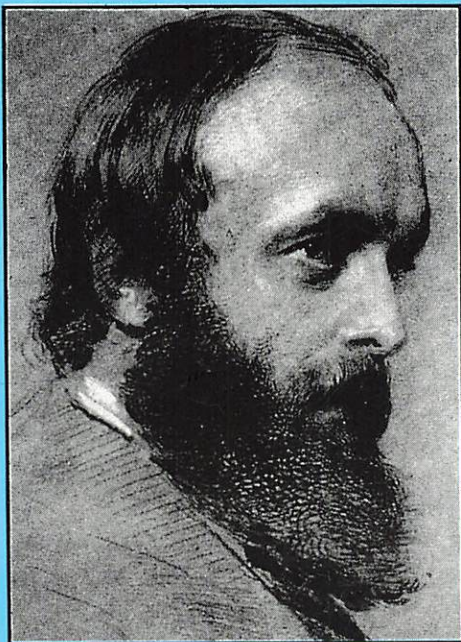


Summer 1998  
Volume 16 Number 4 £4.00

# The Salisbury Review

*The quarterly magazine of conservative thought*



The Third Marquess of Salisbury  
1830 - 1903

**British Philosophy**

*Roger Scruton*

**The Jewish Identity**

*Jonathan Sacks*

**Open Letter to Bill Gates**

*Chester E Finn Jr*

**A L Rowse**

*Andrew Thomson*

**Intellectuals**

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<i>Chester E Finn Jr</i>	15	North American subscription from ISI, 3901 Centerville Road, PO Box 4431, Wilmington, DE 19807-0431, USA.	
Intellectuals and the Two Divisions of Labour		Copyright © The Claridge Press.	
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## Conservative Journal *The Lantern*

*The Lantern* describes itself as 'a quarterly journal covering current affairs of interest to families', and also as 'supporting the policy and philosophy of the British Housewives League'. The League was founded as a patriotic support group for British women in war-time, and has always maintained a resolutely monarchist, traditionalist and family-based stance in the rapidly changing post-war world. The journal has been in existence for five years, and has, under the energetic influence of Charlotte Horsfield, become gradually more intellectual, more serious and more *engagé* particularly in the matter of Europe, towards which it is resolutely sceptical. It is devoted to defending and propagating the old idea of womanhood. Its contributors believe that women find their fulfilment in motherhood, homebuilding, marital and maternal love, and domestic economy. They are frequently outspoken in defence of gentleness, and angry in pursuit of domestic peace.

The issue for January of this year contains a characteristically insightful article by Patricia Morgan, on the fragmentation of the family, and its effect on the environment. It is, says Mrs Morgan, the decline and not the increase of families which is doing such ecological damage. Caroline Neill, who farms in Dorset, contributes a damning piece on the BSE saga, and the hysterical reaction of the political establishment to a danger that has yet to be proved. Other articles continue the journal's ongoing war against Brussels and the European Union, while editorial comment gives perceptive coverage of Parliamentary and legal matters. The journal concludes with a truly conservative recipe for marmalade.

Anybody who has an annoying daughter ought to leave *The Lantern* lying around the house.

*The Lantern* is available, price £8 per annum, from Mrs S.S. Masters, 17 Osborne Road, London N 13 5PT

# The Salisbury Review

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How bad have the intellectuals been? Very bad, says Paul Johnson, in an argument that is critically reviewed in these pages by Dennis O’Keeffe. And certainly, there is some damning evidence, as Philip Vander Elst makes clear in his discussion of the *Livre noir du communisme*. But what exactly is an intellectual? The concept is new to the English language. In the past we were in the habit of distinguishing the educated from the uneducated person. And during the nineteenth century there were many educated people among our political leaders — notably Disraeli and Gladstone, who between them did much to create the new style of politics, in which parties bargain for votes by promising goods that do not belong to them. But, as the editor argues in his survey of the British philosophical tradition, the concept of the intellectual — as a creature whose social role is shaped by his capacity to stand back from the world and think or dream about it — was foreign to English life. The romantic poet, the ‘man of feeling’, and the hermit had all been extolled and ridiculed, with Jane Austen and Thomas Love Peacock effectively putting the lid on their pretensions. Thereafter, thinking and feeling re-assumed their old functions in social life: they were useful, provided you did not notice them. The very idea that someone should draw attention to his intellect and emotions, and regard them as a qualification for office, was anathema to the ordinary Englishman.

