the Muslim tide flowed over city after city, region after region.

The reason why the Muslims conquered Spain so easily was that by the eighth century the Umayad Caliphate had developed into a major military power, its armies superior in numbers, equipment, and methods to the peoples they were attacking. Even though armed cavalry were not yet the chief element in Muslim tactics, their use of cavalry against small armies of undrilled infantry proved devastating. All this changed with the Battle of Poitiers, when Charles Martel's surprise arrival, his choice of high, wooded ground, and the superb training of his veteran infantrymen, massed in a Roman-style phalanx, all succeeded in bringing about a defeat of the Muslim cavalry.

After Poitiers, Charles (a quick learner) reorganized his army to include armored cavalry using the newly-introduced stirrup and the lance, held at rest under the arm, creating, in doing so, the social system we call feudalism as a means of funding the new kind of army.

Nonetheless, the great problem for the Franks—or for anyone else who wished to defeat the Muslims—was that the post-Roman Germanic kingdoms, principalities, and dukedoms were too small and disorganized to form an effective united front, and before Charles Martel could even think of taking on the invaders, he had to consolidate his

own Frankish territories, and extend the boundaries of Frankish control. Even in the face of Muslim attack, this was not a welcome development for many of his contemporaries, as the career of Odo of Aquitaine and others demonstrates. To avoid Frankish control, Odo, like others, was prepared to make common cause with Muslims. It was only sheer necessity, brought on by another defeat by the Muslims, that forced him into union with Charles.

Something of that anti-Frank strategy probably underlay the Basque attack at Roncesvalles. Fortunately, the same tendencies to disunity operated on the Muslim side, and historians now seem to be agreed that disunity, treachery, and rebellion in the new province of al-Andalus proved to be a great help towards the Franks' successes.

Charlemagne's eighth-century army in *The Song of Roland* is armed in the latest eleventh/twelfth-century style. The mounted knights are heavily armored in their hauberks. They wear helmets with a nasal guard. Their chief weapon is the pennoned lance held at rest under the arm, the purpose of the pennon being to prevent the lance from penetrating too far to be withdrawn. Seated securely in the new kind of saddle that prevented them from falling either backwards or forwards, and with their feet held in the stirrups, the knights could now mount a charge that delivered the full force of horse and man to the lance-point. Once the lance was broken or lost, they used the long sword, two-handedly if necessary, and they only fought on foot if they were dismounted by the injury or death of the horse or the snapping of its saddle-girth. Each knight went to battle accompanied by foot soldiers, but we hear virtually nothing about them in the poem except for their anonymous deaths.

A great deal of the poem consists of accounts of the encounters of Roland and his comrades with their Saracen enemies, whose military organization mirrors that of the Franks. Formulaic as the descriptions tend to be, one imag-

ines that the original audiences would have had a strong interest in the weaponry and the styles of fighting. Like a sports commentator, the poet speaks in the language of the game, and although he is capable of praising the technique and even some of the characters on the opposing side, he has no doubt for a moment that Christians are right, Muslims are wrong, and that God and his angels are on the Christians' side.

The reason for the battle that forms the first part of the poem, however, has little to do with the Muslim invasion itself. It arises out of an act of local, domestic treachery when Ganelon, who is Charlemagne's brother-in-law and Roland's stepfather, plots Roland's death with the Muslim king Marsile. We are not told exactly why Ganelon dislikes Roland so much, but we can infer that envy and jealousy have a good deal to do with his feelings.

When Charlemagne and his advisers are choosing an ambassador to respond to Marsile's initiative at the poem's beginning, it quickly becomes obvious that he will not risk any of his closest companions on this very dangerous assignment: Marsile had killed the last two ambassadors. It becomes equally obvious that Ganelon is not one of that inner circle, and when Roland nominates him as ambassador he becomes very angry, so angry that when Charlemagne appoints him by presenting him the glove, Ganelon drops it, and all the onlookers immediately see an ill omen in the incident.

The Franks have been campaigning in Spain for seven years. They are weary, and ready to listen to Marsile's bogus overtures for a truce. Only Roland advises that his offer be refused him out of hand, and Ganelon immediately suggests that Roland is motivated merely by his own foolishness, pride, and ambition. The reader or listener who already knows that Marsile's proposal is false, and that his real intention is to buy the Franks off, and by that means

get them out of Spain also knows, therefore, that Roland is right, and that Ganelon must, for reasons of his own, be wrong, and begins to suspect him.

Sure enough, Ganelon no sooner sets off for Saragossa with Marsile's envoy Blancandrin than he begins to talk treasonously, and by the time they arrive, the Frank and the Saracen are agreed on the need to remove Roland. In the meeting with Marsile that follows, Ganelon explains that to remove Roland is to remove Charlemagne's right hand, and that the way to do that is indeed to buy off the war-weary Franks. They will leave Spain, appointing only a small rear guard to protect the passes, and Roland and Oliver will be in command of it. All Marsile has to do is to attack them with a hugely superior force. Roland will be killed, and Marsile will have no more wars.

At that point, Ganelon's personal feud with Roland has turned into full-blown treason to Charlemagne and his own countrymen, and in the Germanic world to which the Franks belong, that is the worst crime a man can commit. The depth of Ganelon's evil appears when, on the journey home, Charlemagne hears Roland's horn, and Ganelon mocks him, saying:

> There isn't any battle!
> You're getting old, your hair is streaked and white;
> Such speeches make you sound just like a child.
> You're well aware of Roland's great conceit.
> It's strange that God has suffered him so long…
> He'll blow that horn all day for just one hare.
> He's showing off today before his peers. (1770–81)

Charlemagne knows better; he immediately understands that he has been betrayed, arrests Ganelon, and turns him over for keeping, to his greater shame, to the kitchen

staff while Charlemagne and the army return to Spain as fast as they can.

