Dynamics and Policies of Prejudice from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-first Century

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Edited by

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FOREWORD

GIUSEPPE MOTTA*

While John Maynard Keynes argued that "The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones", the study of discrimination and anti-Semitism clearly shows that old ideas can indeed be transformed and rearranged, adapting to the changes of the times and societies. From this perspective, *Dynamics and Policies of Prejudice from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Century* is the result of insightful research drawing on numerous disciplines, which is aimed at emphasizing how "new ideas" can emerge, even though they still struggle in escaping from the "old ones". The contributions collected in this volume deal with the study of various phenomena, such as racism, anti-Semitism, prejudice, xenophobia, gender discrimination, and ethnic and national conflicts, taking into account historical, political, legal, economic, and sociological perspectives. The texts cover a wide range of topics that are addressed through a multidisciplinary approach, which is necessary for analysing i) relationships among states, populations, nationalities, ethnic groups, and religious and linguistic minorities, and ii) the role that prejudice plays in one's own perceptions of others and how others see us. This analysis can contribute to defining the contemporary idea of prejudice in its distinct interpretations and patterns.

In studying the great multinational empires, the nation-states of contemporary Europe, religious persecutions, the relationships between colonizers and the colonized, and ethnic and national conflicts, it is possible to identify different variations of prejudice over the centuries.

In covering the period from the eighteenth century until recent years, the works analyse the concept of prejudice and its numerous expressions during: the delicate passage from the *Ancien Régime* to the creation of the contemporary order; the shift from the domination of multinational empires to the creation of the national states; and the changeover from religious to secular states (democratic or totalitarian). The contributions

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examine both historical events and issues, some of whose consequences are still felt today; but they also look at contemporary situations, such as the recent civil war in Syria and the ensuing refugee crisis.

The historical focus is rounded out by the analysis of sociological factors. These two interrelated disciplines – history and sociology – provide inputs that can be integrated for the purposes of comparisons, and, ultimately, for a comprehensive review spanning from the imperialistic era to the present day (inclusive of considerations concerning jihadism and Muslim-Christian relationships). A particular emphasis is placed on anti-Semitism and religious prejudice, but the book also includes articles concerning: the legal and juridical aspects of discrimination; psychological and social elements; and, more in general, many of the issues that fall within the varying frameworks of racism, prejudice, xenophobia, discrimination, and ethnic and national conflicts. The chapters are structured according to specific topics, such as ethnic and territorial conflicts, colonialism and neo-colonialism, identity and national consciousness, and other decidedly important and complex themes incorporating different perspectives and approaches.

Naturally, the book cannot deal with all the different issues that may be connected with the concept of prejudice in its different manifestations, but it undoubtedly offers a combination of different views, interpretations, and interests.

All in all, the works draw their inspiration from several fundamental questions: What is race? How has racism come to be so firmly established? Why do so few people actually admit to being racist? What is identity? How do we look at others? How are race, ethnicity, and xenophobia related?

The responses are not simple, and therefore, it is only through a comprehensive study drawing on multiple disciplines that can one provide the evidence necessary and the suggestions appropriate to understanding the issue of prejudice. The comparison of historical phenomena and contemporary trends, the combination of social and historical perspectives, and the evaluation of the continuity between the past and the present are key analytical techniques that can contribute to improving the study of these problematic issues that have continually plagued Europe and the rest of the world over centuries.

The book also includes specific studies devoted to comparisons of nationalism-related issues, as well as theoretical approaches to the concept of prejudice and discrimination that are not framed with regard to any particular geographic region but can provide some important key concepts that are necessary for a well-structured and meaningful analysis. With its multidisciplinary approach, the volume comprises a range of work by various scholars from different disciplines, such as political science, history, anthropology, sociology, international studies, security studies, geopolitics, area studies, economics, geography, sociolinguistics, literature, and psychology. Many of the authors participated in the international conference "Dynamics and Policies of Prejudice from the Eighteenth to the Twenty-First Century", held in Rome on 23-24 June 2016 in the framework of a research project funded by the Department of Document Studies, Linguistics, Philology and Geography of Sapienza University of Rome. The conference, as well as this book, were conceived as a general reflection about what prejudice, racism, and bias had represented and still represent in Europe and in its "neighbourhood", together with a collection of innovative and original analyses that may enrich common knowledge and aid in the methodological study of such phenomena.

