

Of Pirates, Highwaymen and Bomb Throwers: Experience in the Past and Relevance in the Present

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There is a crisis of authority in global affairs today, as neither regime formation at the international level, nor law enforcement at the national level appear wholly effective in suppressing lawlessness at the transnational level.¹ Transnational organizations trafficking in drugs, women, children, weapons, nuclear materials and purloined intellectual property pursue profits in indifference to international law and national borders. Transnationally organized terrorist organizations and those that sponsor and finance them pursue their political and ideological ends similarly undeterred by international law and unbothered by national borders. Drawing lessons from political history, this paper demonstrates that there are historical experiences that can prove helpful in understanding today's transnational anarchy. Although some of the analogically relevant experiences occurred within rather than between countries, historical observations nevertheless cast considerable light on conditions, causes and effects of their occurrence as well as on reasons why episodes of rampant lawlessness eventually ended.

This paper takes the present-day prevalence of illicit transnational behavior as given. Official reporting by national governments and international organizations in recent years, dramatic coverage by journalists, and probing analyses by scholars paint a vivid picture of what some have labeled the "dark side of globalization." In 1999, \$400 billion in illicit drugs were distributed internationally; 80 million illicitly procured AK-47

¹ Peter Andreas and Ethan Nadelmann, *Policing the Globe: Criminalization and Crime Control in International Relations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

rifles were in the hands of movements contesting for the control of countries; between \$800 million and \$2 trillion were illegally laundered, and corporations in United States alone lost some \$9.4 billion as a result of the counterfeiting of their products or the theft of designs and technology.² In March 2003, the Congressional Reference Service of the United States Library of Congress reported that “between 700,000 and 4 million people are trafficked every year worldwide.”³ While a proportion of those trafficked are illegal immigrants, seeking, and paying for, transit into Europe and North America, “the overwhelming majority of those trafficked are women and children” sold in one way or another into slavery. Moisé Naím’s frequently cited *Foreign Policy* essay, describes public authorities today as fighting “five wars of globalization” against illegal trade in drugs, arms, intellectual property, people and money. This author concludes that they are losing these wars and “thanks to the changes spurred by globalization . . . their losing streak has become even more pronounced.”⁴ And yet a sixth war of globalization is being waged today against transnational terrorist organizations. To the “for profit” activities of the present-day smugglers, thieves, pirates and slave traders, must be added the “for cause” activities of those presently operating with near impunity, pursuing bizarre utopias and perpetrating cultures of death.

Pirates, Brigands and Anarchists

Robin Hood may never have existed, but surely the Sherwood Forest did.⁵ Oren Barak uses this forest as a metaphor to project an image of an amorphous world where

² Moisé Naím, “The Five Wars of Globalization,” *Foreign Policy*, No.134 (Jan-Feb. 2003), p.28-37.

³ Congressional Reference Service, “Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and the International Response,” *Report for Congress*, Updated March 6, 2003, Summary.

⁴ Moisé Naím, p. 29.

⁵ A.J. Pollard, *Imagining Robin Hood: The Late Medieval Stories in Historical Context* (New York: Routledge, 19); J.C. Holt, *Robin Hood* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982)

political borders count for little and political authority has little limiting or ordering impact on the behavior of the shaded world's inhabitants. Barak's concern is that transnational terrorists are among the "forest's" most dangerous denizens. The "modern Sherwood Forest," he says, is "a black hole of internal disorder that draws self-proclaimed 'Robin Hoods' – small, ideologically motivated, and highly determined bands of political activists who had become outcasts in their own countries – and allows them to organize, engage in military training, forge alliances with local actors, and form clandestine transnational networks."⁶ But also living in this metaphoric domain one might expect to find the rest of the cast of sinister characters whose livelihood is secured by preying upon society outside the forest or ensnaring the unsuspecting who venture within.

Historically, it would seem, there have always been "Sherwood Forests" and they have always served similar purposes in offering sanctuary to those who chose to operate in disregard of the laws and norms of ordered society. Activities within these such sanctuaries are the historical raw material for this study. First, there were the oceans of the world, the Atlantic and the Indian in particular, their bays, inlets, islands and islets, from the mid-sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. These were among the historic heydays of piracy on the high seas.⁷ Then, there was the American "wild west," certainly wild, though actually not very far west, the post-Civil War world of legendary highwaymen. The primary domain of these "bad men" was a swath of mid-America, extending east to west from Kentucky to Kansas and south to north from Texas to

⁶ Oren Barak, "The 'Modern Sherwood Forest'" Paper prepared for the Annual Conference of the International Studies Association, Honolulu, Hawaii, March 2005, p. 2.

⁷ There were of course numerous other eras of rampant piracy on the high seas, extending from ancient times to the present-day. Their characteristics were in many ways quite similar to the era of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" examined here. See, Donald J. Puchala, "Of Pirates and Terrorists: What Experience and History Teach," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (April 2005), pp. 1-24.

Dakota. Third, there were the working class slums of industrializing Europe and North America during the last half of the nineteenth century. These hell-holes gave inspiration, audience and sanctuary to purveyors of revolutionary ideas and proponents of violence. The period extending roughly from 1860 to 1920 (somewhat longer perhaps in Spain) saw the emergence, violent impact and eventual dissipation of Anarchism as creed and cause. The similarities and differences among these three sets of experiences, and comparisons of the past with the present are the focus of this study.

Pirates of the Caribbean. Pirates have been active, dreaded and combated during every historical era. Identified as “enemies of the human race” they continue even today to victimize the world. While never actually labeled as such, “wars on piracy” have periodically recurred, as for example along Roman trade routes across the ancient Mediterranean, in the areas of Hansa commerce in the Baltic and North Sea around the turn of the fifteenth century, in the Spanish Caribbean between 1500 and 1750, in response to the outrages of the Barbary Coast corsairs during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and in the Indian Ocean along the trade routes of the British Empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁸

For reasons of space, the examples of marauding at sea presented here are mainly drawn from the relentless assaults on Spanish shipping in the Caribbean during sixteenth through eighteenth-centuries. The signal characteristics of piracy, however, were common to every historic flaring of the phenomenon.⁹ Pirates fought not for countries but

⁸ H.A. Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World: An Essay on Mediterranean History* (Liverpool, U.K.: Liverpool University Press, 1978); Philippe Dollinger, *The German Hansa* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970); Kris E. Lane, *Pillaging the Empire: Piracy in the Americas, 1500-1750* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998); Alfred P. Rubin, *The Law of Piracy* (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1988).

