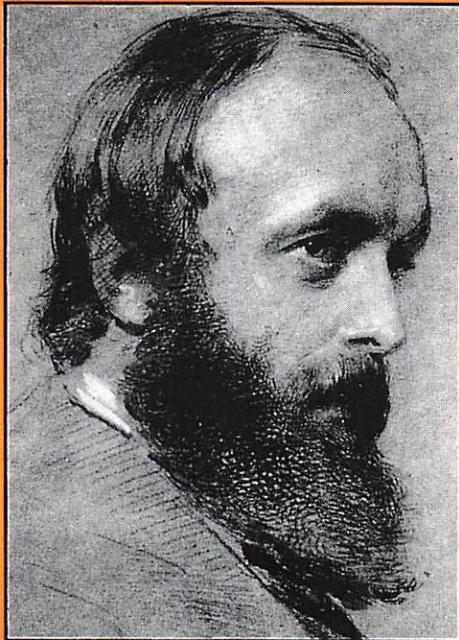


September 1994
Volume 13 Number 1 £4.00

The Salisbury Review

The quarterly magazine of conservative thought



The Third Marquess of Salisbury
1830 - 1903

- Modern Art**
Bruce Charlton
- The Class System**
Simon Seligman
- Europe — The Sacred Cow**
Paul Belien
- The Greenhouse Effect**
Barry Baldwin
- The Evil in Culture**
David Holbrook
- The English Dimension**
Raymond Tong

The Claridge Press

Contents

Rationalism and 'Modern Art'	4	Letter from Australia	35
<i>Bruce Charlton</i>		Editorial	37
Memories of Moscow	8	Letters	38
<i>Mervyn Matthews</i>		Book Reviews	39
A Touch of Class	9	Michael Munford, David Edelsten, Hal Colebatch, Helen Szamuely, Brian Crozier, Vivian Linacre, Angela Ellis-Jones.	
<i>Simon Seligman</i>		Notes on Reviewers	44
The Virus of Evil in Culture	11	In Short	50
<i>David Holbrook</i>		Subscription details	
The English Dimension	14	Published quarterly in September, December, March and June, volume commencing with September issue.	
<i>Raymond Tong</i>		Annual subscription rates: £16, Europe/surface rest of world £18, £23 airmail rest of world; Single issues £4.00, \$7.00, ISSN: 0265-4881	
Liberating Books	18	North American subscription from ISI, 14 Bryn Mawr Ave, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-3275 USA	
<i>David Marsland</i>		Copyright © The Claridge Press	
Is there any hope for Russia?	19	All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or other without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.	
<i>Richard Sim</i>		Printed in the UK by The Warwick Printing Company Ltd.	
The Greenhouse Effect	21	Typesetting by DASH	
<i>Barry Baldwin</i>			
Should there be Nursery Schooling for all?	24		
<i>Stewart Deuchar</i>			
A Godly Ruminant	25		
<i>Paul Belien</i>			
Frights	33		
<i>Tristan Jones</i>			

Conservative Journals: *New Criterion*

Named after T.S. Eliot's famous review, and skilfully edited by the New York art critic, Hilton Kramer, *The New Criterion* began life, as did the *Salisbury Review*, in September 1982, in response to the perceived need for a journal that would defend culture against barbarism, and enduring standards against transitory fads. It has since become the major voice of cultural conservatism in America, the only journal which argues the case for civilised decencies at the highest intellectual level, while maintaining a breadth of vision and a lucidity of style that make every article a pleasure to read.

The existence of *The New Criterion* has destroyed the hegemony exerted for so long by the *New York Review of Books* and made available to educated Americans a vision of their country and its culture that is both positive and open-minded. In the contest with feminism, gay activism and political correctness, the journal has set an example of courage and sophistication, without which the universities — craven institutions at the best of times — would have

done nothing to maintain the *status quo*.

The issue for May 1994 contains articles by Hilton Kramer (reviewing Richard Pipes' thoroughgoing negative assessment of the Russian revolution), by Roger Kimball (discussing the remarkable book *Higher Superstition*, by Paul Gross and Norman Levitt, which documents the assault on science by leftist academics in America), by John Simon on Anna Akhmatova, Elizabeth Spires on Elizabeth Bishop, and by Francis Morrone on 'Citizen Jane Jacobs' — a most welcome account of the woman who drew up the battle-lines against modernist architecture.

Each issue contains poems, reviews, surveys and letters from abroad, and presents an exhilarating panorama of American culture, viewed with a civilised scepticism that is not only worthy of its predecessor, but also justifies its title.

The New Criterion is published ten times a year, subscription \$36, available from 850 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

The Salisbury Review

Editor Roger Scruton
Literary Editor Ian Crowther
Managing Editor Merrie Cave

Editorial address and Subscriptions
33, Canonbury Park South,
London, N1 2JW
Tel: 071 226 7791
Fax: 071 354 0383

The culture industry tells us that we live in a post-modern age, and that the art of our time must be post-modernist if it is to be authentic art at all. Exactly what the term 'post-modern' signifies is a matter of intense academic controversy — indeed, that was the point of inventing it. 'Post-modern', like 'deconstruction', is the foundation of academic 'disciplines' devoted entirely to defining it, or to doubting that it can be defined. It is another piece of debris, thrown into the God-shaped hole at the centre of humane education.

In the post-modern era, we are told, there are no values, but only 'values'. The human world is placed in inverted commas, to become an object of derision. Postmodernist culture combines utter banality with an eager hatred of the human condition — as in the 'art' of Gilbert and George. This is the culture described in these pages by David Holbrook. The wheels of commerce lock together with those of the cultural bureaucracy, to produce a new form of subsidized hatred — a massed assault on those 'bourgeois' susceptibilities which created the demand for art in the first place. As Bruce Charlton points out, the result is to sever art from the audience — in other words, from its only source of nourishment. Post-modern art feeds purely on itself and is addressed to the handful of critics who make their living from the claim to understand it. In such circumstances the artistic impulse withers and dies, leaving stark, denuded carcasses scattered across the cultural landscape like a forest stricken by acid rain.

The art of the past, including the modernist art of Eliot, Matisse and Stravinsky, was addressed to an educated audience. One of the most important features of the post-modern world is the assault on the customs and institutions which permit this audience to emerge. The class system, and its ethos of benign emulation, is under constant attack, since the 'post-modern' world is one of pure equality, in which no culture or life-style is 'privileged'. Yet, as Simon Seligman argues, the class system has been systematically misrepresented by its critics. As a device for maintaining a high culture in place, and for

ordering the relations of those who live beneath its aegis, it has abundantly proved its value. To imagine our society without it is to imagine another denuded landscape, in which nothing meets the eye save the curious forms of nothingness itself.

The class system is a comparatively modern invention, although it has its origin in the medieval estates. Its acceptance has always depended upon a large measure of social mobility, and by the freedom of association which that requires. Self-improvement also requires social support, and one of the small-scale institutions which provide that support is discussed here by David Marsland, who advocates privatisation of the public libraries. The studious recluses who used to run our local libraries may soon be replaced by the new breed of state apparatchik, trained to judge books in terms of their ideological import rather than their intellectual value. Already there have been alarming tales of purges in the London boroughs. Egalitarian orthodoxy tends naturally towards censorship, and as readers of the *Salisbury Review* well know, views of the kind defended in our pages are so deeply offensive to the establishment that, were the *Review* admitted, by some oversight, into a public library, it would certainly be removed from the shelves by the first vigilante who found it there.

Our readers may find some hope for the future in the suggestion made here by Raymond Tong, that England at last declare its independence, and save itself from the ranters and windbags on the celtic fringe. But Mr Tong's argument is addressed to an educated audience, and the English have ceased to be educated. The result, in present conditions, will not be the pre-modern society invoked by Mr Tong, but a new and post-modern England — 'England' in inverted commas, whose independence would in any case be only a matter of form, a sarcastic concession from the post-modernist bureaucrats in Brussels, whose ambitions are described here by our Belgian contributor, Paul Belien. Indeed, that is how the project of European Union should be seen: it is a comprehensive attempt to place the nations of Europe in inverted commas.

Rationalism and 'Modern Art'

Bruce Charlton says it's time the arts caught up with the public

Decline in the arts

It is obvious to everyone except the professional critics and arts administrators that there has been a catastrophic decline in the quality of the arts throughout the twentieth century. In an important sense, and with some qualification, the numbskulls have got it right. Bluntly put: modern art is rubbish.

Or at least it is rubbish compared with the art of the past. This is most apparent in the near total disappearance of genius; but the general run of contemporary work in several branches of the arts — in particular the fine arts — is so low that they are hardly worth bothering with. To put it another way, the serious artist and the educated public are almost totally out of sympathy. Communication is negligible: the artist despises public taste and does not even try to please, while the public reacts with indifference, incomprehension or irritation.

This appalling situation has been tolerated for too long. And, let's be blunt, the situation is *mainly* the fault of the artists (and their symbiotic dependants, the critics). It is the artists' fault because in the end the public must be acknowledged as the ultimate arbiters of excellence. If the artists and the public are out of harmony, it is up to the artists to get back in tune. The typical 'protectionist' response to this well known impasse — that people have some kind of duty to disregard their preferences, subordinate their critical faculties, and 'catch up' with the avant garde — must be rejected as merely exacerbating the problem.

Rationalism in the arts

Michael Oakeshott famously warned

us against a way of thinking he called 'rationalism' in political thought. A similar tendency has been ultimately responsible for the decline in the arts. Rationalism is a style of thinking which involves the belief that ultimate reality is obedient to explicit principles. Rationalists believe that the truth about the world can be captured and expressed by abstract ideas, of which the actual world of practice is merely an imperfect expression.

Some examples: The perfect rationalist political constitution is one which expresses fully and explicitly the principles and arrangements by which a nation is operated. In morals, the rationalist sees principles (such as 'thou shalt not kill') as embodying the essence of virtue, and actual practice as providing merely a flawed embodiment of abstract moral law. And in the arts, rationalism regards aesthetic principle as the best guide.

In opposition to rationalism, Oakeshott gives primacy to practice, habit, tradition and the implicit. Abstract principles are to be regarded as merely an abbreviation, a summary, a checklist or 'crib' of primary reality. Oakeshott shows that explicit principles will always be incomplete, incoherent and unworkable unless they are embedded in tacit practices (transmitted by non-propositional methods such as upbringing and apprenticeship). Thus the virtuous man is one who practices virtue, not a philosopher expert in the analysis and manipulation of moral principles. The best politician is one wise in the practice of politics, not necessarily one clever at ideology and theory.

The analogy with the arts is close. An Oakeshottian view would regard

the arts as traditions, passed on between generations by immersion in practice. Principles have the status of mere 'rules of thumb' to help the beginner. In contrast to this view, rationalism has elevated aesthetic principle to the level of primacy. Ignoring his own embeddedness in tradition, the first step of the rationalist artist is an analysis of the 'what is?' kind (what is painting? what is music? etc). Having answered this question (to his own satisfaction at least), that answer is pumped-up to make the basis of a new artistic movement, school, style or 'ism'; each new movement with its own explicit manifesto reproduced on the labels, in the catalogues and the critical columns.

This sort of thing has been going on for a long time in painting, but in the twentieth century it has come to affect all the arts. At first rationalism was not harmful, because the principles were merely a veneer upon deeper traditional artistic practices (there are plenty of great painters from the early schools). Artists were too deeply soaked in their culture to realise the extent of their debt to it, that their personal signature, their 'originality' was merely an idiom and not the basis of their achievement. But gradually the principles have usurped the tradition. Instead of being a surface feature the principles came to lie at the very heart of artistic practice. By the time of the abstract impressionist painters, the principle was more important than the practice — indeed the practice was judged by its adherence to principle. The result was that the principles became more *interesting* than the practice. We had entered the age of 'the painted word' as Tom Wolfe has called it.

The same destructive effect of rationalistic ideas is seen in the careers of such modernist geniuses as James Joyce, Ezra Pound and Pablo Picasso. Vast natural talent and supreme early achievements were dissipated into self-indulgent experiments, of interest only to their acolytes. The attitude of modernism was encapsulated by Joyce when he insisted, not wholly ironically, that he asked for nothing more from his readers than that they spend their whole lives studying his work. Their descendants have inherited the explicit doctrines of the modernists without their implicit tradition. We see the result all around us.

The cult of originality

In his autobiography, Karl Popper points out the fallacy which underlies the most prevalent myth of modern art: the cult of the original genius. The idea is that the distinguishing feature of genius is to break the bounds of tradition. One important corollary of this notion is that the genius, to be genius, must always be ahead of his time (*avant garde*), and the true genius will not be appreciated by the unenlightened public until after many years — usually after his death. The artist therefore has a duty to ignore public opinion — indeed, the artist's role is to lead and shape public opinion. Accolade from a broad and non-specialist audience is *prima facie* evidence that he is insufficiently advanced.

Popper shows that this myth is based upon factual error. The facts are that very few first rate artists have been unappreciated by a wider public in their lifetime — Vincent Van Gogh and Franz Schubert are the only examples that spring to mind, and both of these died young. That great artists may have died in relative poverty does not mean their work was neglected. Furthermore, Popper suggests that most of the great geniuses of music, at least, were traditional rather than innovative in their temperament — J S Bach and Mozart were conservative by comparison with the lesser Telemann and J C Bach. The hard thing is not to be original, but to be the best.

The cult of the unappreciated, original genius has been immensely dam-

aging. In the first place it has led to big reputations for recent artists who are original, but certainly not geniuses — such as Karl Heinz Stockhausen and John Cage in music, and virtually everybody in the fine arts. By contrast, an artist who is popular and pleasurable — such as David Hockney — is underrated (although he is not a genius either). But there has also been an original and unappreciated artist who did happen to be a genius; and his example has been even more damaging — I speak of Arnold Schoenberg.

Karl Popper points out the fallacy which underlies the most prevalent myth of modern art: the cult of the original genius...the distinguishing feature of genius is to break the bounds of tradition

Arcane and technical language

I believe that Schoenberg was indeed a genius, because people whose musicality is not in question (Glenn Gould, Hans Keller, etc.), tell me he was. I can also appreciate that his early tonal music is very fine (although not much to my taste). However, I just cannot *understand* the language of serialism — it does not make musical sense. My own deficiencies in this respect are clearly shared by the larger music-loving public. Schoenberg's twelve tone compositions are not 'yet' appreciated; the only question is whether they ever will be appreciated.

The answer, I suspect, is no. We have tried very hard, some of us, to get to grips with Schoenberg's arcane and technical language (which is more than can be expected of most people). It cannot be done except by those with considerable music gifts — that is, by professionals and experts. Which means that Schoenberg is that terrible

thing — a musician of undisputed genius who is *not* a great composer. How could he be great when he can only speak to a handful of other musicians? How can his music ever have the edifying influence of great art when we must accept its greatness on trust from experts?

This is the problem with modern classical music. The composers are (in almost every case) serious artists of supreme technical ability. Yet composers are composing for a tiny coterie who can understand their language. Admittedly, this audience of experts is supplemented by a much larger constituency of pseuds — those who do not understand but derive a feeling of superiority from pretending to. The mainstream of modern classical composers (with the exception of a few whose musicality is effectively pre-Schoenberg, such as Benjamin Britten and Michael Tippett) should not be seen as an *avant garde* with which the rest of us will eventually catch up. They are blundering down a blind alley while the rest of the world marches past, uncomprehending and uncaring.

To take a concrete example: Harrison Birtwhistle's opera *Gawain*, recently revived. Following a threat to boo the work off stage, the massed ranks of arts establishment have taken it upon themselves to puff *Gawain* as a work of extraordinary brilliance. I have never head such a firm consensus among the BBC Radio 3 presenters and pundits concerning the merits of anything — J S Bach, Mozart and Beethoven were put in the shade. I listened to the broadcast of *Gawain* for as long as I could manage. In all the propaganda, the critics had neglected to mention something rather noticeable about the opera — it sounds horrible. Here we have it: a serious piece of modern classical music by a composer of great reputation and natural talent, but written in an idiom of such complexity and sonic difficulty that it is actively unpleasant even to be within earshot of it.

Rationalism has damaged classical music by elevating the principle of originality to such a pitch that the whole *point* of music has been lost. For most of us, music is not a job, it is part of life, one aspect to be balanced and

integrated with many others. We love and cherish music; but not to the point of obsession. When music has become so displeasing to the ear, we interpret this as the language of professionals, speaking to each other in a jargon which arrogantly excludes the outsider.

Abstraction

But more commonly we find that modern art is insipid rather than actively unpleasant. It is neither wonderful nor horrible: it merely lacks the power to move. Except, of course, the power to 'shock', 'subvert' or 'disturb'. If this is the aim of art, as critics often seem to suggest, then art is doing a miserable job of it. Art should surprise, in an aesthetic sense; but if violent shock is the goal then the shock of violence would seem a more natural medium. After all, which is the most viscerally challenging — a dead sheep in a formalin tank or a punch in the solar plexus?

The experience of walking around a gallery of abstract modern art is mildly pleasurable or nigglingly irritating; nothing more. We can perhaps appreciate the pleasing forms of a sculpture by Henry Moore, the odd colours and textures of a Jackson Pollock, the chill of a Marc Rothko canvas.... We leave with a sense of modest satisfaction, we have done our duty. But the experience is insignificant by comparison to the sheer humanity, warmth, and sweeping greatness when we step into the galleries displaying the figurative and representational art of the past.

Modern art is almost always 'abstract', not just in the sense that it is without figurative meaning, but also in the sense that it is embodying some abstract theory or another. It might be called essentialist, since modern art is engaged in an attempted definition of itself: it seeks to define the necessary and sufficient conditions of its own existence. In the past painting involved colour, representation, paint, symbolism, perspective, galleries, canvases. The aim was not to embody a theory or demonstrate an essence, but to create the best possible work of art. Modern art and the 'isms' are involved in isolating and exaggerating one or another of the so-called essential and

defining characteristics of the form, in an attempt to describe art rather than exemplify it. So, abstract painters believe that representation is not essential to painting, indeed it merely gets in the way of what painting is 'really' about. They paint a picture which does not represent anything. We look at it — nice colours, nice forms, pretty frame, but so what? Loss is loss.

Another example of abstraction: contemporary dance. Traditional ballet worked on our senses in many

***I am not saying that
great art cannot be
abstract, but that
abstraction is
incidental to greatness
and that we should
judge by results, not
intentions***

ways: movement, costume, scenery and music. The music had melody, harmony and rhythm. Contemporary dance asks, implicitly, what is the essential nature of dance? Costume, scenery and music are shared with other arts, so movement is the answer. Contemporary dance gives us 'pure' movement — perhaps in silence, perhaps with music that lacks rhythm, harmony or melody, perhaps without music but with pure sounds. Hmm, we say — pleasing movement. But are we moved? Perhaps mildly. But this is ballet with, as it were, one hand tied behind its back. The odds are stacked against its success, and the audience is the loser.

By paring away in search of an imagined essence, by elevating the abstract principle above the test of practice, we have crippled the form of ballet, leaving something altogether less effective. I am not saying that great art *cannot* be abstract, but that abstraction is incidental to greatness and that we should judge by results, not intentions. Abstraction brings us no closer to the essentials of dance, or of painting, or of

anything else, because *there is no essence*. Things are as they are. The arts are practices, and to reduce them to principles is to diminish them. I am not merely complaining that modern art fails to live up to the best of the past — things are worse than that. Bad modern art is fundamentally different from bad old art. Bad old art was art that failed at being good; but modern art is not even aiming in the right direction. It does not fail, for the reason that it cannot succeed.

The aim of art is surely to achieve something in practice, not to flesh-out a primary principle. If it were the latter, we should do better contemplating the principle directly, rather than the pale reflection of artistic practice. This, of course, is precisely what we do contemplate in conceptual art; Art without even an artefact. We are informed that a chap has been for a walk in the desert and made a pattern of stones. We are told that the defining feature of art is its presence in a gallery, *ergo* whatever is in a gallery is art. The smug adolescent logic is excruciating — a slap in the face seems the only reasonable response to this sort of stuff. At this extreme there is no difference between art and philosophy, except that the philosophy of modern art is trivial, simplistic or false; putting one in mind of Samuel Johnson's comment on the man who possessed 'but one idea, and that is a wrong one'.

So far as fine art goes, the parallel with the Emperor's new clothes is exact, and the only people who are fooled are the *avant garde*-ists themselves, along with their lap-dog critics — a group which excels only in pretentious gullibility, and which demonstrates a combination of technical mediocrity with a lack of aesthetic discrimination which would simply not be tolerated in any other discourse.

Hope from literature

Although music is crippled by technique and fine art by the lack of it; the outlook is not all gloom and doom: after all, literature is in a pretty healthy state. Critics who write about the 'death of the novel' have the whole thing upside down; the novel is just about the only art that lives. There are

plenty of good novels (like those of Anthony Burgess, Saul Bellow and David Lodge) and stories being written, some good poetry and a few plays, like those of Tom Stoppard. Of particular relevance is the fact that the literary artist and the public are generally in sympathy. It is possible to make a living, or even become rich, by selling novels (even good ones) to a broad range of the public. This is in sharp contrast to the fine arts, which are supported by massive subsidy via the public galleries and Arts Council, and by a commodity market which treats the world of art purely as an appreciating asset. This process goes on in isolation from, and contempt for, the public: indeed, it does not *need* a public, since the economy of the art-world is now entirely autarkic.

Although there has been a shifting of the centre of gravity towards academics and journalists, nevertheless the final arbiters of 'greatness' in literature are still the mass of the 'middle-brow' public — the 'amateurs', who read for pleasure and enlightenment, not to make a living. In the long run these are the people who decide on who are the geniuses and who define the literary canon. They matter to literature, and literature matters to them.

Art thrives in a context where the educated layman is the ultimate judge. The expert community of specialists and artists must maintain professional standards; but in the final analysis they are there to *serve* the keen but amateur non-specialist (just as professional groups such as doctors should always act 'in the best interests' of their clients). In other words, appreciation from outside the academy should be regarded as a necessary, although not sufficient, goal of artistic endeavour. Otherwise we have the world of Herman Hesse's 'glass bead game' where an élite of specialists entertain each other at the public expense in an activity utterly divorced from its culture.

The loss of genius

Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of the second half of the twentieth century has been an almost total disappearance of genius — not only from

the arts but from science and the academy. It makes an amusing, although depressing, party game to recall the geniuses of the first half of the century and try to match them in the second half. At least in Britain and the USA, I cannot think of any undisputed living genius of science (except perhaps the elderly Francis Crick); none of the novel, or poetry, or drama; and certainly none in philosophy, music, architecture or fine art. All this in the face of an unprecedented provision of money, training, facilities, and career opportunities. The reason may not be the same for the arts and sciences — but the growing spread of rationalistic modes of thinking must take a large share of responsibility.

Modernism has collapsed into its abstract foundations. In future art should be tested against practice, not against theories. And practice must include the public — art is for them

It seems we live in a silver age, secondary rather than primary. An age of interpretation rather than creation; of specialist technical skill (glass bead games) rather than humane, general culture. There are parallels with the late medieval era of scholasticism. Like Alasdair MacIntyre, I suspect that the root of this breakdown lies with the loss of an 'educated public' nourishing and being nourished by the academies of experts, sharing and diffusing a moral and cultural grounding, and setting the standard for the rest of society. At present we are divided into mutually uncomprehending cliques — each sceptical of the others and pursuing its own rarefied and incomplete form of rationalistic reductionism. Mass society, alienated from modern art, is united only by its enjoyment of the popular and 'lowbrow' entertain-

ment culture — the media, politics and sport. If it were not for the art of the past, life would be dull indeed.

But a healthy culture needs contemporary art. Modern art is on a downward curve; and there is nothing, as yet, with which to replace it. Rationalism has done its job all too thoroughly. Still, if we cannot predict the solution to our malaise, we can at least understand what is not going to give an answer, and stop doing those things which make matters worse. The first step is to admit that there is a problem. Modernism has collapsed into its abstract foundations. In future art should be tested against practice, not against theories. And practice must include the public — art is for them.

We can be confident that a renaissance will not spring from the arid dust of rationalism, but will, in unforeseen ways, be rooted in the deep soil of traditional practices. We might also predict that any renewal will be outward-looking and interactive with non-specialist public opinion in a way that more closely resembles the career of a contemporary novelist than a contemporary painter. I am not arguing for ignorance or populism, but the time for polite deference to the professional specialist is past. The age of the informed amateur generalist beckons. We have waited too long for the public to catch up with the arts; it is time for the arts to catch up with the public.

Bruce Charlton is Lecturer in Public Health Medicine, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

Rules and models destroy genius and art

William Hazlitt

Memories of Moscow

Mervyn Matthews

The fates of men vary greatly, in both tragic and amusing ways. As the years go by it is interesting to contemplate the ups and downs of one's friends and acquaintances, especially if they became famous. Of moral justice there is, of course, precious little. Sometimes nondescript creatures (Majors, Hurds, Bakers, etc..) rise to the top. Some professional politicians, like the common garden slug, seem to exude a slime which facilitates movement forward, leaving a silvery trace behind. At the same time outstanding individuals who could have done the country a power of good are swept aside or diverted to other pursuits: Enoch Powell, for example, a man of rare, transparent honesty; or Dennis Healey, a good-hearted, copper-bottomed liar whose measured cynicism could have been an enormous asset to our national diplomacy, had he taken his proper place among the conservatives.

One observes the same sort of thing, naturally enough, in Russian politics. The thought occurs to me again a few weeks ago, as the Russian pig (I quote a common saying) gives another shudder and turns over in the mud. Recently I recalled incidents involving an acquaintance which had taken place in other lands, many years ago.

In the mid-sixties I spent a year as a visiting scholar at Moscow University, and lived in one of the hostel blocks on the Lenin Hills. It was a strange experience: I was among Soviet students, but not of them. No one cared to associate with a foreigner, for obvious reasons, and I suspected one or two were actually supposed to keep an eye on me. The only person who seemed relatively uninhibited was Ruslan, an economics student from the Caucasus. He was quite Russianised, though he spoke Russian with a rather peculiar intona-

tion. I remember how, in one of our conversations, he used a word I had not heard before, *utikhomirir'*, to pacify. A colourful word, I thought, so Russian. Ruslan was responsible for order on our floor, an active member of the Komsomol, and quite capable, I thought, of pacifying any ideological opponent.