CHAPTER ONE

THE IMPACT OF MODERNIZATION: OLD AND NEW BIAS IN THE AGE OF TRANSITION

LUCIEN BONAPARTE'S *LA TRIBU INDIENNE, OU EDOUARD ET STELLINA,* GERMAINE DE STAËL'S "*ZULMA*", AND CHATEAUBRIAND'S *ATALA*: COLONIALISM AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT PARADOX OF FREEDOM

SHARON WORLEY*

Racism was an evolving concept during the colonial period. Europeans who first had contact with natives in the Americas and Africa referred to them as savages who were uncivilized. The idea of racial equality was slow to be applied and was generally limited to female natives who married early explorers and bore their children. Africans and Indians forced into slavery by their colonial overlords were exempt from the Age of Enlightenment's notions of racial equality and citizenship until the abolition of slavery by the Early French Republic. During the Napoleonic era, slavery was reinstated, and the Enlightenment debate over racial equality was argued by romantic novelists who looked back to the primitive tribes first encountered by Europeans as the source of romantic concepts of love, hate, and race. The romances among westerners and natives inspired the romantic imagination, but at the same time explored the reality of warring factions among tribes and colonists. The love-hate relationship responded directly to the social reality, on the one hand, and the fantasy of love and reconciliation, on the other. The inequities between the colonial interloper and the native subject were cast according to Enlightenment values that imposed reason and order on society. The question of colonialism and the conflicts between Europeans and natives was at issue in the forefront of Napoleonic politics. Napoleon arranged the sale of the Louisiana territory in 1803, while seeking to expand French colonial domains in the Caribbean on Santo Domingo and in Egypt in 1799. Slavery was abolished by the Early Republic in 1794, but re-

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instituted by Napoleon in 1802, which led to oppression of the natives following slave uprisings. Continued conflicts among settlers and natives in America and elsewhere around the colonial globe inspired romantic novels of love stories with Enlightenment undertones.

Lucien Bonaparte's *La Tribu Indienne, ou Edouard et Stellina* (1799) is set in colonial Ceylon. The large island in the Indian Ocean was originally colonized by the Portuguese who established the port of Colombo in the sixteenth century when the Sinhalese moved inland to Kandy. Within a century, the colonial rule was transferred to the Dutch. In 1796, shortly before Lucien completed his novel, the domain had passed into the hands of the English. Lucien was also the president of the Council of Five Hundred when his brother Napoleon overthrew the government and was formally elected as First Consul. Lucien subsequently gave an order to destroy all copies of his novel. He must have wavered briefly between the imperial scheming of his brother and his own natural, liberal romantic tendencies. Napoleon's marriage to Josephine facilitated the revolutionary's rise to power through her salon and the contacts he made there. She was also from the West Indies where her Creole family owned a sugar plantation on Martinique, and her post-Revolutionary social status was based on the class conferred by the wealth of her estates and her marriage to an aristocrat, Alexander de Beauharnais. Thus, Napoleon's desire to marry the older widow with two children was motivated by class pretensions based on the ownership of a West Indies plantation.

The Bedas tribe described by Lucien's character, Edouard, appears to correspond to the Vedas, who were described in 1695 by Robert Knox in "An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon", as a more primitive tribe who lived in seclusion from the rest of the island. Like Edouard, Knox, an Englishman representing the East India Company, was shipwrecked on the island after losing his cargo and was held captive by the natives for 18 years before escaping to rescue at a Dutch settlement. The presumed inferiority of natives by whites is an underlying assumption of romantic studies. Not only were natives regarded as racially inferior, but they also engaged in hostile negotiations that resulted in their captivity or warfare by the opposing parties. Thus, romantic novelists who addressed the subject ignored recent history and placed their characters within an isolated realm where race is no longer the factor that determines right or wrong, good or evil. Instead, the characters who find love also have their lives torn apart by conflicts outside their control. The romantic novel can be said to ignore completely the modern concept of racial inferiority which was so prevalent in the slave trade and the industries it supported.