⁹ For a more complete accounting, see, Puchala, “Of Pirates and Terrorists;” Janice E. Thompson, *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extra-Territorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

for themselves. They respected neither national flags nor territorial boundaries, they flouted law and authority and from the early sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries they were omnipresent in the waters off New Spain. Greed drove and sustained their enterprise, and by almost all accounts their enterprise was immensely profitable. “Why did they all choose piracy?” Mueller and Adler ask in *Outlaws of the Ocean*. “At an annual profit of from £1500 to £4000, compared to a wage of £1 a year, what greater incentive? . . . As the law stood, you would hang for stealing a pound out of a man’s pocket. So why not steal a fortune?”¹⁰

Preying mainly upon unarmed, innocent people, they robbed their victims, enslaved them, or held them for ransom, and when no profit appeared associated with keeping captives alive, pirates tortured, raped and murdered for sadistic pleasure. When, for example, in January 1671 the much romanticized Captain Henry Morgan and his pirate crew sacked and burned the Spanish settlement at Panama City, the eye witness Alexander O. Exquemelin recorded that,

[The pirates] spared, in these cruelties, no sex or condition whatsoever. For, as to religious persons and priests, they granted less quarter than unto others, unless they could produce a considerable sum of money, being a sufficient ransom. Women themselves were no better used, except they would condescend unto the libidinous demands and concupiscency of the pirates.¹¹

Of the pirate captain, John Roberts, Neville Williams wrote that “he encouraged his crew to the most inhumane outrages. . . On one prize that he caught, Roberts found the

¹⁰ G.O.W. Mueller and Freda Adler, *Outlaws of the Ocean: The Complete Book of Contemporary Crime on the High Seas* (New York: Hearst Marine Books, 1985), p. 298.

¹¹ Alexander O. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers of America* (Annapolis, MD.: Naval Institute Press, 1993) [first published in Amsterdam in 1678].

Governor of Martinique himself, and without ado he hanged him from the yard as they crossed the Tropic of Cancer.”¹²

The pirates menacing Spanish shipping in the Caribbean operated from island havens like Jamaica and its legendary Port Royale, or from Tortuga off the coast of Hispaniola, which was the launching pad for Henry Morgan’s raid on Panama City. By the late seventeenth century Bermuda also became a pirate haven and entrepot. What has slipped into obscurity, however, is that the Atlantic coast cities of British North America – notably, New York, Philadelphia and Charleston, South Carolina – were probably the most notorious among seventeenth century pirate havens. Certainly, they were among the busiest. Cities on the eastern coast of British North America prospered for decades as depots for pirates’ booty: merchants welcomed pirates, received their cargoes, and sometimes underwrote the up-front costs of launching new expeditions aimed at plunder. When not at sea and pirating, Captain William Kidd lived respectably in New York at 119-121 Pearl Street.¹³

The pirates operating in the Caribbean were men (and women) without political allegiance and without identity outside their cutthroat communities. They were mostly European by birth and language, though they could hardly be identified as nationals, subjects, citizens or anything of the sort with respect to any of the countries or courts of Europe. A goodly number of pirates were also escaped slaves of African origin. Several of the pirate captains, like William Kidd for example, were of high birth from respected families, who either eschewed social conventions and mundane living or found the allure

¹² Neville Williams, *Captains Outrageous: Seven Centuries of Piracy* (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 164.

¹³ Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against Pirates* (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 1986).

of ill gotten riches irresistible. For their part, the common members of pirate crews were convicts, fugitives, ruffians, vagrants, deserters, former mutineers and others of similar ilk who could be readily recruited from the waterfront slums of port cities and pirate havens.

The Highwaymen of the American West. Hollywood and the American motion picture industry have to be credited for making familiar a rogue's gallery of names that might have otherwise disappeared from modern history. The Daltons and the Doolins, the Younger Brothers, Billy the Kid, Jesse and Frank James and many others of their kind wreaked havoc across the territory of the North American Great Plains during the two decades following the American Civil War of 1861-1865.¹⁴ In contrast to Hollywood's attempts to romanticize these villains, the truth is that they were thieves and murderers, sociopaths for the most part, driven primarily by greed, partly by the thrill of chase, and partly in some cases by resentments against society and urges for revenge.¹⁵ They robbed banks, stage coaches, trains, railroad depots, the offices of municipal treasurers and on one documented occasion the gate receipts of the Kansas City Fair.¹⁶ They killed dozens of people, possibly hundreds, mostly unarmed innocents – cashiers, bank clerks, railroad employees, bystanders, etc. -- who in some way interfered with the perpetration of robberies. The ruffians also killed one another in some profusion, as there was not only little honor, but also little mutual respect among the thieves.

The geographic range of most of the desperados' exploits encompassed the vast expanse of what is today the American mid-West. During the last decades of the

¹⁴ Carl W. Breihan, *Badmen of the Frontier Days* (New York: Robert M. McBride Company, 1957); Breihan, *Outlaws of the Old West* (New York: New American Library, 1960).

¹⁵ Breihan, *Outlaws of the Old West*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁶ Carl W. Breihan, *Ride the Razor's Edge: The Younger Brothers Story* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 1992), p. 173.

nineteenth century this area was the country's western frontier.¹⁷ One center of lawlessness, in terms of the frequency of raids, robberies and outlaw sightings, was in the states of Missouri and Kansas, although hold ups associated with the James brothers, and the Youngers occurred as far to the east as West Virginia and as far to the north as Minnesota. The James Gang, for example, looted the bank at Huntington, West Virginia in September 1875, and appeared a year later, with several apparent stops in between, at Northfield, Minnesota. The Daltons and the Doolins, sometimes identified as "the Wild Bunch" centered their activities in the Oklahoma Territory, although they are known to have committed train robberies as far to the west as California and to have hidden out in New Mexico as well as near the Dalton home in Kansas. Otherwise, the outlaw bands operated almost at will across local law enforcement jurisdictions, state lines and federal districts. When authorities were perceived to be bearing down, the rogues either found solace and sanctuary near their homes in rural Missouri and Kansas, or they retreated to the wide open spaces, and wide open towns, of Texas. With the Jameses at least, when the loot proved abundant after major robberies, family sojourns in New York were in order.

Who were these outlaws? Of the Daltons, we know relatively little, except that the four brothers – Frank, Grat, Emmett and Bill – were raised in western Kansas. While quite young each committed a rather minor infraction that placed him on the opposite side of the law, but for each such was the beginning of an outlaw's career. On the western frontier, similarly stigmatized men easily found one another and banded to form the

¹⁷ Note the great similarity between the setting and the narrative of banditry in the nineteenth century United States and banditry in Russia during approximately the same period. See, Denise Eeckaute, "Les Brigands en Russie Du XVIIe au XIXe Siècle: Mythe et Réalité," *Revue D'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, Vol. 12 (July-September, 1965), pp. 161-202.

outlaw gangs that terrorized the territories. The typical size of an outlaw gang was a dozen men or fewer, although the Dalton-Doolin “Wild Bunch” may have been considerably larger at the height of its rampaging. Bill Doolin, born in Arkansas, drifted west into Kansas in the early 1880s, later worked as a cowboy on an Oklahoma ranch and by 1891 was in trouble with the law and entering upon a career of mayhem.

About the James brothers and the Youngers we know a good deal more. These were also were stigmatized men, but their status as outcasts was at least in part political.