Two other small incidents come to mind. I had brought an old typewriter with me from England, and Ruslan once asked me to translate and type a small letter he had written to an English firm. The content seemed to be innocuous, but I thought at the time that only a student who was quite sure of himself, and feared not for his studies, would ask a foreigner to do something like that. Then one day, towards the end of my stay, I met him by chance in the corridor. His face was aglow with satisfaction. "A group of foreign students is visiting the University", he declared, "and I've been asked to do some *operative work* with them." I was astonished at his admission. It was the language of KGB surveillance.

I left Moscow with a highly respectable rating (*persona non grata*): my acquaintanceship with the strange Caucasian was not, however, entirely disrupted. In 1974 I attended an international sociological congress in Toronto and found that a small Soviet delegation had been allowed out for purposes of participation. Ruslan was among them.

I ran into him one fine afternoon outside the conference centre. We recognised one another immediately, and I asked him how things were in Grozny. He told me he had come in the capacity of Academic Secretary of an important Moscow research institute. It was clear to me that so young a scholar could only have been selected for a prestigious trip like that if he had

perfect ideological credentials, powerful backing, and of course, KGB clearance.

The years passed, and I sank into the unexciting life of a lecturer at an unremarkable provincial university, with lots of marking. In distant Russia perestroika began. To my surprise I found that Ruslan's surname — it was Khasbulatov — began to appear ever more frequently on the pages of the Russian press. I saw a picture of him, and checked a published biography, to be quite sure. Now a Professor, an able and close associate of Yeltsin, he was evidently destined for great things. Greater things, in any case, than teaching in a small British university. Soon he was President of the Russian Supreme Soviet, a real power in the land, and new occupier of the late Leonid Brezhnev's magnificent apartment a few hundred yards from the Kremlin. His spouse, unlike my own, was photographed in expensive furs and jewellery. True, the policies he proposed seemed disastrous to me, and I wondered what would happen in Russia if he decided to try a little pacifying. But he was certainly out on top.

Sometimes as I ploughed through my awful marking in our modest house in Pimlico, a glow of envy would pass over me. Thus, I thought, do the fates of men vary. Ruslan, I am sure, would gladly have swapped places with me back in 1963. But not now.

Life, however, moves on. Like many other "sovietologists", I found I was again able to visit Russia. I did not see Ruslan, though a mutual acquaintance assured me I still had a place in his excellent memory. Then one morning, in London, (it was October, 1993) I opened the newspaper to find that the building of the Supreme Soviet had been enthusiastically shelled, and the bedraggled occupants, including

Khasbulatov, arrested. At this very moment, I thought, as I enjoyed my bacon and eggs, the poor fellow is lodged, no doubt hungry and threatened, in Lefortovo prison. He may also have been beaten up by the militia, in the normal way. Relative invisibility has its advantages after all.

Subsequently, things shifted again, of course. Some fool in the Russian Procuracy let all the "plotters" out, and Aleksandr Rutskoi quickly declared his intention to run for the Presidency. Ruslan, to judge from a few news

items, was by contrast very subdued. The Russians don't like Chechenians (if that is what they are called), and his chances of another meteoric rise were, to say the least, non-existent. I thought at first that he might settle for an academic post in a small university in Chechnia, with some marking. Even that is evidently not to be. In the spring of this year he was ill-advised enough to return to his homeland and criticise the local president, a gentleman called Dzhokar Dudaev. In June of this year Mr Dudaev banned him from residing

there, and there has been some talk of getting him extradited from Russia, evident to face trial for political misconduct of some kind.

How it will all end, one cannot know. But there is no doubt that the Khasbulatov memoirs, if ever written, will be much more interesting than mine. Not a bad chap at all, really.

Mervyn Matthews is Reader in Russian Studies at the University of Guildford.

A Touch of Class

Simon Seligman looks at British Society

There is a rule in this country, that still holds good; you do not speak about money. To do so is the mark of the genuine outcast, and in it lies all the difference between humanity and barbarism.

What does this have to do with the subject of class? Recently Mr Andrew Neil wrote an interesting article about it in the *Evening Standard*. He instanced a dinner-party he went to at which a fresh-voiced Northumbrian lass was twitted by a public-schoolboy on account of her accent, in spite of his own being unnatural and artificial. What Mr Neil failed to see in the latter's ill-mannered interjection was the sign of a parvenu who would himself be unwelcome in the best circles. It is a fact that part of the reason the class-system is not working is because it is in many cases run by imposters.

If we accept the results of a poll in last February's *Daily Telegraph*, we must agree that everything has gone downhill in this country concurrently with a decline in class attitudes. So we must ask whether these attitudes are not intrinsic to this nation's health and vitality. Many who are not readers of the *Daily Telegraph* would say that they are, and I would agree. Briefly stated, the case for the class-system is

that, as Marx and Engels said in the last century, every society is a living organism. The class-system recognises this, is designed to provide a place for every individual within it, and is able to foster the growth of each of those individuals. It is, however, nothing to do with an economic relationship except insofar as these are mutually beneficial. Class, properly observed, has everything to do with what Japanese call 'jugaku', 'the right way to behave', and involves thinking not of oneself, but of everybody else.

Yet objectors to the class-system must have a point, there must be something wrong with it, particularly if it is agreed that too many of the wrong sort are running the thing. I remember being deeply shocked on one of my first days at Magdalene College, Cambridge, when somebody fell to talking with me and, pointing to a perfectly normal rowing chap, whom he did not know, said, "I think he's a bit impoverished". The place was awash with tuft-hunters. In that the class-system is something that occurs naturally when people behave correctly, when everything falls into place, it follows that the two greatest denials of it are snobbery and social-climbing.

Furthermore the system as we now

have it is a relatively recent development. Social barriers were far higher in 1890 than in 1790. According to Asa Briggs (in *Essays in Labour History*), the terms 'upper', 'middle' and 'lower' 'classes', first made their appearance at the beginning of the last century. In other words they are an indicator of the change our society went through at the time the commercial classes came to power. Adam Smith said of this class: "Their superiority over the country gentleman is, not so much in their knowledge of the public interest, as in their having a better idea of their own interest than he has of his." In a recent article on this subject in *The Spectator*, a family of precisely this type, who became rich in the nineteenth century, is adduced as an example of "old money". The writer goes on to remark that a distinctive feature of their lives is, "the ruthless pursuit of self-interest".

Before going further we must correct the wide-spread misunderstanding of how many classes there are. In short, there are four classes, which resolve into three. There is no "lower class", but a Working Class and three so-called upper classes, one of which is the Middle Class. Of the other two, one is the Upper Class proper, and the

other is the Upper-Upper Class, which has been forgotten about over the years, but is still very much alive — a Class unto itself — and stands in relation to the rest as the head to the body. Should you not agree with this organic depiction of the whole, you may yet find sense in the idea that with the eclipse of this class we are behaving like a society that has lost its head.

This organic depiction also stands in direct contrast to the upper-middle-lower plan on a vertical axis that was introduced at a time the Middle Class came to prominence. While it suggests a harmonious deployment of diverse components towards a single end, the good of the whole, the three-tier plan of one on top of another suggests an oppression (amply borne out by Dickens and others) that was an usurpation of the natural order. Much there may be in the Victorian era that many hold dear; but it is not a period of which I greatly approve. It was the epoch 'par excellence' of the bourgeoisie.

Having said that there are four classes that resolve into three, I must explain that the three it resolves into are not the 'upper-middle-lower' of the angel-cake variety. This never existed except as a mental construct of class-oppression.

An oppression maintained by, it would appear, nothing more than a system of manners, the sort of manners clearly evinced by the ludicrous assertion that you should take ten minutes to notice that someone is well-dressed. (In that the source of sartorial excellence is inner composure, its effect is invariably immediate.) Of the three upper classes it is the Middle Class that is the odd one out. This is because, being the newest class it is in fact the lowest class.

If you do not believe me, merely turn to the earliest schemata of the social order both in this country and in Europe. Our Anglo-Saxon scheme of Eorls, Thegns and Ceorls you will find Latinised by the Medieval Church into the three Estates of 'Oratores', 'Bellatores' and 'Laboratores' beloved of the French scholar, M. Georges Duby. The Third Estate, Laboratores, is precisely translated as "The Workers". Similarly in Ancient Greece,

when in about 600 BC Solon came to make his reforms at Athens, there were in Attica the same three classes of Demiourgoi, Geomoroï and Eupatrids. Demiourgos means "a worker". There, plain as a pikestaff, are the Working Class. In that the Working Class has an ancient pedigree, whereas the Middle Class does not, the Working Class is in fact senior to it. Therefore it can be seen that the categorisation upper-middle-lower in terms of precedence is complete nonsense.

***...the system as we
now have it is a
relatively recent
development. Social
barriers were far
higher in 1890 than in
1790***

Solon was the first legislator to recognise the existence of a new class, the so-called 'zeugitae', yoke-men or rankers, who provided the hoplite infantry then becoming decisively employed in Greek warfare. Their appearance coincides with the greater concentration of the populace into towns and, more importantly, with the introduction of a coin economy. Their accession to political power at Athens is marked by the Archonship of Mnesithides (457/6 BC — Aristotle *Ath. Pol.*), the first of their number admitted to that office.

This new middle class then embarked on an aggressively imperialist strategy, in many places amount to wholesale depredation, that was quite unexampled in Greece and must be thought the archetype of much subsequent bourgeois behaviour. By an extraordinary and perhaps illuminative coincidence of linguistic dissemination, the Sanskrit term for a bourgeois or burgess, 'Vaisya', is in fact precisely the same word as our own 'Viking'.

The new class also produced some exceptionally fine art, being typical in this as well. To do the bourgeoisie

justice, the evidence of Italy, North Germany and the Netherlands attest that the finest works of European art are entirely their own achievement, whether as executors or as patrons. This must also be true of the very greatest single work, the Parthenon at Athens. It seems that excellence in art, always observed to be the close companion of successful commerce, has a great deal to do with the artificial nature of the commercial class. As long as this class maintains its piety, as in many places it undoubtedly did, the results are good. When, as today, it does not, we are confronted with headlines of such staggering vulgarity as: "Art As the New Religion: How The Super-Rich Buy Nirvana".

If the urban class do not appear with the other three classes in the earliest social schemes, where in the organic structure to they fit in? If, according to the traditional scheme the Laboratores, our Working Class, are the arms and legs of the social body, the Bellatores or Warriors, our Upper Class, are the torso, and the Oratores or Upper-Upper-Class are the head, where in the body do the Middle Class belong? Here contemporary (as opposed to antique) Hindu speculation can help us out, and we may find a more convincing answer to the conundrum posed by Christopher Hitchens in a programme on republicanism — why does no-one ever admit to being Middle Class?

According to the Hindus the vast organism of which we are all a part is called the 'Purusha'; of which the Brahmins are the head. The Kshatriyas or warriors are the torso, the Sudras are the arms and legs, and the Vaisya or Middle Class represent the internal functions of the body, which is observably true in this country as well. It provides the body's appetitive, gustatory, digestive and excretory functions by making money, which is the blood that circulates in the body as a whole. It is rightly called the Middle Class not, as it would have us believe, because it interposes between the Working and Upper Classes (which in fact blend imperceptibly into each other), but because it inhabits the core of the social body.

The Middle Class, traversing society

like an alimentary canal from its top to its very bottom seems to be a part of the other three classes, while remaining a class to itself, distinguished by its acquisitive attitude. The upper-Middle Class (which is not a class by itself but only a sector of the Middle Class — represented on the body by the mouth and throat) is sometimes mistaken for the Upper Class because it is usually richer and more distinguished. But upper-Middle Class attitudes are very easy to tell apart from proper Upper Class attitudes. The Upper Class man is what we think of as “the backbone of society”, and his values have been succinctly stated by Plato in *The Republic*, who called him the “timocrat” or “a man of honour”. The Middle Class man Plato called the ‘Oligarch’ or Plutocrat. His values are conditioned by money, which is why in this country, no matter how much he has, he can never achieve respectability. In the higher reaches of the class-system those that win respect do so not because they are wealthy, even though they may be, but because they are devout. Furthermore, no-one in this country, obeying a very proper instinct, will ever admit to being part of its alimentary canal.

It therefore becomes apparent that through the highjacking of the class-system by the Middle Class over the past 150 years many people who are in fact Upper Class have been gulled into

thinking that they are Middle Class; while a powerful sector of the Middle Class has successfully masqueraded as Upper Class. This undoubtedly constitutes a ‘class oppression’ in the Marxist sense. So let us then be quite plain what we mean by an ‘Upper Class Man’. His numbers are proportionate to the Working Class as the torso to the arms and legs. As to torso or “backbone of society” he is also the Heart of the Nation. His position in society accords with that of the Second Estate, acceding to the degree ‘Bellator’, ie ‘warrior’. The Upper Class are the warrior class and in this country that degree has always included the *yeoman*, who among many acts of valour provided archery at Crecy and Agincourt. Whereas it is to be observed that the yeoman in the service of livery companies during the Middle Ages had an inferior status (just as presently in India the kshatriya when he has to work for powerful Vaisyas like the Marwaris), yet he felt in England (and still feels) a common cause with the gentleman — particularly in the pursuit of war. For he is in fact of the same class. Time and again is this made plain to the public school-boy when, practising martial activities at local gymnasia, he is not only not discriminated against because of his accent, but actively helped and encouraged.

You may disagree with this tradi-

tional view of society, but in considering why we are facing such a crisis of values and leadership, can you not see a root cause in the “ruthless pursuit of self-interest”? I would say that it has become plain that we are being governed by values more appropriate to the belly than the head, and in this the organic scheme of society is quite illuminating. Money is a good thing in its proper place. As the Hindus have taught us, it is the blood that gives life to our collective body. But when the blood does not reach all the parts of that body, so that they rot and fester and wither away, is then that life worth living? Will it not indeed, soon end in that body’s death? How much longer can we afford to listen to those whose nature it is, in Adam Smith’s words, to “have a better idea of their own interest”?

Under a monarchy, wealth does not confer rank, whereas under a republic it does, and here a republic is called for only by those who seem to think that wealth should be the definition of status. This can only result, as Karl Marx saw of the French Revolution, in the enslavement of the people. By ‘the people’ it seems to me, he meant not just the Working Class, but all of us.

Simon Seligman is working on a book about Kiri Vati, Central Pacific.

The Virus of Evil in Culture

David Holbrook examines the horrors of post-modernism

A virus has entered the system of literary culture, if not the whole of western culture. It is the virus of schizoid moral inversion, and it threatens seriously to erode our civilisation.

The major source of infection is an

industrialised form of culture — television. The ethos of television is taking over all spheres of art — the theatre, painting, the novel and even poetry, leaving no art-form with sufficient indigenous content to survive on its own terms. Theatre has become dominated

by sensational spectacle, vulgar language, voyeurism and ‘social relevance’, so that one finds *As You Like It* set in modern Dockland, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in which Titania virtually copulates on the stage with a donkey, and a *Lulu* full of more intense

sensualism and violence than Wedekind could imagine. Voyeurism of the grossest kind has pervaded everything — and this is part of the virus that is destroying culture.

The reasons for this are to be found in *The Investor's Chronicle*. Television is expensive to run: the cost of running a television studio is enormous, by the hour, while the cost of preparing a television film runs into hundreds of thousands, if not millions. A play is therefore only worth doing if x millions watch it. It has to make a tremendous 'impact' to hold its audience: the old kind of appeal, of "something to read" will no longer do. The impact has to hold the attention to the small screen, among many other distractions. This process, of course, is related to the BBC's licence fee and the continual political debate over it, and to the support of television offered by advertising. Advertising also depends upon "impact", and must have a mass audience to justify its expenditure: Not even the BBC dare risk a classic to which attention is *not* drawn by a rape scene or a sex scene or some other appeal to voyeurism.

***Voyeurism of the
grossest kind has
pervaded everything
— and this is part of
the virus that is
destroying culture***

In this we see the process by which TV, with its industrial commercial dynamic, mops up the world of literature, and infects it with its own coarse value-system, itself devised from the need to bring the necessary economic return in a difficult world, by playing on the most decadent impulses of ordinary people. Although this is done in the name of "freedom", like the onward march of pornography, it really represents a new enslavement, whereby human consciousness and cultural expectancy are drawn into decadence and depravity.

Some organisations, like the body called Women Against Pornography,

are beginning to recognise the abuse: one bulletin recently registered the horror of a woman reader of a commercial novel in which a woman was raped and *scalped*. But of course any such objection nowadays seems hopeless, since the world of the novel has been overborne by the indulgence of sick fantasies. The excitements of mental rage, for example, have become the staple of the "modern novel" and this tendency is endorsed by many senior academics in new universities such as East Anglia, while organisations like the British Council are devoted to these "trends" and endorse their dissemination as "British culture". Foreign visitors applaud the developments: one French academic with whom I had been discussing Shakespeare, told me that we now, in Britain, live in a "golden age of literature" — meaning the contemporary British theatre, novel and poetry.

Yet from the point of view of anyone concerned with civilisation, and especially with the original *telos* of Ancient Greek thought, or of anyone concerned with the insights of psychotherapy, these "black" tendencies in contemporary literature belong to a profound *falsification* of human truth, and display a treachery to the pursuit of wisdom. It is an abuse of that original *telos*, which was launched on the supposition that there was a higher good, that there was truth and beauty, and that mankind would progress towards them. If (as Raymond Williams averred) "culture is teaching", then what many modern works teach is not only false but actually corrupt. The virus that has been introduced into today's culture is the virus of evil.

And here we need to take recourse to the insights of psychotherapy, to understand the processes and to defend ourselves from them. Here, I believe, one of the most valuable pieces of writing is by W.R.D. Fairbairn, the Scottish psychoanalyst who devised his own model of human nature, based on the observation of patients. Fairbairn's model illuminates a whole tendency in modern culture, in which those with schizoid tendencies can prosper — because they can produce work that by its extremism shocks and can serve commerce most readily. The

relevant chapter of his work ('Schizoid Factors in the Personality' in *Psychoanalytical Studies of the Personality*) was written in 1940.

Schizoid conditions, according to Fairbairn, are the most deep-seated of all psycho-pathological states. The schizoid group includes a high percentage of fanatics, agitators, criminals, revolutionaries and other disruptive elements. But schizoid characteristics, usually in a less pronounced form, are also common among members of the intelligentsia. Intellectual pursuits as such, whether literary, artistic, scientific or otherwise, appear to exercise a special attraction for individuals possessing these schizoid characteristics. This is because the schizoid person must construct an intellectual world in which to live, when he or she finds it difficult to live in the real world. Schizoid individuals are dominant in our cultural world not least because they have the clue to economic success — a willingness to press for an erosion of moral restraints.

There are certain aspects of the schizoid problem that favour the schizoid influence in modern culture: the schizoid tends to be fixed in the early oral phase, and so tends to be preoccupied with *taking*. For him the "libidinal object" tends to be a "partial object" — so, the schizoid individual is liable to be addicted to depersonalised sex and pornography, not least because they make so much money, and so seem to justify themselves. But beneath this lies his "*anxiety over destroying his libidinal object*" — his fear that he has "emptied his mother", a fear that both intensifies his oral need and imparts an aggressive quality to it. He tends also to treat other people "as less than persons with an inherent value of their own". All these elements enable the schizoid person to lend himself to exploitation, not least as pimps to a degraded culture.

The kind of mother who generates schizoid conditions in her child is one who "fails to convince her child by spontaneous and genuine expression of affection that she loves him as a person". The consequence in the child is that he comes to feel that love is denied him and that expressions of his

own love are bad, and he must keep his love inside him, to keep it as good as possible. As an adult he will have strong feelings about his inner life, and will either lose all interest in this inner life when “exported”, or will closely identify with it — as, for example, in works of art.

But the most important analysis Fairbairn makes is of the moral logic of the schizoid individual. The schizoid feels that his mother’s apparent lack of love towards him has come about because *his own love is destructive and bad*. The schizoid patient characteristically feels that if he gives affection to anyone, it may poison him, while he dreads (and often prohibits) the giving of affection to himself, as too dangerous.

The moral logic is complex. Fairbairn points out that in *Little Red Riding Hood*, a story which symbolises the early oral phase, the wolf which Little Red Riding Hood meets represents her own ferocious oral intensity. But the wolf also takes her grandmother’s place, by which she attributes her own ferocity to her libidinal object, who thus turns into a devouring wolf.

A schizoid individual thus concludes that *he must never love or be loved*. He must drive his libidinal objects away from him, and he mobilises his hate and directs his aggression towards others, while inducing them to hate him. Of course, deep down, he yearns to love and be loved, but his tragedy is that he is compelled to hate and be hated. It is also that he feels his love to be destructive of those he loves.

Out of this develop two important motives: one immoral and one moral motive. The immoral motive is that, since the joy of love seems hopelessly barred to him, he “*may as well deliver himself over to the joys of hating, and obtain what satisfaction he can out of that*”. (Our theatres, modern art galleries, and novels are full of works prompted by this motive.) He thus makes a pact with the Devil, says Fairbairn, and says, “Evil, be thou my good.” It is here that we see the motive behind the introduction of the virus of evil into modern culture.

The moral motive is “determined by the consideration that, if loving in-

volves destroying, it is better to destroy by hate, which is overtly destructive and bad, than to destroy by love, which is by rights creative and good”. So it seems to many that there is something good and clean about the hate in modern culture.

When these two motives come into play, says Fairbairn, we are “confronted with an amazing reversal of values.” It becomes a case not only of “Evil by thou my good” but also of “Good be thou my evil”. This reversal of values is the third great tragedy to which schizoid individuals are liable. When this moral inversion happens in politics (as in Nazism or “ethnic cleansing”) we become aware of its nature: for some reason in the arts, we applaud and endorse it, although it directs its subversiveness against the good in human nature (and especially insults *women*).

But it is also the tragedy of our culture. At a time when we need to foster the springs of humanness, and to seek the truths of insight, we are powerfully under the influence of those who have made a pact with the Devil, in film, theatre, poetry and the novel. They have found that it pays to give themselves up to the joys of hating, and they can justify their inversion of moral values by claiming that it is better to destroy by hate rather than to destroy by love. Since many schizoid individuals have a sense of superiority, they can offer this vindication in such a way that the public, the critics and even centres of education and aid for the arts are morally deceived, and become impotent in the face of obvious horrors.

But it is all the same, it is *evil* that is triumphant, and the arts purvey evil — destructiveness, the debasement of the human image, the violation of the feminine, the destruction of privacy, and the rape of individual being — as if these, and all the wrongs that follow from them, are good.

By the same logic, those endeavours (such as Shakespeare’s or Jane Austen’s) that belong to love must be either held off, or in some way subordinated to the culture of hate. We thus became gradually weaned away from our inheritance, so that the rats can gnaw the holy bonds in twain un-

heeded. Any creative endeavour that belongs to love must be held away, resisted, denounced and excluded. Schools and universities, which should be the centres of *humanities*, give themselves over, by their choice of works to study, to the same process. Hence we have the spectacle of young people being enthusiastically introduced to literary works that offer only corruption and depravity, in the name of “English studies”. And because of the economic success of moral inversion, and the excitements of the diabolic inversion of morality itself (to say nothing of the more flagrant elements in our “brothel culture” as the late E.W.F. Tomlin called it) this morally inverted culture gradually excludes the culture of truth and love that once was prevalent, when the teaching of literature was first enshrined in the syllabuses of higher education. The virus of evil thus menaces the whole system.

How long can civilisation itself survive the onslaught of moral inversion? There are many signs today that our intelligent young people have no sense that they have become involved in a new and disastrous acceptance of moral inversion, even though its erosive effect on the spirit is far more damaging than any material pollution of the environment. As Michael Polanyi put it, in an essay in *Knowing and Being* (1969), this “triumph over conscience” leads to a moral revolution that is in itself inverted: and it tends to become immanent in brute force because of the predominant naturalistic view of man that impels it. Once they are immanent in physical force, moral motives no longer speak in their own voice, and are *no longer accessible to moral arguments*. “Such,” he concludes, “is the structure of modern nihilistic fanaticism” but the bitter joke is that no-one notices any longer that it is nihilistic fanaticism: it has become the fashionable staple diet of much modern art and culture — including poetry and the novel, which were the traditional foci for the sensitive pursuit of truth and for love of the human spirit.

David Holbrook’s latest novel *Even if they Fail* was published this summer.

The English Dimension

Raymond Tong suggests that England should declare its independence

The English during recent decades have tended to be uneasy when writing or talking about their nationality, about England rather than Britain and about the English rather than the British. It would appear that while the Scots are pleased to be Scottish and the people of Wales to be Welsh, the English are much less forthcoming, tending to use the word "British" rather than "English". This diffidence about national identity sometimes finds expression in the most unlikely places, even among those who are clearly concerned with their own history and culture, such as English historians writing about English history. Naturally, since they are neighbours, the histories of the English, the Scots and the Welsh, like so many individual lives within their borders, may sometimes overlap. Nevertheless, as any Scots or Welsh person would be the first to emphasise, England is not Scotland or Wales, and English history is not Scots or Welsh history. Indeed, except among the English, concern for national history and national identity has steadily grown throughout the present century, resulting in influential national parties in both Scotland and Wales. Although England, largely owing to its dominant role in the development of the British state, has not yet had similar national aspirations, there is obviously no need for the English, whatever their political viewpoint, to be reticent about their nationality. They have, among many other things, a long and remarkable history, a magnificent literature, and distinctive institutions expressing their Englishness. Moreover the Scots and the Welsh are certainly not reluctant about expressing their national identities.