Pierre-Paul Prud'hon's illustrations to Lucien's novel show the greed of European traders who exploit the riches of their colonial domains and sell the natives into slavery. Ultimately, Edouard sells Stellina into slavery after she becomes pregnant. Edouard views the rituals of the natives of Ceylon as barbaric practices and cannot overcome the staunch position of the intractable native priests who maintain that the ancient rites and rituals must be observed. Ceylon hosted religious diversity at the time when the Portuguese arrived and added Catholicism to native traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Yet the intense conflicts between Europeans, who continued their hold on the island, and the natives, who retreated to Kandy, created a hostile climate of retribution comparable to what was seen with the head-hunting tribes of the Amazon and the human sacrifices of the Aztecs before the arrival of Cortez. The purpose of love is to reveal the harsh reality of colonial exploitation, retribution, and retaliation. Love temporarily intervenes and causes the hostilities to end, but ultimately love cannot stop the tide of violence in the wake of colonial empire. Edouard is rescued by ransom only when the island is transferred to Dutch control. Under colonial rule, Hinduism becomes an exotic cult of death where Brahma demands human sacrifices. In the dramatic conclusion, the vengeful deity is defeated when the Portuguese storm his sacred temple and desecrate it. Thus, as the colonial interloper, Edouard represents the humane Enlightenment world that seeks to civilize the primitive world and put an end to its barbaric practices. Yet, his lover, Stellina, loses her independence and his support. She is reduced to slavery in the chattel-bartering world of European colonialism, which fails to recognize the inherent rights of individuals, regardless of race and gender. Lucien's critique of colonialism was damning to the political ambitions of his brother because it reveals the romantics' attitude towards slavery as a dehumanizing act that removes love, the most critical element of human society. According to Staël in her tale, *Zulma*, “Love is above the laws, above the opinion of men; it is the truth, the flame, the pure element, the primary idea of the moral world”.

Lucien’s character, Edouard, is captured and set to be executed, but is saved through the intervention of the native Stellina, with whom he falls in love and conceives a child. The intense attraction between Stellina and Edouard eliminates the boundaries of culture and war, causing “the god of war to leave the couch of the goddess of love, Venus, who resembles the god of war in the deep wounds and blushing countenance of its victims” (Bonaparte 2006, 66). The exploitation of the colony by the Portuguese parallels Edouard’s sexual exploitation of Stellina whom he ultimately abandons, though she successfully saves him from execution by her

people. Lucien's portrayal of love, loyalty, and politics in colonial domains sought by France is a harbinger of the reality of the French Empire's colonial world. The rich Caribbean plantation colony of Haiti was acquired by France from Spain in 1697, while the city of Santo Domingo was ceded to France in 1795. In 1801, Lucien's brother-in-law, General Charles LeClerc, was sent by Napoleon to impose slavery. LeClerc put down an uprising and regained control of the island before dying from yellow fever in 1803. His final order, which was left unfulfilled, was to put down the insurrection by simply massacring the insurgent rebels among the Negro population above the age of 12.

The intense antipathy towards the natives whom the French exploited for imperial gain makes Lucien's tale of love between a colonial interloper and a native girl all the more remarkable. Napoleon's Empire would require the riches of the West Indies supplemented by his dream of capturing additional Eastern colonial territories. The suggestion of interracial miscegenation in a love story could only contribute to Lucien's rupture with his brother, whose growing empire he refused to support. Turning his back on the future Bonaparte dynasty, Lucien retreated to burgeoning romanticism where love healed all wounds, and aesthetics simplified the conflicts between races to an appreciation of beauty in nature. With the publication of his novel, Lucien became a romance author whose hero is closer to Chateaubriand's Chactas than Napoleon's hero, Clisson. Lucien, the intellectual, recognizes that, above all, commerce is the source of conflict, and love has the power to assuage war. But he is too much of a romantic to seize the monetary gain accrued from colonial riches. The romantic-tragic hero, Edouard, must leave his lover due to insurmountable ethnic and political divisions, but the conclusion of the novel is open to different interpretations. If the rift between cultures were to be healed, his star-crossed lovers could be reunited and live blissfully ever after. For the romantics, Staël, Chateaubriand, and Lucien, the politics behind colonialism were limited to abolishing slavery and European exploitation. Their romantic conception reduces the reality of the brutal clashes between Europeans and natives to a psychological conflict that hinges upon the inability of individuals to overcome their differences.

The broader historical circumstances which force lovers to tragically choose one culture over another only serve to intensify their longing for one another in a universe without feelings. As romantics, they follow their hearts in love as well as war. Edouard is compelled by necessity to enter into a relationship with Stellina who rescues him from her tribe that

sacrifices foreigners. This aspect of Lucien's plot is closer to the real-life histories of i) Cortez' interpreter, La Malinche (1496-1529), also known as Doña Marina, who gave birth to their son, Martin, and who is considered to be the first racially mixed person in the Americas, and ii) Pocahontas (1596-1617), later christened Rebecca Rolfe, who saved John Smith's life and gave birth to John Rolfe's son, Thomas. The romantic novel that addresses these real-life scenarios thus offers an idealistic interpretation of events in which racism is examined to expose the evils of racial genocide and enslavement. Romanticism acts as the harbinger of Enlightenment idealism in its effort to portray the natives sympathetically, from the perspective of interracial and intercultural romance.