Roland and the peers die in the battle, but they have won a great victory. The Saracen king who intended to cut off Charlemagne's right hand by having Roland killed, has had his own right hand cut off, literally, by Roland himself. His armies fly until, pursued by Charlemagne, whom Roland has summoned with his horn, they drown in the Ebro. Marsile returns home in shame to his wife's contempt. Meanwhile Charlemagne, lamenting the loss of Roland, knows that without him, he will have a world of trouble to contend with:

> The Saxons will rise up against me now,
> And the Bulgars, Huns—so many devilish folk—
> Apulians and Romans and Sicilians,
> And those from Africa and Califerne,
> And then my pains and troubles will begin.
> Who'll lead my armies forcefully enough,
> When he who always guided us is dead?
> …He starts to yank upon his whitish beard
> With both hands, and the hair upon his head.
> A hundred thousand Franks fall down unconscious.

Unknown to Charlemagne, even as he speaks, the world in the person of the Emir Baligant and his army, whom Marsile had previously summoned, has already arrived to fight with him. That battle ends when Charlemagne, despite his great age, destroys Baligant in personal combat. After baptizing a hundred thousand Muslims, Charlemagne then returns home in triumph carrying the bodies of Roland and the peers, and for a while there is peace. But the poet ends by letting us know that there will be no final peace: Gabriel the messenger angel instructs Charlemagne to summon the armies of his empire because the pagans, i.e., the

Saracens, are attacking King Vivien and the Christians of the land of Bire:

> The emperor had no desire to go:
> The king cries: "God, how tiring is my life!"
> His eyes shed tears, he tugs at his white beard.

Moreover, just as the Franks in their weariness had advised Charlemagne at the poem's beginning to respond to Marsile's proposals, so at the end, when he summons the barons of the empire—Bavarians, Saxons, Normans, Poitevins, French, Germans, Teutons, Auvergnois—to preside over Ganelon's trial, they, for fear of Ganelon's pledge or champion, Pinabel, advise him to drop the charge of treason, and make things up with Ganelon. Charlemagne, who has something of the constitutional monarch in his approach to business, calls them traitors, but is prepared to accept their verdict when just one knight, Thierry, steps forward, like Roland at the earlier council, to tell and to maintain the truth.

Ganelon's defense, that he had Roland killed in a personal feud, has no standing, says Thierry: when Roland died he was serving the emperor; that fact turned Ganelon's private act of vengeance into a public act of treason, and made him a felon:

> He broke his oath to you and did you wrong.
> For this I judge that he should hang and die,
> And that his corpse be thrown out to the dogs.
> Like that of any common criminal.

Thierry then challenges any kinsman of Ganelon to dispute his verdict, and the trial becomes a trial by combat when Ganelon's kinsman Pinabel accepts Thierry's challenge. In the fight that follows, Pinabel is the favored

champion—as the poet says, if Pinabel hits someone, his time is up. When Thierry unexpectedly proves to be the victor, and kills Pinabel, the Franks proclaim the outcome a miracle of divine justice, and recommend that both Ganelon and his thirty hostages be executed.

The manner of Ganelon's execution, torn apart by four horses (like Francois Ravaillac, Henry IV's assassin in 1610), and the hanging of his thirty kinsmen-hostages has upset many modern readers. A contemporary reader, however, would have had no difficulty in understanding that Pinabel and the kinsmen-hostages, by maintaining Ganelon's cause, were parties to his treason. The poet comments, laconically, "Treason destroys itself and others too."

If we look at the outcome of this poem in the context of our larger theme, we shall notice that Charlemagne's most dangerous enemy is not the Saracens, but homegrown treason. The poet understands, too, that although the immediate danger might be local and domestic it has national and even international ramifications. He also knows that no final peace is in sight, and so he ends his poem with the emperor in tears, tugging at his beard.

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Italy—the Muslim Conquest that Failed

When power was wielded by forceful men with clear minds...

by Thomas J. Fleming

When in 1453 the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II succeeded in conquering Constantinople and putting a final stop to the history of the Roman Empire, he regarded himself as the legitimate heir to the Caesars and the rightful ruler of Italy. In this ambition, he was repeatedly encouraged by Renaissance Italian intellectuals, who preferred a Muslim Empire to the irritating moral restrictions imposed by the Church. To claim his inheritance, Mehmed had to launch an invasion against the Italian peninsula, which was divided into an interlocking series of warring camps—papacy and empire, Venice and Florence, Naples and Sicily. Two obvious routes were open to him. He could invade by land from the North, which would require him to take Venice out of the picture, and before taking on Venice, he would need to establish a land base on the Dalmatian Coast. His failure to take Belgrade (in the siege of 1456), coupled with the continuing opposition offered by George Castriotis "Skanderbeg" and the Venetians, made that megalomaniac adventure less attractive, and he had to consider the Southern route.

Several elements in this tale stand out: The first is the unchanging ambition of Muslim governments to conquer or dominate the West by whatever means possible. The second is the curious way these ambitious rulers latch on to Western traditions, which they use as justification. For Mehmed, it was the legacy of the Caesars that offered the pretense

of legitimacy. More recently Muslim political leaders have invoked such Western ideological slogans as nationalism, democracy, fascism, and Marxism. It is as if they have fallen so far behind the West that their only recourse is to ape European fashions and ideologies.