When most English people use the word "Britain" they are usually aware that the area covered is the island that contains England, Scotland and Wales, together with adjacent small islands, and that when the word "British" is used it means all the people who are citizens within that area. On the other hand, in spite of showing a responsible reticence on the subject, they are equally aware that these words are much less evocative of patriotic emotion than

... while the Scots are pleased to be Scottish and the people of Wales to be Welsh, the English are much less forthcoming, tending to use the word "British" rather than "English"

"England" and "English". After all, they know that they are English and that England is their country. They speak the English language in an English way, possibly with a regional accent. They have been taught English history from the Anglo-Saxons to the present day and are aware to a greater or lesser extent of England's vast cultural heritage. They may have learnt some of the patriotic passages in Shakespeare's plays or poems reflecting the English countryside by poets such as Wordsworth or Hardy. They may hear the strangely disturbing echoes of Englishness in the music of Elgar. They may be aware of the significance of Milton's thundering words: "Lords and

Commons of England, consider what Nation it is whereof ye are." And almost certainly they will know Nelson's famous signal to his fleet before Trafalgar: "England expects that every man will do his duty." Consequently, while most English people appear quite satisfied to be British, they are nevertheless also aware of their Englishness. Indeed, there is a good deal of truth in H.W. Fowler's observation in his *Modern English Usage* that "no Englishman calls himself a Briton without a sneaking sense of the ludicrous."

Since "England" and "English" are evocative of patriotic emotion, while the words "Britain" and "British" are obviously much less so, it is unreasonable to expect English people to refrain from using them when describing themselves and the country in which they were born. Nobody, whether Scots, Welsh or English, can possibly be expected (again using H.W. Fowler's words) "to stop and think whether they mean their country in a narrower or a wider sense each time they name it." Sometimes they will know immediately that the wider sense is called for, but instinctively they will tend to describe their country in the narrower sense, for implicit in the words "Scotland", "Wales" and "England" are profound feelings and subconscious depths of national and cultural identity. And it is both right and politically healthy that this should be the case. For patriotism, as George Orwell observed in his essay *Notes on Nationalism*, means "devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force upon other people". Such devotion plays a vital role in defining personal identity

and in maintaining confidence in national values, beliefs and aspirations. Like love of family, it is invariably good. It is love of one's own — and we must love our own before we can love others.

Unfortunately, ever since the First World War there has been a continuous effort by a great many intellectuals to deride patriotism and to chip away implacably at nearly everything that could possibly make the English aware of themselves as a justifiably proud nation. Those engaged in such activity have quite often been impelled by an irrational sense of guilt about the imperial past, coupled with a rejection of the competitive nationalism which they have seen as its source. Although of all the nations of the world the English have the least reason for such historical guilt having always contributed immeasurably more than they have received, since the nineteen-twenties there has been an ever increasing literary torrent quite wrongly associating patriotism with jingoistic and aggressive flag-waving. In spite of the generally peaceful evolution to independence of the new Commonwealth countries, since 1945 this process of deflation has continued to flourish: weakening national purpose and pride, devaluing cultural and historical realities, and undermining the national vision at home and overseas.

The kind of patriotism being thus undermined is usually regarded as British patriotism, but in reality most of the caricaturing and historical perversion has been aimed at the English majority. And this is perhaps poetic justice for while the Scots and the Welsh, as a result of national revival, have gradually become more secure within their authentic national identities, the English have usually tended to express their patriotism as British. Their reasons for doing so are fairly evident. The English have always played the principal role in developing and preserving the British state, so that synthetic British patriotism is very largely their own creation. However, by continuing to emphasise the British identity, the English have remained entangled in their imperial past, as well as in its contemporary manifesta-

tions. As a result of their long imperial hangover, they have retained a sense of international obligation and responsibility much greater than their actual power justifies. Yet on the other hand, having helped so many countries to arrive at nationhood and having for so long underlined for others the importance of national and cultural identity, they often seem almost indifferent to their own great qualities as a nation.

having helped so many countries to arrive at nationhood and having for so long underlined for others the importance of national and cultural identity, they often seem almost indifferent to their own great qualities as a nation

However, the passing of time and political evolution have now presented the English with a considerable dilemma. Following the long evolution to independence of the Commonwealth countries, demands for self-government within Britain itself have become increasingly a matter for constant debate. There is, of course, an obvious pattern of logic in the manifestos of the Scottish and Welsh nationalists. English imperial expansion began in Britain and it is perhaps appropriate that it should end in Britain. Unfortunately the way in which the English have continued to sustain the British identity has clearly placed them at a considerable disadvantage. At present in Britain there is a Scottish nation and a Welsh nation, but seemingly no English nation. This strange illusion has been reflected in all the devolution proposals put forward since the early nineteen-seventies, when it had become clear that Scottish nationalism

was thriving. It was particularly evident in the referenda in Scotland and Wales in 1979, when the people of both nations were offered a limited amount of self-government from Westminster. No referendum or consultation was offered to the people of England, although they were informed that if Scotland and Wales voted for limited autonomy, such autonomy would also in due course be extended to the English *regions*. Fortunately the referenda proved to be somewhat premature and no constitutional changes were necessary.

However in Scotland, in rather confusing circumstances, the result of the referendum was very far from being a serious reversal for Scottish nationalism. A total of 32.85 per cent of the Scottish electorate voted in favour of a partly autonomous Scottish Parliament and only 30.78 per cent voted against. Unhappily for the "Yes" voters, in order for the relevant Scotland Act 1978 to be implemented, there had to be an affirmative vote of at least 40 per cent of those entitled to vote, not simply a majority of those who voted.

The report which led up to the 1979 referenda was produced by the Royal Commission on the Constitution under the chairmanship of Lord Kilbrandon. Published in 1973, it declared that its main intention had been to "investigate the case for transferring or developing responsibility for the exercise of government functions from Parliament and the central government to new institutions of government in the various countries and regions of the United Kingdom". From the findings of the report it seemed some degree of autonomy was indicated for Scotland and Wales, and that if a sufficient number of people in those countries wanted such constitutional change they could hardly be denied it. These findings, however, were decidedly discordant, recommending different and conflicting constitutional arrangements for Scotland and Wales. As Peter Calvocoressi indicated in his book *The British Experience 1945-75*, they left "the position of England anomalous and unclear in an island which could contain a British Parliament, a Scottish sub-Par-

liament, a Welsh Assembly, but no specifically English legislature." While Scotland and Wales would be partly self-governing nations, the English national identity would be divided up into seven or eight regional identities, even though the ancient kingdoms of Wessex, Mercia, Deira, Bernicia and so on were fully merged into a proud English nation over a thousand years ago.

What is most surprising about these extraordinary constitutional proposals is not that they were produced by a Royal Commission, but that they received, and still receive, a great deal of support from both the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats. Indeed their emphasis on "the British nations and regions" solution to the problem of devolution is one of the main reasons why these two parties, especially Labour, gained so many votes in Scotland during the last general election. Unlike the Conservatives who wish to maintain the present structure of the Union and the Scottish National Party who want complete Scottish independence within Europe, both Labour and the Liberal Democrats seek the continuance of the British Parliament at Westminster, but with Scotland and Wales becoming partly self-governing nations with their own legislatures in Edinburgh and Cardiff. They are also in agreement with the Kilbrandon Report on the constitutional restructuring of England. To balance the partly autonomous nations of Scotland and Wales, they propose that the English nation should be divided up into seven or eight partly autonomous British regions.

To a dispassionate outside observer such a solution must surely look like the expression of Celtic revenge. However, the fact that such proposals continue to attract wide support indicates clearly that the English do not wish to express their authentic national identity in the same nationalist way as the Scots and the Welsh, but are more concerned with Britain and the British identity. It is assumed that England, the more co-operative partner, can justifiably be expected to make whatever sacrifices are necessary in order to

preserve the British state, even if this means promoting the national identities of the Scots and the Welsh, and at the same time denying the English any further identity as a nation. It also seems to be assumed that each of the partly autonomous British regions of England can to some extent be equated with the partly self-governing nations of Scotland and Wales. Under this odd and retrograde constitutional set-up, the Scots will be Scottish and the Welsh will be Welsh, but the English will be for ever British. As David Owen disarmingly observed in his book *Face the Future*, when commenting on the problems involved in such devolution: "Scotland feels that it is a nation, and it is a nation, and this is the justification for treating Scotland differently from the English regions."

***It is assumed that
England... can
justifiably be expected
to make whatever
sacrifices are
necessary in order to
preserve the British
state, even if this
means promoting the
national identities of
the Scots and the
Welsh, and at the
same time denying the
English any further
identity as a nation***

Nobody would dispute that the Scots are a nation, but there can be no doubt that the English regions, so appealing to many devolutionists, together constitute one of the truly great nations in the history of the world. When on 17 September 1656 Oliver Cromwell told the Parliament: "We are English, that is one good account", he was not without justification. Today, over three centuries later, the English have even more reason to be proud of their na-

tional identity. Adding to the achievements already mentioned, we should remember that since the seventeenth century the English have always been at the forefront in evolving and defending free institutions. They have exported their liberal thought to every part of the globe, often in the form of democratic self-government. At the same time they have contributed enormously to scientific, cultural and humanitarian advancement. In co-operation with their Celtic partners, they pioneered the Industrial Revolution, becoming in the nineteenth century the leading industrial nation, with virtual hegemony among the nations of the world. Having achieved so much, how strange it would be and how appalling if the spirit of England should ever be allowed to decline to such a degree that the English were no longer able to think of themselves as a nation.

Fortunately the situation is not quite as bleak as it may sometimes appear. Thanks largely to the Conservatives under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher (and more recently John Major), in spite of world recession, the British state is in reasonably good health, and since it is the largest part of the British state, so is the English nation. Although Britain has become a firm member of the European Community, such membership has never prevented the government from staunchly defending British interests and at times displaying under Mrs Thatcher a nationalism in some ways similar to French nationalism during the presidency of Charles de Gaulle. The overall support for Britain's role in the Gulf War, like the obvious pride shown by almost every section of the population at the time of the Falklands War, clearly indicates the existence of a good deal of national feeling, which would have been unthinkable in the nineteen-sixties or the nineteen-seventies, when the overseas image of Britain often appeared decidedly tarnished. While we have witnessed during the past decade a continuing loss of faith in the Welfare State, with all its deadening bureaucratic ramifications, we have at the same time become aware of a lively Britannia looming ever larger

on the world stage. Moreover, with the Conservative message of individual initiative and enterprise becoming widely accepted, even by the Labour Party, there is a growing majority of people who are enjoying a better standard of living. Continuing to prosper, even in a period of recession, they have come to appreciate the importance of a respected national state, capable of defending and promoting British interests abroad.

At present, national feeling in England is usually expressed in terms of the British state and the British identity. The Scots and the Welsh, on the other hand, are much more concerned with their own national identities than they are with the British identity. Moreover, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats are both nationalist parties as far as Scotland and Wales are concerned, having firmly pledged themselves to establishing Parliaments in Edinburgh and Cardiff. Paradoxically only the Conservatives appear committed to preserving the present structure of the British state. It is therefore not surprising that their following in Scotland has declined dramatically during the past decade. Indeed, having lost a large part of its support in the Celtic fringe, the continued success of the Conservative Party will depend increasingly on the English majority. The time may come when the Conservatives find themselves accepting the fact that while other parties generally equate "English" with "British", the majority of their own supporters, often subconsciously, tend to think of "British" as "English". Certainly the growing national feeling evoked in recent years by the various achievements of Conservative governments, while usually thought of as British, is in reality English.

There are many advantages in preserving the British state in its present form. Those who wish to do so are justified in trying to maintain the status quo. Unfortunately they are running out of time. In its effect on the future constitutional structure of Britain the 1992 general election may prove to be one of the most decisive in recent history. About three-quarters of the votes in Scotland were obtained by

Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party, all of whom have among their main aims the establishment of a Scottish Parliament. With only minority support in Scotland the Conservative government is faced with a very difficult situation. No matter how much they may wish to preserve the unity of the British state, in the end the decision with regard to its future will depend not on the British Parliament, but on the Scottish electorate. Since the majority of the Scottish electorate voted for a Scottish Parliament in the last general election, in terms of British democracy sooner or later they can hardly be denied it. The question therefore is no longer whether or not Scotland will have its own Parliament. The question is rather when and within what sort of constitutional structure.

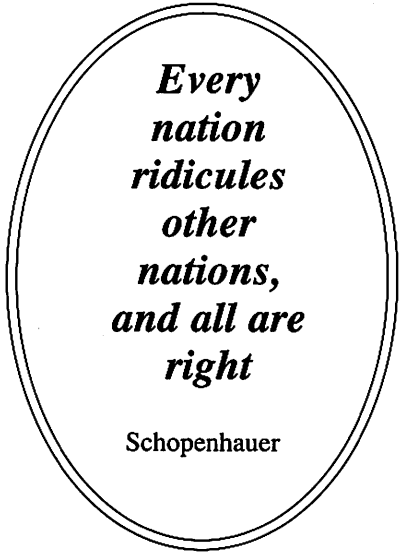
Now that the Scots, and to a slightly lesser extent the Welsh, apparently regard the British identity as a non-identity, the English are placed in a vastly changed position in relation to the British state. They must halt the erosion of their national identity, so long obscured by the British identity, and consciously assert their Englishness. Since the national feeling, which has become evident in recent years, is obviously English rather than British, this could prove somewhat easier to achieve than might previously have been imagined. Fortunately John Major made it clear during the 1992 general election that a constitutional solution involving nations and regions is not acceptable to the Conservative Party and that as far as Scottish autonomy is concerned it would have to be either the present Union or complete independence. Of course the government would prefer the continuance of the Union. Their policy of all or nothing is therefore strategically very sensible. However, it is also a policy with which all who love England must surely agree.

England has only the same area approximately as New York State. Dividing such a small country up into seven or eight partly autonomous regions would not only be absurdly retrogressive, but from an administrative point of view unnecessarily complicated. Certainly anybody who is con-

cerned for the future of England should reject the divisive arguments about nations and regions, and should firmly insist that England can best be governed from Westminster, as it has been for so many centuries. It should also be clearly stated that the English wish to remain a nation, like the Scots and the Welsh. After all, when Scotland has its own Parliament in Edinburgh and Wales its own Parliament in Cardiff, there can be no reason whatsoever why England should not have its own Parliament at Westminster. It should be quite evident that once autonomy is deemed necessary for the two smaller nations of Britain, it is not possible to deny such autonomy to the largest, especially when that nation has such an obvious national identity and such a resplendent history and culture.

It should also be quite evident that once the English have been granted their autonomy, like the Scots and the Welsh, they would always have the kind of government which only they themselves had voted into power. It would, for example, no longer be possible for the Labour Party to decide the future of England with the support of their majorities in Scotland and Wales. Without the aid of the Celtic fringe, it is highly unlikely that the Labour Party would ever be able to obtain a majority in an English Parliament.

Raymond Tong's new book of poems *Selected Poems* was published in July by Robert Hale.



*Every
nation
ridicules
other
nations,
and all are
right*

Schopenhauer

Liberating Books

David Marstrand looks at the case for radical reform of Public Libraries

The general case against public service organisation does not rest exclusively, or even primarily, on the need to reduce public expenditure. Certainly, the state will not be able to provide education, or health care, or pensions — let alone libraries — unless enough wealth is produced to generate sufficient taxes to pay for them. There is, however, an important positive case (sufficient in itself, in my judgement, to be telling) for private, voluntary, and genuinely self-financed municipal services to be liberated from central state control even in the wealthiest of societies.

It turns on flexibility and innovation by contrast with the dead hand of bureaucracy; on efficient use of resources over against routinised extravagance; on genuine consumer accountability in comparison with specious democratic control and paternalistic interference. In this context there is a powerful case for privatising libraries — for liberating books — which needs to be addressed whether in boom or slump, whether taxes are high or low, and under whatever government.

The library service seems to me to be in general one of our better public services, and much less damaged by the usual toxins of state control than other such services. I attribute this to the powerful and authentic professionalism of librarians, the traditions of librarianship, and the idealism associated with the whole history of libraries in the free world. This does not mean, however, that the destructive influences of state control — from bureaucracy, through political correctness, to the hijacking of the libraries by the comfortable middle classes — are not increasing, or that improvements might not be obtained by liberalisation.

The public libraries are increasingly in the entertainment business. Why should we not expect those who can afford it — the large majority of the population, and the huge majority of library users — to operate through commercial library channels for this purpose at least? Why should the poor pay from their taxes, and their improved benefits be foregone, in order that the well-heeled should have free access to detective stories, thrillers, even Booker Prize-winning novels, and

The library service is one of our better public services, and much less damaged by the usual toxins of state control than other such services

down-market Hollywood videos? Indeed even the proper business of public librarianship — curation, scholarship, art, high literature, and science — could be handled for the most part perfectly well, and more efficiently, on an entirely commercial basis: a niche-market for quality reading. I would envisage library passes for children, perhaps, and certainly for the elderly and the genuinely poor. The poor are not in fact well or extensively served under the established regime, despite their large presence in the arguments of those who want to preserve the status quo. The concept of the library as a “community space” providing an arena of adventurous self-expression for the oppressed and the deprived is a typically fanciful product

of the utopian imagination of the guiltily over-privileged New Class.

Who would own and run the liberated libraries in the new competitive environment? Why not booksellers, publishers, broadcasting companies, broadcasting companies, colleges, and significant numbers of employee buy-outs? It is sometimes argued, as it is analogously with hospitals and schools, that specialisation, coordination, inter-linking, and planning would be lost if libraries were taken out of the public sector. I doubt this. Over time some library companies would expand horizontally and vertically, so as to handle these matters perfectly effectively, like any large private company. Apart from this, much more complex and subtle tasks are managed easily, efficiently, and routinely by market mechanisms. Consider the links between the countless independent units, of varying sizes, involved in motor manufacture, the insurance industry, or food production and distribution.

Multiple benefits of liberalisation

One of the beneficial effects of liberalisation would be the exposure of wasted library assets. The most glaring example is provided by the libraries of higher education. They could easily be brought into the new system, whether privatised themselves or not, and linked together to serve young people at school, people in training, and the unemployed. The universities’ reference system is an absurdly under-utilised resource, which could serve the whole population of many cities and towns wonderfully well.

Another benefit would be a more rapid and innovative movement into the whole field of the electronic media. State organisations are conservative in

their very nature. Yet another would be the development of more specialisation, with new user groups more effectively discovered by the market than by planners, however benevolent. I would predict there would be longer and more convenient opening times, and in general more attention to the individual consumer's needs and preferences. While the benefits will be considerable, the costs will be borne entirely by those staff of the public libraries who are campaigning so feverishly to preserve their municipal-feudal privileges, and by recalcitrant collectivists in the academic world, in the media, and in the Opposition parties who routinely resist every next extension of market principles.

Towards radical reform of the library service

One is against the Philistines. A library service which is exclusively state controlled poses grave threats of waste, bureaucratic ineptitude, and politically-

correct control of reading. A new library service, fully liberated or partially liberalised, could help us to avoid these dangers. It could provide the variety of reading to which people have a right more efficiently, more flexibly, and at less cost — with large savings to be spent on the disadvantaged and on specialised needs.

The current campaign to preserve the discredited status quo is notably long on pseudo-idealistic emotion and short on facts. The Library Association and its allies should admit that utilisation of libraries is much more modest than is commonly claimed, and skewed towards a much narrower segment of the population than they commonly pretend. Campaigners against modernisation might also acknowledge that current deficiencies and difficulties in library provision are attributable not to the Government's so-far modest attempts at reform, but on the contrary to their own

reactionary efforts to shore-up the outmoded ancien regime.

Auctions of precious collections of rare books and savage reductions in library opening hours — like dirty, decrepit rolling-stock and inadequate services on British Rail — are the result of state monopoly, inattention to real costs, and an absence of competition. Like the railways, our libraries need increased investment. It is likely to be available if, and only if, our library services go genuinely public as a result of systematic privatisation.

David Marsland's latest book *Understanding Youth* was published by the Claridge Press. This paper was based on the author's contribution to a debate at the Royal Society of Literature in October 1993.

Is there any hope for Russia?

Richard Sim is less sanguine than Mervyn Matthews (SR March 1994)

Mervyn Matthews's informative survey of recent developments in Russia is certainly encouraging and gives much ground for hope. Yet many of the same facts viewed from a different perspective can yield quite a different interpretation. He claims that "a real miracle" has occurred in the former Soviet Union but unfortunately one of the problems with miracles is that most people don't really believe in them.

After all, never mind the fanfare of publicity surrounding the START accords, we are still awaiting for Moscow to honour the Biological Weapons Convention, the Geneva Protocol on Chemical Weapons, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, SALT I and SALT II,

the Helsinki Final Act, the United Test Ban Treaty and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty.

It is usual to attribute these lamentable failings to the machinations of hardline generals who are blocking all Yeltsin's best efforts. Yet we know from the evidence of defectors that it was the *policy* of the old USSR not to honour these agreements in order to secure a strategic advantage over the West. Are we not in danger of becoming complacent in always giving Moscow the benefit of the doubt?

Also on the question of dissent, all is not quite what it seems. While it is heartening indeed that the last Soviet labour camp was closed on 7 February 1992 it should not be forgotten that

large numbers of genuine dissidents remain incarcerated in dozens of psychiatric institutions throughout the former Soviet Union. No doubt many are now genuinely insane as a result of their systematic mistreatment, but would it not be more reassuring if some of these institutions were opened up to international inspection? Would not a sincerely liberal government wish to do something for them? Some form of reparation might even be made, perhaps along the lines of the best western care in the community projects.

Mr Matthews says that it is probably inevitable that the old communist nomenclatura would retain its ascendancy after 70 years of communism. Yet, nonetheless, it is surely very strik-

ing how little new blood there is. In many cases, it is not just the same sort of person who is in office but the very same individual with a different title. Even well-known KGB murderers have not lost their substantial pensions. No charges have been brought against any of the KGB "doctors" who deliberately induced insanity in their victims, surely one of the worst crimes committed even in this barbaric century. There has not been a single trial; no public call for soul searching and repentance; no call for purification. The weather-vane mentality of many leading communists, if anything, only underlines the lack of a real change of heart in the heart of the state.

The elections have conferred a democratic image on an extremely authoritarian régime. They have smoothed the way for preserving the essence of the old régime during a difficult transition period. Yet the introduction of democratic symbols and the discarding of the old compromised and tarnished communist emblems are not in themselves sufficient proof of a conversion to democracy.

At this point, honesty demands that one really must consider the analysis of Anatoly Golitsyn. Golitsyn defected to the United States in 1961 after 16 years' service in the KGB. He carried some remarkable prophecies which were not believed at the time. He warned that during 1958-61 Moscow's think-tanks had drawn up a deception strategy which would involve "spectacular" changes. He warned that the communist planners would deliberately float polycentric communism so as to give an impression of weakness even though unity of action was being forged in secret. He said that experiments in setting up a phoney state-run dissident movement were beginning while real opponents would be anonymously destroyed or forced into exile. He warned that the communist planners were intending to introduce a false liberalisation in the USSR and Eastern Europe during the 1980s. He predicted the legalisation of Solidarity, democratisation in Czechoslovakia and the removal of the Berlin Wall. Golitsyn said that the changes in Russia would

be "spectacular" and that a liberal leader would emerge in Moscow in the mid-1980s. All this and much more was largely set out in his substantially ignored work, *New Lies for Old* (published in 1984 but written much earlier).

Golitsyn further warned that it was part of a long range strategy, that the Soviet security apparatus would retain a tight grip on the "opposition" parties and the "Independent" states while Western aid was secured, the disarmament of Western Europe took place, and power passed through an intermeshing set of international arrangements to Eurasia's sole military superpower, its power based firmly on nuclear blackmail.

Of course, it *does* sound like a conspiracy theory on a grand scale. It is not hard to see why Golitsyn was not believed. But is it not time to think again about his warnings? Anyone who has tried to forecast in any detail events still many years ahead knows that it cannot be done. Such remarkable predictive powers are astounding by any reasonable criteria and, surely, intellectual honesty demands that analysts should scrutinise again the basis of his claims. After all, the usual glib comments about "conspiracy" and "cock-up" theories really belong to an earlier age. Too much attention is paid to nineteenth, eighteenth and even seventeenth century ideas of government. The fact is that modern states do possess myriad and sophisticated ways of exerting influence and manipulative power. At the moment little or no attention is being paid to the existence of immensely powerful security service resources in Russia devoted to protecting secrets and disseminating false information.

There is far too much in Golitsyn's writings to do more than touch upon here, but certainly a minimal interpretation must suggest that perestroika at least began life as part of a deception strategy. Perhaps the changes really did get out of hand and genuine liberals really did take the initiative; but it would be foolish to ignore Golitsyn's warnings altogether.

For once again we could look at Mr

Matthews's interesting evidence of change and put a much less sympathetic perspective on it. What indeed has the reform period been used for? For the destruction of troublesome minorities? For the constant promulgation of flawed and contradictory laws? For endless distracting power struggles and personality clashes? All reforms have been embarked on in the worst possible of ways. Moscow has succeeded in compromising the ideals of democracy and liberalism. Gaidar's freeing of prices actually had the effect of enabling the communist ruling class to use some \$180 billions of Party funds, laundered in western bank accounts, to buy up the capitalist component of joint-venture schemes, thus reinforcing their hegemony. It is hardly the birth of a new post-communist business élite. The astonishingly inept handling of reform has resulted in strengthening ordinary Russians' convictions that private property means crime, bribery, murder and swindling.

I'm afraid I cannot share Mr Matthews' optimism although I sincerely hope he turns out to be right. It seems to me, however, that while Moscow's present political structure is not as overtly totalitarian as its prototype of the 1930s, it certainly resembles it much more closely than it does Western democratic societies.

Richard Sim worked for the Institute for the Study of Conflict.

*All
government,
indeed every
human benefit
and enjoyment,
every virtue and
every prudent
act is founded
on compromise
and barter.*

Edmund Burke

The Greenhouse Effect:

Is it Just Hot Air? asks Barry Baldwin

According to Sean Ryan in the London *Sunday Times* (December 29, 1991), a new study by the Meteorological Office concedes that the much-heralded catastrophic change in climate will not happen in the next century after all. Temperatures may rise, but only by 0.2 celsius per decade, much less than is claimed by the professional pessimists. And we can put away our Building Your Own Ark kits for the moment. The extra heat will not be released by the oceans until at least the 22nd century. Doomsday postponed? But was there ever a doomsday to begin with? A level-headed look at the "evidence" shows that in no other area except cholesterol have so many guesses been turned into factoids.