But it was at this very moment that the Russian concept of the ‘intelligentsia’ was first emerging: the concept of a class of people, distinguished by their habit of reflection, and entitled thereby to a greater say in human affairs than had been granted hitherto. The peculiarity of this class is that its members are entirely self-appointed. Nothing is demanded of the intelligentsia other than that they identify themselves as such. Having done that, the aspiring intelligentsia have qualified themselves for government. A few obstacles might lie in their way: but they are obstacles created by unthinking people, by the ‘bourgeoisie’, and can be blasted away without compunction. It is this ‘self-validation’ of the intellectual class — its refusal to submit to judgement from any person or institution less ‘qualified’ than itself — that gave communism its international following. The communists identified themselves through ideas, and called upon

the support of all who shared those ideas. And thereby they wiped their own consciences clean after every crime.

The aftermath of this shameful process is described by Zoltán Földi, and one can be forgiven for thinking that the inauthenticity of intellectuals is proven by nothing so much as the ease with which they have identified with the communist cause. However, as A.D. Harvey indicates, self-validation is not a process confined to thinkers and politicians of the left. It stems, in the last analysis, from a deep social and philosophical nihilism, of a kind exemplified as much by Ernst Jünger and Martin Heidegger as by Lenin, Trotsky and Sartre. It is precisely the repudiation of nihilism, the refusal to pass from human scepticism to inhuman denial, that has characterised our own conservative tradition — exemplified at its intellectual best in imaginative historians like A L Rowse and Gertrude Himmelfarb, both of them celebrated in these pages. Our conservative thinkers do not deny themselves the right to political action — but as a rule it is of the quiet, constitutional and forgiving kind engaged in by that great Australian, B A Santamaria, described here by Hal Colebatch.

Nihilism is, perhaps, the inevitable consequence of the attempt to acquire a social identity through ideas. For ideas are fallible, insubstantial, and without human warmth. At the root of many European tragedies — and communism is one of them — lies that more intimate tragedy explored here by The Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks: the Jewish search for identity in a secular world. The rabbinical tradition has made thought, fable and dialogue central to Jewish belief. But it has also made Jews vulnerable to the nihilism of the intellectuals, as they seek to retain through thinking an identity that is, in the last analysis, obtainable only through tradition, religion and kinship. It is the realisation of this (though perhaps not in those terms) that has made so many secularised Jews — Gertrude Himmelfarb among them — into advocates of the Western tradition. The message of Himmelfarb’s writings is clear: however much we may be tempted to imagine better worlds, fairer deals, more liberated societies, there is nothing more important to us than decency, and a quiet submission to the only moral order that we could ever know.

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# British Philosophy

## *Roger Scruton compares the British and Continental traditions*

Philosophy would be regarded as one of our great national accomplishments, had not the German thinkers of the nineteenth-century captured the European imagination with their promise to make sense of the human condition (a promise that no British philosopher would be inclined to make). At the same time nothing is more typical of our national character than our ability to continue philosophizing as though Hegel, Schopenhauer, Marx and Nietzsche had never existed. Many people regard this seeming indifference to continental developments as the sign of a philistine insularity. But that is a shallow diagnosis. The two greatest influences on British philosophy in our century have been Frege and Wittgenstein — both of whom were translated and commented upon in Britain long before they had attained the recognition they deserve in their native countries. Indeed, British philosophy has involved a continuous response to continental developments throughout its modern history. But it has been a very selective response, and one which involves a distinct reluctance to engage with thinkers who do not share our stubborn belief in valid argument as the be-all and end-all of philosophical discourse.

The result is that British philosophers generally acquaint themselves with the works of their continental contemporaries, while remaining largely unaffected by them. Continental philosophers look to the English-speaking world for their largest market, while being ignorant of the philosophy that is produced in it, and depending for their intellectual appeal on a kind of lordly indifference to the local product. A British philosopher would feel duty-bound to read Jacques Derrida's

*Marges de la philosophie*, while being amazed by its author's indifference to rational argument; a French philosopher would dismiss Derrida's work as past its sell-by date, while remaining unconcerned by its quality as reasoning. A British philosopher would read the latest article by his Oxford colleague on the functionalist theory of mental representation, and marshal his objections against it. A French philosopher would be appalled to think that an intellectual could have the slightest interest in what his undistinguished colleagues thought about anything, let alone something so remote from our postmodern concerns as the functionalist theory of mental representation.