In their campaigns against the West, Muslim leaders have almost always been aided by European intellectuals who have been for centuries so disenchanted with Christianity that they will pick up any weapon they think will be useful in destroying whatever is left of the Christian moral and social order. Hilary Clinton may hate Muslim men for oppressing their women, but she heartily approves and supports the Islamic ideology that promises to obliterate the cross.

Mehmed the Conqueror was far from being the first Muslim to dream of conquering Italy. It is always difficult to talk about 'Italian history,' because between the fall of Western Empire in the late 5th century and the creation of the Italian State in the middle of the 19th, Italy was only, as Metternich accurately described it, "a geographical expression." Beginning in the later Middle Ages, there was certainly a sense of a common Italian culture, but that was more dream than reality. Before Dante, many Italian poets chose to write in Provençal French, which was hardly more different from Tuscan than Tuscan was from Sicilian.

Inevitably, then, the Italians' efforts to save Italy from Muslim conquest and to recover territories that had been subjugated were carried out by different political regimes in different parts of Italy, particularly the Normans in Sicily and Southern Italy, the Papacy in Rome, the maritime republics of Pisa and Genoa, and, of course Venice, all for different selfish motives and only occasionally out of a real sense of a Christian Crusade against Islamic rule.

Sicily

Sicily, which lay between the Italian peninsula and Muslim-held North Africa, was the logical first step for Muslim invaders, just as it had been in ancient times when the Carthaginians invaded Italy. Roman Sicily was the granary of the Empire, and in the troubles of the later empire, it could have been seen as a beautiful haven of peace and prosperity where both Greek and Roman settlements lived side by side. The population did not decline as it did elsewhere, and there is evidence of healthy village communities. The invasions and occupations of Vandals and Goths did a great deal to destroy prosperity, but some measure of stability was restored by the Byzantine Empire, which reconquered the island and slowly rehellenized it both in language and religion.

When the Arabs arrived in the early 9th century, the island was controlled by Byzantine Greeks. Torn by factional fighting between the enemies and the defenders of icons, the Empire was particularly weak and faced constant attacks from Arabs in the Middle East and from Slavs, who had invaded the Balkans. On the eve of the Muslim invasion of Sicily, Constantinople was ruled by the Empress Theodora. The Empire was never strong under an empress, and the pious Theodora was no exception. During her reign, the Empire drifted ever closer to disaster, and her son, the aptly named Michael the Drunkard, did no better.

As always happens under weak leaders, disgruntled regional potentates were encouraged to strike out on their own. A rebellion by the Byzantine commander in Sicily touched off a war that invited Arab intervention. The Byzantine army already had a major job on its hands fending off

the Abbassid Caliphate, and they sent only marginal help to the locals who did their best to defend themselves.

Taormina, the last Christian city to be subdued, fell in 902. By the time the Normans arrived, nearly 170 years later, much of the island had been Islamicized and Arabicized. While Sicily did not exactly flower under the Arabs, it become known for the comfort and luxury of life. Unlike the Byzantines, who ruled from afar, the Arabs had come to stay, and improvements were made in agriculture. Although the Christians were subjugated and deprived of most civil rights, they were better off than in the Middle East, where they were more openly persecuted. By the end of the 10th century, Sicily was viewed as a thriving and stable part of the Muslim Arab world.

Muslim-dominated Sicily (along with Persia and Spain) is often described as one of the various high points of Islamic civilization, when living was good and literature and scholarship thrived. There are two common elements in all these periods: First, the conquered peoples—Jews, Greeks, Persians, Spaniards, and Italians—were instrumental in preserving their own culture and handing it on to Arabs and then Turks, and, second, the force of Islam itself was comparatively weak. Once the religious establishments were strong enough to have some control, the Golden Ages were quickly terminated by religious fanatics.

The remarkable thing about Sicily is not that it was lost to the Muslims but that it was recovered by a small band of Norman adventurers. The Italian South in those days was confused and turbulent. Sicily and Southern Italy, at the end of the 10th century, were divided into a number of states and spheres of influence that were often at war with each other. Arabs held Sicily; the Byzantines still retained Apulia and Calabria; Naples, Amalfi, and Gaeta were commercial maritime republics much like Pisa, Genoa, and Venice in central and northern Italy; but the important cities of

Salerno, Capua, and Benevento were the centers of Lombard principalities. (Lombards were Germans who took over most of Italy in the 7th century until conquered by the Franks.) Across from the northern border of the Lombard states lay the estates of the Church.

Sicily, apart from its Arab rulers and colonists, was still predominantly Greek, and, under Byzantine pressure, Calabria (more or less the toe) returned to its Greek heritage, but the Byzantine Empire's attempt to Hellenize Apulia was not a success, and Apulia, as well as the three maritime republics and the Lombard principalities, remained Latin. Byzantine rule was not popular: the Italians paid high taxes for the feeble protection from the Muslims they received, and the forced Hellenization was resented. A number of uprisings were fomented against the Empire, and they were often supported by Lombard rulers such as the Prince of Salerno, who hired a contingent of Norman knights returning from the Crusades.

The leaders of this other Norman Conquest were even more remarkable than Willian the Bastard who at almost the same time was taking over England. William after all was Duke of Normandy with at least some show of a title to the throne of England. The Hauteville brothers, who took over Southern Italy and Sicily, were only impoverished knights, lances for hire, and in fact thugs. How did Normans end up in Italy? Overpopulation of Normandy, combined with their own roving spirit, made the Normans the most sought-after soldiers in the world. These were descendants of Norsemen, and it was only in 911 that Rollo and his Vikings were given [by Charles the Simple] a vast chunk of territory in France on condition that they defend their land against other Vikings.