Breihan explains:

During the 1850s, in every Missouri county there were violent quarrels on the subject of slavery and even secession. . . . The James boys were governed by Southern sympathies because of their family background, but they had tangible reasons to become partisans against the slavery haters. The wandering bands of armed men called Jayhawkers, or Red Legs, aroused indignation of every self-respecting citizen. These marauders . . . left so much death and destruction in their wake that in the 1860s the pro-Confederate faction tried to check them by forming bands of their own.¹⁸

Frank and Jesse James both fought with the South in the American Civil War as guerrillas who operated along the western frontier under the command of William Clarke Quantrill who was notorious for his ruthlessness. When the Civil War ended with the Southern surrender in April 1865, Confederate forces continued to have the upper hand along the western frontier, so that for many fighting in this region the surrender was difficult to accept. Even more resented was the postwar occupation. The Younger brothers, Cole, Jim and Bob, also fought on the side of the South and because of their Southern sympathies suffered like the James brothers and their families during the extended era of Northern occupation. While this hardly explains and far less excuses the entry of these men into careers of highway robbery, it suggests that their motivations

¹⁸ Breihan, *Outlaws of the Old West*, p. 6

were more complex than greed alone might explain. At the very least, their military experience rendered the Jameses and the Youngers accomplished horsemen and highly skilled marksmen, which were characteristic of all of the desperados of the American frontier. The success of their illicit exploits depended upon their being better armed than their victims, fearless and ruthless, while their survival depended upon capacities for fast flight over difficult terrain. Horses, guns and the superior ability with respect to their use were among the prerequisites of the successful highwayman.

There is no reliable inventory of the James and Younger brothers' misdeeds, in as much as they were accused of hold ups committed by others, while on different occasions their own work was attributed to others. The composition of the James Gang varied over time, although Jesse and Frank James and the three Younger brothers, Cole, Jim and Bob, formed the continuing nucleus. In February, 1866 the James Gang held up the South Bank of Kentucky at Russellville, and in December 1869 they robbed the bank in Gallatin, Missouri. June 1871 found the gang in Corydon, Iowa, where the bank was robbed and in April 1872 the James brothers and the Youngers were in Adair County, Kentucky, where the bank was robbed and a cashier murdered. Then in May 1873 the gang held up the Savings Association in St. Genevieve, Missouri. The first train robbery attributed to the James Gang took place in Adair County, Iowa in July 1873, and this was followed by the stealing of the gate receipts at the Kansas City Fair in September. The gang robbed a stage coach on route to Hot Springs, Arkansas in January 1874, and then committed their second train robbery between St. Louis, Missouri and Little Rock, Arkansas in July. A stagecoach hold up southwest of Austin, Texas may or may not have been the work of the James Gang, but the looting of the bank in Huntington, West

Virginia in September 1875 unquestionably was. Doomsday finally befell the James Gang on September 7, 1876 when local citizens armed themselves and foiled the outlaws' attempt to rob the First National Bank of Northfield, Minnesota. In the gunfight, two members of the James gang were killed and all three of the Younger brothers were wounded and captured soon thereafter. Jesse James escaped, but was later betrayed and murdered by a supposed comrade anxious to collect reward money. Not long after Jesse's death, Frank James surrendered to law enforcement authorities in Missouri. He was tried for his alleged crimes *and was remarkably acquitted* by juries in his home state, after which he lived out his life in relative obscurity.

Anarchism at the End of the Nineteenth Century. Historian Barbara W. Tuchman, titles Chapter 2 of her masterful portrait of the late nineteenth century "The Idea and the Deed," and she opens with the following observation:

So enchanting was the vision of a stateless society, without government, without law, without ownership of property, in which, corrupt institutions having been swept away, man would be free to be good as God intended him, that six heads of state were assassinated for its sake in the twenty years before 1914.¹⁹

These were President Carnot of France in 1894, Premier Canovas of Spain in 1897, Empress Elizabeth of Austria in 1898, King Humbert of Italy in 1900, President McKinley of the United States in 1901, and another Premier of Spain, Canalejas, in 1912. If we extend the time frame just bit, we can add Tsar Alexander II of Russia in 1881. All of these deaths, Ms. Tuchman reports, "were the gestures of desperate or deluded men to call attention to the Anarchist idea."²⁰

¹⁹ Barbara W. Tuchman, *The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War 1890-1914* (New York: Macmillan, 19xx), p. 63.

²⁰ Tuchman, p. 63.

During the turbulent decades of industrialization in late nineteenth century Europe and North America, revolutionaries acting in the cause of Anarchism unleashed a wave of terror that both paralyzed bourgeois society and mobilized massive state repression. By contemporary comparison, the violent accomplishments of the Anarchists were hardly extreme. While spectacular in many instances, the political assassinations of major public figures numbered perhaps a score and when lower-ranking officials murdered in pursuit of the anarchist cause are added, the total mounts to perhaps 100. The greatest numbers of these killings were committed in Russia amid the simmering, pre-revolutionary environment at the turn of the twentieth century. Otherwise, between 1890 and 1914, Anarchists bent on perpetrating “propaganda of the deed” bombed cafes and railroad stations in France, churches in Spain, police stations in Italy, theaters and opera houses in several European cities, a crowded street in Chicago and the French Chamber of Deputies in Paris. Altogether, Jensen surmises that “during the entire ‘golden age’ of anarchist terrorism, 1880-1914, almost 150 succumbed and over 460 were injured.”²¹

The damage that Anarchists were able to do was limited by the weaponry available to them – pistols, daggers and small bombs -- and their failed attempts to wreak revolutionary havoc outnumbered their successes. But in the context of the times, and amid turbulent conditions of class conflict in nearly every industrializing country, the insecurity and anxiety that the anarchists’ activities generated greatly amplified the terror. Bourgeois society reeled. Upon assuming office as President of the United States after the assassination of William McKinley in 1901, Theodore Roosevelt declared Anarchism “a crime against the whole human race” and he urged that “all mankind should band

²¹ Richard Bach Jensen, “The United States, International Policing and the War Against Anarchist Terrorism, 1900-1914,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (spring 2001), p.16.

together against the Anarchist.”²² And subsequently, in the midst of efforts to suppress anarchist violence in the United States the *New York Times* announced that “the United States has declared open war on Anarchists.”²³

Anarchism is a political ideology, a creed of the extreme Left that rejects governing organization and governing authority. Government, the Anarchist believes, is always biased in favor of vested interests that dominate society and economy and is therefore always punitive and unjustly constraining regarding the powerless masses. French thinker Pierre Proudhon is credited with inventing the label “An-archy” and indeed with giving it initial ideological substance. “To be governed,” Proudhon wrote,

is to be watched, inspected, spied on, regulated, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, ruled, censored, by persons who have neither wisdom nor virtue. It is every action and transaction to be registered, stamped, taxed, patented, licensed, assessed, measured, reprimanded, corrected, frustrated. Under the pretext of public good it is to be exploited, monopolized, embezzled, robbed and then, at the least protest or word of complaint, to be fined, harassed, vilified, beaten up, shot, garroted, deported, sold, betrayed, swindled, deceived, outraged, dishonored. That’s government, that’s its justice, that’s its morality!²⁴

Other nineteenth century ideologues of Anarchy, like Michael Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin more directly linked the anarchist creed to the critique of capitalism and bourgeois society that was already gathering intellectual steam around mid-century. The stratified society of the Victorian Age separated the flamboyantly rich from the desperately poor; control over property was the means by which the rich perpetuated their control; government was the instrument the rich wielded to protect their property. Since this situation allowed no possibility for the alleviation of the plight of the poor, because

²² Richard Suskind, *By Bullet, Bomb and Dagger: The Story of Anarchism* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), p.130.