The adjective 'British' has become attached to two schools in the history of thought — the British empiricists, and the British moralists, each typifying an important aspect of our national culture. The word 'British' is often used ignorantly where 'English' would be more appropriate. But in describing these two schools the word is rightly used, and indicates (what many Celtic nationalists would like to deny) that there really is a British national culture, which subsumes the cultures of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and that its vehicle is the English language. The British empiricists count Englishmen, Irishmen and Scots among their number; and the same is true of the moralists. Beginning in the middle ages with William of Ockham, the empiricist tradition flowered at the Renaissance in the writings of Francis Bacon — distinguished, as so many of our philosophers have been until this century, by the beauty of his style. It bore fruit in the work of another great stylist, Thomas Hobbes, and found its

finest intellectual expression in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the writings of Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Thomas Reid. Our greatest nineteenth century philosopher, John Stuart Mill, also belongs to the empiricist tradition, as does our greatest twentieth-century philosopher, Mill's godson Bertrand Russell.

Empiricism is not a uniquely British product — after all, it owes its name to a Roman philosopher, Sextus Empiricus. Nevertheless, there is a peculiarly British form of it, which does not merely affirm that experience is the source of all knowledge, but also actively engages with the illusions that are supposed to arise, when we disregard this truth. British empiricism is a debunking philosophy, often satirical in style, and fiendishly clever in exposing fallacies, ambiguities and false assumptions. Its negative energy is so great that readers often fail to notice how bare and unsupported are its own assumptions. From Bacon to Russell, we find the attempt to tell us that all knowledge derives from experience, and that the desire to refer beyond experience is doomed to failure. But no British empiricist pauses long enough to examine the nature of this experience, upon which everything is supposed to depend; instead, he presses on impatiently to the battle-ground, eager to puncture the inflated opinions of his mystical and metaphysical opponents.

This feature of empiricism reflects another aspect of our national culture — which is the adversarial approach to intellectual questions. We do not build systems so much as cross-examine the systems of others; we do not propose answers but ask questions instead. As in a court of law, we strive to shift the onus of proof to the other side,

and are content when his case has been undermined. As for our own position, we are 'innocent until proven guilty'. This adversarial approach has distinct advantages, in defending the individual from tyranny. And in philosophy it enables us to escape committing ourselves to anything, besides our own quiet prejudices. It also discourages us from making our prejudices into systems, or from converting our philosophical opinions into official doctrines. On the other hand, it is one cause of the dissatisfaction that is often felt with British philosophy. Empiricism offers only a fragmented and negative vision of the world, and leaves the task of understanding it to science. And increasingly in the modern world, people have begun to doubt that this is a task that science can accomplish. Science explains the world, but it does not make sense of it, or enable us to feel at home in it. Much of the appeal of continental philosophy since Hegel has stemmed from its promise to rescue the human world from science, to give it a meaning and identity which are immune to disenchantment. In the face of that promise, British philosophy is apt to look peculiarly charmless.

The British moralist tradition is our native answer to the negative metaphysics of empiricism. Given that philosophy offers no system which will make sense of the world, of what relevance is it to the lives of ordinary mortals? The answer lies in morality, and in the ability of philosophy to bring order and logic to our lives as moral beings. Thomas Hobbes laid down rational foundations for a commonwealth, in which the rights and duties of every citizen would follow from the very fact of membership. In describing his abstract 'Leviathan', Hobbes elaborated a picture of the human being and his motivation which is true to empiricist assumptions, and which assumes that human beings are alike in their fundamental desires, and have an equal interest in living under a common sovereign. His somewhat mechanical picture of the human individual was left uncorrected by Locke, in his two treatises on civil government.

Locke adopted and adapted Hobbes's theory of the social contract, and provided a grounding for the liberal

conception of the state which has been endorsed in one form or another by subsequent empiricist thinkers. It was Locke's pupil and disciple, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who first felt the inadequacy of the empiricist metaphysics as a foundation for 'moral science'. He proposed a return to Aristotle's ethical theory, in order to understand the roots of our motivation as rational beings, and the sources of human happiness. He thereby initiated the search for a new Enlightenment morality, founded on human nature, and independent of religious premises. It would be a common morality, arising from our condition as rational beings, and expressing the sympathy for one another which is the root of our social existence.