Within a generation the Normans intermarried with the Celtic/Frankish natives. They adopted the French language and culture along with the Catholic faith without surrender-

ing any of their native violence, cunning, greed, or treachery. The Normans who came to southern Italy were only two to three generations removed from Rollo. Some of the newcomers were hired by the Italian rebels against Byzantium; others took service with the Prince of Salerno; others ended up working for the Byzantines. For several decades, Norman adventurers were content to work for others, but when the Duke of Naples gave Rainulf the Norman the town of Aversa as a base, the Norman war-chief attracted the boldest of his countrymen, and by frequently changing sides, they were able to play a major role in south Italian affairs.

Among the many Norman immigrants who came to Aversa—between Naples and Caserta—were William the Iron Arm and Drogo, the two eldest sons of a minor nobleman, Tancred de Hauteville, grandson of one of Rollo's companions. Other brothers were to follow. In 1038 they fought on the Byzantine side against the Saracens in Sicily, where they were initially successful. Unfortunately, the unruly Normans resented the Greek commander's authoritarian manner and deserted. Fighting the Byzantines, William the Iron Arm made himself Lord of the Normans of Apulia in 1042. At William's death, Drogo succeeded to his brother's position, and the Western Emperor recognized him as Count of Apulia.

About this time another Hauteville brother arrived, Robert, who would soon live up to his nickname "Guiscard," the crafty. His brothers appeared to have resented his arrival, and Robert assembled a band of robbers and lived off the land by pillaging and extortion. It is said that he spared no one, neither women nor children nor priests and nuns. To Robert, nothing was sacred but his own interest and advancement. In this respect, however, he was hardly different from the other Normans.

Pope Leo IX grew increasingly alarmed at the violence of the Normans. He was a competent Pope who led the

movement for reforming the Church. He was also related to the family of the Western emperors (the Salian dynasty) whose claims to rule Italy he naturally supported. He was also begged by the Byzantines to suppress the pestilent Normans. The Pope personally headed the coalition troops sent to subdue the Normans. Unfortunately, the Normans, led by Richard of Aversa and Robert Guiscard, defeated the allies and, on bended knees and professing submission to the church, took the Pope prisoner and held him hostage until he agreed to recognize their Italian conquests.

Robert, backed by his newly arrived younger brother Roger, became the dominant player in the region. Roger de Hauteville was a warrior like his brothers and as wily a diplomat. When the two brothers quarreled—Robert had rewarded Roger not with the territory he wanted but with money—Roger soon was able to put enough pressure on his brother that Robert had to concede half of Calabria, and the two, for the most part, shared power over their conquests.

Making peace with Pope Nicholas II and his top advisor and successor Hildebrand/Gregory VII, the brothers-in-crime took over Southern Italy. Armed with the Pope's blessing, the Norman brigands could now claim to be holy warriors fighting against both Muslim infidels and schismatic Greeks. They seized Bari from the Eastern Empire, but the big prize was Sicily, and although the reconquest was in origin a joint project of the Hauteville brothers, troubles in Italy—and his dream of taking over the Byzantine Empire—forced Robert to leave most of the job to Roger.

Roger's first expedition (1060) to liberate the Christians of Messina from the Muslim Yoke, was not successful. The next Summer, however, joined by Robert, he took advantage of divisions among the Saracen emirs who divided the rule over the island. They liberated Messina, thus establishing a Sicilian beachhead. Despite the initial success, the Norman's progress was slow: the Muslims dug in and

defended major towns like Agrigento and Palermo, which was only taken in 1072.

It took 30 years, but Roger ultimately succeeded in breaking every vestige of Muslim power and in imposing Norman-style feudalism on the entire island. The Normans were few in number, but they counted on the support of the south Italian Lombards and Sicilian Greeks. The last Muslim outpost, Noto fell to Roger in 1090. This was truly one of the most important reconquests made by Christian Europeans

Norman Sicily in its heyday was a more brilliant success than Norman England, though it was a medley of Italian, Greek, Arab, and Italian peoples. Sicily became arguably the richest kingdom in Europe, but it was exposed to attack and inherently unstable: Its roots were shallow, and as the Normans adapted to the climate and to Arabic customs, they gradually lost much of their native vigor. Nonetheless, under the Hauteville rulers and later under Frederick II—an Hauteville heir through his mother—Sicily was the most civilized part of Europe. The Muslims mourned its loss, but they did not succeed in getting even a toehold again until the European Union forced the Italians to accept thousands of upon thousands of North African "refugees."

Rome

When they began their raids on Italy, the Arabs did not intend to content themselves with Sicily. Even before they had completed the conquest of the island, they were invited, by competing Lombard rulers in southern Italy, to assist them in their civil wars. They took advantage of these invitations not only to pillage cities but even to seize the port of Bari,

which they used as the base for staging further raids. However, defeated at sea by the Duke of Naples, the Saracens decided to go after a softer target: Rome.

In 846 when a Saracen fleet sailed up the Tiber to attack Rome, there was no army of Franks to defend the city. Charlemagne was long dead, and, while his successor Louis the Pious had exerted himself to defend his Empire from the Muslims, poor Louis had faced rebellions from his quarrelsome sons. When he died in 840, his son and successor was Lothar I, who had been ringleader of the revolts against his father. Lothar received the reward for his impiety when his brothers rebelled against him. Italy was entrusted to Lothar's son, the future Louis II, who would eventually join forces with the Byzantines to liberate Bari from Muslim control.