People talk about the weird weather. When I was a boy, it was blamed on everything from atom bombs to the communists. 'Twas ever thus. The ancient Sumerians saw all weather, especially floods, in terms of divine emotions, something that also comes out in the biblical story of Noah. A 4th century BC lead tablet at Donona in Northern Greece asks the oracle there, "Is the severe winter we are having the result of wickedness in the city?" Likewise, William Langland in *Piers Plowman* was sure that the violent storms that hit England in January, 1362, were a divine punishment for human pride. This came not long after the tempests and floods that ravaged Romney Marsh in 1288.

In his *Life of John Milton*, Samuel Johnson wrote that "There prevailed in this time an opinion that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of nature. It was suspected that the whole creation languished, that neither trees nor animals

had the height or bulk of their predecessors, and that every thing was daily sinking by gradual diminution." Similar apocalyptic thoughts were entertained by Samuel Pepys in his diary entry for January 21, 1661: "It is strange what weather we have had all this winter; no cold at all, but the ways are dusty and the flies fly up and down and the rose bushes are full of leaves; such a time of the year as never was known in this world before here."

Was this England's first Greenhouse Christmas? Who or what got the blame? The point is, no permanent trend had set in. The July of 1758 was exceptionally wet, with at least five inches of rain being reported. Typically, the weather forecasters, then as now, had got it all wrong. Here is Dr Johnson again, writing in the *Idler* magazine (Saturday, August 5, 1758): "the rainy weather which has continued the last month is said to have given great disturbance to the inspectors of barometers. The oraculous glasses have deceived their votaries; shower has succeeded shower, though they predicted sunshine and dry skies; and by fatal confidence in these fallacious promises, many coats have lost their gloss, and many curls have been moistened to flaccidity."

This sounds more like the British weather that natives and tourists know. But again, no settled trend. In her diary for July 17, 1793, Johnson's friend Hester Thrale noted that it was "the hottest summer known for many years in England ... no water in the pumps, and the hens die of sunstrokes." Some years earlier, in Florence, Italy, in 1785, she had written in a letter that "The heat here is furious now, and no rain at all; and everybody is shocked, and fears of future distress alarm them exceedingly. I am sorry that the same

apprehensions are well founded in other countries, for by that means each will be deprived of help from another."

Nineteenth century weather also oscillated from extreme to extreme. In June, 1846, temperatures in the county of Kent hovered for 3 weeks between 105°-116°F (40°-45° Celsius). Yet in 1890, England was to be in the grip of its coldest winter for 300 years, whilst in Europe the river Tagus froze in Lisbon and the Mediterranean harbour of Toulon was covered with ice.

So there is nothing new about odd and extreme weather. Nor can automobiles or modern industry be blamed for any of these cases. Sometimes, natural phenomena can produce unnatural ones. The impact of meteors and giant comets, from Babylonian times to the 20th century, is plausibly argued by Victor Clube and Bill Napier in their 1990 book *The Cosmic Winter*. Some scientists, for example Guy Brasseur of the American National Center for Atmospheric Research, think that the 1991 eruption of the Mt. Pinatubo volcano in the Philippines will cause a significant drop in the earth's temperature for the next decade.

To inject a personal note, I happen to live in the Western Canadian city of Calgary where the weather is famously fickle. It is the sort of place where you can get all four seasons in a single day. For a couple of weeks in October of 1991, we had a good deal of snow and temperatures of zero °F (-18° Celsius). My reaction to this was, where is the Greenhouse effect now that we need it? But in the subsequent winter, we had virtually no snow and unseasonably mild temperatures for several weeks. The credit for this apparently belongs to the welcome phenomenon of El Niño, a warm current that makes its

appearance every 4 years. But then, to cap it all, we had frost and snow in the middle of the summer of 1992!

The same kind of thing was seen elsewhere. Throughout the summer of 1992, Hudson Bay remained covered in ice. There was summer snow and an early freeze in Alaska. At Tasch, in Switzerland, there was a 2ft snowfall in August. Moscow got its first dose of the white stuff in September, weeks ahead of normal. Britain followed up one of its worst recorded summers with one of the coldest and snowiest Octobers ever. Perhaps most to the long term point, sea temperatures off Baffin island and the Labrador coast were four degrees below normal.

Proponents of the Greenhouse effect always bring up three things: rise in the earth's temperature, rise in sea-levels, and increase in carbon dioxide levels. But without exception, these are misleading at best, fallacious at worst.

Thermometer data (recorded at weather stations) are vitiated by their uneven distribution across the world, being largely concentrated in the Northern hemisphere and taking virtually no account of the oceans that cover 75 per cent of the planet. They also fail to take account of local conditions and microclimates, in particular the so-called urban heat island effect. Robert Balling, director of climatology at Arizona State University, has (for instance) pointed out that temperatures in Phoenix can vary 10 degrees between city centre and suburbs. Hence, it makes a great deal of artificial difference to the overall statistics and projections just where you take your temperatures.

Since Baling produced his report in 1989, Roy Spencer of the NASA space centre in Huntsville, Alabama, has come up with a graph of global temperatures for the past decade. His figures are based on satellite data, far more reliable than thermometer data, being spread evenly across the world and not vulnerable to such distortions as the urban heat-island effect. Spencer's conclusion? "Over the entire 10-year period, there was no net warming or cooling."

Sea-level "statistics" are even more

misleading. Essentially, they are nothing more than averages derived from the readings of tide-gauges located in harbours. Localised conditions can produce any figures anyone wants. Horror stories about sinking islands (and there is nothing new in these, of course—remember Atlantis, the "Lost Continent"?) ignore such places as the Shetlands that are actually rising. The claim that polar icecaps are melting is based on nothing more than two photographs taken by two submarines, 10 years apart! In the words of David Aubrey, director of coastal research at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute on the Eastern American seaboard, "You can come up with any average and whatever answer you want. There is no evidence that the sea-level is rising due to global warming."

As to the dreaded carbon dioxide factor, no one denies the increase in emissions, but the consequences are (or should be!) very much a matter of debate. Carbon dioxide is only one of several greenhouse gases, and less influential than water vapour. All these gases both trap and radiate heat, emitting as much as they absorb. According to MIT professor of meteorology Ronald Newell, heating of the atmosphere is not the result of radiation but of the release of latent heat when water vapour becomes rain. Newell argues that increased carbon dioxide is not a warming factor, but a potentially cooling one. He is backed up by Walter Ellsasser of the California Lawrence Livermore laboratories, a research institution sponsored by the American government. In a recent paper, Ellsasser asserts that a doubling of carbon dioxide levels would have very little effect on the earth's temperature, and if it did, it would be a cooling one.

Other scientists, notably Sherwood Idso of the American Water Conservation Laboratories, maintain that in terms of earth history current carbon dioxide levels are at an all-time low, also that more would be welcome. Greater amounts of this life-giving gas would cause increased vegetable growth that could help feed the world's expanding population; Idso has demonstrated this by his experiments in cultivating orange trees in enclosed

spaces with double the normal concentration of carbon dioxide.

Indeed, even if the earth is warming up, we cannot lose, since on the reckoning of still more scientists a rise of one or two more degrees would cause more evaporation from the oceans with consequent widening of the tropics that would turn such desolate regions as the Sahel desert belt into a breadbasket.

Since human beings are themselves producers of carbon dioxide, fanatic environmentalists could help matters by committing suicide. The rest of us should sit back and relax. Over the last century, the earth's temperature seems to have increased by a half to one degree. But most of this happened before 1938, that is, before modern industry and lifestyles, and before the proliferation of cars. From 1938 to 1970, there was such a cooling trend that the doom-and-gloom merchants of that era were busy predicting a new ice age. One of these less than expert prophets were Steven Schneider of the US National Centre for Atmospheric Research. Since then, Schneider has turned full circle and is now on the Greenhouse warming wagon.

Incidentally, an article in the November 1982 issue of the *New Scientist* claims that the tree-wood exhalations of termites cause 22 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions. Likewise, dead ants create formic acid, a prime ingredient in acid rain, something else which has had an unduly bad press. Findings are now available from the large-scale American National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program, concluded in 1990. Its study of ice cores and lake sediments showed that rain has always been acidic, not much increased by modern pollutants. Soil and vegetation play a bigger role in acidifying the lakes than does acid rain. The beech trees of the Black Forest in Germany, marked for death by the gloom-and-doom brigade, have started to recover. Why? Because they were suffering from drought, not pollution. Nicer yet, the spruce trees are regrowing at an unusually fast rate. Why? Because acid rain is acting as a fertiliser.

A prime producer of acid rain is

sulphur dioxide (SO₂) generated by the burning of coal. But even this now has its scientific friends. A report by Professor Tom Wigley, leading climate expert at the University of East Anglia in Britain, shows how SO₂ particles bounce incoming short-wave solar energy back out of the atmosphere, thus reducing the amount of heat getting through to the earth's surface. Water droplets also condense on SO₂ particles, thereby producing clouds which are efficient in reflecting solar heat back into space.

This brings us to the other environmental scare of the moment: damage to the ozone layer and consequent increase in the danger of skin cancer for sun-worshippers. Here, too, there is a good deal more hyperbole and myth than scientific fact. A detailed article in the *Sunday Telegraph* (April 25, 1993) by Matt Ridley shows that there is no such thing as the ozone layer, at least as it is commonly (mis)understood. In the high troposphere, ozone concentrations average three parts per million, half that amount over the tropics. Above the range of 280 nanometres, the ozone 'shield' does not block ultraviolet light from reaching the ground. There is also no hole in the ozone layer, not even over the South Pole, where the truth is simply that in spring the concentration normally drops to roughly half its normal level. Finally, no one is denying the value of ozone in absorbing ultra-violet, but it does not have to be in a tropospheric layer. Ozone in the atmosphere is just as good, and its presence there is increasing about 10 per cent per decade, thanks to its prime source, that good old bugbear the car exhaust.

As to skin cancer, the fashionable scaremongering, given credibility by the fact that the United Nations attaches its name to the predictions, has been recently denounced by the National Radiological Protection Board in Britain which refuted tales spread by Greenpeace of rabbits blinded by ultraviolet radiation in southern Chile close to a supposed ozone hole in Antarctica. (See the report in the *Sunday Times*, June 20, 1993, again by its

environment correspondent Sean Ryan.) These findings are supported by a prominent dermatologist at Glasgow University, Rona MacKie, and (more suggestively) by Joe Farman of the British Antarctic Survey, previously associated with reports in 1985 of an ozone layer hole in the South Pole.

The most delightful aspect of the debate has to be the recent argument over how much damage, if any, is done to the ozone layer by human farting. Terry Bolin, an Australian gastroenterologist, got it started by urging people just before Christmas 1992 to avoid flatulence-causing turkey and plum pudding, because the consequent breaking of wind would add to the average daily output per person of 'dangerous' levels of hydrogen, carbon dioxide, and methane. He was at once shot down by (again) Professor Tom Wigley who pointed out that methane actually increases ozone. His conclusion: farting is environmentally sound. An extra wrinkle was provided by Professor Rodney Taylor of the British Digestive Foundation: since methane is produced by high-fibre foods, vegetarians are (for good or ill) the prime factor there; Taylor added that the average cow produces 500 litres of methane a day.

The next time you see Sting wearing his Save the Brazilian Rain Forest T-shirt, ask him if he knows that most of it was never lost in the first place! New U.S. Landsat satellite photographs taken in 1988 show that the previous ones from 1978 were both misleading in themselves and made far more so by pessimistic projections (a polite term for guesses) made on their basis. The new evidence is available in the form of a book of 1986 maps made and published by the Brazilian Institute for Space Research.

In 1989, a report from the George C. Marshall Institute (Washington, D.C.) entitled 'Scientific Perspectives on the Greenhouse Problem', predicted that the 21st century will be cooler than the present one, and that any Greenhouse effect would be a welcome brake on the arrival of a new ice age. This conclusion was based on a detailed study of

the long and well documented periodic dimmings and brightenings of the Sun, thanks to sunspots and other solar activities. These are seen to occur in super cycles of alternate centuries, and the Sun has been in one of its hotter and brighter periods since around 1880. This phenomenon has recently been corroborated by research in Denmark, based on analysis of records of solar behaviour that go back at least to the early 18th century.

Scary scenarios make good headlines (back in Roman times, Lucretius and Seneca were predicting the exhaustion and cataclysmic destruction of the earth), and it is easier to obtain funding for pessimistic than optimistic "research". Only a fool (not that there is any shortage of these in the environmental-ecological lobbies) would claim to have all the answers. But anyone who takes a cool look at this hot topic must conclude that there is a good deal more heat than light, and that this heat is mostly man-made, pumped out in many cases by the equivalents of Chicken Licken with a PhD. The most noxious example of this breed must be Vice-President Al Gore, whose highly profitable vision of the apocalypse to come, *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit*, serves up every environmentalist cliché in the book, from the need to stabilise world population (this from a father of four!) to phasing out pretty well all industrial development, a policy which one has to assume does not include his own profitable Tennessee zinc-mining, a very messy and polluting extractive industry (see the *Toronto Globe & Mail*, May 1, 1993). And this is the man who proposes to spend \$100 billion of taxpayers' money on his ecological fantasies. Since his elevation from Senator to Vice-President, we have not seen or heard much of Al Gore in this or any other connection: long may his absence continue!

Barry Baldwin is Professor of Classics at the University of Calgary.

Should there be Nursery Schooling for all? asks Stewart Deuchar

Nursery schooling for all is promised by all the political parties in Britain. Everybody wants to be seen to be wildly in favour of it. Sir Claus Moser proclaims that, 'All the research evidence points to the enormous benefits...' Even hard-boiled George Walden MP sees nursery schooling as the key to recovering our lost competitiveness. Feminists regard it almost as a fundamental human right. People on the left see it as a way of helping disadvantaged children. People on the right tend to be reassured by its Mary Poppins resonances. Educationists favour it because they believe that all things are best done by 'professionals'. There is much cluck-cluckings about the 'impoverished vocabulary' which many young children bring to school from their 'deprived' homes. The only people not yet on record as being wildly in favour are the children themselves.

Actually, not all the research evidence points to the enormous benefits. Barbara Tizard and Martin Hughes, whose credentials are impeccable, conducted a piece of research described in their book *Young Children Learning* (Fontana 1984). They selected thirty girls close to their fourth birthdays and compared their experiences at home and at nursery school. Fifteen of the girls came from middle class homes and fifteen from working class homes. By means of hidden microphones all their conversations were recorded and analysed.

The results challenge a great many assumptions about how young children's minds develop. The girls clearly learned far more in two and a half hours at home with their mothers than they did in their well run nursery schools in a similar period. This applied equally to all the children. The conversations which took place at home were of a completely different character from those which took place at

school. At home half the questions were asked by the children. At school nearly all were asked by the staff. A simple table shows this very clearly:

Frequency of children's questions, mean hourly rate

	<u>Home</u>	<u>School</u>
Working class	24.0	1.4
Middle class	29.0	3.7

The children were happy at nursery school. They played with sands, they blew bubbles, ran about and did all the things they were expected to do. They listened to stories being read, and they joined in singing songs. There were few tears, and not many quarrels. The staff were attentive and used every opportunity to try to extend the children's range of experience and vocabulary. The children learned a lot about how to adjust to a school environment, but not much else. The few pupil-staff conversations which took place were flat and sterile compared with the vibrant exchanges which even the least articulate girls had with their own mothers at home.

The first myth which this book challenges is that working class children arrive in school with an impoverished vocabulary. This had already been challenged by the American linguist W. Labov in a paper about the language of black ghetto children in 1969 (Labov, W. 1984 *the Logic of Non-standard English*, in P.P. Giglioli (ed) 1972. *Language in Social Context*. Harmondsworth). Tizard and Hughes found that their middle class girls were significantly more articulate than the working class girls, but the latter could certainly not be said to be verbally or intellectually 'impoverished', quite the contrary. Yet it is easy to see how this idea has gained acceptance. All the girls had been attending their nursery schools for almost a year, yet they all

switched off their curiosity when they came into the school. With the working class girls this switching off was even more noticeable than with the middle class girls (see table above).

Whatever the reason for this switching off, on this showing the effect of nursery schooling is to increase rather than diminish the advantage of being middle class.

Among a great many widely accepted notions challenged by Tizard and Hughes is Piaget's belief that children's minds work less logically than those of adults. If children appear less logical, it is because they do not have a solid basis of experience of how the world works; it is also often because adults are too insensitive, or too busy, to perceive what it is that the child is trying to say.

The basic fact is that children are desperately anxious to fit into an extremely complicated and puzzling world — the *adult* world. The things that preoccupy them are the central issues of the human condition, birth and death and everything in between. Clearly, a 'child-centred' institution such as a nursery school is not much help to a child wanting to explore these things. Neither is it a real school in which the serious business of becoming 'educated' is tackled head on. It is a sort of limbo.

Mothers start with tremendous advantages as educators. Not only do they share a wealth of memories with the child, which can be mulled over to provide material for truly educative exchanges, but they also exemplify life being lived by a real person — cooking, cleaning, mending, shopping, writing letters, dealing with neighbours and everything else. In this book it is striking that in the nursery schools the most interesting exchanges arose when a member of staff, instead of routinely going the rounds making comments and asking questions, hap-

pened to be 'anchored' somewhere, perhaps in a corner, mending or making some piece of equipment. Then children might come and ask the real questions. But even them most of the talk was at cross purposes because the

adult and the child had so little in common.

This book raises all sorts of questions about how we set about 'educating' children, including the question of whether nursery schooling for all is

really such a wonderful idea — for the children.

Stewart Deucher is Vice Chairman of The Campaign for Real Education.

A Godly Ruminant

Paul Belien sees Europe milked dry by bureaucrats

When Zeus, the supreme god, fell in love with the young Europa, he transformed himself into a bull and abducted her. That story is fairly famous. What happened next is less known. Europe gave birth to a calf which grew up to be the sacred cow of the European Community. Considering the Common Market's origins, it is no wonder that, from its earliest days, the EC has taken a particular interest in agriculture, preferably beef and dairy produce.

A few years ago I started an article in The Wall Street Journal with this provocative paragraph. The article ("Farmers' Sacred Cow Blocks Europe", WSJ-Europe, February 21, 1989) was about the CAP, the Common Agricultural Policy of the EC. The CAP was set up in 1962 as a welfare operation for farmers and devours almost two-thirds of the EC's annual budget. It works with so-called "interventions" and "restitutions". An intervention is the mechanism by which the EC buys up farm produce and takes it off the market whenever overproduction brings the market price down below a set minimum (the intervention price). A restitution is an export subsidy to promote the sale of an EC product on the world market. Thanks to the CAP, the EC keeps farmers going, who, without interventions and restitutions, would long have gone out of business. However, not only poor and honest farmers benefit from the CAP. Fraudulent operators and criminals also thrive on it. Each year up to

5 % of the CAP budget ends up in the hands of criminals.

Until the *Maastricht Treaty on European Union* came into force on 1st November 1993, the only domain in which the European Community had really succeeded in creating a genuine and recognisable common policy was agriculture. Since Maastricht the message has been put out that "Europe is

Thanks to the CAP, the EC keeps farmers going, who, without interventions and restitutions, would long have gone out of business. However, not only poor and honest farmers benefit from the CAP. Fraudulent operators and criminals also thrive on it

about to invade the everyday lives of all of us, not just the farmers." Are we, the citizens of Europe, all going to end up in the stomach of a godly ruminant? Not a bloodthirsty carnivore eager to rip us to pieces, but an insatiable vegetarian living on ever growing quanti-

ties of taxpayers' money?

Semantic Confusion

The story of Zeus and young Europa is a myth. According to Webster, a myth is "a story that explains some practice, belief or institution." However, the word can also refer to "a thing existing only in imagination or whose actuality is not very verifiable." Does the federal Europe, or an embryo of it, really exist? Can it even exist? Can it work? Is it something really supranational? Or does it just defend the national interests of one (or two) member-states disguised as a federalism claiming to uphold the benefits of all members?

The trouble about the growing influence of supranational federal Europe is that we do not exactly know what to expect. Even those who oppose the concept of "Europe" as it is being devised by the 13,000 civil servants of the so-called European bureaucracy in Brussels, do not know what the enemy they are fighting really looks like.

Indeed, since the Maastricht Treaty came into force, tremendous confusion has arisen, a reflection of which can be found in the present confusion over Euro-terminology. Shortly after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, the copy editor of *Trends*, the Brussels financial-economic weekly, sent a memo to all contributors of his magazine that from now on the magazine would no longer use the term European Community or the abbreviation EC. It would speak about the European

Union, or EU, instead. Most newspapers did the same. Overnight EC was replaced everywhere by EU. This, however, is wrong. The European Union does not exist yet. It is in the making. And it is not a transformation of the European Community. It is something basically different.

Both this European Union in the making and the European Community exist today — actually there are three of these European Communities: EEC, ECSC and Euratom — and the terms do not refer to the same subjects. All this is very confusing, but the confusion serves a purpose. If people are confused, they can be easily manipulated.

The term “European Union” refers to a new entity which is founded on the three European Communities and on specific intergovernmental activities of the (currently twelve) member-states of this Union in the areas of foreign policy, security, justice and home affairs. The term “European Community” refers to activities of the institutions and member-states of the European Communities (which happen to be the same as those of the European Union) in domains which have a more direct economic impact and which were already within their competence before 1993, such as the creation of a Single Market through mutual recognition of norms and through harmonisation of company law, regulation of financial services, and labour law. The EU has no legal personality. It cannot conclude international treaties, nor has it legislative power. The EC, however, is a legal person in international law. All the directives and regulations emanating from Brussels are EC legislation (“Directives” are EC-laws with a general appeal while “regulations” apply only in individual cases). They are subject to judicial review by the *Court of Justice of the European Communities*.

The root of the semantic Euro-confusion can be traced back to the mid-1960s. In the course of the 1950s a number of West European countries signed three different European treaties establishing three different European institutions: the European Economic Community (EEC), the

European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). As the six countries establishing these communities were the same and none of the three organisations was joined by any other members, the governing authorities of the three communities were merged in 1967. This led to the establishment of the Commission of the European Communities and the Council of Ministers of the European Communities. The latter changed its name into the “Council of Ministers of the European Union” in 1993, but the former is still officially called “Commission of the European Communities” even after the Maastricht Treaty. In all non-official documents, however, it refers to itself simply as “the European Commission”, which is also the name commonly used by the media.

“When words lose their meaning, people will lose their liberty,” said the Chinese philosopher Confucius in the 5th century BC. This fear has been shared by many over the centuries

The merger of their governing bodies in 1967, led to the disappearance of the terms Euratom, ECSC and even EEC, which was replaced by EC, the abbreviation for European Communities (plural). Soon, however, everyone started to use the term European Community (singular).

In 1985 the Single European Act was signed in which the member-states of the communities updated the three original treaties from the 1950s. By that time, however, everyone was already simply using the term “Europe” when referring to the twelve member-states of the EC.

When in 1973 Britain, the most prominent member of another important West European economic organi-

sation, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), left this organisation to join the EC, EFTA was reduced to a marginal group and the EC became the only significant institution for economic collaboration between free countries of the European continent. The result was that the term “Europe” became a synonym for an institution, so much so that when people in the twelve member-states of the EC/EU talk about Europe nowadays, it is not clear whether they are referring to the whole of Europe or to twelve nations only. Usually the latter is the case. This use of the term is wrong, however, for Europe comprises more than just those twelve nations on the Western and Southern fringe of the continent.

It is not only wrong, but also dangerous. “When words lose their meaning, people will lose their liberty,” said the Chinese philosopher Confucius in the 5th century BC. This fear has been shared by many over the centuries. “So long as we speak in language based in erroneous theory, we generate and perpetuate error,” wrote the British-Austrian economist and Nobel Prize winner Friedrich Hayek.

The enormous confusion over terminology makes it almost impossible nowadays to conduct a realistic discussion about European integration, what it is and what it should look like. One can be a Europhile and a Eurosceptic at the same time. It all depends on what the “Euro-” stands for. Usually it stands for supporting the concept of a supranational welfare system between the members of the European Union, as devised by the Commission of the European Communities. The word “Europe” has been claimed as their exclusive property by those defending the highly centralised concept of European integration propagated by the bureaucratic apparatus in Brussels. Those who do not agree with this concept are called “Eurosceptics”, or even “Eurohaters”.

The usurpation of the term Europe by a small group, turns their concept of European integration into a Zeus, a sacred cow, which one cannot criticise without being regarded as an anti-federalist and a dangerous nationalistic xenophobe.

But the real danger of the narrowing of the term Europe is that if the concept of the Brussels bureaucrats proves unworkable and becomes discredited, the whole idea of European federalism, political cooperation and economic integration will be discredited in the eyes of the public. What the Brussels bureaucracy is actually doing by claiming the exclusive right to speak on behalf of Europe, is forcing the public either to accept its vision of Europe as a supranational social-democratic welfare state, or to get no Europe at all. Consequently, those opposing this Europe are actually adopting a Eurofriendly position in trying to save Europe from the "Europhiles" defending "Europe".

The Third Attempt

'Europe' is a word which can mean different things. Europe is the western peninsula of the Eurasian land mass: the continent to the west of the Ural mountains and the Bosphorus and to the north of the Strait of Gibraltar, the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Caucasus. The twelve countries that make up the European Communities/European Union are but the extreme western and southern fringe of this continent. Neither North nor East nor Central Europe are part of it. The territory of the twelve EC/EU member states does not cover even a quarter of Europe's 10 million square kilometers. More than half of the continent's 680 million inhabitants are not represented by the European Parliament.