Shaftesbury's followers included Francis Hutcheson and Bishop Butler, who laid the foundations for the ethic of conscience that was to find its highest expression in Kant. And the branch of philosophy now known as aesthetics would scarcely have existed in its present form had it not been for such Shaftesburians as Hutcheson, Alison, Burke and Kames. It was another moralist in this tradition — Adam Smith — who laid the foundations for political economy, a subject which engaged the intellectual energies of his two greatest successors, Bentham and Mill, and which was treated by Smith with a subtlety that is only now being fully appreciated. From the work of Bentham arose the new jurisprudence of John Austin and his followers. Indeed, the British moralists represent what is best and most fertile in our philosophical tradition, and even the reaction against them on the part of Coleridge and Ruskin was to make a decisive mark on the national culture, leading eventually to the academic literary criticism which has been the foundation of humane education in our universities.

There was nothing parochial about the British moralists; Shaftesbury was renowned throughout Europe, being recognised as a leading figure of the Enlightenment by both Kant and Goethe. Bentham lived for a while in Paris, and wrote his early works in French. Nevertheless, their morality has a distinctively British flavour; not

for them Kant's sublime exhortation to duty, or the adulation of natural passion that we find in Rousseau. Their precepts rest on a bed of good-natured sympathy, and the philosopher emerges in their pages as moral adviser to the rising middle class. When, as a result of Bentham and Mill, utilitarianism became established as the public voice of philosophy, it seemed as though every social, moral, legal and political problem could be provided with a common-sense solution, simply by following the calculations of the philosopher, and aiming for the sum of human happiness. The triumph of utilitarianism was of course short-lived; but the assumption that social and moral problems admit of a single rational solution survived its demise. The loss of status experienced by British philosophers in our time has resulted from a collapse of the moralist tradition, and from the inability of the new species of philosopher to utter a single piece of coherent moral advice.

In the works of our greatest twentieth century philosopher, however, the two traditions — empiricist and moralist — were still very much alive. Bertrand Russell used his great discoveries in logic and the foundations of mathematics to rewrite the empiricist programme. Sceptical, scientific, with a rapier-like intelligence, he tried to recast all philosophical problems (all those recognised by the empiricists, at least) in a new and transparent language, whose meaning would be not only unambiguous, but also self-evidently derived from experience. He swept away the ponderous metaphysics of the Hegelian idealists, who had briefly established a toe-hold in British universities, and devoted his spare time to writing elegant defences of the Bloomsbury morality by which he lived, or at any rate by which he thought he lived. By now, however, the two strands in the British tradition had begun to fall apart. The metaphysics was sophisticated, and the morality merely sophistical; the supreme cleverness which gave rise to Russell's logic was matched by no wisdom in his ethical outlook, and the philosopher's impressive public persona did not disguise the shallow aristocratism of his moral vision.

Wittgenstein once said that the works

of Russell should be divided into two kinds. Those on logic and metaphysics should be bound in blue, and everyone should be required to read them. Those on morality and politics should be bound in red and forbidden. The remark is typical of its author. But it also conveys a continental reaction not merely to Russell, but to twentieth-century British philosophy as a whole. On the one hand, the empiricist tradition has promoted logical analysis, valid argument, and the clear presentation of philosophical questions in a language which shows that they really *are* questions, and they really might have answers. On the other hand, the moralist tradition has run out of steam, being for too long severed from the decencies that first inspired it, and reduced to a kind of secular problem-solving. Wittgenstein's impatience with Russell's moralising reflected his own more mystical and Christian leanings. But it typifies a widespread reaction to British philosophy in our century, and one which we should try to understand.

Too many British philosophers in our time have speculated fruitlessly about the meaning of 'good', 'right' and 'ought', while confining their examples to such trivia of everyday life as would neutralise all desire for a moral solution. The manifest facts that modern man is living in a state of spiritual anxiety, that the world has become strange to us and frightening, that we lack and need a conception of our own existence — such facts have gone unnoticed in the prevailing moral philosophy. Ethics has come to rest in the study of dilemmas, like that of the man who must visit his aunt in hospital on the very same day as his child is competing in the long-jump at school.