There was little that Louis II could to do to protect Rome from Muslim Pirates. Pope Sergius II (844-47) received no help either from Lothar or from Louis. The raiders sailed up the Tiber and devastated several important churches outside the walls. Although the parts of the old city protected by walls (including the Capitol) were defended, in the Vatican, which lay, unprotected by any fortifications, across the Tiber, altars and icons were stripped and destroyed by the Muslim attackers. Even the tomb of St. Peter was looted. The Church of St. Paul Outside the Walls was also looted. Louis II did not relieve Rome, though he may have tried, but the attackers were driven off by the arrival of Guido (or Guy), Marquis of Spoleto. Son of a Frankish nobleman and a granddaughter of Charlemagne, Guido was representative of the emerging Frankish-Italian nobility. Rome itself was also defended by a local militia, whose regiments (scholae) were parceled out among the regions of the city.

In the midst of this crisis, Pope Sergius died. Leo IV (847-55) was the unanimous choice as his suc-

cessor. He was a remarkable leader. Even Edward Gibbon, the anti-Christian author of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, says: "This pontiff was born a Roman; the courage of the first ages of the republic glowed in his breast." The Pope set about the task of reorganizing Rome's defenses—repairing walls, constructing towers, putting barriers into the Tiber. Meanwhile the North- African Muslims were organizing a second more massive invasion, but the Pope, who proved to be an able diplomat, formed an alliance with the prosperous maritime cities of the South: Naples, Gaeta, and Amalfi. In the great sea battle off Ostia (849) to decide Rome's future religion, the Neapolitan fleet was already winning the day when a storm arose and destroyed the Muslim fleet.

In 852, Leo IV founded the "Leonine City," that is, the Vatican, by fortifying what became known as the Borgo Pio (the pious city) and by hedging in the entire area with walls that would provide refuge to Popes down to Pius IX. Pope Gregory IV had already built up the fortifications at the port of Ostia, and Leo now went to work on the harbor at Portus. By the time of his death, this great Pope had shown himself worthy of Rome's great defenders, from Horatius who stood at the bridge to the Emperor Aurelian who had built the circuit of walls that still defended the city.

The Medieval Papacy is often accused of giving way to excessive political ambitions. The reality, however, was that they had no choice. Byzantine control in Italy was fast disappearing, Charlemagne's empire was falling apart, and none of the successor kingdoms—France, Germany, Lotharingia—was in any shape to defend Italy from the Saracens. Descendants of the imperial family, who inherited the blood of Lombard and Frankish barons, fought over the empty title of King of Italy, but real power in Central Italy was more and more in the hands of the Papacy. The 9th and 10th centuries were not a Golden Age of episco-

pal purity or papal government, but there were remarkable leaders such as Pope John VIII, who exerted himself manfully against the Muslims and was certainly one of the most effective papal rulers in the early Middle Ages.

Three years after his consecration in 872, John had to deal with the dangerous power vacuum left by the death of Louis II. The most competent Carolingian ruler left in the field was Louis' uncle Charles the Bald, who is often considered the first king of France. Invited by Pope John, King Charles rushed to Rome to be crowned by the Pope on Christmas Day 875. The date was intended to recall Charlemagne's coronation only 75 years before, but this second Charles only stayed in Italy long enough to be crowned before abandoning both Rome and all Italy to the chaos and violence in which it was being engulfed.

Charles the Bald could do little to protect Italy from renewed Saracen attacks. Pope John, however, rallied the militias, made alliances with powerful neighbors, and even created the first papal navy, which he commanded in person as admiral in several successful engagements with the Muslim pirates. When the Neapolitans proved to be turncoats, he executed some of the traitors and arranged a coup in Naples itself. John was among the first European rulers to have a clear idea of the Muslim threat. Born in Rome, he had witnessed the Arab attacks in the 840's, and he tolerated no divisions among Christians—in fact, he put a papal ban on any separate treaties with the Saracens.

To meet the impending Muslim attacks, Pope John took steps to strengthen the fortifications around Rome. In particular, he fortified the hitherto unprotected area around St. Paul's Outside the Walls much as Leo had fortified the Borgo Pio. Outside of Rome, however, the Pope was hindered on his efforts by faithless Italian nobles, some of whom were all too willing to make an alliance with the Muslims. It is a pattern we see wherever we look: Muslim ag-

gression is almost always aided by treacherous Christians. The Pope travelled across Southern Italy, cajoling, bribing, and threatening the unreliable nobles into an anti-Muslim alliance.

It was at this time that the Saracens established their robbers' roost on the shore of the river Garigliano in southern Italy. From this fortress, they periodically sallied forth to prey upon Italian Christians. These Muslim robbers, who looked upon monasteries as soft targets, destroyed the great abbey of Farfa. Many Italian potentates sought to purchase peace and security by allying themselves with the Muslim invaders. In the North, Muslim robber bands had a similar base in the Alps where they waylaid merchants and pilgrims on the way to Rome. And, if travelers took the sea-route, they were attacked by Muslim pirates.

In 876 Pope John VIII personally took command of a naval squadron that attacked and defeated a Muslim pirate fleet, but he knew this was only the beginning. The Saracens continued to make gains in southern Italy: In Sicily, Syracuse finally fell in 878, and the Muslims would soon hold all of Sicily. Responding to the Pope's appeal, Charles the Bald returned to Italy in 877, primarily to have his imperial titles confirmed, but he died that same year without accomplishing anything. Pope John VIII died in 882. At this critical juncture, the papacy became the political tool of the Counts of Tusculum, who presided over the infamous "pornocracy." In the version of history given by Liutprand of Cremona, a rabid advocate for the German Emperor Otto, who subjugated Rome, the lascivious Marozia, installed puppet-Popes to do her bidding. How much truth there is in this tale may never be known, but it is clear that the Roman nobility, however corrupt they might have been, were resisting the arrogance and oppression of their German masters.