Europe is also a cultural concept. This is more complex to define. Among the citizens of the different nations on the European continent, there is a sense of allegiance transcending the limits of their own nation and encompassing other nations living on, but even living beyond, the European continent. Many scholars have written about this subject. Traditionally this sense of the larger cultural community was defined by "Christendom", the common denominator for the civilisation of all the cultures influenced by the religion of Christianity.

In the 18th century the cultural term "Christendom" was gradually replaced by the geographical term "Europe" to designate this same cultural commu-

nity. In 1799 the German romantic poet Novalis wrote an essay "Die Christenheit oder Europa" ("Christendom or Europe"), depicting the history of the European continent as a threefold process of unity, disintegration, and new unity. As the first unity was a unity under Christianity, the new unity, according to Novalis, also had to be a unity under Christianity. In reality, however, the appeal for European unity became a political appeal. As such, "Europe" was the rallying cry of both Napoleon Buonaparte, a Corsican who became a French dictator, and Adolf Hitler, an Austrian who became a German dictator, when they tried to expand the new political order which they had achieved at a national level, across the entire continent.

***...if the concept of the
Brussels bureaucrats
proves unworkable
and becomes
discredited, the whole
idea of European
federalism, political
cooperation and
economic integration
will be discredited in
the eyes of the public***

Both Napoleon's and Hitler's attempts at European unification were monstrous "carnivorous" undertakings which brought devastation to the whole continent and ended in military collapse. However, if these dictators had won their wars, European unification would already have been achieved, respectively in 1815 under French and in 1945 under German leadership. Britain fought both unification attempts, the first one in alliance with Prussia (Germany), the second one in alliance with France. Today the British are again very critical of European political unification. This time, however, the unification process is a peaceful, "vegetarian", undertaking, and Britain is virtually alone, facing an

alliance of Germany and France.

The attempts to achieve political unification of Europe were, almost by necessity, limited to the European continent. Europe in the cultural sense can either be larger or smaller than the geographical Europe. It can, on the one hand, encompass countries outside the European continent which were settled by European peoples, such as the United States, Canada or New Zealand. On the other hand it can exclude parts of the European continent inhabited by nations who historically did not belong to Catholic or Protestant Christian churches, such as Russia. This led to the appearance of a new cultural-political term in the 20th century: the "West".

One will usually speak of "the West" in referring to the broader community of originally catholic and protestant nations, including those which lie beyond the European continent but have been settled by Europeans. And one will speak of "Europe" if one wants to restrict this same group of nations to those on the European continent. The latter, cultural concept of Europe is smaller than the geographical entity of Europe, as it often excludes Russia. However, this might be changing if Russia turns towards the West again, as it did between 1702 and 1917, the era when St. Petersburg was Russia's capital.

On the Way to Rome

The British historian Hugh Seton-Watson once wrote, in an essay about the mystique of Europe, that it has been aptly proven that a sense of a European cultural community can exist without a movement for European economic and political unity. It did for more than 200 years. Whether the reverse can exist, a movement for European economic and political unity without a European cultural community, is the question. "It can," said Seton-Watson, "but at great cost, and perhaps not for very long." ("What is Europe, Where is Europe?", *Encounter*, July-August 1985.)

This brings us to the problem of the multicultural society, a society which lacks a sense of a common culture. If Seton-Watson is right the trend towards such a society — which is under

way in many European nation-states — implies not only the impossibility of building a larger European Union, but even an evolution towards a gradual political fragmentation and economic breakdown of Europe's nation-states themselves. According to Seton-Watson there is a need for "a positive common cause.... This was understood by the founders of the EEC, men well aware of the European cultural heritage and deeply marked by it. But when a mystique gets into the hands of bureaucrats, there is apt to be trouble."

Part of the original mystique can be found in the name that was given to the Brussels building which for more than 30 years now has been housing the Council of Ministers of the EC/EU — the *Charlemagne Building*.

Charlemagne, King of the Germanic tribe of the Franks, was crowned Emperor of the West in 800 A.D. He was the first ruler France and Germany ever had in common. His son, Louis the Pious, was the last. Indeed, his grandsons, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, became the first kings of, respectively, France and Germany, when in 843 at Verdun the Carolingian empire was divided and the nation-states of France (the West-Frankish kingdom) and Germany (the East-Frankish kingdom) were established.

It is striking how present attitudes to the concept of Europe bear resemblance to those of a distant past. Charlemagne — Carolus Magnus, or Charles the Great — is considered the father of the political unification of Europe as he is considered the father of both France and Germany, the two nations whose alliance constitutes the political backbone of the process for European unification after the Second World War. The territory of the original six member-states of the EC (France, Germany, Italy and the three Benelux countries) was an almost exact copy of his Carolingian Empire. Only Switzerland was missing.

But neither France nor Germany can claim that Charlemagne was born in their territory. The great Frank was born in the dynasty of the lords of Herstal, on the west bank of the river Maas in present-day Belgium, and he spoke the Germanic language of this

region, which later evolved into Dutch, the language currently spoken in Flanders and the Netherlands. The Maas (or Meuse in French) constitutes part of the border between the present-day kingdoms of Belgium and the Netherlands. Right on this border, 20 kilometers to the north of Herstal, is the city of Maastricht.

The Benelux was a modest institution. In its charter it never envisaged a transfer of national sovereignty to a supranational level, but it worked remarkably well, gradually eliminating all border controls between the countries

Here, on 7 February 1992, the Treaty on European Union was signed. The town of Maastricht has symbolic value. The city was founded by the Romans 2,000 years ago, on the spot where a very important Roman Road crossed the river Mosa. "*Mosa*" is the Latin name for Maas and the city was called accordingly: *Mosae Trajectum*, or "the crossing of the Maas". The Roman Road ran from *Colonia Agrippina*, the present-day German town of Köln (Cologne), to Camaracum, the present-day French town of Cambrai, on the road from Brussels to Paris. There still is an age old, popular nursery rhyme in the region which goes (in Dutch) "*Tussen Keulen en Parijs ligt de weg naar Rome*" or (in English) "Between Cologne and Paris, we find the way to Rome." Indeed in December 800, the hero of the people of the Maas was crowned emperor in Rome. Charlemagne probably crossed the Maas a number of times along the old Roman road in Maastricht. He established the capital of his European empire in Aachen, 30 kilometers to the east of Maastricht, on the spot where today

the borders of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany meet.

Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg paved the way to the Treaty of Rome by establishing the first European organisation intent on creating one economic market for different countries: the Benelux. The war experience of the early 1940s had brought the exiled Dutch, Belgian and Luxemburgian governments together. In September 1944 the governments of the three countries signed the Treaty of London, establishing an economic union between their nations. The Benelux was a modest institution. In its charter it never envisaged a transfer of national sovereignty to a supranational level, but it worked remarkably well, gradually eliminating all border controls between the countries.

Encouraged by this experience, in the early 1950s the three Benelux-countries together with France, West-Germany and Italy decided to set up a number of organisations for economic cooperation. The initiative for the first of these organisations, the European Coal and Steel Community of 1952, was taken by a Luxemburgian, Robert Schuman, who became the French prime minister in 1947. Schuman, remembering three devastating Franco-German wars in less than a century, reckoned that the only way to neutralise the political enmity between the two arch-enemies France and Germany would be to merge their economies, beginning with the heavy coal and steel industries. His colleague, the German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, a lifelong democrat who had been the mayor of Cologne before the Hitler dictatorship (and who had been imprisoned by the Nazis), agreed.

In 1955 the Messina Conference laid the foundation for two other pan-European economic organisations between the six "Charlemagne" countries: *Euratom*, establishing a common market for the development of peaceful applications of atomic energy, and the European Economic Community, aimed at establishing one border-free Common Market for goods and services between the member-states by 1970. Unlike the Benelux, a substantial transfer of sovereignty from

the national governments to the supranational level was envisaged. The process resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Rome on 25 March 1957. The EEC was born.

The Middle Realm

The Treaty of Verdun of 843 divided the old empire of Charlemagne not just into two parts — a west Frankish kingdom for Charles the Bald, the first king of France, and an East Frankish kingdom for his brother, Louis the German, the first king of Germany. There was also a third brother, Lothar, who inherited the imperial crown and the lands lying between France and Germany: the Middle Frankish kingdom. This Kingdom of the Middle was named after him: *Lotharii Regnum* or *Lotharingia* (“Lorraine” in French, “Lothringen” in German, “Lotharingen” in Dutch).

Lothar’s realm comprised all the countries lying between France and Germany today (the three Benelux nations plus Switzerland) along with the Eastern part of present-day France (the regions of Lorraine, Alsace, Burgundy and Provence), as well as part of western Germany (Frisia, which lies along the North Sea coast, the whole west bank of the Rhine and also the eastern part of the Cologne area) and as the northern half of Italy.

When Lothar’s son died without offspring in 875, the middle territories were divided between Charles the Bald and Louis the German. However, as these regions lay on the periphery of their heartlands, generations of kings of France and Germany trying to consolidate their royal powers were never able to establish a firm rule over them. The result was that throughout the Middle Ages, and for some of them up to the 18th century and even today, the lands of the ancient middle part of Charlemagne’s empire were made up of virtually self-governing republics of farmers (as in Switzerland), independent counties controlled by burghers (as in the Netherlands and along the Rhine) or city republics (as in northern Italy).

Virtually self-governing, with little interference from greedy princes, their tax collectors and meddling civil servants, these lands became very prosperous. Capitalism started here. This

whole axis from Amsterdam in the north to Siena in the south evolved into the economic spine of Europe. To a large extent it remains so today and the inhabitants are still influenced by centuries of independence and self-reliance without government interference.

During the course of history in some of these middle regions (notably in the Netherlands and the Burgundian era at the time of the United Dutch Republic, and in Switzerland) these small, independent states merged gradually into federations where the constituting parts and the individual citizens retained a large degree of autonomy. The fact that there was a broader federation not only guaranteed greater protection against enemies from abroad, but even came to guarantee that at the level of the individual republics, counties or cities the rulers could not abuse their powers and the citizens maintained the same level of freedom as in the other member-states of the federation.

In these regions sophisticated politi-

This whole axis from Amsterdam in the north to Siena in the south evolved into the economic spine of Europe. To a large extent it remains so today and the inhabitants are still influenced by centuries of independence and self-reliance without government interference

cal theories were devised which ensured that the Prince or the government did not embody the highest authority and was accountable to the law. Both Switzerland since the 13th century and the Netherlands from the 16th to the 18th century were repub-

lics. The Burgundian Netherlands had a Prince, but whenever he wanted to raise taxes, this prince, the Duke of Burgundy, had to ask the 17 counties of the Federation (and in the most prosperous of these counties, like Flanders and Brabant, even the different cities) for their permission. Both Switzerland and the Burgundian Netherlands were multilingual federations. Even many of the individual member-states of the federation were themselves multilingual. As neither the federal government nor the local governments had the powers to pursue a policy of cultural or linguistic unification, this never led to problems. The linguistic conflict in Belgium (the former southern part of the Burgundian Netherlands) only started in the 19th century when the old counties had been abolished and the country had been transformed into a centralised state intent on uniformisation.

The former Carolingian Middle Lands saw not only the birth of capitalism but also of limited government. A decentralised political culture developed which generated the same general principles as the anti absolutist English political tradition. Contrary to the English common law system, however, these political systems were rooted in the civil law tradition and accepted a written legal and constitutional order. Thus *federalism* was born. It is almost a synonym of constitutionally guaranteed limited government, both at the local and at the highest federal level. Federalism in this sense was seen from the bottom up, not as a system imposed from above. This is also the real meaning of subsidiarity: power is delegated to the lowest possible level which can guarantee a decent civil order — and the lowest possible level of all is often the individual citizen.

Many capitalist ideas came to England via the Netherlands. In mediaeval times there were extensive contacts between England and Flanders, and later between England and Holland. Bernard Mandeville, the writer of “The Fable of the Bees” was a Dutchman who had settled in London. Via New Netherlands, the colony established by the United Dutch Republic along the

Hudson River, the federalist ideas also took root in America and were later incorporated into the American Constitution, which is in effect a merger of two different traditions of limited government: the common law tradition of the English and the federal tradition born in the lands of the former Carolingian Middle Kingdom.

In modern times absolutist monarchs succeeded gradually in bringing most of the regions of the ancient Middle-Frankish realm under their control. Centralised nation-states which were ruled from above were established almost everywhere. The kings of France and Prussia succeeded in subduing their part of the Rhine region. The French Revolution swept away all the existing self-governing systems, and after the fall of Napoleon only Switzerland returned to its old constitutional order. Everywhere else we witness the beginning of the era of the centralised state, forever expanding its powers and legitimising itself by establishing welfare systems that “take care” of the citizens from the cradle to the grave. In many regions, however, like Flanders and Lombardy, the memory of the ancient free self-governing federation is still alive and federalist movements have a strong popular appeal. It is no coincidence that this call for regional autonomy goes apace with a call for a more liberal economy and the right of people to take care of themselves.

It is no coincidence either that nearly all the Founding Fathers of the EEC were people from the old Middle-Frankish kingdom, like Schuman and Adenauer. Schuman was a Luxemburgian by birth who as a young man had settled in the neighbouring region of Lorraine/Lothringen. Adenauer regarded himself as a Rhinelander, so much so that he once toyed with the separatist idea of establishing an autonomous Rhine-republic, independent of Germany. The EEC started out, not as a combined initiative of France, the centralist nation-state born out of the West-Frankish kingdom, and Germany, its East-Frankish counterpart, united in a common enterprise to subdue the citizens of Europe after having each tried to establish a unified Europe on its own

terms, but as a Middle-Frankish venture. It wanted to check both French and German national ambitions as well as all tendencies towards state absolutism.

Being profoundly shaped by their backgrounds in the capitalist Middle-Frankish civil community, the Founding Fathers knew instinctively how to neutralise dangerous state ambitions and guarantee freedom, peace and prosperity: via economic liberalisation

Being profoundly shaped by their backgrounds in the capitalist Middle-Frankish civil community, the Founding Fathers knew instinctively how to neutralise dangerous state ambitions and guarantee freedom, peace and prosperity: via economic liberalisation.

The Enemy Within

The EEC of the Treaty of Rome was set up as an instrument for economic liberalisation. The aim of transferring national sovereignty to the supranational level was to prevent the national levels from becoming too interventionist. The net result should be less government interference. However, the opposite has happened.

The EEC's Founding Fathers had the right instincts, but they had overlooked a phenomenon which was taking place after the Second World War. The absolutist monarchies that had gradually gained control also over most of the self-ruling territories of the ancient Middle-Frankish realm, had in the 19th century been replaced by nationalistic nation states, who in the 1950s, all over Western Europe, were

being replaced by social-democratic welfare states. Europe's citizens, after having been “children of the King” and “children of the nation-state”, were now becoming “children of the welfare state”, but not “grown-up” individuals able to take care of themselves. The latter was considered to be the government's task. The state was to be held primarily responsible for the protection and promotion of the economic and social welfare of the citizens. For the state this provides a handsome alibi. It can claim a right to be absolutist in the citizens' own interest.

The transformation of the national states into welfare states took place between 1950 and 1960, exactly at the same time the EEC was set up. This virtually aborted the goal of the Founding Fathers — economic liberalisation — from the beginning. Ironically the EEC, an organisation which was set up to fight state absolutism, would ultimately be transformed into a vehicle for welfare state absolutism.

As long as the EEC remained a vehicle for economic liberalisation, the member states were very reluctant to surrender sovereignty. This attitude was due more to socialism than to nationalism. The acceptance of the notion that a citizen has a right to state aid whenever he finds himself in social or economic difficulties, ensures that any project limiting the power of the national state is doomed from the beginning — unless the institution replacing the national state takes over its welfare functions. This was the case with the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), set up in 1962. The CAP is a gigantic multi-national welfare operation for farmers. It has proved a financial and economic disaster, but in terms of supranational co-operation it was a success.

In 1966 the so-called *Luxemburg Compromise* granted member states the right to veto any Community decision whenever they felt a “vital interest threatened”. This was the final blow to the liberalisation goal. The EEC's welfare-state governments invoked vital interests threatened each time a segment of their population risked experiencing a social or economic disadvantage as a result of economic lib-

eralisation on the European level. As a result, on New Year's Day 1970, the border-free market for goods and services, promised by the Treaty of Rome, was nowhere in sight. Although not very successful, the EEC (apart from the CAP) more or less remained an instrument for economic liberalisation until the end of the 1970s. This explains why in 1973 the British entry into the EEC was strongly opposed by the Labour Party and backed by the Conservative Party.

However, as the original six "Charlemagne" members of 1957 were joined by Denmark, Great Britain and Ireland (1973), Greece (1981), and Portugal and Spain (1986), it became ever more difficult to set up mechanisms for a supranational liberalisation of the market. The more welfare states were involved, the greater the probability of welfare-state-inspired vetos. Most of the new members did not join because they adhered to free-market principles, but because it was a way of getting their agriculture and industry subsidised. The outlook of the executive branch of the EC, the European Commission, also changed.

The goal of the Commission shifted from the economic liberalisation envisaged by the Rome Treaty to sometimes plain economic interventionism. This was almost inevitable given the way in which the Commission is composed: it has seventeen members, two from each of the five larger member states and one from each of the seven smaller ones. In small countries like Belgium there is a silent agreement among the main political parties to have a rota for the one commissioner the country is allowed to nominate every four years. If a Christian-Democrat politician has been commissioner during the previous term, the next term goes to a Socialist, and the next to a Liberal. A big country with two European commissioners usually nominates one from a right-wing party and one from the left. Britain has one Conservative and one Labour commissioner, Germany one Christian-Democrat and one Liberal. Because the Commission encompasses the whole political spectrum, it still includes some advocates of free-market

principles, but it also contains advocates of a planned economy. Inevitably the economic policy it creates is a mixed bag. The EC has become the champion of a "mixed economy" — or, as its defenders would say, "capitalism tempered by socialism" — the typical economic system of the welfare state.

Jacques Delors was one of the first to notice that by the early 1980s economies had become increasingly international, which made it impossible for the individual welfare states to retain national control over their economies

This is also true at the level of the Council of Ministers. The policy one gets within the EC is always the same: compromise, the "muddle of the middle". If, however, one needs to compromise between a party which is against government interference in the economy and one which is in favour of this, even the middle position will always lead to more interference than before.

In 1985 Jacques Delors became president of the European Commission. For the presidency of the Commission there is also an unwritten agreement between the member states to apply a rotation system, based on both nationality and ideological affiliation. In 1985 it was the turn of a Frenchman and a Socialist. This was Delors' chance. He was a former French Socialist minister. He was not a principled hard-line Socialist who believed in a planned economy, but a moderate one who believed in the "mixed" economy of the welfare state. And he clearly understood the enormous potential of the EC, not as a vehicle of economic liberalisation, but as a vehicle of the welfare

state.

The Fatal Conceit

Jacques Delors was one of the first to notice that by the early 1980s economies had become increasingly international, which made it impossible for the individual welfare states to retain national control over their economies. Consequently, the welfare state, which depended on the money and wealth generated by the free economy, had to follow the economy to the supranational level. As the internationalisation of economies was proceeding at an ever increasing pace, Delors knew he had to act fast. He immediately started improving the EC's institutional mechanisms so that supranational integration would proceed smoothly and quickly. Within a year after his accession, the Single European Act (December 1985) had been passed.

The Single European Act abolished the unilateral veto of the member states (except for various welfare reasons, such as "health, safety, environmental protection, consumer protection, or protection of the working environment") and introduced a weighted voting system. The Single Act also reset the date by which the EC should be a border-free market for goods and services to December 31, 1992. The latter could be seen as a paradox: a goal of liberalisation, such as the creation of a border-free market, to serve an interventionist welfare purpose. But Delors understood that a border-free market would lead to the extra economic growth which was needed to generate the necessary money for the survival of the ever expanding welfare mechanism.

Delors reversed the whole mentality behind the EC. He officially added a "social dimension to the European project and he turned the EC bureaucracy into an instrument which was to intervene regularly in the national economies in order actively to "create" a Free Market. One thing, however, Delors did not understand: a bureaucracy cannot construct a free market; a free market creates itself, spontaneously. A government, whether it be national, European or local, cannot "create" freedom, it can only let freedom happen. Liberty, as Isaiah Berlin

(a Latvian) has warned, should be a negative concept rather than a positive one. It has more to do with what a political authority does not, than with what it does. Positive liberty, as Leszek Kolakowski (a Pole) has remarked, is a Marxist concept. It more often leads to less freedom than to more.

However, Latvians and Poles, not being "Europeans", were not heard. The 17 commissioners and the 13,000 civil servants working in the Charlemagne building and other office buildings of the Commission in Brussels were pleased with Delors' message to start "constructing Europe". It made them feel important, this was the fatal conceit.

Socialism, as Hayek (an Austrian) wrote, is a form of constructivism, which is immodest: certain politicians and bureaucrats think that they know better than the people themselves what is good for them. The problem is not that these constructivists do not mean well (they often do) but that they suffer from a lack of knowledge. The constructivist mentality sees society as a system that can be centrally directed.

However, as society grows more and more complicated, it becomes ever more difficult to centralise knowledge in one bureaucratic centre. The system becomes self-defeating through its lack of knowledge about reality. Socialism works in the closed, almost "tribal" order of the group, where everybody more or less knows what everybody else's goals and needs are, but not in the open and ever more complicated, extended order of the modern world. In the open extended order one can only know what the goals and needs of people are by looking at the market. The market, on condition that it is open and free, is, as Michael Polanyi (a Hungarian) pointed out, a medium of communication which conveys information about how people behave in accordance with the knowledge they have about their own situations. The market is a reservoir of knowledge which is constantly being updated and which is vital for the survival of the open extended order. Without it the societal order breaks down and society can only survive if it closes itself, or if it "tribalises". Protectionism is the eco-

nomie result of such tribalisation. It is the consequence of both socialism and nationalism.

Tribalisation or "group egoism" is what the Treaty of Maastricht is really about. Maastricht is the culmination of the Delors mentality which has permeated the EC. Maastricht cannot work because constructivism cannot work, like the former Socialist regimes in Eastern Europe. They also lacked knowledge and were out of touch with reality. They ultimately perished, but not without having first destroyed the whole economy and brought poverty to the people. Maastricht might do just that, because the European commissioners and their thousands of civil servants do not have the slightest knowledge about the European realities: the goals, the aspirations and the needs of the peoples of Europe. They cannot have, for nobody can. Only the market, always adapting and adjusting itself to new phenomena and evolutions, can communicate these.

***Delors' Europe will
turn out to have been
an unattainable
vision, but before this
is realised it may
cause great damage to
Europe — west as
well as east***

Europe does not need Maastricht, or any other new Treaty, to make it more free and prosperous. In order to become free, Europe needs more freedom. Maastricht wants to impose a European Union from above, but federalism from above is not federalism.

The Delors Commission began replacing the various local (national) government regulators by a European super-regulator claiming to be intent on "liberalising" the market. Once more, positive liberty is leading to less freedom. Competition between the various national regulators at least has the advantage that the citizens and companies of Europe can move their money and economic activity to the

most business friendly and economically sound countries. The European super-regulator robs them of this advantage. But the East European experience in 1989 has proven that the market will ultimately prevail as it knows more than the regulator. In the knowledge society of the twenty-first century, the EC will not be able to halt the internationalisation of economies and the spread of information beyond the borders of Europe. If Luxemburg is forced by EC interventionism to give up its favourable climate for international banking, the banks will move to the Cayman Islands, the Netherlands Antilles or other distant places. For the home-banking citizen of the modern age it takes only a push on a button to transfer money, whether to a bank in his home town, or in Luxemburg, or at the other side of the world.

Delors' Europe will turn out to have been an unattainable vision, but before this is realised it may cause great damage to Europe — west as well as east. Indeed the new EC mentality which caused the change of the Founding Fathers' negative concept of liberty, as expressed in the Treaty of Rome of 1957, into the positive concept, embodied in the Treaty of Maastricht of 1992, is also apparent in the attitude of the Community towards other nations, especially Eastern Europe. So long as the EEC was an instrument for true liberalisation it was an open organisation, welcoming new members even when this brought additional problems. When the mentality of group egoism gripped the institution, it acted as Socialist systems do everywhere: it closed its borders to the outside world. By the end of the 1980s the EC had become a closed instead of an open society. European nations applying for membership were told to wait until the group had consolidated. When the Iron Curtain fell in 1989 the EC did not welcome the liberated East-European nations in and did not open its market to their goods. Instead it shut them out because it did not consider them fit to participate in the "open" market of the EC. They were not welfare states, as they did not generate any wealth (yet) for redistribution by national, let alone supranational welfare mechanisms.

The loyalty of Delors and the constructivist “Europhiles” to Europe is only a loyalty to the welfare state. Their “Europe” does not include ancient European nations like Poland, Hungary, Latvia and others, who have first hand experience of the reality of Socialism, and their European adherence is conditional. It depends on the “social dimension” that is given to it. In 1989 the French President Francois Mitterrand made it clear that he was not prepared to accept the border-free market and lift restrictions on the free movement of capital within the Community if the Community did not write up a “Social Charter”. Mitterrand backed Maastricht, because it paved the way for the “social Europe”.

The EC/EU structure is self-defeating in our expanding world where the

need for the optimisation of human knowledge is growing. The hardline socialist regimes of the planned economy in Eastern Europe could not survive in the knowledge society our world is becoming, but neither can the moderate socialist welfare regimes of the mixed economy in Western Europe, not even when they act on a supranational level. These regimes will implode as completely as the regimes in the East. As soon as that happens, the real legacy of the old federal civil order of the former Carolingian Middle Lands might stand the chance it unfortunately did not stand in the 1950s. By the way, it is no wonder that the only remnant of this old order, Switzerland, does not want to have anything to do with the concept of “Europe” that is currently being de-

vised in Brussels. The Swiss understand the correct nature of federalism.

A compatriot of Jacques Delors, the 17th century French poet Jean de La Fontaine, wrote a fable about a frog who became envious of the size of the ox in the meadow beside the frog pool. So it puffed and puffed and swelled up. “Yurrop, yurrop, yurrop,” it went at every puff, “Europe, Europe, Europe,” until it finally burst.