Continental philosophers have not neglected ethics. But from Hegel and Kierkegaard, through Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, to Sartre and Heidegger, they have shown a striking indifference to such everyday trivia, and concentrated instead on the position of the philosopher himself, in a world that is godless and unguided, and where we wander as strangers. The *real* problem, for such thinkers, is seldom encountered by the man in the street,

even when both his aunt and his child are clamouring for his attention. The real problem comes into being only with the consciousness that discerns it, and this is a philosophical consciousness. Sartre and Heidegger offer a morality for the intellectual, in a world which denies him the possibility of religious faith. This explains the appeal of so much continental philosophy, and the disappointment of students with British philosophers, who seem to ignore entirely the thoughts and emotions that cause us to philosophize in the first place.

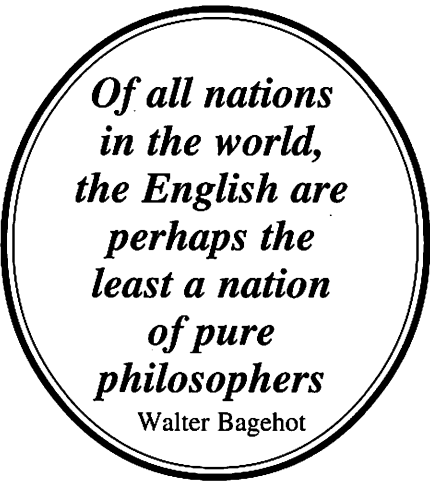
But here we encounter another peculiarly British trait. The concept of the intellectual, as a distinct human type, is absent from the mainstream of our philosophical culture. The British philosopher poses as a man of the people, motivated by ordinary concerns, whose scepticism is reserved for the metaphysicians, the mystics and the system-builders. Even when he is engaged, like Berkeley, in destroying the belief in a material reality, the British philosopher protests that he does so in the name of common sense, and in opposition to the outrageous paradoxism of his colleagues. Throughout the nineteenth century, when people of supreme intellectual accomplishment held the highest offices in Britain, it was never assumed that their education might in any way disqualify them from government, or induce the peculiar anti-bourgeois posture which was the perpetual theme of continental literature. Disraeli and Gladstone were regarded not as intellectuals, but as educated men, the more qualified for government on account of their literary achievements. Even those thinkers who felt some inkling of the spiritual vacancy of the modern world occupied their time, like Ruskin, in trying to persuade the man in the street to share their vision, or, like Morris, in dreaming of an idyllic union between the artist and the handyman.

The nearest our national culture has come to the concept of the intellectual is through Coleridge's theory of the clerisy — the class of thinking people who would perpetuate the spiritual and literary inheritance of the nation, and exert

a permanent influence on government. Interestingly enough, it was Coleridge who led the reaction against British philosophy, repudiating, in the name of Kantian metaphysics, both the empiricist theory of knowledge, and the utilitarian theory of morality. Coleridge's complaints against Bentham were echoed in Matthew Arnold's defence of culture against the philistines, and in our own century by T S Eliot and F R Leavis, in their attempts to re-write the literary canon, and displace philosophy with poetry as the key to the modern condition.

If you are seeking for words to express and soothe the modern consciousness, you would certainly be disappointed by the works of British philosophers writing now, whose intellectual concerns are entirely remote from any recognisable human predicament. Their isolation from the surrounding culture is the price that British philosophers have paid for their obsession with valid argument — for validity is most easily achieved by saying nothing. Its greatest virtue — that it tries to say what it means and to mean what it says — is precisely what has unfitted British philosophy for survival in the modern world. The rival tradition, more literary than logical, which has its roots in nineteenth-century German romanticism, will always be more popular with the reading public. For it promises a philosophy of the modern condition itself.

**Roger Scruton's most recent book is *The Aesthetics of Music* (OUP).**



*Of all nations  
in the world,  
the English are  
perhaps the  
least a nation  
of pure  
philosophers*

Walter Bagehot

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# A L Rowse: a Personal Memoir

*Andrew Thomson*

For many years now I have enjoyed a kind of spiritual and intellectual affinity with the late Dr A L Rowse, the Cornish historian, through his voluminous output of books and writings. His death on 3 October 1997 at the advanced age of 93 seemed a fitting moment for me to attempt some kind of personal tribute, as an author whose own writings owe so much to his. He was indeed a complex figure, reviled by many fellow historians in the academic world; yet a considerable degree of justice was done by his *Times* obituary — largely favourable and well balanced. Inevitably, space precluded a fully adequate account of all his multifarious interests and achievements.