At the height of the revolution, Staël wrote a short story about slavery entitled, *Zulma.* Zulma, a female slave, is charged with murdering her lover, Fernand, by shooting him with an arrow through his heart. She defends herself in the narrative by describing the intensity of her relationship with Fernand, who was driven into exile by the cruel forces of society. Upon his return, he is made the commander-in-chief of the army. His absence leaves Zulma with feelings of "dreadful forebodings" which fill her with terror. When she hears a rumour of Fernand's death, she searches the battlefield for his body, feeling "the violence of such deep unhappiness that I felt myself exist only through my pain" (Folkenflik 1987, 147). When he reappears, slightly wounded with a poisoned arrow, Zulma sucks the poison from his wound in order to save him. Fernand leaves her, and when they reunite, she spies him at the feet of another lover, Mirza. Her immediate response is to shoot and kill him with an arrow. She pleads her case before the judges as a crime of passion in which she was driven mad by love and the poison from Fernand's wound. When the judges acquit her of the crime of passion, she responds by committing suicide by plunging an arrow into her own heart. Staël explains in the foreword that she originally intended the novella to serve as the first chapter to her book, *On the Influence of the Passions on the Happiness of Individuals and Nations* (1796). Her objective in writing *Zulma*, she explains, was to portray love "in the most terrifying picture possible, the most passionate in character. It seemed to me that this emotion could possess the maximum energy imaginable only in the combination of a savage soul and a cultivated mind…I tried to find a situation of despair and calm…in which the unhappy being was capable of observing itself…" (Folkenflik 1987, 139). In the absence of Enlightenment reason, the passions could be destructive, on the one hand, but they could also inspire positive effects (Henderson 2013, 57-73). The concept of love during a time of chaotic revolution was theorized by Staël as a "crisis

touching everyone's destiny, when lightning is striking…when being alive is enough to drag everyone into universal commotion" (Folkenflik 1987, 151).

The narrator is an anonymous European observer who describes himself as "a prisoner of the savages who live on the shores of the Orinoco", a river running through Venezuela and Columbia. His status as a prisoner recalls the drama of the ongoing French Revolution as well as that of the freed slaves in French colonies who, during the Early Republic, briefly benefitted from the abolition of slavery before it was reinstated by Napoleon. The hope of freedom and liberty is thus contrasted with the doom of slavery and imprisonment, which ultimately results in the death sentence of Zulma and the Reign of Terror in Paris. The laws of gender become conflated with the laws of the jungle and the corrupt judicial process under the Jacobins with the resulting executions of feminists Roland and De Gouges as well as Corday and Marie Antoinette (Broccardo 2015, 409-428). The South American jungle climate, however, suggests the savagery of human passions ignited by the institution of slavery globally. Love becomes an overriding passion that transcends rational rights and laws. Zulma feels justified in murdering lover and then committing suicide to punish herself for her crime. Her emotional testimony is also sufficient to affect her pardon by the judge who likewise rules in favour of human passions. Staël associated slavery with gender inequality, writing in her essay *On Literature:* "The odious institution of slavery affected everything in the ancient world…The right of life and death that was often granted to paternal authority…created two classes of people, one of whom felt no obligation toward the other…Women throughout their life, children during their youth, were submitted to some of the conditions of slavery" (Kadish 2012, 32). In a letter to her father written in 1803, she expressed her horror over the executions of African slaves who were thrown overboard without a trial in Saint-Domingue by General Leclerc when he put down their uprising. As a woman, Staël sympathized with the female slave who had no rights and no hope of attaining the advantages of citizenship. She strongly believed that the revolution had failed in its mission to bring justice to all. But love was a strong emotion that could turn the tide of barbarism and cruelty in women's favour. By arousing the emotions as an author and a lover, she felt she could stimulate the reader's sublime Kantian ethical reflex. The primacy of passion over reason in Staël's literary plots is explained in Staël's chapters on love. She demonstrates the inequality of love in relationships in which men dominate women, exploit them and then discard them with soiled reputations. Laura Broccardo points out that

Zulma's suicide signifies the "master-slave" relationship between a man and a woman, and its effects on the female victim, who, swayed by the influence of her passions, is helpless to represent her own interests and carries out her own self-destruction. It stands in direct contradistinction to Staël's firm commitment to political liberty and due process, to which she and her lovers, especially, Benjamin Constant, subscribed. For example, in his political theory, the *Principles of Politics,* Constant wrote:

> The guilty do not lose all their rights. Society is not invested with unlimited authority over them. Its obligation to them involves inflicting punishments on them only proportionally to their misdeeds…. It has yet a further duty, namely to institute such chastisement as cannot stir up or corrupt the innocents who witness it…. Toward the end of the last century, people seemed to have sensed this truth. Human skill no longer sought how to extend as far as possible, in the presence of several thousands of witnesses, the convulsive agony of one of their fellow creatures. We no longer savoured premeditated cruelty. It has been discovered that this barbarity, ineffectual as regards the victim, perverted the witnesses of his torment and that a whole nation was depraved to punish a single criminal.