²³ Jensen, p. 33.

²⁴ Tuchman, p. 65.

the ruling class would never give up its property or the powers and laws which protected the ownership of property. “Only revolutionary overturn of the entire malignant existing system would accomplish the desired result,” and so the high priests of Anarchism advocated revolution, after which a communal utopia would emerge where human needs would be served and government would be unnecessary.²⁵

Anarchism attracted a legion of true believers in Europe, a fair number of whom crossed the Atlantic as participants in the waves of immigration that supplied the labor force for American industrialization after the Civil War. Getting the revolution started, however, proved difficult because neither the propaganda pouring forth from the anarchist presses nor the firebrand eloquence of the creed’s wandering apostles succeeded in igniting revolutionary consciousness among the poor. By the late 1870s, impatience with the faltering revolutionary effort prompted the anarchist elites to endorse the doctrine of “propaganda of the deed,” which advocated spectacularly violent acts that would awaken and inspire the masses, raise revolutionary consciousness, generate ideas and spread them through the world “by permanent revolt, by spoken and written words, by the dagger, the gun, and dynamite.”²⁶ Such a campaign of “propaganda of the deed” would in Bakunin’s words, “hurl mankind out of its ruts into new roads,” and according to Kropotkin the challenge of igniting the revolution would henceforth be passed to “men of courage willing . . . to act, pure characters who prefer prison, exile or death to a life that contradicts their principles, bold natures who know that in order to win they must dare.”²⁷ And so began the anarchist era of violence. The reign of terror was transnational, and it became increasingly indiscriminate as it progressed, such that by 1894 when Emile

²⁵ Tuchman, p. 64.

²⁶ Oliver, p. 13.

²⁷ Suskind, p. 37.

Henry exploded his bomb among innocent patrons in the Terminus Café in the Paris Gare St. Lazare, he could defiantly justify his act by proclaiming that “there are no innocent bourgeois.”²⁸

Anarchism was never a movement, nor was it ever an organization, because Anarchists rejected movements and organizations in principle as much as they eschewed leadership, authority, rules and laws. There were countless anarchist clubs in cities large and small across two continents and countless anarchist publications issued by individual publicists or small clusters of collaborators. There were also anarchist sanctuaries in countries like Switzerland and England where authorities tended to be more tolerant of seditious commentary and less particular as to who entered or exited across their borders. As the anarchist extremism of the 1890s escalated and countries like France, Belgium and even Switzerland, and then even the United States, passed increasingly restrictive and punitive laws regarding political expression and violent behavior, England became the anarchists’ refuge of last resort.

In form, nineteenth century Anarchism resembled an oriental religion: there were high priests, the Bakunins and Kropotkins, and at least one high priestess in the person of the firebrand Emma Goldman, who propounded, protected and disseminated doctrine, and there were believers who received the word. Among the latter were probably tens of thousands among the working masses, mercilessly exploited and living in despicable conditions, who were prepared accept the critical worldview of the priests, who could be roused to indignation and who fervently desired change.²⁹ There were probably also a

²⁸ Tuchman, p. 93.

²⁹ Tuchman’s description of the living conditions of the poor is classic and worth transcribing: “They came from the warrens of the poor, where hunger and dirt were king, where consumptives coughed and the air was thick with the smell of latrines, boiling cabbage and stale beer, where babies wailed and couples

few hundred extremists of temperament, of conviction or of desperate circumstance, scattered across two continents, who could be goaded (perhaps inspired?) to commit heinous acts of violence. “I killed President McKinley because I done my duty” said Leon Czolgosz, the president’s assassin. Czolgosz explained that he had heard Emma Goldman lecture and her doctrine “that all rulers should be exterminated . . . set me to thinking so that my head nearly split with pain. McKinley was going around the country shouting prosperity when there was no prosperity for the poor man. I don’t believe we should have any rulers. It is right to kill them...”³⁰ Tuchman appropriately identifies the Czolgoszes among the true believers as “instruments of the Idea.”

Sorting the Lessons of History

Caution is always in order when one rummages through human experience in search of insight because (1) history never repeats itself, as each moment is distinct, each personality is singular and each outcome results from necessarily unique permutations and combinations of causal factors, and (2) history is essentially random, so that any perceived regularities and relationships are figments of the mind of the interpreter and not attributes of an objective reality in human affairs.³¹ Nevertheless, history is the spacious laboratory within which social scientists seek knowledge about the human condition, and

screamed in sudden quarrels, where roofs leaked and unmended windows let in cold blasts of winter, where privacy was unimaginable, where men, women, grandparents and children lived together, eating, sleeping, fornicating, defecating, sickening and dying in one room, where a teakettle served as a wash boiler between meals, old boxes served as chairs, heaps of foul straw served as beds, and boards propped across two crates as tables, when sometimes not all the children in a family could go out at one time because there were not enough clothes to go around, where decent families lived among drunkards, wife-beaters, thieves and prostitutes, where life was a seesaw of unemployment and endless toil, where a cigar-maker and his wife earning 13 cents an hour worked for seventeen hours a day seven days a week to support themselves and three children, where death was the only exit and the only extravagance and the scraped savings of a lifetime would be squandered on a funeral coach with flowers and a parade of mourners to ensure against the anonymity and last ignominy of Potter’s Field.” Tuchman, p. 64.

³⁰ Tuchman, p. 106.

³¹ See, Donald J. Puchala, *Theory and History in International Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2003), Chps. 2-3.

unlike their more modest colleagues in the humanities, who tend to be quite respectful of the singularities of personality and the uniqueness of events, social scientists are impelled to denature history's randomness by imposing regularities and relationships. Hence:

1. *Some Notable Similarities Across Cases*

Though different in ways that will be examined in moment the episodes from history briefly sketched above – piracy, outlawry and anarchist terrorism -- had notable similarities. Each, for example, was an instance of illicit behavior played out across a broad expanse of geographic space. All had essentially similar impacts upon victimized societies. They all generated greatly heightened insecurity; they all disrupted the normal functioning of societies; they all cost human lives, most often the lives of innocents; they all gave rise to demands for protection from public authorities; they all forced a reallocation of public resources into law enforcement or military capabilities. The great irony, or perhaps the important revelation, in all of this is that very small numbers of sociopaths (or dissidents, if you will) were repeatedly able to disrupt and terrorize entire societies for extended periods of time. So few were the perpetrators, perhaps somewhat more than a thousand pirates, maybe 200 desperados, at most a few dozen anarchist bomb throwers, yet so dramatic were their impacts. How vulnerable were societies in the past, and how much more vulnerable are societies today! Small numbers of destructive extremists can wreak awesome havoc.