The story has a sequel: The ox, witnessing the frog’s implosion, shook its head and said (with its American accent): “Mooh man, if you want federalism, try capitalism first.”

Paul Belien is Director of the Centre for the New Europe in Brussels.

Frights

Tristan Jones remembers some nautical horrors

I have lost count of the of times that people have asked me what were the most frightening experiences I’ve had in over 50 years sea-faring. I usually answer the question with a joke — something like: “Oh, the time I had some passengers joining when I was chartering my yacht in the Greek Islands, and one of them was listed as Mrs Thatcher”; that kind of thing. I’m not too good at talking about real fears.

Here I won’t count my five years Royal Navy war-time, spent mostly on North Atlantic convoys in destroyers and frigates. Some of that was frightening indeed, although I suppose there was some comfort in having company on such occasions, and in knowing that someone else was in charge. Neither do I count the time in 1960 when my boat was almost overwhelmed by a capsizing iceberg in the Arctic: that was so unique and terrifying an occasion as to

be beyond most ordinary mortals’ comprehension, thank God. Another time I don’t count was when my 24 ft Folkboat was smashed to bits by a blue whale in mid-Atlantic; simply because there was no time to be frightened: the whole episode was over in less than a minute. That was in 1968. It is only in hindsight that it is terrifying. Occasionally now I have a nightmare of it. In my 50-odd years voyaging under sail the two times which I do count, though, both occurred when I was single-handing. They always strike my mind and emotions when this question is asked, but I’ve never spoken much with anyone about them. Both times happened in a dead-flat sea-calm, and both times other marine animals besides me were involved.

The way I tell these tales might offend some conservationists, but believe me the most vital thing when you

are alone on the ocean is to conserve yourself, because if you don’t you’ll be dead.

The first terrifying time was in the northern autumn of 1968; a portent perhaps of the whale encounter which I mentioned before and which happened a couple of weeks later. I’d departed from Vigo, in North-West Spain, in my 24 ft engine-less Folkboat “*Two Brothers*”, headed for the Azores and eventually, I had hoped, for South America. The wind in those parts is usually a north-westerly, but a few hours after I slipped port it veered and blew quite strongly from the south-west. This forced me north into the Bay of Biscay. As usual when any kind of blow strikes up, the comparatively-shallow Bay becomes very rough; the best thing to do is get out of it into the open Atlantic ocean; I hauled around for the north-west, to escape into the

deeper, more steady North Atlantic.

As suddenly as the wind had risen, it dropped again and left me rolling away with the mainsail banging this way and that for 30 hours, until there was a dead flat calm. Over the slowly-moving, undulating sea-hills I could still see the mountains of Galicia, mist-shrouded at their peaks, 25 miles to the south. So there I was, becalmed. It was fairly cold; I was wearing two jerseys and two pairs of corduroy trousers.

In those days thick corduroys were best in cold-weather sailing; not like now with all these fancy-pants developed for skiers and such. Corduroys were cheap, too, then, not like now..

I remember I'd just finished my lunch. As I washed my plate in the sea I realised that the sea, instead of being its usual greeny-blue, was almost black. I stared at this for a second, until I realised that "Two Brothers" was surrounded, five to ten feet underwater, by a *school of whales*. Not a mere one or two; not a dozen, but a living, breathing, moving, racing, menacing *one hundred* — at least — of them. Many of them must have been shifting at twenty knots. One suddenly, aggressively, noisily, surfaced, and I saw that it was a narwhal. That one must have been all of twenty feet long and he must have weighed a good ten tons. They were probably feeding off small fish; pilchards most likely.

I was too frightened, with all those moving masses threatening to collide with my boat, to think about their feeding habits. I stared straight down into the water; three narwhals were basking in the shade of my boat, lying athwartships no more than a foot below my keel. Now and again one would rub its fin — I could feel the boat shudder every time. Within half a minute, even under two jerseys and a jacket, I was perspiring freely. I tried to recall the prayers I had learned as a child in Wales. That was the day my beard turned grey. That herd of narwhals stayed with "Two Brothers" for three and a half hours, and I've never, not even in steamer-crowded fog or storm, felt the same doom-laden terror. Then, as suddenly as the great cumbersome animals had appeared,

they all disappeared. That evening the wind rose from the north-west; I was once again underway and, whilst still shaking, happy.

The second time I was really terrified was in November 1972 off the coast of Peru, in my 18 ft long cutter "*Sea Dart*". We all know that the Humboldt Current, as it runs north from the Antarctic Ocean, carries along with it some other strange creatures besides wind-less singlehandlers. It's a vast foggy area, because of the hot sun and cold sea water. Again, even though I was just south of the Equator, I was wearing two jerseys. I'd been at sea, heading south for Callao, beating against the prevailing southerly breeze and the Humboldt current, for about 60 days and nights (that's right, *two months*) — I know I was not hallucinating, I'll tell you later about a couple of times that I did — and neither was I drunk; there had been no liquor within miles of me for months.

Beating out in the night, but not so much as to get carried too far offshore, and in the day beating inshore, but not so much as to run ashore, is the name of the long, slow game under sail on the West Coast of South America, heading south. But sometimes, inshore, the wind would die; I would be carried back north-west into the ocean-reaches by the merciless Humboldt, and then, wearily, have to fight my way back to the coast again.

Near the land the seas were calm, when the wind died, and this time was like that. The fog at sea-level is burned off by the sun about noon; then the heat is enough to fry what brains we have, but the scenery revealed — the *snow-capped Andes*!

I couldn't sit staring at the snowy peaks all day; I turned to gaze over *Sea Dart's* side. What met my eyes was enough to make a bishop burn his bible. All around and under the boat, was a blood-red *monstrous jelly-fish*. It was round, undulating and pullulating, so that it appeared to my horror-stricken eyes as if it was breathing, and extending out about all around the periphery of this scarlet monster there were tentacles waving out another ten feet or so. Some of them

curled up and reached menacingly above the surface of the seas; some of them only inches away from my gunwhales.

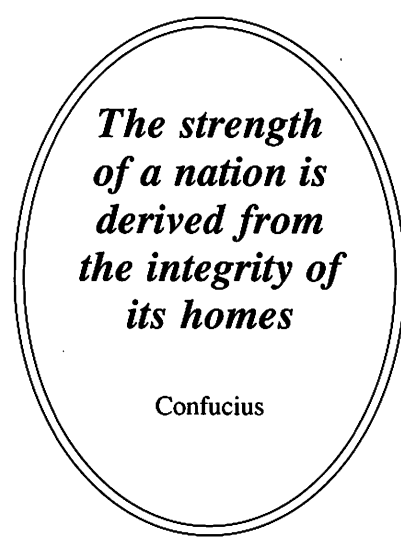
Even as I gaped further I saw that riding on the seas all around, just below the surface, were other monstrous beings, giant jellyfish or whatever they were, and some were blue, some green and some inky black. When I came to my senses I dragged my never-yet-used, 4 hp British Seagull outboard motor out of its carton, fumbled it onto its stern-mounting, scrambled around panic-struck for gasoline, prayed like a maniac and pulled the ripcord.

The engine started first time and I got out of that patch of horrible colour as fast as I could, all the while hoping to hell that the engine noise and the prop wash would not stir those creatures into defensive anger.

I told this last tale a few times afterwards; for some years it was sometimes scoffed at. Recently, however, there have been reportings of these giant "jellyfish" in the Humboldt Current by scientists, so it must be true. Sooner or later one or more of these monsters may be shown on television: then we will all *know* it's true.

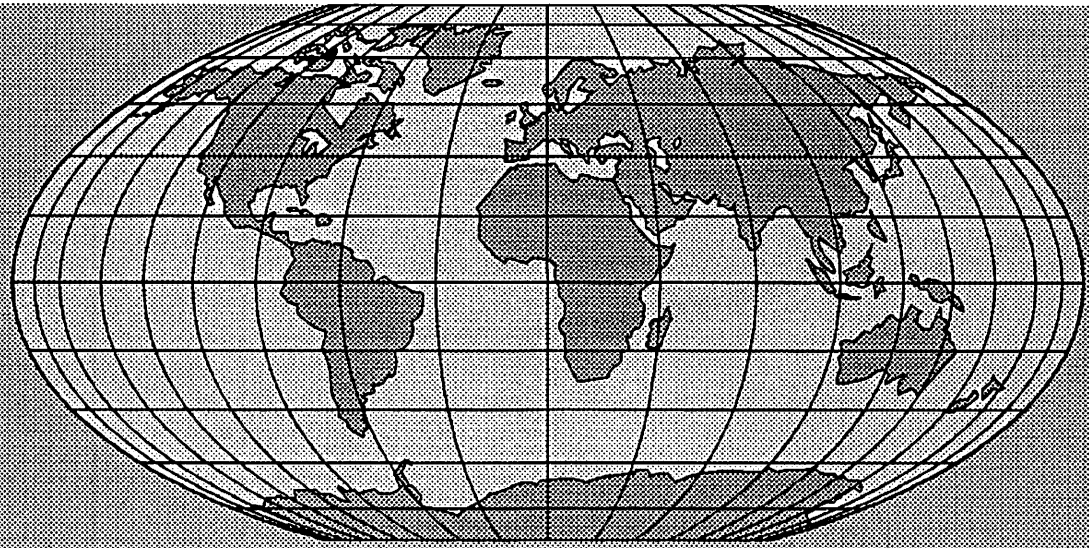
"There are more things in Heaven and Earth Horatio than are dreamt of in your philosophy"; but I'm convinced there are many more in the sea.

Tristan Jones, a prolific maritime author, runs a project for the disabled in Phuket, Thailand.



*The strength
of a nation is
derived from
the integrity of
its homes*

Confucius



Letter From Australia

Peter Coleman sees the next poll as a referendum on the Queen.

Back in the antediluvian Sixties — early in 1963, about the time of the Stephen Ward-Christine Keeler scandals — I was sent to interview Alexander Downer, the conservative grandee, anglophile, Minister in the Menzies Cabinet — and father of the Alexander Downer who in May this year became Leader of the Opposition to the Keating Labor Government.

It was a baffling interview, intriguing and disappointing. He believed, for example, that the moral rot in England ('once the most spiritual country in the world') was running deep but that Australia could still resist the infection — an optimism I could not share. He referred movingly to his religious self-discovery during his years as prisoner of the Japanese in Changi, but then he lauded the egregious tract of the time, *Honest to God*. He laughed equally at censorship (Mary McCarthy's *The Group* was in issue at the time) and at republicanism ('Australians love the Queen'). Like Paul Keating, he collected antiques; like Gough Whitlam, he served on the board of The National Gallery; and like me, he wanted to see Venice again before he died. The statesman he most admired was Disraeli.

Neither ideologue nor career politician, he was that rare animal in Australia, the conservative radical born to politics and public service. So is his son,

the second Alexander Downer: it is the key to both his confidence and his popular appeal.

But there are differences. The son knows his father's world is gone. His own view of politics is sharper and tougher. The struggles he faces call for more steel and guile than his father needed or wanted, and he appears to have them.

When aged 43 he was elected, unopposed, Leader of the Liberal (that is, liberal-conservative) Party, it had been beaten in five elections in a row. It had lost government in 1983 after falling into a slough of dispiriting, unprincipled pragmatism from which it was only partly rescued by the ideologues of economic rationalism. These triumphalist 'drys' introduced a market rigour into their Party's economic policies but were so inept on all other issues — from republicanism or foreign policy to educational standards or family policy that Labor leaders Bob Hawke or Paul Keating would easily outwit them. Some of them even managed to guarantee Labor ten more years in government by splitting conservative support and working for a new party led by a provincial demagogue. In the last election they ensured Labor's victory by jubilantly promising, if elected, a huge new Value Added Tax.

Alexander Downer moved almost immediately to restore the Party to what he has chosen to call commonsense,

regardless of ideological purity. If some conservatives had seemed indifferent to the problems of Asian migrants or Aborigines, he certainly was not. He also made early commitments to small business, the arts, the environment, local government and the states. You are trying to be all things to all men, warned his 'dry' critics who had themselves talked to no one but each other.

But what Downer was doing was to bring the Liberal Party back to the mainstream. 'I am born of the Liberal Party,' he said with assurance, and people knew what he meant.

The test will come in the next election when the dominating issue will be the republic. Downer has none of his father's passionate royalism. Like most Australians, he does not rule out the idea of a republic one of these days. We are already 'a crowned republic', that is, a constitutional democracy without baubles or sentimentality. Most voters — even in Sydney, the republican base — still see no obvious advantage in a republic, but fear a consolidation of the power of the central government.

Under the present constitution the Governor-General is selected by the Australian Government but appointed by the monarch and enjoys a limited number of independent powers including the power to dismiss a government and call an election. A President of Australia would be a government appointee and stooge with no reserve powers. (Keating rules out the

option of having the public elect a President since that would create an alternative focus of power and authority to the Prime Minister.)

But the argument that Australia should, in self-respect, have its own 'head of state' has some obvious resonance, and indeed only a small majority entirely dismisses the republican case.

If this often becomes an arid argument among lawyers, it is a different matter with proposed changes to the flag, especially the elimination from its corner of the Union Jack. The flag is a potent icon of Australian pride, combining symbols of nationhood and history. In principle, it is possible to create an equally effective new one. But the alternatives so far suggested by the republicans are both drab and ridiculous.

These matters have been put in issue because Mr Keating needed them to mobilise his Party, especially the Labor Left, in the light of his government's economic failures (record unemployment, reduced standards of living) and its espousal of privatisation and deregulation.

Now as the global economy recovers, and Australia's with it, the Labor Party, particularly its right wing, would prefer to fight on economic policies and to defer the republic and the new flag until after the next election or even until the Olympic Games in Sydney in the year 2000 with all the millennial and nationalist hoopla they are bound to evoke. But Keating cannot retreat and Downer will not let him.

When Connor Cruise O'Brien was in

Australia developing his well known theme of the link between nationalism and religion, he naturally looked around for some religious aspect to the republican debate. The closest he got, he said, was a suggestion that Catholics, the largest communion, would oppose republicanism because if the Crown is thrown out, God will be the next to go. But he found no sense of a holy crusade among republicans. The only crusaders are the constitutional monarchists.

The scene is set for a lively election some time in 1995.

Peter Coleman's latest book *Memoirs of a Slow Learner* has just been published by Harper Collins.

New Books from Claridge

Expected Publication date December 1994:

The Falsification of the Good

by Alain Besançon translated by Matthew Screech

Alain Besançon explores the diabolic spirit of communism, and the negation of humanity which the communists intended and achieved, together with the underlying disintegration of the Western spirit as it has drifted from its anchor in religious faith.

Expected Publication date early 1995

The KGB Law Suits

by Brian Crozier

For six years in the 1980s, Brian Crozier was involved in a series of lawsuits. The connecting link in all of them was the KGB. In one case, the main defendant was the Anglo-French financier Sir James Goldsmith. In another, it was Crozier himself. Had these cases come to trial, the main witnesses, tracked down by Crozier, would have been KGB defectors, but the plaintiffs dropped out. Brian Crozier's blow-by-blow account, *The KGB Lawsuits*, makes fascinating reading.

Place your advanced orders for these books by completing the flyer enclosed with this copy of the Salisbury Review

Editorial

The idea is becoming current among conservative intellectuals that Lady Thatcher's brand of Toryism was somehow bogus, a reversion to the liberal individualism of John Stuart Mill and the Manchester plutocrats. Under 'Thatcherite' principles, they tell us, our customs, institutions and social fabric suffered a disruption which was unknown during the 'caring' years or Tory paternalism. Some commentators, such as Dr James Le Fanu in the *Sunday Telegraph*, have suggested that the uncompromising adoption of market solutions has led to the subversion of our major institutions, which have been founded in a spirit of compromise. Others, including Dr John Gray, have reiterated the old socialist argument that the free market is the solvent of community, and that political action is necessary to save the social fabric from the unravelling effects of human greed. Dr Gray has even gone so far, in an article in *The Times*, as to exhort conservatives to vote Labour, having perceived in the party of Mr Blair a respect for tradition and community that would neutralize those old class resentments.

Dr Gray's call to vote Labour reminds us of a previous gesture in the same direction, when Enoch Powell urged his supporters to vote for the only party (as he saw it) that would protect our sovereignty from the Eurocrats. Time has shown the Labour Party in its true colours. Today it gives no inkling that it has an interest in national sovereignty, or even an idea of it; and it is as eager to be part of the machine in Brussels as was Edward Heath, the cryptosocialist against whom Mr Powell's urgings were in fact directed. Time will also give the lie to Dr Gray, when the 'communitarians' whom he admires acquire the right to tax us, and once again subject our way of life to their egalitarian edicts.

No Tory, and certainly not Margaret Thatcher, has advocated the market as the sole basis of social policy. From

Burke to Oakeshott there has been a continuous awareness that the free economy is only one half of conservatism, the other half being the difficult one, since conservatives, unlike Marxists, do not reduce social life to its economic 'base'. This other half of conservatism is the subject matter of social policy; it elicited Burke's defence of tradition, and Oakeshott's ideal of civil association as a form of conversation. Hayek brought the two halves of conservatism together in his theory of spontaneous order — of which the market and tradition are both special cases. (Tradition, in the Austrian *Weltanschauung*, is a kind of diachronous market — a continuous bargain, as Burke might have put it, between the dead, the living and the unborn.) No thinker has ever imagined that it is *easy* to reconcile a free economy with custom, tradition and institution building. But conservatives have refused to regard the first as enemy of the second, being persuaded that the centralised economy is a far greater threat to the fabric of social life than any number of entrepreneurs, and that a man is, in Dr Johnson's words, seldom so innocently employed as when making money.

Nevertheless, we are to believe that Thatcherite 'individualism' has offered an unparalleled threat to our national institutions. The institutions which are mentioned (for example by Dr Le Fanu), are precisely those which a Tory should regard with suspicion: hospitals, schools, universities, and the myriad quangos of the caring professions, whose denizens enjoy unparalleled opportunities to justify their claims on the public purse. The purpose of Lady Thatcher's reforms was precisely to liberate education, medicine and charitable activity from the strangle-hold of state bureaucracies. Although conservatism is founded in the 'care of institutions', it does not endorse all institutions in all circumstances, and certainly not those which

have become part of the gravy train. For conservatives believe in a distinction between state and civil society — the distinction articulated by Hegel, and fought for by the anticommunist resistance in Eastern Europe. They favour voluntary associations, churches, charitable societies, clubs and private schools — institutions whose goals, funds and membership depend only on themselves, and not on the state. To imagine that the defence of state schools or nationalised hospitals is fundamental to the conservative worldview is to mistake the whole nature of English Toryism. The purpose of Thatcherite reforms was to liberate those institutions from the apparatchiks, and to allow them once again to pursue their internal and charitable purposes. The reforms may not have worked — and, in the case of the health service, it is no longer clear that they ever *could* work. But they were reforms in a conservative direction.

We should also ask ourselves whether the Labour Party would be a more effective guardian of our institutions — other than those, such as the welfare apparatus, which are its own invention. All forms of independent education and medical care are an object of suspicion to the old socialist mentality, which will continue to seeth in the Party, even beneath the smile of Mr Blair. Any institution that promotes excellence and therefore privilege excites in the Labour Party an impetuous desire to destroy it, even when it has already fallen under state control (witness the fate of the Grammar Schools). And all those 'anachronisms' — from the monarchy to the country house, from Ascot to fox-hunting — which arouse the old class resentments, will surely be targeted by any future Labour Government, notwithstanding the fact that they, far more than the state bureaucracies, define what England has been and what it is.

It is true that the social fabric of our country is weaker now than it was

when Lady Thatcher first took office. This is not because of her policies but in spite of them. The Church of England, on which so much depends, has been taken over by secularizers and softhearted agnostics; Lady Thatcher's attempts to appoint sensible bishops were invariably thwarted by apparatchiks within the church. The monarchy has been jeopardised not by Tory policy, but by a combination of media ruthlessness and marital breakdown. The education system is in disarray largely because of the entrenched

egalitarianism of the Department of Education and Science, against which the power of a Tory minister counts for little.

Of course the Tories have made many mistakes, and Mr Major's decision to abolish the distinction between universities and polytechnics shows a crass disregard for education which may well reflect his own personal lack of it. (On the other hand, how many leading academics spoke out against this outrage?) But we should not be distracted by the failures of the Conservative

Party from defending and defining the three goals which, for a conservative, are inseparable: promoting a market economy, freeing civil society from state control, and protecting the customs and traditions which define the national spirit. Those were Lady Thatcher's goals, and if she failed in implementing all of them it is not because they are incompatible, but because the vested interests which stood against her proved to be more durable than a mere politician.

Letters

Sir

Martin Tyrrell's condescension towards Arthur Seldon is misplaced. The 'poetry' he criticizes was never intended as serious verse. It is clearly a parody of the Scarlet Pimpernel's mocking lines. Those of us who enjoyed the exploits of Baroness Orczy's eponymous hero as children would recognize that 'damned' accent anywhere!

Anna Cole
Amersham

Sir

Christianity and Civilization, Editorial, *The Salisbury Review*, June 1994.

Like most German immigrants, I am awed by the British record in humanness which expresses itself in the philosophical heritage of a John Locke no less than in the common decency of generations of armies of little people who stand in the breach, be it in their communities or in international emergencies. Your fervent affirmation of the belief that civilization rests on the Christian religion echoes the utopianism of the Kantian tradition which, by political analysts, has rightly been held to be the root cause of the perennial German tend to irrationalism.

The Christian religion had its origin in Jewish Messianism, born out of hope for a deliverer in times of unbearable social and political distress. Such

failures of nerve are but all too human, but they do not solve the problems humanity faces. Today, we have available great treasures of themes in sophisticated philosophies of existence which, while transcending the Christian vision in power and beauty, correspond admirably to the mystery of existence as disclosed by modern science.

The survival of mankind, and of all that is precious in Britain, depends on our effort to build the future; it is the noblest task of the imagination. The rousing appeal to ideologies of the past, despite their evident lack of credibility, is a betrayal of humanity and of ourselves.

Gertrud Walton
Winchester

Sir

C S Morris is suggesting the wrong solution to our problems (*SR June 1994*). We need more right wing policies, but a new party would split the Conservative vote and open the floodgates to the Labour Party.

What is required is pressure on the leadership of the Conservative Party to adopt policies that will bring back our traditional supporters and at the same time give the floating voters good reasons to support us. There have been the first signs in recent weeks that there is a move in this direction.

Above all, we must make it clear that we are totally opposed to a federal Europe. Words alone will not suffice: what is required is action that reflects that policy. None would be more convincing than a decision to work for the abolition of the farcical and costly European Parliament. Historically, of course, only states have parliaments. If we are not going to have a United States of Europe there can be no place for a European Parliament. It is a threat to the sovereignty of national Parliaments, and is therefore intolerable.

We must also be prepared to defy European organisations. The power of the European Court of Justice must be drastically curtailed. What better way to show that Court that we will not submit to it than to re-introduce corporal punishment in schools?

The two measure alone which I have suggested would probably be enough to give us a majority at the next General Election. A few others on similar lines would ensure that our majority was considerable. The Party of the Third Marquess of Salisbury could then go forward to the twenty-first century as the natural party of government and not as one of two right wing parties condemned to opposition for decades.

Ronald Forrest
Haverford West, Pembrokeshire.

Reviews

What are we to Believe in?

Michael Munford

Humanism: the Wreck of Western Culture, John Carroll, Fontana Press 1993 £6.99.

This is a remarkable book. John Carroll is an Australian academic, born in England, educated at Melbourne and Cambridge. He is Reader in Sociology at La Trobe University; but he is like no other sociologist, surely, in the world. Readers of *The Salisbury Review* know him as the author of several essays, including one in particular, 'Male and Female' (December 1992), which boldly stated the essential psychological and moral distinctions. His work is characterized by profound insights, real honesty and basic good sense; if he sometimes adopts a somewhat prophetic manner, we forgive him; he is fundamentally on the right side.

'The subject matter of this work' he writes 'is in essence the spiritual history of the post-Christian West'. The book consists of a series of analytical chapters covering leading thinkers and artists since the Renaissance: Donatello, Holbein, Luther, Shakespeare, Velazquez, Poussin and so on; it ends with Henry James and John Ford. Such an undertaking risks being thought pretentious, arbitrary and incomplete: and all three criticisms would have some validity. But we read John Carroll, not for an inclusive philosophy, but for insights and clarifications which we can add to our own perceptions of past and present.

His book is not an academic study of humanism; it is a personal search for values. The fundamental conclusion is that ethics and life itself are incomplete and worthless without religious faith; yet the author sometimes seems more convinced of the necessity for

religion than he is of the existence of God. This lack of firm positives betrays itself in other ways. If humanism (as defined by Dr Carroll) is the wreck of Western culture, we need to identify the Western culture that it wrecked; and this the book never really does.

The negative analysis is often irrefutable. The author is right; life is not centred on the human consciousness, ethics cannot be based on purely human interests: God must be the starting point. Otherwise we shall end up, with Bentham, eviscerating morality 'into a technical computation of units of pleasure'. And since life never can be wholly rational, we shall compensate for this with the madness of the French Revolution and the 'deified passion' of Romanticism.

Nevertheless surely the individual consciousness that we have achieved in the last five centuries is not all bad. Why does Dr Carroll include no lyric poets in his collection? When Donne wrote

I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I
Did, till we loved?

he was describing an individual consciousness that was *shared*: and his celebration of the value of personal love has a profound and permanent validity.

The last five centuries have not been, on the whole, a mistake; they *are* Western culture, and Dr Carroll must beware of himself appearing to be among the wreckers. Not for nothing is this the work of an Australian. Despite Dr Carroll's commitment to many traditional values, he does not see himself as a conservative:

Conservatism at best staged a series of holding operations, directed by an unworldly vision of the future as a hazy, nostalgic recreation of an idealized past. It lacked the colossal initiative that the task demanded, and tended to withdraw into cogent, pessimistic analyses of decline.