The public suicide of Zulma in a fit of insane passion resembles the public executions of the Reign of Terror in which the crowd was entertained and implicated with its direct involvement. Without the restraint of reason, Zulma subsumes to baser instincts which also satiate the curious onlookers. The passions of Staël's heroines, Delphine, Corinne, and Sappho, guide their actions, but also their suicides. Though Staël's political convictions were rational, her heroines, and indeed her personal love life, followed the unpredictable, destructive course of human passion. Though she clearly recognized the difference between the Dionysian and Apollonian impulses, she believed that as nations, humans are swayed by passion, and by the most immediate and personal human emotions of love and hate. The sentiments expressed by her character, Zulma, echo Staël's feelings for the Comte de Narbonne to whom she wrote: "There is only you for me in the world; nothing exists except in connection with you; everything else is confusion in my mind and my heart; I can judge nothing…except assisted by your ideas... you, my guiding star" (Solovieff, 36).

Written as an apology for the Catholic faith, the original edition of *Génie du christianisme* (1802) also included two novellas. Its emphasis on the beautiful poetic aspects of Christianity, however, aligns it more closely with the themes of romanticism (Adam 2007, 30-49). *Atala* is about star-crossed Native American lovers in war-torn North America, and *Rene* is about the romantic attraction that a young American immigrant feels for

his dead sister who, after taking orders as a nun, dies while tending contagious patients. The plots were inspired by Chateaubriand's travels in North America in the 1790s during the French Revolution.

Atala, a Christian member of the Seminole tribe, rescues the young Natchez Chactas, who has been captured by her tribe, but refuses to consummate her love for him because she has taken a vow of Christian chastity; she commits suicide rather than break her vow. When Chactas first meets Atala, he mistakes her for a Virgin of Last Love: "I thought she was the *Virgin of Last Love*, that virgin sent to prisoners of war to bring enchantment to their grave. Persuaded that this was so, I spoke to her, haltingly, yet with confusion that did not arise from fear of the pyre, 'Lady, you are worthy of a first love and are not created to be the last. The movements of a heart that will soon cease to beat would only respond sadly to the movements of yours. How can life and death mingle? You will make me regret the daylight far too deeply. Let some other be happier than I, and a long embrace unite the liana and the oak!' to which Atala replies: 'I am no *Virgin of Last Love*. Are you a Christian?'" The *Virgin of Last Love* provides solace to those who are deprived of their personal and political freedom. She also represents personal fulfilment in romantic love.

Romanticism encouraged two disparate modes of discourse. On the one hand, Napoleon sought to recreate a court culture which sponsored and promoted political liaisons through marriages and established dynastic rites. The Empire style yielded to the neoclassical nymphs and goddesses or tragic Greek heroines, luxury was complemented by idealism in the human figure and spirit, and love relationships served to reinforce the militant dynastic aspirations of both the ancient and modern worlds. On the other, hand, romanticism encouraged dissent. Dissent in the form of the rejection of traditional marriage role models and dissent in accepted patterns of social discourse. Romanticism encouraged Rousseau's concept of primitivism and pedagogy, where following the inspiration of nature led to a greater sense of individual fulfilment and a rejection of duty. In taking Native Americans as his subject, Chateaubriand demonstrated the conflict between the two realms: the impulse towards nature and the demands of societal duty. Napoleonic era lovers like Chateaubriand, who supported political liberty and republicanism, tended to follow the romantic impulse towards individual freedom by discarding the shackles of social slavery and following their heart.

The death of Atala demonstrates how freedom is impaired by conformity to social rites and duties and leads to the destruction of the individual's