The spates of behavior under review, and therefore the durations during which societies were held hostage, were relatively long-lived. Pirates infested the Spanish Caribbean for nearly two centuries; from its intellectual origins in the 1840s to its dissipation in the 1930s, the anarchist episode stretched to nearly a century; the James

brothers and Youngers rampaged for about fifteen years, but the full span of banditry in the American West lasted about forty years. Beyond their skills in planning, surprise, deception, and rapid and successful flight, there were several reasons why the respective perpetrators were able to operate in defiance of law and society for extended periods. For one thing, the conditions of the times during which the episodes played out produced nearly inexhaustible recruitment pools of marginalized people, social outcasts or otherwise desperate men and women. Even when in each case some of the offenders were apprehended or killed, there were always countless others available to take their places and carry on. Pirate crews were recruited from the waterfront riff-raff of European and North American seaports – vagrants, criminals, convicts, mutineers and escaped slaves.³² The highwaymen of the western frontier were disproportionately embittered veterans of the armies of the fallen Confederacy. Many were also young men who, in a largely male environment, discovered that the efficient use of force and firearms was a surer and quicker pathway to wealth and status than farming or animal husbandry. Anarchist bombers were drawn from the vast army of destitute, desperate and angry people rendered homeless and hapless by the inequities of early industrialism. In the United States the Anarchist message was particularly appealing to disenchanting European immigrants, who were already familiar with the discourses of the political Left and who found the industrial slums of North America no more acceptable than those of Europe. Sociologists have long recognized the strong connections between anomie and counter-societal behavior, so that it comes as no surprise to find such behavior emerging and enduring during periods of prevailing anomie.

³² The origins of pirate captains, however, were quite different. See, Puchala, “Of Pirates and Terrorists: What Experience and History Teach,” pp.

Another reason why perpetrators of illicit behavior were able to operate with relative impunity over long periods of time is because they were all continually able to find sanctuary in friendly environs where they were unreachable and untouchable by law and society. Sanctuary was crucially important in every episode. As noted, pirates had their havens, and more than that they also had collaborators among on shore merchants who supplied them and accepted and fenced their booty. Piracy was, and still is, a business, as are drug smuggling, illicit arms trading, human trafficking and money laundering today. No one's interest in the illicit networks is served by the elimination of the perpetrators. Quite the contrary, everyone's interest is served by protecting, abetting, harboring, hiding and helping the criminals succeed. Widespread political corruption served, and still serves, similar purposes, as public officials in exchange for appropriate compensation have been continually prepared to look away from enforcing laws. According to Robert Ritchie, for example, British officials in the Atlantic seaboard cities of colonial North America, and mostly notoriously in New York City, were complicit in a goodly proportion of the piracy in Caribbean in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and then later in the piracy that threatened trade in the Indian Ocean.³³

For the highwaymen of the western frontier, sanctuaries and networks of complicity were less elaborate, but similarly important. It was always possible for perpetrators to flee to wilderness liars, but such "hideouts" were but temporary sanctuaries. Most often the outlaws returned to familiar and friendly surroundings near to their ancestral homes, where relatives more than willingly harbored them and where neighbors as often as not welcomed them as returning heroes. Clay County, Missouri was home to the James brothers and Jackson County was home to the Youngers. They were

³³ Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War on Piracy*, pp.

eternally welcome among their neighbors and could be comfortable and relatively safe among the sons and daughters of the old Confederacy. Family clans constituted networks of complicity, and for the Jameses and Youngers, their respective families extended as far to the east as Virginia and as far to the west as California. Similarly important were networks of comradeship born out of the Civil War experience, as it was frequently possible to find protection from pursuing lawmen on the farms and in the homes of “men who had ridden with Quantrill.” The protection of home and family sometimes continued even after outlaws were apprehended, because, as the experience of Frank James illustrates, it was nearly impossible in most such home communities to impanel a jury that would not opt to acquit the “local hero.”

Personal sanctuary for perpetrators of the anarchist terrorism of the late nineteenth century was less important because the assassins and bombers were almost always apprehended and in many cases they considered their trails and executions as elements of their acts. The aim of “propaganda of the deed” was to deliver the anarchist message, and the occasions of trials, where the accused would harangue over the injustices of bourgeois society,” and scaffolds, where the condemned would invariably shout “*Vive le anarchie!*” and “I will be avenged,” were but opportunities to press the cause forward. Being apprehended, tried and executed were parts of the ritual sequence of martyrdom. Assassins were readily replaceable from the great pool of the destitute, desperate and angry. On the other hand, what required sanctuary were the purveyors of the word, not only the writers of the voluminous flow of dialogue, direction and invective, but the presses, the cubbies and garrets that physically housed them, and the meetings rooms where the faithful gathered to receive the word. The most appropriate sanctuary for the

protection and propagation of the anarchist word was a liberal society with permissive laws regarding political censorship and considerable official leeway regarding freedom of speech and assembly. Sanctuary for the purveyors of anarchist propaganda also came to mean countries that were reluctant to extradite political radicals accused of subversive activities and who had fled from the law in their homelands. As it turned out, such environs hospitable to the propagation of the anarchist word became increasingly difficult to find as anarchist activities terrorized bourgeois societies, so that by the turn of the twentieth century, Victorian England had become the anarchist sanctuary of last resort. London, as a result, became a hotbed of radicalism mostly engaged by political refugees for all over Europe.³⁴

Nor must it be overlooked that the outlaws of the past were able to do what they did for as long as they did it because law enforcement was usually less than effective. In the pirate havens of course there was no law enforcement, either because in places like Port Royale and Tortuga the pirates were the law, or in places like New York, Philadelphia and Charleston those empowered to enforce the law chose not to do so. Otherwise the Spanish settlements around the Caribbean were insufficiently garrisoned at least in part because the Spanish crown was so intensely engaged in warfare in Europe that forces for the colonies were unavailable. At sea, the Spanish opted to convoy treasure fleets by sending naval escorts, which were seldom able to offer sufficient or efficient protection because, as the Spanish discovered, keeping watch over flotillas of sailing vessels even under the best conditions of wind and weather is nearly impossible. Spanish authorities were moreover reluctant to take proactive measures of searching out and

³⁴ H. Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), p. 78.

destroying pirates in their lairs and strategies of passive defense failed utterly. On the American frontier, law enforcement amounted most often to a lone sheriff, sometimes assisted by a deputy, whose jurisdiction spanned a rural county often hundreds of square miles in size. There were in addition federal marshals whose perimeters of responsibility were even larger and which clearly could not be patrolled and ordered with any measure of thoroughness. Law enforcement was therefore reactive rather than preventative: after a robbery a posse was formed and the outlaw gang was pursued. Occasionally they were caught or killed, but this was the exception and not the rule. The railroad companies enlisted the assistance of Chicago's Pinkerton Detective Agency, whose minimal success in capturing a few train robbers was achieved at the cost of the lives of several operatives. Otherwise, the western frontier was bedecked with handbills and wanted posters identifying the desperados, offering substantial rewards for their capture "dead or alive," and in effect inviting the citizenry to take on the task of policing the frontier – which townfolk frequently did, as in Northfield, Minnesota in 1875.