It was the rulers of the "pornocracy," in fact, that defended Rome from the Arabs. John X (914-28), the protege of the Tusculum faction and alleged lover of the Countess Theodora, was a strong-minded and astute statesmen, who forged a coalition to unify Italy against the Muslim invaders. The only hope, as John realized, lay in a coalition of Rome, Byzantium, and the South-Italian nobles. Treaties were signed, nobles bribed, and a coalition was cobbled together of Roman militia forces, a Byzantine general, the dukes of Gaeta and Naples. Coalition troops defeated the Saracens and, after concerted efforts, prised them out of their compound on the Garigliano. Those who escaped to the mountains were cut down or enslaved. Although he was murdered by Marozia and her allies, he has gone down in history as weak and profligate. In the West's struggle with Islam, Pope John X is as great a champion as Pius V, who organized the alliance that won the day at Lepanto.

Pisa

With the victories of John VIII and John X and the Norman recovery of Sicily, the Muslim threat to Rome and the South grew less alarming. During this same period, the maritime republics to the North were also sweeping the seas of Muslim pirates and reclaiming the Western Mediterranean. As early as 828 a small Italian fleet under the Tuscan Count Boniface, acting for Louis the Pious, raided the North African coast, and we are told that most of the sailors were from Pisa. Tuscan sailors and soldiers even went south to Salerno to defend it against the Muslims.

By the early 10th century, as John X was chivvying the Muslim brigands out of the South, Saracens were raiding

the Ligurian coast all the way to Nice. Genoa was sacked in 935, and the Islamic terrorists slaughtered the people mercilessly. The Arab raid on Genoa had two major effects. For their own protection the Ligurian towns had to subject themselves, in the long run, to Genoa, which accelerated Genoa's rapid rise to power. More immediately, however, Pisa, in fending off Muslim raids, expanded her power up the Ligurian coast. Her importance was so great that she was even spoken of as the capital of Tuscany, though such a term probably only indicated her size and importance and not any official position. The parallel rise of these two maritime republics set the stage for a conflict that would prove fatal to Pisa.

All of Italy was under threat, but the south was hit particularly hard. Amalfi, though a powerful maritime power, was not sufficient to defeat the Muslim pirates, and Pisa, for motives of charity and profit, came to the rescue of the maritime cities in Southern Italy. From the late 9th century, Pisan vessels had been raiding North Africa and defending the South. Her ships fought the Saracens in Calabria (the toe of Italy) in the 10th century and drove the infidels out of Reggio. Early in the 11th century, while the Pisan fleet was away defending Southern Italy from Muslim attacks, Saracen pirates from Spain sailed up the Arno and burnt part of Pisa (in 1004). Eight years later, they laid siege to the city.

The Pisan Reconquest

From their colonies on Sardinia, Corsica, and the Balearic isles, Muslims were constantly threatening the Tuscan coastline. Sardinia had remained a part of the Empire (with a

brief Gothic interlude) since the Punic Wars. Under Byzantine rule, the unified province of Sardinia, which had become de facto independent, disintegrated into four rival judgeships (judicatus) governed by rulers chosen from dominant families. In their constant bickering, divisions, and wars, the competing judges were extending an open invitation to any ambitious Muslim chief.

In 1015 Mogahid, a Muslim war-leader in Spain, conquered the weak and divided island. This Mogahid is said to have been originally a Christian Slav who had worked his way up to a dominant position in Western Spain, from which he launched his invasions of the Balearic Islands and Sardinia. His initial conquest (and subsequent invasions) of the island was apparently very brutal.

In retaliation for the Spanish Muslims' attack on their city, the Pisan fleet, assisted by Genoese allies, sailed to Sardinia. In the face of the Christian counter-attack, Mogahid chose to withdraw and bide his time, but, upon the departure of the Pisan and Genoese fleets, he returned with a vengeance. When Pisa and Genoa returned, Mogahid made good his escape, but Pisa and Genoa defeated the Muslims and captured his brother.

Sardinia, though it remained independent and divided into the judgeships, was divided into fiefs, some of them given to the greatest families of Pisa and Genoa. Unfortunately, the rival Italian cities were soon at odds, and though Genoa is said to have been first to attack, the superior Pisan strength expelled the Genoese from Sardinia. It was not the first clash between the rival maritime cities, and their conflict would damage both and eventually be fatal to Pisa.

In 1063, a Pisan fleet attacked Arab-held Palermo to support the Normans who were retaking the island. By Medieval standards, Palermo—with a population exceeding 300,000—was a vast and well-fortified city. In a concerted effort, Pisan ships broke the harbor chains and

hoisted their new flag: a Pisan cross on a field of red, which had been adopted after they had wrested Sardinia from the Muslims. Although they could not actually take the city, so long as its defenders remained within the walls, the Pisan adventurers took home so much booty they were able to begin construction of the new cathedral. The conquest of Sicily was left to the Normans, but the Pisan fleet had decidedly put the Muslims on the defensive.