will. In his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality,* Rousseau proclaims "I should have wished to live and die free". The two forms of inequality Rousseau identifies are physical or natural and social or imposed by society. Chateaubriand's death of Atala suggests that his heroine was forced to yield to the dictates of conventional Catholicism by the pressures of familial bonds that superseded her natural emotional desire for love and intimacy. Removing primitive humanity from the "state of nature" resulted, according to Rousseau, in inequality among humans that was imposed by social laws and classes. The conflict forces Atala to choose neither. She cannot actually fulfil her vow of chastity after death, and she refuses to yield to her stronger instinct for love. Consequently, she chooses self-immolation because of her inability to resolve the conflict between the two. Rousseau claims that humans have a natural desire to return to the primitive state where there are no such social restrictions and duties. This is the natural state. In Anne-Louis Girodet's romantic painting of the *Burial of Atala* (1808), the literary heroine assumes a limp, soft, supple pose as she is tenderly lowered into her cavernous grave by her lover and the priest who represent these two antipodes, suggesting the original primal state which precedes civilization, and the fetal pose in the womb and cave of nature (Moscovici 2001, 197-216). Scholars, such as Katherine Wickhorst and Michael Call, have noted the tomb as a recurring motif in *Rene*, in which the protagonist seeks a space which is "real and imaginary" and similar to Foucault's theory of another space which is utopian (Wickhorst 2009, 1-20). Chateaubriand's references to the womb, death and the Biblical earthly paradise of nature derive from Rousseau's theory of inequality, which asserts that human impulses toward regressing to the womb of nature must be restrained, or else the result will be tragedy, loss, and death.

Rene's identification with the natives and their political-nature duality incapacitates him; he is unable to save himself by leaving their settlement. Chateaubriand's philosophy closely mirrors that of Rousseau, while his liberal politics follow the Coppet circle of Staël. In his essay on *Ancient and Modern Revolutions* written while in exile in England during the Revolution, Chateaubriand extolls the Eden-like paradise of Niagara Falls as the embodiment of nature's purity and harmony. It reconciles good and evil, and the conflict between the Europeans and Native Americans, which resulted in the latter's massacre and displacement. Eric Miller identifies the impulse to rectify the wrongs against Native Americans by whites in Chateaubriand's final chapter "Night among the Savages of America" and in the epilogue to *Atala* with the romantic impulse to experience the divine in nature (Miller 2005, 125-137). The discovery of Native Americans

complicates the history of Western civilization from the perspective of Enlightenment and Romantic philosophy because it necessitates the inclusion of natives in whites' history of *their* universe, causing an empathic identification with both the natives' primitive innocence and victimization. James Hamilton, by contrast, perceives an altered consciousness or waking dream, in Réne's communion with nature as he ascends the volcano crater Mt. Etna. The romantic hero is an archetype who, according to Hamilton, views the volcano as a metaphor for life (Ross 2013, 25-58). Laurence Porter suggests that Chateaubriand cloaked his cross-cultural and "hybridization" themes in Catholicism to appeal to French readers and evade censorship. Porter perceives Chateaubriand's credible attempt to describe the "otherness" of Native Americans and their exotic culture for the benefit of Europeans who could not understand the natives' language or culture. The massacre of the Natchez Indians in 1727 provides the pretext for Chateaubriand's story. The brutal white suppression of Native Americans is contrasted with Catholicism, which ameliorates, to some extent, the otherwise fatal confrontations between tribes. Porter also asserts that in the *Les Natchez*, "Chactas serves Chateaubriand as a surrogate to condemn the oppressive society that has rejected the author," while scholar Philippe Moisan suggests that Chateaubriand himself identified with the characters of Chactas and Réne (Porter 2010, 159-171). Malcolm Scott suggests that religion in *Atala* serves as a "corrective to the sexual instinct". When the lovers attempt to solve their conflict by having Chactas convert to Christianity, they discover that it is irreconcilable since Atala has taken a Christian vow of chastity to her mother. Since Atala cannot keep her vow, she chooses suicide by taking poison. The resulting tragedy demonstrates that only Christianity can solve the problems of the modern world and the clash between "natural man" and civilized man (Scott 2014, 106).

Clearly, Chateaubriand sought to engage the contemporary history of France and Louisiana, and at the same time, to merge the mythic Biblical European history with the contemporary reality of colonial exchanges with new cultures. However, in merging the Judeo-Christian mythic paradise of Eden with the Natchez' history in Louisiana, Chateaubriand's fictional native protagonists also support his theory that even the earliest primitive stage of society must conform to a cultural structure of morals based on customs in order to survive. Existentialism in its purest form had its origins in romanticism and the romantics' recognition that the malaise of life was a psychological state of aesthetic inertia that causes regret and suffering. The more Chateaubriand praises the beauty and harmony of nature, the more his characters realize that the ability to tame the wilderness

and civilize humanity is beyond their grasp. True love symbolizes this lost symbiosis where couples are denied the consummation of their impulsive feelings because they cannot accommodate the dictates of social customs. The tragic plot of the romantic novel concerns lovers who can never fully consummate their passions and choose suicide instead.