Law enforcement was, as noted, fairly efficient at apprehending anarchist assassins. But, because (1) captured assassins were almost immediately replaced by other assassins, because (2) these others were almost randomly self-selected, and remained anonymous until they acted, and because (3) assassins frequently exploited porous European borders to commit their misdeeds in countries that were not their own, law enforcement failed to stop anarchist terrorism. How, in last analysis, was this to be done when hell-bent extremists would and could attack at any time in any place? Some success was apparently registered, as discussed below, in countries like Germany where

efficiently authoritarian regimes attacked and suppressed *Anarchism* in holistic manner rather than separately chasing down particular bomb throwers.

2. *Some Important Differences Between Cases*

The French sociologist Jean Baechler relegates the study of the kind of illicit behavior examined here to a realm he colorfully labels “dustbin sociology.” This, he writes, includes “the more radical forms of opposition to established order. . . expressed by rejection of the social order and the establishment of societies that openly defend quite different values and claim that they have, at least within their own ranks, ushered in a new order.”³⁵ According to Baechler, the counter-societal phenomena examined in this paper are of two different kinds, and the distinctions are analytically important. Baechler labels the greed-motivated, wealth-seeking behavior characteristic of piracy and highway robbery, “brigandage” and sees it emerging and flourishing under three sets of conditions, (1) where society does not entirely control all available space, (2) where the machinery of the state is ineffective and unable to “impose order on the entire territory that constitutes the political unit,” and (3) where the brigand can merge with ease with the society from which he has come. Such conditions, as shown, certainly prevailed in the Caribbean world during the seventeenth century in particular: no power, far less Spanish power, controlled the oceans, the islands, the coasts, the ports; and again, as shown, no public authority was able (and many were unwilling) to enforce municipal laws against piracy; in port, pirates moved and mingled in local society largely unmolested, and in some instances pirate captains were even accepted into higher society.³⁶ In similar fashion, the desperados of the “wild west” flourished in the frontier zones where neither the presence

³⁵ Jean Baechler, *Revolution*, trans. Joan Vickers (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1975), p. 64.

³⁶ Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kid and the War Against Piracy*, pp.

nor the effectiveness of the United States Federal Government were much in evidence, where local government was rudimentary and where law enforcement was largely voluntary. Moreover, when pursued by the law, wounded and in need of care or during respites between major robberies, many of the highwaymen had the option of going home. Interestingly, conditions of uncontrolled territory and ineffective law enforcement within politically delimited space diminished notably during the twentieth century, and as Baechler would have predicted, brigandage diminished accordingly. It persisted mainly where conditions still favored it.

In Baechler's classification, the behavior manifested during the Anarchist episode was different. It had nothing to do with booty, and everything to do with human deliverance. Baechler calls the phenomenon "millennialism" and proposes five defining features that include:

1. Maximal disproportion between the aims pursued and the means available,
2. Boundless character of the aims and promises,
3. Emphasis on conflict, regarded as the cataclysmic transition to a transfigured universe.
4. Collective aspect of salvation,
5. The promised salvation is terrestrial.³⁷

Millennial movements emerge and flourish in turbulent times of rapid and/or fundamental structural or cultural changes in human affairs. They may arise and play out within particular societies or diffuse more broadly, sometimes becoming global in scope. "On the whole," Baechler says, "the phenomenon is rooted in an objective situation, a state of extreme agitation, which attacks a group of people. The specific response to such

³⁷ Baechler, p. 83.

an attack,” he continues, “implies a particular sort of leader through which it is channeled, which may be called . . . charismatic.”³⁸“The inner logic of the movement, which aims at the reconquest of identity, requires, sooner or later, a consideration of the efficacy of the means employed, otherwise it is doomed to certain failure. And indeed failure is a frequent, almost constant occurrence.”³⁹

Anarchism was most certainly the intellectual and emotional product of an extremely turbulent era. Industrialization in nineteenth century Europe and North America reconfigured the class structure, reallocated the distribution of wealth and status, and revised the hierarchy of values, demoting Christian emphases on charity and community and promoting individualism and the secular embrace of material possessions. In the United States, social tensions were further exacerbated by the emigration of several million job-seeking, poor and penniless, non-English-speaking, non-Protestant, sometimes-socialist-inclined people. In the short run, political institutions, which are almost always behind the curve in times of monumental change, proved incapable of addressing the boiling social tensions that industrialization was generating.

And so, the high priests of Anarchism (and indeed of Blanquism, Communism, Syndicalism and all of the other revolutionary doctrines swirling in the internecine debates of the nineteenth century political Left) *declared war on change*. The Anarchist thinkers were terrified at the social and cultural changes wrought by industrialization, and while they purported to be looking forward to a new and better age for mankind, they were actually looking backward to imagined harmonies among primitive peoples.

³⁸ Baechler, p. 85.

³⁹ Baechler, p. 87.

Bakunin, for example, modeled his utopia after a flattering conception of rural communal life in Russia, and Kropotkin, a geographer by profession, reckoned that all mankind should be content living like some of the primitive peoples he observed on field trips to Siberia. Millennial movements seek the reconquest of identity, that is, the preservation of what was in the face of what is becoming.

3. *Some Endings*

An important, but also easily overlooked, conclusion that can be drawn regarding piracy in the Caribbean, brigandage along the American frontier and anarchist terrorism is that each of these phenomena, though long-lived and terrifying, eventually ended. This is not to say that piracy, brigandage and politically-motivated terrorism passed from history. They obviously have not. But, the particular manifestations examined in this paper all ended. Since the world today is obviously confronting new manifestations of brigandage and millennialism, to what extent can historical experience help us to better understand how and why they might end?

Historically, the onset and later dissipation of various counter-societal phenomena has been wave-like in character. Revolutionary eras have been followed by periods of stability and order, only to be followed later by new revolutionary eras. Similarly, periods of widespread criminal activity have been followed by eras of prevailing civility only to be followed by new eras of lawlessness. In like manner, the flourishing of counter-societal behavior has occurred in different places at different times, resembling something like a “flare” pattern. Such regularities suggest that the emergence and flourishing of behaviors inimical to society occur under particular, propitious conditions and they subside when conditions change. The threatened social order, Baechler

observes, always “retaliates by attacking” dissidents, as society “always . . . tries to crush counter-society.”⁴⁰ Whether such efforts at suppression can succeed depends upon the environments within which they are undertaken.