Italian merchants—Pisans in particular—were not so much high-minded idealists as pragmatists, trading with the Muslims when it was possible, fighting and despoiling them when Muslim rulers felt strong enough to oppress the Christians. For the Italians, North Africa was the key place, both for trade and for potential loot. The Moroccan port-city of Mehdia (between Tangiers and Casablanca) was held by a Muslim Prince named Temim, who built it up into a thriving center of trade—and piracy. Thanks to its natural situation and the later fortifications, Mehdia had been made nearly impregnable. Inside its formidable walls, thousands of Christian prisoners despaired of liberation from slavery and return to their families.

Whether their motives were Christian charity or the more down-to-earth desire to protect their shipping from piracy, Pisa and Genoa decided once again to combine forces. Their request for Norman support was turned down by Robert Guiscard, who probably had enough work to do keeping his unruly Norman and Lombard vassals in order and cooperating with his brother in the reconquest of Sicily from the Arabs The expedition set sail in 1087. Their first objective was the island of Pantelleria, a prison for high-ranking prisoners in Roman times and in our own times a vacation resort. The crusaders took the island, though not before the defenders smuggled out warnings to Temim by means of carrier pigeons. The Pisan Visconte Ugo was killed in the fighting for Mehdia, but Temim was forced to

capitulate: He surrendered his Christian captives—along with a great deal of his treasure—and granted Pisa trading privileges.

Enriched by the spoils of North Africa, the Pisans dedicated a huge amount of the loot to the further adornment of their cathedral. The entire Piazza dei Miracoli, in fact, was only made possible by the city's aggressive maritime adventures, especially the unremitting conflicts with Muslim powers.

Pisa's wars with the Muslims were conducted by individual admirals and trading consortiums rather than by the city itself, but they were not haphazard expeditions in search of booty. The Pisans, though working as entrepreneurs, were single-mindedly driving the Muslims out of Christian Europe and bringing the war to the Islamic-held North Africa and the Middle East. In 1099, along with Genoa and Venezia, Pisa sent 120 ships to support the first Crusade. Records are scanty, but Pisan importance can be measured by the fact that their Archbishop Daibert was made Bishop of Jerusalem.

On Easter 1113, the Archbishop of Pisa (Piero Moriconi) called for a crusade in the Western Mediterranean and named twelve consuls from the ship-owning families to lead the expedition. With the Pope's blessing and the support of French and Spanish allies, Pisa conquered the Balearic Islands (Mallorca, Minorca off the coast of Spain) in 1113-15. It was a stunning victory and Pope Gelasius II rewarded his crusaders by granting the Pisan archbishop authority over the Church in Corsica.

These were the glory days for Pisa, when she almost literally took on the world. Driving the Muslims out of the Western Mediterranean, fighting with Genoa and Lucca and eventually Florence, she exhausted her strength and succumbed to Florence in 1404. The Italian mastery of the sea was then left to Genoa and Venice, who spent far more

time fighting each other than they did fending off the Ottoman advance.

Venice

The history of Venice is intimately entwined, first with the Byzantine Empire, whose emperors Venice acknowledged as suzerains, and then with the Ottomans. In the 9th century, the Doge was summoned by the emperor (Michael the Stammerer) to take part in naval operations against the Saracens who were attacking Sicily and Southern Italy. The Doge sent a Venetian fleet, the first of several unsuccessful expeditions against the Arabs.

Despite early failures, the Venetians continued to aid the Byzantine fleet in operations against the Saracens, and they also participated in joint campaigns with the Emperors of East and West in the siege of Bari, which the Saracens surrendered in 871. One Doge even tried—ultimately unsuccessfully—to end the trade in Christian slaves sold to the Muslims.

The Venetians had their noble side, but they were also instrumental in diverting the Fourth Crusade into an attack on Christian Constantinople, which was sacked and subjugated. Venice had perhaps the lion's share of the loot. This was the real downfall of the Byzantine Empire, a catastrophe for the most civilized people in Christendom, but it also now exposed the entire Mediterranean to Islamic attacks.

Venice and Genoa were later in a rivalry to the death over who would exploit the declining Byzantine Empire in its death throes, and neither were of great help in 1453, when the city fell to Mehmed. The Venetian Senate debated what to do, after the fall. Some called for war, but the greater

number agreed to congratulate the conqueror and try to make the best business deals they could.

Nonetheless, the stable oligarchy that ruled Venice well understood—and periodically took steps to resist—Ottoman expansion. In the very next year after the fall of Constantinople, they entered into a pact (Treaty of Lodi) with the other great Italian powers—Florence, Milan, Naples, and the Papacy—designed to end aggression within Italy and guard against Mehmed's invasion plans. By a very good fortune, the next papal vacancy was filled by the great Sienese scholar and diplomat, Eneo Silvio Piccolomini, a man who understood the imminent danger of Muslim expansion better than anyone in Europe. Pius summoned Catholic Europe to stage one more crusade, but the Venetians were slow to respond, complaining that they always had to bear this burden alone. Pius wrote of them that "the Venetians never think of God, and except for the state, which they regard as a deity they hold nothing sacred, nothing holy. To a Venetian, that is just, which is good for the state; that is pious, which increases the empire." The Venetians eventually agreed to join the Crusade, but, when the Pope died at Ancona, where the fleet was assembling, the crusade dissolved.

Mehmed had the Venetians on the run, chasing them out of the Ionian islands and forcing them, in January of 1479, into signing a treaty by which they ceded not only territories in Albania and Greece but the islands of Lemnos and Euboea (Negroponte) in addition to paying a large tribute. But Venice gained her primary object: restoration of trade in the East and access to Ottoman ports. The treaty meant that Mehmed was now free to carry out his grand design of taking over the city of the Caesars, which would also mean conquering the Kingdom of Naples, whose Aragonese king was closely connected to Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary. Like Pius XII, the Hungarian ruler was both an ac-

complished humanist scholar and a determined enemy of Islam.