Yes, we must do better than that. We have to construct the future. But it will not be easy. In the Prologue to the book, the prophetic tone is a little too much like Manning Clark, or even D.H. Lawrence:

It is time for a new beginning, but not quite yet. First, the old must be buried, and with due rites. A requiem must be sung, one that gets the story right, in its magnificence and in its meanness. Less to honour Caesar than to bury him, that there may be no mistaking that he is dead, that we may understand him so as not to choose him again.

The book cannot really show us the way forward. Nor can it offer us a complete account of the past we must put behind us. Nevertheless it contains some fascinating ideas. Carroll's analysis of Velazquez's *Las Meninas* is masterly. He makes Kant appear crystal clear. Perhaps his most revealing insight is in his identification of the importance of Shakespeare, and above all of *Hamlet*, as an influence closely associated with the decline of religion and the triumph of obsessive and pessimistic self-analysis. Not for nothing do the dictionaries of quotations contain so much of the text of that play; the neurotic prince has entered the very fabric of our consciousness, and he has done us no good.

John Carroll is also profoundly suggestive on changing perceptions of

women:

Protestant theology was severely impoverished by its neglect of women, and above all of the two Marys central to the Gospels.

and later

The story of the nineteenth century

demolition of its inherited culture could be told through painting. It could be even further focused down into the progressive desecration of the female body.

Yes; and so we reach the *reductio ad absurdum* of our own century — feminism, the doctrine that women, and

specifically female values, do not exist; the redefinition of 'sex' to describe, not a human classification, but a form of human activity.

There is much more. John Carroll's book costs only £6.99. It is worth every penny.

De Glancey vs Spenlow

David Edelsten

Robert Surtees and Early Victorian Society, Norman Gash. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993, £40.

One does not readily classify Surtees as a novelist: with him description too consistently plays cuckoo-chick to plot and narrative. Try for instance to reconstruct from memory Soapey Sponge's disreputable odyssey, as one may without effort recall Emma Woodhouse's progress to and from Box Hill; it cannot be done. But Surtees inevitably invites, if not comparison with, relation to Charles Dickens; their life-spans very nearly coincided, and, *pace* Saintsbury, Cecil and even Peter Ackroyd (who, writing today, ought to know better), they belong to the same constellation. What though, when the moon rises, one can but ask why anyone attempted to write novels after Austen. Is it possible that Surtees asked himself that question, or something like it, before deciding, for a while, to follow the demi-mondaine calling of hunting correspondent?

Born in 1805, the younger son of a Durham squire, he left grammar school at 14 years of age, and was articled, first to a solicitor in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and then to one in London. Soon sickening of law he turned to journalism. His brother's death in 1831 mended his prospects; he inherited in 1841, and lived at Hamsterley Hall until he died in 1864. A private, unusually tall, retiring man, who would not allow his name to appear in print, he married, had three children, lived to all appearances conventionally, but

wrote eight full-length books and much else beside.

The very property that leads us to question Surtees' *bona fides* as a novelist, his obsession with, and eye for detail, makes his books a lode for the social historian: Professor Norman Gash has given us a much wanted study of this aspect of his oeuvre. He does this in thirteen short readable chapters, divided into four Parts, which relate different sectors of Surtees' world to the context of other, mainly contemporary, accounts. The first, and longest Part takes us mainly out-of-doors into "Surtees' England"; he then treats "Domestic Interiors" and "Manners and Morals", and finally, in "The Changing Years", gives a convincing account of how the author, raised in the Regency, viewed the turmoil in life and manners that accompanied the birth of railways, electric telegraph, and the penny post. We tend to think of our own age as being one of unprecedented change: reading this book, I begin to question that assumption.

In an age of otiose books and otiose professors, Norman Gash (what a splendidly Surteesian name for many another 20th century academic) has given us a book that is at once full of learning, and full of fun. I have seldom read anything that so engrossed me, or so illuminated afresh a subject that I had previously thought I had some grasp of. One can but think that the

Professor's students were a lucky generation and be grateful that there is at large in this world of weird ideas a cohort of people who have had the benefit of his instruction. The book is beautifully produced, clearly printed, well indexed, and lacks only, and strangely, a picture of its subject. If I were a rich man I would send my copy to Bayntun; as it is, Gash may stand alongside red Morocco sporting Oxford blue, redeeming the shameful neglect with which the Clarendon Press, for so long, has treated Surtees.

It is of course not Dickens' fault that he is overrated, any more than it is Elgar's that he is — both wrote 'national anthems', and we justly love them for it, and indulge their faults. But we are to blame for undervaluing Surtees. I have already named some of the guilty parties, but even the fourth edition of the Oxford Companion dismisses him with a paltry single paragraph. (Drabble does much better in the fifth edition.) And Peter Ackroyd, in over a thousand fat and learned pages, fails to find space to mention that Jorrocks begat Pickwick. In these days of caring and counselling, Surtees, "a humane man who nevertheless disliked the cant of humanitarians", deserves to be widely read for his realistic and astringent commentary on aspects of a formative time. You will not find rag-doll women, or an ounce of sentiment, in anything he wrote.

Alienating the movie-goer

Hal Colebatch

Aliens, the film

What are the *Alien* films all about?

It is fairly obvious what they are not: they are not science-fiction but horror-stories set in space.

Real science-fiction stays within the parameters of good science. Real S-F, like that of Larry Niven or Poul Anderson, would not create impossible creatures so fecund and ferocious they would quickly destroy all prey and then presumably starve. The obvious problem is that in real nature such creatures would never have evolved in the first place: large predators like tigers are rare and to survive must breed slowly.

There are other inconsistencies and bad science in the *Alien* milieu: some characters wear spectacles so it seems that though the Einsteinian problems of faster-than-light travel have been overcome myopia is still with us. The atmosphere on a desolate planet is pronounced "almost primordial", but at the same time coal is detected, suggesting the script-writers either do not know what primordial means or do not know how coal is formed.

But if the films are bad science, they may still have significant cultural implications. Certainly, they are brilliantly effective at one level, and have to some extent implanted themselves in popular culture. Model Aliens, including full-size "chest bursters", have helped partially displace Airfix kits in hobby-shops (as well as in some department stores that unctuously ban war-toys), and the series has other spin-offs in books and documentary films. With obvious irony these multi-million dollar movies, possibly among the most manipulative ever made, have, if they have any socio-political message, the usual recent Hollywood one of anti-Capitalism.

In *Alien*, the first film, made in the

late 1970's, the ruthless "Company" exposes the unsuspecting crew of a space-tug to hideous death by diverting it to investigate a signal from an ancient derelict space-ship crashed on an inhospitable planet. The derelict's crew, a civilized race, has been wiped out by the Aliens and the ship's transmitter is still sending out a warning to keep away (The remains of the creature at the transmitter are described as "fossilised", with no indication of how fossilisation could have taken place. In the same ship, Alien eggs are wet, slimy, alive and ready to hatch, presumably after thousands or millions of years).

The Company has, somehow, intercepted and decoded the warning some time earlier. It doesn't, quite implausibly, seem to want to have the derelict ship examined for any possible new scientific knowledge, but wants Aliens for its "bio-weapons" division and has planted a robot disguised as a crewman to stop the crew defending themselves. It is in some ways a simple gothic horror-story, a beauty-and-the-beast fable (Ripley and the Alien set off alone together in the lifeboat at the end, with the doomed space-ship exploding behind them. It can be seen as a parody of a honeymoon, the quasi-sexual associations being made more explicit as Ripley livens things up by taking her clothes off).

In *Aliens* (the second film), Ripley is rescued after ditching the Alien and drifting through space for decades in suspended animation, sleeping with her faithful pussycat, a ferocious non-human predator small enough for her to relate to. The Company, now reclaiming the planet where the derelict was found, is still up to its old tricks. It deliberately exposes the innocent planetary colonists, men, women and chil-

dren, to Alien "impregnation". After pretending to disbelieve her story, it then sends Ripley, who is the only survivor of the first crew, and an understrength military force set up to fail, to subdue the resulting Alien colony. Again the Company is hoping to get Alien specimens as bio-weapons, deliberately sacrificing innocent lives in this fiendish quest. Ripley, on the other hand, the honest artisan who also happens to be a shapely woman, knows that one Alien back on Earth will mean The End.

Company and Aliens become aspects of the same evil. The Alien species itself can be seen as a symbolic hostile caricature of Capitalism: its embryos are implanted in a host in a quasi-sexual violation, and the host is killed when the Alien bursts out of it in a parody of birth: it has multiple jaws and talons, the better to consume its victims. But although its senses are superhumanly sharp, it has no eyes: it destroys insensately and indiscriminately. Queen Aliens produce eggs on a conveyor-belt technique.

In *Alien 3* Ripley, after again drifting in space, and presumably again for many years, crash-lands on another desolate planet with a few convicts overseeing a mining installation. This installation, another activity of the Company, is being kept on a care and maintenance basis in case mineral prices rise. Somehow, the Company back on Earth immediately knows all about Ripley and what has happened, and (it never seems to learn) again wants to breed Aliens for weapons. The Alien here, by the way, apparently gestates in a dog and when it bursts out shows it has inherited a dog's well-known ability to run upside-down on ceilings.

The convicts are relatively docile not

from advanced penology but from economic pressure and an "opium of the people" religion: as care-takers they are paid wages and encouraged in a sort of Born-Again Christian mysticism. When convinced of the danger, they fight the Alien but for self-preservation alone. Actress Sigourney Weaver says of Ripley: "I think she has no choice." There is no heroic dimension.

In all three films, the ugliness of the settings is almost unrelieved. Except for the clean, pink, womb-like chamber lined with breast-shaped buttons housing the computer, known as "mother", in the first film (the heavy-handed if effective psychological manipulation of the viewer suggested here as well as by things like amplified heart-beats on the sound-track is typical of the whole series), the sets resemble industrial plant in recent documentaries on East Germany. The final philosophical implication are of total pessimism and nihilism.

Aliens, the most artistically satisfying of the three, has a climax of brave and self-sacrificing acts: Ripley enters the Aliens' tunnels to save the little girl Newt, who is the colony's only survivor; Bishop, a distrusted android, bravely returns to a collapsing nuclear reactor to rescue Ripley and Newt before it explodes. Back on board the space-ship, in a superb and visually-stunning scene, Ripley in John Wayne or High Noon fashion challenges the Queen Alien in a final one-to-one showdown; Bishop, torn in two by the Queen, still saves Newt from being sucked into space. *Aliens* ends implying the human race (of which the android can be taken as a qualified representative) can be unexpectedly noble and valiant. There are knightly and chivalrous values, and against all odds the dragon is slain. It is a Western set in space (using

the term "Western" in both the Hollywood and the wider cultural senses). Perhaps the fact it was made in Ronald Reagan's America of the Eighties had something to do with this.

Alien 3 indicates the nobility was futile: Ripley and Newt die because of the Aliens anyway, as does a wounded soldier Ripley rescued earlier, a decent Joe with whom she seemed destined for a bit of romancing. Bishop asks to be destroyed. The Nihilism is reinforced by explicit parodies of Christianity.

This nihilistic curve can be contrasted with the structure of *Star Wars* (condemned by some critics for its "free-enterprise ideology"). *Star Wars* follows an eventually upward curve. It is at the end of the second part of the *Star Wars* trilogy, "The Empire Strikes Back", that things are at their lowest spiritual ebb. The third part, "Return of the Jedi", tells of moral recovery and deliverance. In "Return of the Jedi" the dying but morally reclaimed villain Darth Vader knows and acknowledges himself as saved: indeed, in a sudden vast shift of perspective, we can see the moral salvation of this individual as being the main point of the whole story. The structure of the "Aliens" films is the opposite, falling in the end into nothingness. At the end of "Return of The Jedi" the evil Emperor falls into a fiery pit. At the end of *Alien 3* Ripley does.

The prison-world of *Alien 3* is like a vision of the human condition in what is sometimes called "late capitalism" (though actually more reminiscent of Late Communism). There are two dumb overseers and a disgraced doctor plus 25 convict-caretakers in the shut-down mining installation, which, to make everything including Ripley more ugly, is infested with bugs so every-

body's head has to be shaved (this also makes her look more like a Nineties feminist). In a documentary on the making of *Alien 3* there was some serious pondering on and discussion of the "character" of Ripley, rather as though it were Hamlet. Sigourney Weaver claimed: "We are keeping with that tradition" (of dirty and ugly sets) and that there had been "a consistent battle to get the values that you see in the script onto the screen."

Tradition? Values? There is a line attributed to a schlock-movie director at the absence of viscera on the visor following a car-crash: "Am I the only one who respects the writer?" If these are not just films to assist sexually-inept young men have their female companions in the audience grab hold of them but seriously seek to perpetuate "traditions" and "values" of pessimism and industrial filth, what on Earth are we really confronted with?

The story of a beautiful woman being terrorised and violated by a beast is older than cinema. In one way the *Alien* films are an up-dated *Perils of Pauline*. Something, however, is different. The three films seem to document an erosion of sensibilities and a perception that an audience is ready to enter new regions of spiritual nastiness and brutality. The producers even a few years ago, even at the time the first *Alien* film was made in 1978, would, I think, have drawn the line, in a general entertainment film, at *Alien 3*'s killing and cutting up a child.

Hal Colebatch's book *Return of the Heroes: "The Lord of The Rings", Star Wars" and Contemporary Culture*, was published in 1990 by the Australian Institute for Public Policy, Perth. He recently had a science-fiction Novella accepted for publication in the US.

For Sale

Newscuttings and documentation (mainly politics, foreign affairs, etc) filed in boxes 1960-80

Please contact Rita Hofstetter (081 440 1741

Heroic Chroniclers

Helen Szamuely

A.J.P. Taylor, Adam Sisman, Sinclair-Stevenson 1994 £18.99.

Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? Who will write the histories of historians' lives? Quite often and deliberately, other historians. Weidenfeld and Nicolson even have a series *Historians on Historians*. Of course, the question is a little unfair since history is not, or ought not to be merely biography. Perhaps historians ought to be subjected to what is increasingly seen to be the ultimate punishment, the modern biographer. To be subjected to Adam Sisman is no great punishment. *A.J.P. Taylor* is well written and is, in the main, affectionate and admiring. Sisman has talked to many people and has decided to ignore or downplay the less flattering comments.

Whether Taylor was the greatest historian of his time, as some reviewers have said, is too early to tell. He was certainly a colourful (deliberately so) and controversial (doubly deliberately) figure. A popular lecturer in Oxford and on television, he was, understandably, disliked by his colleagues and, somewhat more surprisingly, often by his undergraduates. His post-graduate pupils have retained a vividly affectionate memory of him. Scrupulously fair in his supervision, he had some very clear favourites. A brilliantly knowledgeable man with a hugely inquiring mind and retentive memory, he was, nevertheless, prejudiced to the point of bigotry. This led him to some very fatuous comments, notably in the history of the Second World War he wrote. Being supervised by him, as I was, was an exhilarating experience but we very nearly had a major row over his insistence (in 1976!) that the Polish officers at Katyn had been murdered by the Germans.

One could go on listing contradictions for a long time. Sisman does not

simply list them; he disentangles and analyzes them skilfully, showing the intellectual achievements (and shortcomings) as well as the private failures. The most notable of these, the two disastrous marriages before he found some sort of peace and happiness with his third wife Eva, have already been written about by Taylor himself in his unsatisfactory autobiography. Indeed, only one story in Sisman's biography shocked me: Taylor's refusal to see his mentor Sir Lewis Namier even on his deathbed because he believed mistakenly that Namier had thwarted him in his desire to become the Regius Professor of Modern History.

This, rather than the tormented marriages, had been the great tragedy of Taylor's life. The whole dreary and ambiguous story is ably and fairly told by Sisman. Some of the reviewers with personal knowledge like Sir Raymond Carr and A.L. Rowse (who himself may be said to have been by-passed by the establishment) have added to it. Being rejected by the Oxford establishment which he allegedly despised but secretly rather liked being part of, somehow broke Taylor's career as a serious academic historian. He certainly never ceased to complain and resent, as his treatment of Namier shows. At least one of his great books, *English History, 1914-1945*, was yet to appear, as well as the controversial *Origins of the Second World War*. The latter confirmed for many that Taylor was not a serious historian but a showman. His subsequent blossoming career in television and as a journalist apparently supported this view. Taylor rather defiantly emphasised his populism and his alleged readiness to do anything for money. Yet, most of us

now acknowledge that *Origins of the Second World War* was a serious piece of historical work, carefully researched and well thought through. Taylor, like so many historians, was trying to analyze certain very disturbing trends in twentieth century history. The problem was not, as some have alleged, that he was incurably frivolous, but that he lacked a proper understanding of ideology and its importance. One of his last successful television series was *The Warlords* in which he gave a brilliant talk on Churchill. When it came to Stalin it became obvious that he was somewhat at sea, partly because Stalin was more than just a Warlord and partly because he was clearly motivated by something more than lust for power or nationalist feelings.

This apparent misunderstanding is particularly curious in a man who had been a member of the Communist Party (that in itself would not imply an understanding of ideology, particularly in England) and remained sympathetic to the Communist cause as late as the publication of *A Personal History* in 1983. His analysis of the 1956 Hungarian revolution, for instance, defies belief. It is particularly odd, as of all non-Communist British historians, he was the only one who made several trips to that country, where he appeared in our flat among other places as the epitome of an Oxford don, and ought to have been able to glimpse the truth.

The question of Taylor's relationship with the Communist world is rather curious and Sisman does not explore it adequately. Taylor himself boasted of the fact that he stood up to the Soviet historians in 1948 at Wroclaw. But subsequently he tended to take a pro-Communist line on most matters. He would have argued that it was a pro-Russian and anti-German line but there are times when one has to wonder. Did this contribute to the fact that alone of all the major historians he never had any honours at all? Christopher Hill and Erich Hobsbawm had professorships. Was it, as Taylor implied, because he was an outsider in the establishment? But Namier, far more of an outsider, was honoured, though not by Oxford. Or was it that

Taylor was neither totally on the inside nor totally on the outside?

A. J. P. Taylor is an entertaining and enlightening book. But this is only the first of what promises to be a series of biographies of a man whose life was interesting but whose writings were more important. Do we need biographies of historians, particularly as most of them seem to be more than inclined to write their autobiographies? There seems to have been a spate of historians' biographies in the last few years: Trevelyan and Marc Bloch last year, and Namier a few years ago. It is as if historians are seen to be the true heroes of our times. Is it that there is something by definition a little detached about a historian? They are necessarily outsiders looking on, rather than actors in the drama. That makes the historian the archetypal twentieth century hero. Yet if one looks at the subjects of biographies I have just listed, one can see that they were not simply onlookers. Trevelyan, a scion of social and intellectual aristocracy thought of history as his biographer David Cannadine puts it, as "something which his forbears *had made*, which his family was still making, and which was thus an integral part of the fabric of his own life. The history of the nation was but the history of the Trevelyans writ large." He was very much the great and the good, not only in academia but the wider world. Typically, he was much involved in the creation and governing of the BBC while Taylor later espoused the cause of independent television, partly out of libertarian principles and partly out of an uncon-

querable desire to tweak the great and the good's tails.

Both Trevelyan's and Marc Bloch's biographies were subtitled *A Life in History*. Sisman's book is subtitled *A Biography*: a publisher's quirk, perhaps but it is oddly significant. Taylor, though a consummate professional, was not really serious about anything. Unlike the three historians with recent biographies he was not motivated by Duty. Marc Bloch outlined his views on history when he was twenty-one. He approached the subject seriously and thoughtfully as he, the child of a recently emancipated Jewish family from Alsace, approached life in general. In his case this culminated in his involvement in the French underground movement during the war, arrest, torture and execution. But even in hiding he was the consummate historian, producing one of the most interesting books on its study: *The Historian's Craft*. One could argue that just as Trevelyan and Bloch in their way were representative of their generation and were perhaps a little out of date by the mid-twentieth century, Taylor with his incurable frivolity, his inability to work out precisely where he was in the social set-up and his flirtation with Communism, is completely representative of our own age. One could argue this, until one turns to Linda Colley's biography of Sir Lewis Namier, for better or worse, the most influential British historian of this century. According to her, Namier's insecurity and anxiety makes him the most representative of all twentieth century

historians. Taylor had insecurity and anxiety in plenty, as Sisman shows convincingly, but he lacked something else, that Namier had what in their own way other great historians had: an understanding and an ability to illuminate the connection between their own and their age's anxiety. As Linda Colley wrote:

Not only did he [Namier] labour under a heavy burden of personal angst, but his life also spanned the end of European supremacy and the dissolution of two great empires — first the Habsburg and then the British. If the bulk of Namier's writings is a relentless inquiry into how men can consort together — a scrutiny of the bonds of race and class and nation, and of collective institutions like the House of Commons — this is surely understandable. These matters preoccupied him because the Old World was falling apart as he wrote, and because like so many other creative men and women in Europe this century he himself was never able properly to consort with anyone.

Taylor was undoubtedly a more entertaining writer than Namier and often more shrewd and perceptive. He was a great deal more fun than either Trevelyan or Bloch probably. But he left no school of thought, nothing even for subsequent generations of historians to fight against. It was not that he was fundamentally unsound, as some of critics thought; he was deeply unserious and was, therefore, not always capable of understanding the seriousness of his own century. In his own way he was a great man but he was not a hero. Sisman's biography will probably be the only one we shall need.

Notes on Reviewers

Hal Colebatch's book *Return of the Heroes: The Lord of the Rings, Star Wars and Contemporary Culture* was published in 1990 by the Australian Institute of Public Policy.

Brian Crozier's new book, *The K.G.B. Law Suits* will be published by Claridge Press next year.

David Edelsten is Hunting Correspondent of *Country Life*.

Angela Ellis Jones is writing a book about law and public opinion in England in the twentieth century.

Vivian Linacre is sole Principal at a surveying and valuation consultancy practice in Scotland.

Michael Munford is Director of Insight Research Limited.

Helen Szamuely is a freelance writer on Russian and East European affairs.

The Candour and Courage of Boris Yeltsin

Brian Crozier

The View from the Kremlin, Boris Yeltsin, £18 Harper Collins, 1994.

There is a refreshing candour about Boris Yeltsin's two autobiographies, especially in comparison with the writings of his predecessor. Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* only marginally extended the range of Orwell's New-speak in his *Perestroika* (in which he praised Stalin's collectivisation of agriculture but dismissed the 14 million deaths it caused as "not without serious excesses and blunders"). Yeltsin is concrete with details and frank about his own shortcomings.

In the first of his autobiographies, *Against the Grain* (Cape, 1990), he described at length the lowest point in his political life when Gorbachev summoned him from his hospital bed in November 1987 to dismiss him as Mayor of Moscow. Considering the way Gorbachev had treated him, it is not surprising to find him critical of his predecessor.

Later, Yeltsin toured the United States, crowding into one impossibly crowded week what would have been a strenuous enough programme initially planned for two weeks. The compression had been made because the Central Committee would only let him go for one week. The KGB mounted a vicious campaign against him, spreading tales of his being permanently drunk and of going on a personal spending spree whereas he had bought a million throw-away syringes as gifts to children's hospitals, in support of the official anti-AIDS campaign.

On his return the official television ran a news film about him, deliberately slowing it down to support the line that his speech had been slurred. Shortly afterwards, on his way to visit a friend

outside Moscow, he was thrown off a bridge into an icy river, sending him back to hospital with pneumonia.

Yeltsin's new biography gives detailed accounts of two historic coup attempts, both of them failed: the anti-Gorbachev attempt of August 1991, and the anti-Yeltsin one of October 1993. Although Yeltsin had no inside information about the earlier coup, he anticipated it and talked to General Pavel, commander of the paratroopers, who assured him of the Army's loyalty in the event of trouble. The famous incident, flashed across the world's television screens, when Yeltsin clambered onto a tank and said his piece, was spontaneous. He had been calling the leaders of the Soviet republics from his office in the Russian Parliament — the White House — when he saw a tank parked outside. "Suddenly, I felt a jolt inside. I had to be out there right away, standing with those people."

Having described the incident, he added: "This improvised rally on the tank was not a propaganda gimmick. After coming out to the people, I felt a surge of energy and an enormous sense of relief inside." (p.69) Thus was history made.

Although the illustrations include a picture of another famous televised shot, of Yeltsin's accusing finger in the Russian Parliament, forcing Gorbachev to read out the minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 19 August, when the coup leaders had proclaimed a state of emergency, he does not describe what happened in the actual text. In fact, this book, gripping though it is by the

nature of its themes and the frankness of the author, bears obvious traces of haste. This is no Churchill crafting his paragraphs for posterity, but a man of action recording events as they happen.

As insomniac, he wrote his "view from the Kremlin" in note form in his waking hours of 2 to 3 am, each morning. His judgment, especially of people, was initially too trusting. His choice of Ruslan Khasbulatov as Chairman of the Russian Parliament was an example. He had been warned that "you better watch yourself with that kind of man", but at first "these mysterious words... frankly, had no meaning for me" (p.195). "At that time, Khasbulatov seemed intelligent and reasonable. And unassuming."

The rude awakening came in October 1993 when Khasbulatov and his (Yeltsin's) Vice-President, General Rutskoi, led the attempted coup against him, for which both men were jailed, though later amnestied. The same is true of Yeltsin's account of the searing events of October 1993. The August coup had opened his way to power on the ruins of a discredited system. The October coup was sprung on him by disgruntled hardliners, so misleadingly known as "conservatives", unable to adapt to private enterprise, freedom of the media and incipient democracy.

After the event, the Western media criticised him both for allowing the Army to fire on the White House, and for delaying his decision to do so. Realistically, he did what he had to do. Had he not given the rebels time to think over the wisdom of their rebellion, the world would have accused him of unnecessary bloodshed. Had he let them get away with it, Russia would have taken a giant step backward into a further era of totalitarianism.

Here is Yeltsin in candid, self-critical mode:

Am I a strong or a weak person?