Piracy in the Spanish Caribbean was never suppressed. It merely became unprofitable because by the mid-eighteenth century the reserves of precious metals in New Spain were depleted and the great treasure fleets no longer sailed toward Cadiz. New Spain itself, as well as much of the island world of the Caribbean, became economic backwaters and as a result became progressively unattractive to plunderers. For their part, the pirates moved into the Indian Ocean to ravage the Mogul Empire and British India’s trade with Europe.⁴¹ Captains launched their expeditions from the Atlantic seaboard havens in North America, sailed around the Cape of Good Hope, re-supplied in Madagascar, attacked the trade routes of the Indian Ocean and returned with their booty via Madagascar to New York, Philadelphia and Charleston. Such activities greatly disturbed the British government, because the times had changed: it was no longer Spanish shipping that was under assault but British shipping, it was no longer the Spanish Empire that was challenged but the British Empire and indeed it was about at this time in the mid-eighteenth century that the notion of having a global empire (and needing to protect it) entered the British political consciousness.⁴²

Consequently, the British government, with considerable support from British commercial classes as well as approval from common people who rallied around symbols of empire, did essentially two things: (1) they eliminated the pirate havens in

⁴⁰ Baechler, p. 88.

⁴¹ Janice E. Thompson, *Mercenaries, Pirates and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extra-Territorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). P.47-48.

⁴² Robert Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War Against Piracy*, p.

their Atlantic seaboard colonies by removing the corrupt officials who abetted piracy, by installing and holding responsible new administrators who were committed to enforcing laws against piracy, and by smashing the networks of on shore collaborators who made the pirating business profitable, and (2) they sent the newly strengthened British Navy into the Indian Ocean, largely wiped out the pirates, and in the course of this flattened Madagascar.

In explaining why in the seventeenth century “the most successful of the British pirates were knighted and/or given important posts in the Royal Navy or the British Admiralty. . .” and yet by the eighteenth century “pirates were being hanged en masse in public executions,” Janice Thompson speaks of “a change in the state’s attitude.” She also makes note of changes in the state’s capabilities which rendered possible the enforcement of the laws that followed from the British state’s “changed attitude” regarding piracy. By the middle of the eighteenth century the modern state had been consolidated in Europe, the British state included, with dependable revenue-collecting capacity, effective and efficient administrative capacity, a capacity for coercion, and, following Thompson’s main theme, intolerance for non-state agents of violence. What had changed between the heyday of the plundering of the Spanish Caribbean and the later cleansing of the Indian Ocean by the British Navy was the arrival of the modern state.⁴³ Piracy could flourish in the era of the weak, pre-modern state, but not in the face of the emergent modern state.

Most of the outlaws that ravaged America’s western frontier were eventually caught or killed. But eliminating particular bad men did not end brigandage, because as long as conditions of “wide-openness” prevailed, each gang suppressed was replaced by

⁴³ Thompson, pp. 67-68.

another newly active. As it turned out, brigandage along the western frontier of the United States subsided in large measure because the frontier itself disappeared. By the turn of the twentieth century, most of the recently-settled, sparsely populated, rudimentarily governed and administratively unreachable regions of the United States had either transformed or were transforming into populated, settled communities. Several of the formerly makeshift cow towns in the corridor of the Great Plains between Texas and Minnesota had become, or were becoming, large, modern cities (and as such the setting for the new era of the mobsters, but this is a another story).⁴⁴ One-man sheriffs' offices became police departments; state police organizations often modeled after the accomplished Texas Rangers were established, toting firearms in public was no longer tolerated and the influx and presence of increasing numbers of women diluted the harshness and volatility of the prevailing male, macho culture. Between the 1860s and the turn of the twentieth century the frontier moved westward and brigandage moved along with it until there was no longer a western frontier. Conditions had changed.

“With McKinley,” Tuchman observes, “the era of Anarchist assassinations came to an end in the western democracies. . . . Anarchist passion on the whole passed . . . into the more realistic combat of the Syndicalist unions.”⁴⁵ But era of the Anarchists actually had two endings, the first having to do with the end of bomb throwing and pistol- and dagger-wielding, the second with the fading of the utopian vision. To a certain extent, the ending of individually perpetrated violence resulted from a tactical decision taken by intellectual leaders of the movement like Peter Kropotkin. “Propaganda of the Deed” was

⁴⁴ See, Herbert Asbury, *Gem of the Prairie: An Informal History of the Chicago Underworld* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986); Laurence Bergreen, *Capone: The Man and the Era* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).

⁴⁵ Tuchman, p. 109.

not working in as much as the terrorist acts were not arousing the revolutionary sentiments of the masses. On the contrary, acts like the killing of innocents in the Terminus Café in Paris and the assassination of President McKinley in the U.S. kindled popular resentment against anarchists and led to the widespread repudiation of Anarchism. As a result, the leaders of the movement in a series of writings disseminated by the anarchist media disavowed violence as a means and called for the end of the campaign of “propaganda of the deed.” The high priests of Anarchism, however, continued to embrace their utopian visions along with the myths of revolution.

But among the working classes, the ideological appeal of the anarchist vision waned. People came to recognize that the utopia of primitive communalism was neither achievable nor perhaps even desirable and revolutionary upheaval was not the most promising pathway to improved conditions for the masses. On the other hand, shorter working hours, safer working conditions and decent wages were desirable, and these were perceptibly attainable through labor unions. Legislative acts also rendered reforms possible. During the latter nineteenth century and into the early twentieth the quasi-democracies of Europe and the United States were evolving political parties of the Left and being pushed toward universal suffrage. A legitimate political voice for the poor was being established. Conditions were changing. The era of early industrial capitalism was perceptibly giving way to what was to become the era of the welfare state. Revolutionary fires ignited by the anarchist elites were dying and the masses of the faithful were abandoning the cause. Revolutionary zeal persisted in places like Russia and Spain, where alternative options appeared closed to suffering peoples. Anarchists enflamed with revolutionary fervor saw utopia within reach and therefore participated with enthusiasm

in the Great Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Spanish Civil War that began in 1936. The end of anarchist era, along with the physical elimination of all but handful of remaining Anarchists, was finally confirmed in Russia when the Communists imposed the totalitarian state and eliminated all other political faiths, including Anarchism, and almost all of the faithful. For their part, the Falangists in Spain won the civil war and both during and afterward did everything they possibly could to exterminate both Anarchism and Communism, as well as every other doctrine of the political Left along with its adherents.

Lawlessness in every form thrives when perpetrators are unreachable, when they outnumber and are able to out gun the policing forces sent against them, and when they have better intelligence-gathering facilities than their pursuers. Law enforcement capacities were enhanced in the course of each of the episodes of lawlessness discussed in this study and these improvements clearly contributed to bringing the respective eras to their ends. Yet, it was only in the case of the pirates of the Caribbean that one might conclude that better law enforcement was decisive. This was because the phenomenon of piracy was assaulted holistically. Instead of considering pirate attacks to be separate and discrete events and therefore acting to pursue and eliminate the ships, captains and crews associated with specific acts of piracy, the British authorities went after *piracy as a phenomenon*. They sought to destroy the entire complex of perpetrators and collaborators that rendered piracy a thriving business. As Ritchie makes clear, the British fought not a war on *pirates*, but rather a war on *piracy* – and they were largely successful.⁴⁶

Those who sought to suppress brigandage along the American frontier could not do this. There was never a holistically conceived and executed war on brigandage,

⁴⁶ Robert C. Ritchie, pp.

because there was no way to fight it. It was not possible with assets available to patrol on horseback the thousands of square miles of frontier territory, nor was it possible to locate and destroy all of the wilderness hideouts or to eliminate the sanctuaries offered by the friends and families of the outlaws (although this was attempted). There was nothing to do, really, except what was done and that was to approach each act of highway robbery as a discrete incident and to post a handbill and launch a posse accordingly. Some culprits were caught in this manner, but little progress was made overall against the ravaging of the frontier regions.