In their refusal to confront the reality of racial politics, the romantic novelists of the Napoleonic era imposed their own Enlightenment standards of equality upon their native characters. Love relationships reveal the height of human passions that can also lead to human death. Rather than explore the future of racial tensions that threaten to unleash the forces of violent retribution upon whites, the romantic novelists subliminally enslave their characters through love relationships that are an extension of colonial racial politics. The questions of social legitimacy are only addressed in a cursory fashion as an extension of colonial authority. The Early Republic's concept of racial equality and citizenship is buried among lost primitive, Eden-like worlds that conceal the dominant colonial forces of white wealth and military power.

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WITH PRIDE AND PREJUDICE: PAÌSIY HILENDÀRSKI AND THE PERCEPTION OF BULGARIA'S NEIGHBOURS IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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In 1762, working at the Athonite monastery of Zograf, a monk of Bulgarian descent, Paìsiy Hilendàrski, completed the "Slavo-Bulgarian history of the Bulgarian people, kings, and saints and of all the Bulgarian endeavours and events" (Kosev *et al.* 1962; Arnaudov 1972). At the time, Bulgaria had been part of the Ottoman Empire for almost four centuries. The Bulgarian kingdom was divided into four *sanjaks* (administrative areas in the Ottoman Empire), and its patriarchy, previously autonomous, was subordinated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople; its population became part of the *Rum-millet* (Roman nation), which included all Christians, as well as the Greeks, Serbians, and other South-Slavic populations living within the imperial boundaries. When they were included in this peculiar administrative system (which emphasized religion over national or ethnic affiliation), the Slavic nations lost all of their autonomy. Their written languages were no longer used for administrative or ecclesiastical purposes (except for menial tasks), and without an adequate educational system, the languages lapsed into little more than local dialects. Autonomous cultural production in the Slavic language ceased almost completely (Hristova, 1993; Hristova, 1996).

Paìsiy, the first of the so-called Bulgarian "awakeners", lived and worked at both the Hilendar and Zograf Athonite monasteries. The monasteries had been able to salvage at least a part of the Bulgarian heritage and traditions, copying books and icons, writing simple treatises, and maintaining contact with the foreign churches, particularly the Russian Orthodox Church, breaking, in part, the cultural isolation of the Bulgarian lands (Petkanova, 1990; Todorova, 1997). Apart from the elementary

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notions provided by the monastic instructors, however, the Bulgarians had no possibility of being educated in their native language: those who wished to make progress in the administration or in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and who were not willing to convert to Islam, were forced to study Greek. Paìsiy sought to address this issue, providing the "simple Bulgarians", as he usually labels them in his book, with a manual that supplied a general outline of Bulgarian history. Given the Bulgarian people's broad-based unawareness of their national past, this text rapidly gained acclaim, with its importance ending up to be completely disproportionate to its actual historiographical and cultural merits. Paìsiy's work cannot be considered a reliable account of the history of medieval Bulgaria; nationalist instances abound, the author's opinions are almost never corroborated by evidence, and the whole structure of the book is heavily influenced by the style and motifs of ecclesiastical narratives, often more hagiographic than historic. On the other hand, our brief analysis is mainly concerned with the flawed ideology at the core of the book. Any objective historian would rightfully discard such ideology, but it proved to be the main cause of the work's success, at a time when Bulgaria was slowly beginning to reconsider its past and, even more slowly, to construct its future.

The introduction to the *Slavjanobolgarskaya istorija* is a declaration of the author's main intent: the enlightenment of the Bulgarian people through an exposition of the nation's most significant achievements in the political, military, religious and cultural fields; it is also fiercely polemical against the neighbouring nations, especially Serbia and Greece, which had somehow retained the memories of their past, and considered Bulgaria a country without history and without glory.

> Be careful, you readers and listeners of Bulgarian ancestry, you who love and have at heart your Bulgarian ancestry and homeland, and wish to understand and know what is known of your Bulgarian ancestry and your fathers, ancestors, and kings, and patriarchs and saints... It is necessary and useful to know what is known of the works of your fathers, just like all the other peoples and nations know their ancestry and language, have a history and whoever among them is learned knows, tells and is proud of his ancestry and language... So, read and learn, so that you will not be scorned and scolded by other peoples and nations... I wrote this for you, who love your ancestry and the Bulgarian homeland and love to know about your ancestry and language... But some do not like to know about their Bulgarian ancestry, turn to a foreign culture and to a foreign language and do not care about their Bulgarian language, but learn to read and talk in Greek and are ashamed to call themselves Bulgarians. O mindless beast!