As Mehmed laid his plans, the Venetians looked the other way. They had been in conflict with the Pope and feared the rising power of Naples. Mehmed had a more positive ally in Florence, where Lorenzo de' Medici was grateful to the Sultan for turning over the assassin of his brother Giuliano. We do not know what sort of deal was struck between Lorenzo and Mehmed, but the crooked Florentine had a medal struck celebrating Mehmed's accomplishments, including his success in taking over Magna Grecia. Franz Babinger has tried to argue that the medal is referring only to the Greek islands recently acquired by the Ottomans, but, throughout ancient history, Magna Graecia meant one thing: Southern Italy, colonized by Greeks, and in the Renaissance the term was properly used by the humanists who flocked to Lorenzo's court. More recent scholars have pretty much debunked Babinger, and it has been pointed out (by James Hankin) that Mehmed was expected to receive divine assistance in defeating the Spanish in Naples.

In 1480, 140 Ottoman ships landed near Otranto, easternmost point in Italy, across from Albania and just northwest of Corfu. A Venetian squadron had tracked the Turkish fleet past Corfu before discretely turning around. The Venetians were more deeply involved than the blind eye they were turning. Venetian transport ships were in the Ottoman fleet, and when the Turkish pasha in command asked the Venetians about their preference in enemies to attack—the Pope or Naples—the Venetians returned only an ambiguous answer.

The Ottoman commander offered peace and security to Otranto, if the citizens would surrender, but the town angrily rejected the terms. The Turks, some 18,000 strong, bombarded and stormed the city, killed all the men includ-

ing the archbishop leading a religious procession, and left only 10,000 out of 22,000. 8000 were shipped off to Albania as slaves. 800 were dragged up a hill and slaughtered when they refused to profess Islam. Ottoman forces began to raid up and down the coast, imposing taxes on families that refused to convert and confiscating bells of churches.

The Turkish army got ready for a blitzkrieg that would take them to Rome. The Pope, who had no use for his faithless ally the King of Naples, called for allies, but there was little response. Milan and Venice—what did either of them cared what happened to the kingdom of Naples? And Florence actually supported the invasion. Nonetheless some sort of alliance was crafted on paper: Naples, Milan, Ferrara, Genoa, and Hungary. Even Florence signed, obviously with no intention of doing anything. Pope Sixtus IV, who did raise a good deal of money, which he passed to the King of Naples, was on his own, and it took some time to take his troops out of central Italy and send them to Otranto where they bottled up the Turks, who, once they received supplies and reinforcements, arrogantly refused to discuss surrender.

Mehmed, although he had been ruling for three decades, was under 50 and willing to commit the vast resources of his Empire to the conquest of Rome. His plan would have proceeded along the same lines as the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans. The essential elements are alternate threats of terror and promises of peace, comforting lies about protecting the Church, a string of alliances with native leaders who would be, one by one, displaced by Ottoman governors. If the planned conquest of Italy sounds too fantastic to be practical, just consider this: Serbs and Hungarians, before the Ottoman conquests, were regarded as among the toughest fighters in Europe in those days, while the more civilized Italian states had to rely on hired mercenaries, often from Germany and France. Fortunately, the Italians never had to

put the Ottoman resolve—or their own mettle—to the test. Mehmed died under suspicious circumstances less than a year later, and the demoralized Turkish garrison surrendered to the Neapolitans.

Pope Pius II was right about the Venetians and their cynicism, but what his analysis left out was their firm resolve to defend their only god, the Venetian state. Heroic Venetians fought and died in battles for Cyprus, Crete, and half the Eastern Mediterranean. It was the triple alliance of Venice, the Papacy, and Hapsburg Spain that defeated the Ottomans at Lepanto, though as the Serbian Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokollu informed the Venetians, the Ottomans soon built an even bigger fleet and continued their domination of the sea. Since most of Venice's activities were outside of Italy, the Venetian struggle lies outside the scope of this essay.

Conclusions

The Italian resistance to Islam teaches several useful lessons. Disunity and discord are fatal to any plan of defense, and Muslim states have always been successful in fomenting and exploiting rivalries between Christian states as well as rebellions and civil wars within them. There is something depressingly similar about the invasions of Sicily, Spain, the Byzantine Empire, and the Balkans. In each case, local Christian rulers thought they could use Muslims in their conflict with rivals and enemies, though in the end it was they who were used by the Muslims.

The clarity of the Muslim vision of conquest compared with the muddleheadedness of Western rulers who could only rarely set aside petty ambitions and greed long enough

to resist a determined enemy. But, on those rare occasions when power was wielded by forceful men with clear minds—Leo IV, John VIII and John X, Roger Hauteville, and any number of Venetian Doges—Italian Christians consistently prevailed against powerful Muslim forces, just as Janos Hunyadi the Hungarian, Vlad Tepes, and Mathias Corvinus did in Hungary and Wallachia, or, still later, Don John of Austria at Lepanto, the Austrians, Germans, and Poles at Vienna, and Prince Eugene of Savoy, who was driving the Turks out of the Balkans when the Austrians were stabbed in the back by Eugene's uncle Louis XIV. Time after time, the Ottoman advance was stymied by determined European leaders, though in the end it was the ever-progressing technology of Western armies, coupled with the ever-increasing degeneration of the Ottoman state that turned a resourceful and determined enemy into the "sick man of Europe."