An academic musician by training, I had hardly heard of Rowse until in 1972 a schoolteaching post in Bideford took me far away from my home in Edinburgh. Steeped in history and tradition as that Scottish capital undoubtedly is, North Devon and neighbouring Cornwall certainly provided their own intense cultural shock, with prewar and even Victorian lifestyles and social attitudes still surviving in that fascinating backwater. Prominently on sale in Bideford's main bookshop were a number of books by A L Rowse, highly respected in that part of the West Country as a native of Cornwall. Always eager to learn about places where I settle, I began with his *The Expansion of Elizabethan England*, and quickly realised the crucial importance of Devon and Cornwall in the 16th century struggle against Spain. To follow this, *The Elizabethan Renaissance* opened my mind to a whole new world of arcane ideas and knowledge. And — as a bonus — Rowse really responded to the music of this period, not as a dry musicologist, but through his deep appreciation of its

mysterious expressive qualities.

I had a chance to meet him later in the mid-1970s when he came to Great Torrington for an advertised 'Evening with A L Rowse' at the Castle Hotel. Even before his talk began, he was darting around the platform like a perky robin, a mass of nervous vitality. Once he started, however, it turned out to be not so much an historical talk as a political tirade — against socialism, the welfare state, trade unions, and so on. A party from the North Devon College in Barnstaple became increasingly vocal in its disagreement. To one conventionally radical student who made the statutory protest that history should be about the lives of ordinary people rather than Kings and Queens, Rowse retorted that one should set one's sights higher, just as he himself had risen above his old Dad! He began to be heckled, and even for a moment tried to assert order like an old fashioned schoolmaster. Eventually he took a more conciliatory line and things calmed down somewhat. In the final part of his talk, the lyrical, poetic side of his character emerged as he became intoxicated by the sound of the succession of names of the Devon and Cornish aristocracy in the Elizabethan age.

Afterwards he disappeared, only to re-emerge heaving boxes of books — a comical sight for a Fellow of All Souls — and proceeded to sell signed copies of *A Cornish Childhood*. (Indeed, I subsequently learned that it was his thrifty practice to buy up remaindered copies of his own works and dispose of them himself — the Cornish National Trust bookshops were full of them.) When I told him that I appreciated his writings, he seemed genuinely touched — 'You're very kind'.

This episode revealed much about the man himself, as I soon realised in

reading *A Cornish Childhood*. Certainly, his early struggles to win an Oxford scholarship from his Grammar School in the face of working class parental incomprehension and discouragement does account for his less becoming personality traits: the constant assertion of intellectual superiority, scorn and dismissal of opposing views and, with increasing age, a defensiveness amounting to paranoia. At the same time, with my own Scottish background I could readily sympathize with his very real thirst for education and knowledge, and his untiring devotion to the life of the mind, from an early age — all the more intense for the necessary striving.

I went on, with increasing compulsion, through the rest of his autobiographical books based on diaries, *A Cornishman at Oxford*, *A Cornishman Abroad* and *A Man of the Thirties*. This world was indeed curiously familiar to me, and I recognised a not dissimilar temperament to that of my father, an Edinburgh schoolteacher. There was the same engagement with left-wing ideas and 1930s Labour politics, followed by disillusionment with the organized working class movement as it failed to embrace the social and cultural ideals of its arrogant intellectual leadership. Even within my own limited experience as a public schoolboy from a home which professed rather hypocritical socialist values, I understood a little of the schizophrenic cultural divide which Rowse had to endure, moving between his parents' council house in St Austell and the upper echelons of the English establishment at Christchurch and All Souls, Oxford.

From this magnificent, though unaccountably neglected autobiographical series, I also learned of another vital, little known dimension of

Rowse's youth, one which particularly appealed to me, since my own field is 19th and 20th century musical history in its wider cultural context. While laying the foundations of his Elizabethan work, he was simultaneously studying the disturbing social and political problems of Europe in the aftermath of the Great War. His omnivorous reading took in a wide range of foreign literature, including Marxism, though his natural preference was for French authors, Proust above all. And his descriptions of his all too brief travels abroad in the 1920s, principally to Paris, Munich, Berlin and Vienna, are remarkable for acute observations of the life of these cities and their people, revealing a highly developed visual sense and feeling for atmosphere; they also record his revelling in their historical, artistic and musical heritage.