> Why are you ashamed to call yourself Bulgarian and do not read and do not talk your language? Have not the Bulgarians got a kingdom and a state? They reigned many years and have been glorious, illustrious and famous in the whole world, and many times they received tributes from the powerful Romans and the wise Greeks... Of all the Slavic nations the most glorious one has been the Bulgarian: they were the first to call themselves kings; they were the first to have a patriarch; they were the first to be baptized; they conquered more land than any other. Of all the Slavic nations, they have been the strongest and the most respected and the first Slavic saints were of Bulgarian ancestry and language... So why, o silly little man, are you ashamed of your ancestry and crawl behind a foreign language? Because - they answer me - the Greeks are wiser and more learned, while the Bulgarians are coarse and stupid and do not use elegant words. For this reason, they say, it would be better for us to join the Greeks. But know, o mindless man, that there are many nations more wise and glorious than the Greeks. Maybe some Greek abandons his language and culture and heritage as you abandon them, oh idiot?... Bulgarian, do not fool yourself, know your nation and language and instruct yourself in your own language! Bulgarian simplicity and good nature are the best. The simple Bulgarians welcome everyone in their home and feed them and give alms to whoever asks them. While the wise and cultured Greeks never do that, on the contrary, they take from the simpletons and seize unjustly, and from their wisdom and culture, they will reap sin rather than blessing (Hilendàrski, 19-21).

Paìsiy almost obsessively repeats the terms 'homeland', 'nation' (*народ*), 'ancestry', and 'Bulgarian', as if he were someone who had been forced to be silent for too long and was finally able to express himself and vent his frustration (Danova 2003). Paìsiy firmly refutes all the allegations made against the Bulgarians by their Serbian and Greek neighbours. He reminds the reader that, among the Slavs, the Bulgarians can boast not only a long series of primogenitures, but also a series of splendid victories against those who were then accusing them of being a worthless people. The Greeks, so proud of their past empire, had also been defeated many times and reduced to the humiliation of paying a tax to Bulgaria. The harsher words, however, are directed against his fellow Bulgarians, who are ashamed of their own ancestry and believe that it would be better for them to conform to the language and customs of the Greeks. Paìsiy sternly reminds them that his fellow citizens are oppressed and despised not because they are unworthy, but because they have no written records of their past, notwithstanding their former glory. He ascribes the lack of historical records to the Ottoman invasion, and to the envy of the neighbouring nations, who conspired to deny the Bulgarians the recognition of their former status (Hilendàrski, 22-27).

After this lengthy introduction, Paìsiy provides a mythical account of the Bulgarian people to ascertain and highlight their unique characteristics and virtues. According to his narrative, the Bulgarians are a Slavic nation, sharing the common origin of the Slavs: no mention is ever made of any Turkish ancestry. Their name comes from the Volga River, from where, at the time of the Roman emperor, Valens, they moved to the Danube, becoming vassals of the empire; the Greeks, unaware of the Bulgarians' real identity, called them Huns or Goths (Hilendàrski, 31-37). Bulgarian subordination to the Greeks was very short, because "they were not used to submit to kings, and they were savage and fierce, fearless and strong in war, and proud as lions" (Hilendàrski, 37). The identification of the Bulgarians with the Huns allowed Paìsiy to ascribe to them many exceptional military achievements, long before the actual arrival of the Bulgars south of the Danube in the year 681 A.D.:

> And God gave rise to the Bulgarians against the Greeks, and by means of this small and simple nation, God humiliated them many times... The kingdom of the Romans was strong and glorious on Earth, but the Bulgarians ruled over the Greeks and the Romans and conquered plenty of lands and ruled autonomously and with glory. Sometimes the Greeks defeated them and wanted to subdue them, but God again gave rise to strong and brave rulers among the Bulgarians, and they prevailed again and set their Bulgarian people free of Greek and Roman oppression, as we will see below... Look at their deeds, oh reader, and learn the truth (Hilendàrski, 41-42).

In the long, garbled list of military exploits that follow, it is almost impossible to discern a proper chronology of the Bulgarian Khans and their conquests. As might be expected from a member of the clergy, the Bulgarians' conversion to Christianity and their strong religious beliefs form a prominent part of this section of the book and are among the most important events described by the author. However, Paìsiy's aggressive stance towards the neighbouring nations is repeatedly the most evident feature of his narrative. In this section, Paìsiy is mainly concerned in listing the lands captured from the Roman Empire and settled by the Bulgarians, and the times when the Byzantines (the Greeks, as he always calls them) and the neighbouring nations were forced to pay a tax to the Bulgarians, on recognition of the latter's superiority.

The ethnic and cultural boundaries of Bulgaria encompassed, in Paìsiy's vision, the lands from the Black Sea to Aegean Macedonia and the Adriatic Sea. According to his text, those lands had been inhabited without interruption by Bulgarians and by Bulgarians only, resisting any