In emergency situations, I'm strong. In ordinary situations, I'm sometimes too passive. Sometimes I don't look anything like the Yeltsin everyone has grown used to seeing. I mean, I can fly off the handle in a stupid way, like a child. That is probably a weakness. Other people say my weakness is that I

create obstacles so that I am forced to make a terrible effort to overcome them heroically later. That's not true. The obstacles find me on their own. Always. I don't go looking for them. (p.205)

The American translator, Catherine A Fitzpatrick, has written extensive footnotes filling in background which the

author takes for granted, and comprehensive biographical notes. In an Appendix, Yeltsin quotes intriguingly from KGB documents, notably about Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President John F Kennedy. There is no shortage of conspiracy theories about this sensational event. I had always,

until now, assumed that the KGB was involved, since Oswald had spent some time in the Soviet Union and married a Soviet citizen. But one of the documents quoted puts the blame on three Texas oil magnates. I confess this was a new one on me. As conspiracy theories go, it takes some beating.

The Continental Chimera

Vivian Linacre

Britain Beyond Europe, Bill Jamieson, Duckworth, 1994. £17.99.

We have less than two years within which to regain our national independence and prosperity by secession from the European Union, or witness the extinction of the United Kingdom as a sovereign state. Full economic and monetary union, following a commitment in 1996 to a single currency, must inevitably lead to political union within an expanding federation dominated by Germany. The process that began with the Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1952, evolving into the bogus Common Market that Britain joined in '75 and into a directly elective Parliament in '79, then developing by way of the Single European Act of '87 and the European Union Treaty of '92, will have reached fulfilment.

Neither the narrowness of support for Maastricht in the constituent Parliaments of the U.K., France, Denmark and elsewhere, nor the abysmal turnouts at the recent European Parliamentary elections, will affect the M.E.P.s' self-importance or unanimity of purpose. The British delegates, returned by barely one fifth of their aggregate electorate, will happily draw their £175,000 each in annual salary and expenses while looking forward to the exercise of real power — usurping Westminster — within their present term of office. Meanwhile, our own government leaders insist that no decisions need be taken in advance of the

1996 issues, which means that in the event they will duly capitulate, without even consulting the country. For this Conservative administration must run its full course if the economy and its popularity are to recover sufficiently before the next general election, by which date our nationhood will be forfeit.

There are only two hopes. One is that the people rebel, compelling the government at least to resist the federal movement until the general election, when European Union would become the main issue. The other better — is that the government suddenly sees the light, executes a "Euro-turn" and calls an earlier general election for a mandate to withdraw from the Community. Since all the opposition parties are dedicated to a socialist super-state, the Conservatives would be returned with a huge majority.

But the politicians, the media and the public must first be awakened from the European nightmare. Hence the immense value of this book. Nothing more important has been published in Britain since Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. If every M.P. and journalist, every member of the C.B.I., the Institute of Directors and the T.U.C. all read it, we would not endure the insanities of Brussels and Strasbourg for another week

Superbly produced, with ample index, bibliography and end-of-chapter

notes, and copiously illustrated with statistical tables and graphs, it is also embellished with telling historical quotations, such as Roy Jenkins' 1956 declaration that "it is impossible for us to contemplate going into a full customs union. To do so would mean not only whittling down imperial preferences but introducing anti-imperial preference. That is a position manifestly impossible for any British government"; and Disraeli's in 1872 that "The issue is not a mean one. It is whether you will be content to be a comfortable England, modelled and moulded on Continental principles and meeting in due course an inevitable fate, or whether your sons....rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen but command the respect of the world", and in the author's final paragraph, "as Burke reminded us, while our leaders were prepared to abandon us 'to a direct confession of our inferiority to France, and whilst many....were ready to act upon a sense of that inferiority, a few months effected a total change in our variable minds. We emerged from the gulf of that speculative despondency and were buoyed up to the highest point of practical vigour.' Never say the die is cast for the British people."

As Deputy City Editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, Bill Jamieson expertly proves that Britain must escape from 'Fortress Europe' into the global mar-

ket-place. Since the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989, the population of the world's capitalist regimes has exploded from one billion to five billions. The emerging nations of Eurasia, Africa and Latin America, containing more than 80% of the people on earth, will enjoy all the future growth in the world's labour force, as well as most of the commodity production. These rapidly developing countries realize the benefits of low taxes and free trade. In contrast, Europe is pursuing policies of high taxes (to pay for the massive bureaucracies and subsidies) and protectionism. The Commission is creating a customs union — a concept that was discredited in the 17th century — which has already created havoc in the agricultural, aviation, textiles and steel industries. In a free market, Britain would enjoy much cheaper food, clothing and manufactured goods. At worst, Britain's living standards might correspond with Switzerland's!

He demonstrates that "The total direct financial cost to Britain of EC membership is now £108 billion. This comprises a cumulative visible balance of payments deficit with the EC since 1973 of £87 billion and net financial contributions to the Community budget of £21 billion"; and that "80% of [Britain's] overseas investment by asset and even more by earnings are derived from countries outside the EC and in economies that are now growing fast"; and that "the years 1993 to 2013 could see China's share in world GDP more than double, from 7.5% to 16%, and Asia's rise from 20% to 36%. Meanwhile the OECD share could fall from 55% to just 35%"; and that "The Common Agricultural Policy accounts for two-thirds of the Community budget....In 1990 it cost more than £19 billion to administer....By 1993 the estimated gross bill was more than £88 billion, divided among the nine million employed by the CAP and paid for by the remaining 320 million"; and that "the drive to economic and monetary union, far from being a passive casualty of the recession, was the means by which Europe's crisis of competitiveness and labour-market rigidity was

heightened and accelerated. Indeed it has been the convergence agenda itself, and the push for integration culminating in the Maastricht Treaty that transmitted and deepened recession throughout the ERM currency bloc"; and that "Jacques Delors' solution to the EC's problems was predictable, if breath-taking. He called for a huge increase in EC spending on transport, electronics infrastructure and common information systems, costing £33 billion a year and financed, presumably, by raising the very taxes and costs and interest rates that lie at the heart of Eurosclerosis." Continental leaders have yet to show that they have grasped the magnitude of the challenge arising from world-wide cost restructuring and the drive to productivity. The more they shrink from doing so the more notably Europe's economies will underperform and the longer its unemployment queues will grow.

These archaic socialist prescriptions for economic recovery — increased central planning and expenditure — can only prolong the recession and further worsen Europe's trading position in relation to the rest on the world. The reasons for the otherwise mystifying lack of opposition spring mainly from personal gratification, of M.E.P.'s and Commission officials, and of what the author describes as the "political classes of Denmark, Spain, Italy and the Benelux countries, barely known beyond their borders" who "gain in stature by becoming part of a Euro-élite"; just as an "infatuation with Europe and disdain for that which distinguished Britain from the continent characterised the elite that took Britain into Europe." A decisive influence was also exerted by "the requirements of American economic expansionism and Cold War diplomacy"; for "In the chasm of Suez and its aftermath it suited the United States to consolidate control of Britain's nuclear deterrent and to advance her integration with Europe". Britain's abandoning "a global vision for a regional one" could only reinforce the U.S.A.'s super-power status.

One of the two huge bonuses of this book, indeed, is an analysis of the 1956 Suez crisis, when Britain lost its nerve

under U.S. pressure, and fell out with France; with tragic consequences for Europe, for the Middle East, for Africa and for the world. For the result of the French withdrawal from Algeria, which inevitably followed, was the ascendancy of General de Gaulle and his concept of a Carolingian Europe on a Franco-German axis. Equally inevitable was Britain's withdrawal from the Middle East, creating a vacuum from which have resulted two Arab-Israeli wars and the emergence of Palestinian terrorism, the destruction of Lebanon, the ruin of the Sudan and Ethiopia, the rise of Gaddafi, Saddam Hussein and the Gulf War. The premature decolonisation of the rest of Africa was likewise predictable, with an appalling outcome for hundreds of millions in that continent. None of these dreadful events need have happened, and most would have been prevented, had Britain and France prevailed at Suez. Again, if they had been supported then by the U.S.A., it is most unlikely that Khrushchev would have dared invade Hungary; but instead, the American action against its British and French allies encouraged the U.S.S.R.'s expansion into central Europe, thereby consolidating the spheres of influence of the two super-powers. Suez was indeed Europe's Waterloo.

Forty years on from what Bill Jamieson calls "the traumatic faultline of Suez", the question is: will Britain lose its nerve a second time, with yet more tragic consequences? Are we to be intimidated, not only by the Euro-élite, as we were before by the U.S.A., but also once again by the chattering classes at home? For, of course, the opposition parties and liberal media today are solidly Europhile, just as they were solidly opposed to the Suez operation and vociferously in support of African decolonisation. They love to talk about "being at the heart of Europe", but Europe has no heart, nor backbone either: witness its indifference to the horrors of Bosnia! Witness also its indifference to the blockade of Macedonia by Greece, which receives £10 million a day from the Community!

The other bonus is a devastating indictment of the mismanagement of

the U.K. domestic economy over the last five years (the “White-knuckle-ride”) during which GDP fell while public spending rose in real terms by 13%, creating a budget deficit equal to 8% of GDP. The social security budget exploded from £49 billion to £85 billion. The DSS’s own pay bill rose by 50% to £1.5 billion with a staff of 98,000, while nearly a quarter of all benefit spending now goes to people on above-average incomes. “To finance just one year’s spending now requires a tax generation equivalent to more

than 50 companies the size of British Petroleum.” Spending by other departments, education, environment, Home and Foreign Offices, Scotland and Wales — all soared. Bill Jamieson’s point is that Britain’s survival is threatened as much by “debt and the dependency machine” as by Europe. We need “a redefinition of the functions of the British state: where it begins and where it ends, what it should provide and what it should best leave to others.” He sets out “A New Agenda: Home Affairs”, including a table showing “how

to cut state spending by £100 billion”, and concludes with chapters entitled “Good Fences in Europe” and “Britain or Benelux West”. Understandably, the book bears the signs of a rushed job, with many textual errors: e.g. ‘£700 million’ instead of ‘billion’ on p.16, ‘rewritten’ instead of ‘redrawn’ on p.32, ‘1963 to 1987’ instead of ‘to 1978’ on p.147, ‘1992-1993’ instead of ‘1989-1993’ on p.148. All these can be corrected in a revised edition, which should be in a much cheaper paper-back, in order to sell a million!

The not so rotten state of Britain

Angela Ellis-Jones

Capitalism Culture and Decline in Britain 1750-1990, W D Rubinstein, Routledge. Pb £10.99

As long ago as the 1880s perceptive observers began to notice that all was not well with Britain’s economy. A steady trickle of articles and books appeared, offering analysis and prescription, but for many years these remained fairly marginal to national debate. As the French writer Andre Siegfried observed in 1931: ‘True to his inveterate insularity, our Englishman remains entirely self-satisfied. His century-old pride prevents him from seeing, or at least appreciating, what is wrong with him.’

As late as the 1950s the British were convinced that British institutions, from the administration of justice to television, were ‘the best in the world’. (Foreigners did not always share this view.) But from the early 1960s, coinciding with the loss of empire, and the decline of middle class hegemony, this attitude of complacency and pride in Britain was replaced by one of anxious self-criticism. ‘What’s wrong with Britain?’ moved to the centre of national discourse.

Numerous pundits offered economic, political and social explanations for the painful phenomenon of a (relative) decline that had become blindingly

obvious. The process of analysis seemed to be making little headway, with assertion and counter-assertion, until Martin Wiener published *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* in 1983. He argued that the root cause of Britain’s industrial decline was that the British have never really been serious about money making, have always preferred the ease of the country and fine living to the grime of industry. Men who made fortunes out of industry retired to country estates and raised their sons to be gentlemen, thus ensuring a diminishing amount of entrepreneurial talent in succeeding generations. This work, which examined the problem from a new angle, cultural rather than economic, was enthusiastically received.

But it is in the nature of historical explanations always to be provisional. In *Capitalism Culture and Decline in Britain 1750-1990* Bill Rubinstein, Professor of Social and Economic History at Deakin University, Australia, mounts an effective challenge to the Wiener thesis.

Rubinstein’s main contention is that although Britain was the first industrial nation, British strength never lay

in manufacturing but in commerce and finance. This was so even during 1815-70, and became increasingly true after 1870.

Rubinstein supports his thesis by showing that in 1859-60, at what is taken to be the high point of Victorian industrial achievement, the ratio of Schedule D and E taxpayers to adult males in London (where finance and commerce were concentrated) was 41%, whereas that in Lancashire was 13% and in Yorkshire 10%. Moreover, total employment in manufacturing never amounted to more than a half of all of those in employment, although until recently it was the largest single sector.

The author debunks Wiener’s assertion that industrialists sent their sons to public schools and so turned them away from careers in industry. Looking at the careers of a total of 1802 boys who entered eight top public schools in the years 1840, 1870, and 1895-1900, Rubinstein shows that most came from professional families, and went into the professions. Of the third from business backgrounds, the majority became businessmen. Few came from northern manufacturing families.

The author also questions Wiener's thesis by looking at the hostility to industrial enterprise of the thinking classes of other more industrially successful nations, and finds as least as much animosity as that shown by Britons. After all, Marx and Brecht were Germans. Indeed, given the unintellectual bent of the British, and their view of themselves as a nation of doers rather than thinkers, it is surprising that the Wiener thesis ever made much headway.

Rubinstein emphasises that Britain has not suffered from any absolute decline, and that its standard of living in terms of owner occupation and consumer durables compares not unfavourably with those of its competitors. In 1990 Heathrow was the world's busiest airport, and Britain still has many world class companies. Rubinstein finds paradoxical the fact that British living standards have risen dramatically and uninterruptedly at precisely the time when Britain has found itself at the bottom of the league for economic performance, and when

its economic performance has been the subject of perpetual derision. The statistics are obviously not measuring all they are supposed to be picking up.

(International statistical comparisons are notoriously misleading; figures for Britain through time put the country in a better light. The importance of manufacturing in the British economy is indeed declining: whereas in 1982 the proportions of GDP accounted for by manufacturing, financial services and other services were 26.7% 17.8% and 42.4% respectively, by 1992 these proportions stood at 22.6% 23.6% and 46.1%. But during this time GDP at market prices grew from £425 billion to £536 billion (1990 constant prices). We must have been doing something right.)

The book could have benefited from more careful editing. On p155 we read 'Douglas Hurd was the only Etonian in the Cabinet when Mrs Thatcher resigned at the end of 1990... the Cabinet did not contain a single member of the traditional landed aristocracy or gentry'. This is incorrect.

William Waldegrave, Old Etonian younger son of Earl Waldegrave, was appointed Secretary of State for Health in November 1990, shortly before Mrs Thatcher resigned.

Despite these imperfections, the book is an impressive addition to the literature on British economic performance over the past century. While one must accept that Rubinstein has largely demolished Wiener's cultural thesis, his argument on the comparative unimportance of Britain's manufacturing sector will meet with more resistance, not least because it is an issue which has been around for longer. In 1903 a writer in the *Saturday Review* asserted:

Some people think we may cease to be a great manufacturing nation and that England may still remain the banking and financial centre of the world. This is pure delusion. Britain's financial growth was the consequence, not the cause of British predominance, and our industrial commercial and financial interests hang together.

This one will run and run.

Sophist's Corner

The Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations wishes to appoint a research fellow to work on a major project concerned with ethnic mobilisation and the nation-state.

Ethnic Mobilisation and the Nation-State

(A) There are two major dimensions to this project. First, the researcher will focus upon some key examples of mobilisation by 'majority' ethnic groups in three countries (Germany, France and Britain). The second focus will be on one autochthonous East-Central European ethnic/national group which is deeply concerned with developments in its historic homeland, whilst being well integrated in its new West European home. The research will be operationalised in two phases: the first will last from September 1993 to August 1995, and the second from

September 1995 to September 1998. During the first phase the researcher will build on work done in Britain on majority ethnic mobilisation by right-wing groups against new ethnic minorities. The concerns of contributors to journals such as *The Salisbury Review*, will be examined and related to wider concerns about freedom of expression in a democratic society. The research will then proceed to examine similar radical right-wing demands in Germany and France with respect to those countries' new ethnic minorities, particularly Muslims. Given the nature of the study the researcher will draw upon the extant secondary literature, and published statements by groups and official bodies. The researcher working with colleagues in the Centre, will attempt to develop a typology of ethnic mobilisation within

majority populations.

(B) During the second phase, the researcher will examine the social and political concerns and mobilisation of either Poles, or Ukrainians in Britain and either France or Germany. In particular, the research will explore forms of nationalist mobilisation amongst these groups with historic homelands in Europe. The researcher will analyze both secondary and primary literature, conduct in-depth, open-ended, interviews with influential community leaders and officials involved with such groups in Britain, France or Germany, and where possible observe deliberations at meetings.

From an advertisement by CRER, Warwick University.

In Short

Daniel Hannan: *Towards 1996* IEDSS 1994, £5.

Here we go again: a paper by a *young* man who knows European history, knows the languages and is — against European integration. Daniel Hannan's *Towards 1996* sets out clearly and cogently why European integration is not only not a grand vision but is inherently anti-European. The special qualities of European culture — political and economic freedom and the rule of law — are being variously diminished, destroyed and subverted by European integration. Britain in particular has suffered by the process, since it has cut across all her traditions and history. Instead of apologizing for it as Sir Edward Heath would have us do, this country should build on her strengths. Instead of being afraid of being left in the "slow lane" (whatever that may mean), Britain should affirm the principles on which European development ought to proceed and call upon the certain support those principles will command across the *real* Europe.

Hannan does more than just set out the case for firm and, dare one say it, bloody-minded action on the British government's part. He shows how such an action would benefit Europe, since the tight European Union has betrayed the East European countries and turned Western Europe into an economic and political morass, full of fraud and regulations, the one feeding off the other.

The East European countries have been banned from trading with Western Europe to protect CAP and other politically powerful and economically inefficient lobby groups. The Visegrad countries' applications to join are not welcome to the Eurocracy, among other reasons, because their economy, especially their agriculture, is *now too free*.

Hannan feels that 1996 will be the turning point when the strengthening

forces that support a loose free trading association will go into the attack under Britain's leadership and Europe will be regained for genuine European ideas. He does not mention the other obvious alternative. If the integrationists succeed in their fully declared aims, the European Union will, like the Soviet Union before it, collapse under the weight of its own economic and political contradictions. And that will not be a pretty sight.

HS

William Christian: *George Grant: A Biography*, University of Toronto Press.

Canada is one of two countries where a party calling itself 'conservative' regularly wins elections (although it oxymoronically adds 'progressive' to its name). Genuine conservatives, however are as rare in Canada as anywhere else in the modern world. Rarer still is the conservative intellectual, ready to speak out on behalf of customs, institutions and ideas which his colleagues regard as quaint or dangerous. Nevertheless, it is to Canada that we owe one of the most lucid, thoughtful and committed of recent conservative thinkers — the philosopher and publicist George Parkin Grant, author of *Lament for a Nation*, who died in Halifax in 1988.

Professor Christian writes well, and his book is comprehensive and monumental, as biographies now tend to be. The result is not, however, the coffee-table fodder that its size might lead one to fear. It is a thoughtful and thought-provoking study of a man at odds with the modern world, sincerely fighting, in unpropitious circumstances, against evils which he was one of the very few to perceive. It shows a character as large and striking as the intellect for

which Grant was famed: romantic, troubled, but with a settled Anglican faith from which he drew the resources necessary for his lonely battle against left-liberal orthodoxy.

Grant was surely the only serious thinker who saw the meaning of the sixties at the outset, and who knew exactly where he stood in relation to this lamentable episode. One of the first to identify the seeds of destruction in modern theories of education, he spoke out tirelessly against the practice and the ideology of 'liberation' in all its forms, whether in politics, in psychoanalysis, or in everyday morality. His *English-speaking Justice* remains a central document, a classic defence of the common law, and a subtly argued reply to those, such as Rawls and Dworkin, who treat the law less as an expression of social order than an instrument of social engineering.

Christian's biography should be on every conservative's reading list, alongside the works of Grant himself.

RS

Rodney Atkinson and Norris McWhirter: *Treason at Maastricht: The destruction of the British Constitution*, Compuprint Publishing.

This is a succinct account of all the important ways in which the Maastricht Treaty undermines and over-rides the British Constitution. It tells the story of the authors' gallant attempt to have British government ministers Douglas Hurd and Francis Maude arraigned for treason in the courts of England and Scotland. The case that Atkinson and McWhirter make in support of such a dramatic charge serves to illustrate the essential perversity of the current European agenda and the consequent damage to the sovereignty and inde-

pendence of the signatory nation states. Much of the authors' argument is valid for other members of the European Union. But there is one argument which applies specifically to Britain and lies at the heart of the charge of treason: the way in which Maastricht effectively strikes at that very foundation of Britain's Constitution, the relation between the Queen and her subjects and their relationship with the EEC. 'The Government has made the Queen and her subjects (without their consent) citizens of an alien power towards which they will have duties and by whom they can be taxed.'

Many provisions of the Maastricht treaty contravene fundamental British laws. It defies the basic constitutional maxim that 'no Parliament may bind its successors' for Maastricht makes the EC both 'irrevocable' and 'irreversible' and the 'treaty is concluded for an unlimited period'. 'Municipal' elections for which foreigners may now stand in any of the EC member States does not, as is generally supposed, mean merely local elections but, by specific definition of the European Court, any elections within member states whether national or local. Subsidiarity does not mean that Brussels recognizes States' rights or control over matters that fall logically within the purview of those states but, on the contrary, guarantees the right of the 'centre in Brussels to delegate subordinate tasks to the peripheral nation states.' Indeed, it 'is the European Union which will decide what powers and responsibilities will and will not be delegated to what remains of the sovereign nations of Europe. Any conflict between European institutions and the British Government on this issue will be referred to the European Court which has made its federalist goals explicit on several occasions. The Court has in fact defined its duties as 'enabling the Community interest to prevail over the inertia and resistance of member states.' Individual member States now lose control of immigration into their territories. Article 100c of the Treaty states that as from 1st January 1996: 'The Council, acting by majority voting, shall deter-

mine the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of a visa when crossing the external borders of the member states.'

That Maastricht clearly violates provisions of Magna Carta; the oaths of allegiance of both the British police and armed forces as we have hitherto known them; the Act of Settlement of 1700; the Coronation Oath Act, the Treason Act of 1795; all this and more the authors amply demonstrate, thus giving the lie to those British and other European prime ministers who have more than once declared that Maastricht, far from restricting sovereignty, actually extended it. In its description of how Maastricht implies the greatest challenge to the Crown since Cromwell, it also provides a clue to the motivations of those who have lately been so active in campaigning against the monarchy. It shows too that, for all its social-democratic trappings, the federalist project is in many ways not very different from the New Order in Europe that Hitler proposed to install by force of arms.

The main question that arises in the reader's mind after reading the authors' well-documented case against the British signatories (and those who back them) is why Conservative politicians who consider themselves patriots could so lightheartedly have signed away, not only the constitutional rights of the British people but also the rights of the monarch and her duties towards her subjects, without the knowledge or consent of either. And how such men, like so many other European politicians, can continue to misrepresent or hide the real significance of what they have done. This small book is an essential manual for the growing number of those determined to combat European federalism.

PL

Sara Moore: *Peace without Victory for the Allies 1918-1932*, Berg Oxford/ Providence USA 1994. £30.

The author examines the years 1918 to 1932 and the way the Victorious allies handled Germany at that time. Her

thesis is that Germany was able to turn what had been portrayed as a harsh post-war settlement of crippling reparations into one that enabled her to recover, re-arm and re-emerge as a major power which under Hitler plunged Europe into World War II.

Sara Moore pulls no punches in her comments on personalities: General Smuts is seen as "an ambitious introvert with a towering brain and a limp-handshake manner". Keynes is described as coming "from a cloistered academic family" who "had been brought up by German nannies in his youth". Snowden is "a sharp-tongued Yorkshireman, a man of the people, with fire in his belly that the élite seemed to lack, one which could tell Britain's pre-World War I traditional enemy, France, that Great Britain would be pushed around no longer." President Woodrow Wilson is described as anti-British whose "failure to demand unconditional surrender from the Germans in 1918 was inspired as much by jealousy of Britain's high profile Empire as a belief in the 14 points in 1918". This failure to extract unconditional surrender from Germany seems to be the gravamen of the author's analysis. "Failure to divide the former Prussian Empire after World War I into its component parts as might have happened if the allies had fought on for unconditional surrender gave Germany a relatively magnanimous peace under the Treaty of Versailles". This mistake and the failure "to take firm steps to control Germany afterwards, must take its share of the blame for encouraging the German hierarchy to play games with the international community in subsequent years, in order to pursue their own nefarious ends".

Whether such a dismantling of Empire in Europe would have been better for Europe is a what might have been that makes for fascinating conjecture. What we do know, however, as the experiences of post World War II have shown both within Europe and beyond, is that the break up of an Empire can carry with it the most appalling consequences and dangers.

TS

The Claridge Press

Just Published:

Understanding Youth by David Marsland
The Measure of Man by David J Levy
Some to Mecca Turn to Pray by Mervyn Hiskett

Forthcoming Titles:

The Falsification of the Good by Alain Besançon
The KGB Lawsuits by Brian Crozier

Thinkers of Our Time Series:

Oakeshott by Robert Grant
Polanyi by Richard Allen
Carl Schmitt by Paul Gottfried
Chesterton by Ian Crowther
Scheler by Francis Dunlop

Next in the Series:

C S Lewis by Philip Vander Elst

Peter Fuller Memorial Lecture Series:

Landscape into Sound by David Matthews
Subject Matter and Abstraction — in Exile by Robert Natkin
Seeing With the Ear by Howard Jacobson

Blast Series:

Left High and Dry by Peter Fuller
Education & Democracy by Anthony O'Hear
Resisting Leviathan by Philip Vander Elst
The Coming Order by Andrei Navrozov
Quo Vadis? by Piers Paul Read
Race and Free Speech by Ray Honeyford

Obtainable through you local bookseller, or direct from:
The Claridge Press, 33 Canonbury Park South, London N1 2JW
Tel: 071 226 7791 Fax: 071 354 0383