Incidents of anarchist terror similarly resulted in pursuits after individual terrorists, who, as noted earlier, were invariably caught. But apprehending anarchists was not the same as suppressing Anarchism, which continued to inspire new terrorists. In the societies where anarchist terror was most destructive, reacting holistically and suppressing Anarchism as such – by, for example, jailing the high priests, smashing the presses, confiscating and destroying the literature, closing the meeting rooms, infiltrating the clubs and tracking the members – would have meant undoing liberal society. Since Anarchists were not the only ones spouting seditious invective, suppressing political dissidence would have involved a rather draconian clamping down on freedoms of speech, assembly and movement. Governments were reluctant to do this, and citizens were reluctant to accept it, although, as it turned out, most continental governments were ultimately forced by the perceived terrorist threat to actually move in the direction of undoing liberal society. However, they did this slowly, haltingly and only partially. For the longest time, therefore, law enforcement authorities were obliged to tolerate *Anarchism* while combating only the bomb-throwing *Anarchists*. This did not stop the

wave of terror. In the more authoritarian states it was possible to suppress Anarchism as such, although never completely and at great cost to civil society.

Then and Now

To summarize and bring this discussion full circle, we live today in a neo-medieval world of weakened states, ungoverned territory, unregulated behavior, unenforced and unenforceable law, a world replete with sanctuaries, lairs, corruption, collaboration and conspiracy. All manner of non-state actors pursue their interests largely indifferent to the political borders of the decaying Westphalian state system, and those engaged in sinister enterprises operate in ungoverned transnational space relatively unmolested.

It would appear that conditions emerging in the twenty-first century again favor the flourishing of brigandage. The proliferation of weak states and governments, complete breakdowns of authority in some places, civil warfare that limits governments' reach into territories nominally under their jurisdiction, and the reconstituting of "tribal areas" and ethnically autonomous zones all favor a resurgence of brigandage. Clearly this is already happening. To this one must add the "virtual space" at the interstices of national political jurisdictions, a transnational domain nominally governed by unenforceable international law, where public authority only barely manages to reach and where globalized brigandage thrives. John Rapley likens this ungoverned transnational domain to a "new middle ages" and dubs it a "gangster's paradise."⁴⁷ It could also be likened to the Spanish Caribbean in the seventeenth century and the American western frontier in the nineteenth.

⁴⁷ John Rapley, "The New Middle Ages," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 85, No. 3 (May/ June 2006), pp. 95-103.

The conditions of today's globalizing world also involve rapid and fundamental social and cultural changes that are as jarring, threatening and unacceptable to some peoples as were the changes wrought by industrialization in the nineteenth century. It is therefore not outlandish to surmise that we are living today under conditions that favor millennial movements. Many of these will likely arise in the non-Western world, where the threatening aspects of globalization are most keenly felt. We know already that some of these millennialisms are going to take the form of religiously based reactions to secularization. The high priests are already proclaiming their protests and making their demands: true to Baechler's categorization, their promises and aims are "boundless;" they emphasize conflict and foresee "the cataclysmic transition to a transfigured universe;" they dwell on the "collective aspect of salvation;" they assure that "the promised salvation is terrestrial." And true believers by the tens of thousands are embracing their messages.⁴⁸

It is not difficult to expect millennial movements also arising around themes of cultural protest, anti-Western themes for the most part – Asian Values, African Values, and the like -- as the "reconquest of identity" becomes a central theme of a twenty-first century politics of culture. Indeed, it is already a central theme.⁴⁹ Nor, is it difficult to expect millennial movements built around themes of equity, justice, empowerment, and reallocation, arising in response to the economic impacts of globalization, in effect recreating the class conflicts of the turbulent nineteenth century, but this time at the

⁴⁸ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 82-94 ; Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror* (New York: The Modern Library, 2003), pp. xxv-xxvi; 157-158.

⁴⁹ Donald J. Puchala, Katie Verlin Laatikainen and Roger A. Coate, *United Nations Politics: International Organization in a Divided World* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 2006), Chp. 5.

global level.⁵⁰ If my analysis of nineteenth century Anarchism is useful, we can expect that the high priests of the respective twenty-first century millennial movements will promise redemptions they cannot deliver, restitutions of values they cannot accomplish and utopias they cannot establish. It is not therefore difficult to believe that small but deadly groups of extremists among believers will again resort to “propaganda of the deed,” armed this time with twenty-first century weapons.

If the episodes and eras examined in this study have contemporary relevance, the lessons are fourfold. First, the assaults on ordered society abetted by the conditions of our time are likely to be long-lived and probably immensely destructive. Second, enhanced law enforcement capacities can mitigate the destructiveness of the predictable counter-societal behavior to come, but it is *international* law enforcement capacity that needs to be dramatically improved. Because the dangerous perpetrators of our day are operating transnationally, it is therefore in transnational transaction space that they need to be combated and this means enhanced international law enforcement capacity. This can only follow upon strengthened international authorities. Global transaction space is today ineffectively governed. Sovereignty shields sanctuaries and encourages collaborators. International authority therefore has to be empowered to reach perpetrators and this may well mean sacrificing some of the sacred cows of westphalianism, including absolute sovereignty. Third, counter-societal phenomena will have to be confronted proactively and holistically, since reactive and selective enforcement strategies appear inevitably to fail. Both brigandage and millennialism are complex phenomena with numerous aspects and agents. Combating only parts of the systems of action seldom suffices. Fourth,

⁵⁰ Among the critics of globalization, William Greider anticipates possible millennial responses most explicitly. See, Greider, *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1998), pp.

millennial movements that breed political extremism, and reap destructiveness accordingly, will need to be combated in the interest of global civility. Otherwise, our world begins to look much more like sixteenth Europe during the era of the Thirty Year's War than almost anybody would want to accept. Counter-revolutionary strategies will likely include (1) separating high priests from believers and (2) transforming the conditions that breed revolutionary dissent. There will be contests of ideas that need to be understood as such and in this moderation and rationality have to prevail over Manichaeism and false prophecy. Then, since history and experience suggest that ideologies lose their appeal as their messages diverge from reality, whatever realities initially encouraged violent dissent will need somehow to be altered. The faltering attempts at the suppression of counter-societal behavior exhibited in the episodes examined in this study should surely dampen any expectations one might have about a painless ride for global society through the early decades of the twenty-first century. There is however a modicum of cold comfort to be found in the historical regularity with which destructive episodes and turbulent eras inevitably end.