From his close friendship and protracted correspondence with Adam von Trott — later to be barbarously executed as a conspirator against Hitler's life — he claimed to have received special insights into the convoluted, Hegelian-formed German mind and spirit. By reaction, this unsettling experience effectively reinforced his admiration for the clarity of Latin-based civilizations. All this ultimately worked to the benefit of his great works of British history which — with Scotland and Ireland properly represented — are set against the political and religious conflicts of continental Europe. Indeed, he is always splendid at portraying clashes of ideas, cultures and interests; and these invest his style with its enormous energy and excitement.

My second and last encounter with Rowse took place in the following decade, when I had thankfully left schoolteaching to pursue at last a more stimulating career as a writer. In the summer of 1984, the Brighton Festival featured an enquiry into the identity of Shakespeare's Dark Lady of the Sonnets, with three speakers proposing different cases. Naturally, they included Rowse, for whom the subject had become a near-total obsession. And there he was, well before the thing started, installed at the back of the Brighton College hall selling copies of

*Shakespeare's Self-Portrait!* To my astonishment, he seemed to remember me and chatted away like an old friend. It wasn't going to be a very serious occasion, he said, just 'fun and games'. When I told him I was currently writing a musical biography, he started talking about the composers he liked, airing his knowledge about them.

He was on sparkling form at the opening of the enquiry, even giving me a conspiratorial smile and little hand-wave as he mounted the platform! Of the other two speakers, whose names I don't remember, one was a smug academic bully, the other tied up with acrostics and other such arcane devices. It amazes me that Rowse, of all people, was prepared to share a platform with such obvious inferiors — neither of whom succeeded in challenging him intellectually. He naturally argued in favour of his own much trumpeted discovery — of the Italian musical nymphomaniac Emilia Lanier as the Dark Lady — while his complacent opponent put up a black slave girl at court. (I'm not sure whether the latter was even meant as a serious proposition.) Alas the initial mood of jollity was not to last long, for when it was time for the audience to participate, I unwittingly set the cat among the pigeons. Quite innocently, I supported Rowse by suggesting that it seemed highly unlikely that a black slave girl in that era could have absorbed European music to that degree. Emilia's father, on the other hand, was a court musician, and musicians, like the Bachs and Couperins, tend to run in families.

At this point I should add that in addition to the speakers, someone had thought up the gimmick of having three young actresses each representing a version of the Dark Lady and introducing herself in the rôle — or at least that was the general idea. The result was an object lesson in how racial attitudes and political correctness can override rational argument and enquiry. Personally affronted at my suggestion, the black actress who represented the slave girl vociferously joined battle with me, while her advocate coolly sought to put me down by pointing out that Kiri Te Kanawa — a

New Zealand Maori — had nevertheless managed to become an opera singer! If this was to be the level of discussion, it was better to sit down and shut up, and Rowse himself remained contemptuously silent — wisely, in the circumstances. At the end, the cowed audience voted for the black slave girl. Rowse of course was very obviously put out by the result. When I told him afterwards that he had fully convinced me, he replied emphatically and entirely in character: 'Most people CAN'T THINK'.

It is unfortunate that his extensive work on Shakespeare in the final decades of his life brought so much critical opprobrium, even to the extent of undermining his reputation. Indeed, his embattled tone, dogmatic certainty and constant reiteration of a few *idées fixes* soon became wearisome and oppressive even to his greatest admirers. I don't claim professional competence in this field, but I do believe he was at heart a frustrated creative writer — unable to attain the highest rank as a poet — and thus overidentified with the Bard of Stratford, making the subject too much of a personal issue. On the other hand, the tensions between art and scholarship were probably necessary for him in order to fulfil his special genius. To call Rowse an aesthetic historian does justice to the superlative writing and organization of his best books, but not to the commensurate hard qualities of his research and thought. He cannot be held entirely to blame for the academic demarcation disputes between university departments of English and History, which have hitherto prevented the valuable parts of his work on Shakespeare from being properly evaluated.

The din of dispute can all too easily obscure the finest aspects of Rowse's personality — generosity towards real ability and undying loyalty to those, among them TS Eliot and GM Trevelyan, from whom he received encouragement as a younger man. Aware of his love of music and Francophile tastes, I ventured to send him — in grateful recognition of the inspiration I had derived from his works — a copy of my first book, a biography of Charles-Marie Widor, the French

composer and organist of Saint-Sulpice. It was a nice coincidence, too, that Rowse — who venerated the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches as carriers of tradition and culture — had written of his own youthful attachment to that famous church in Paris where the aged Widor was still playing in the 1920s. Very soon afterwards, a warm letter of thanks arrived, enclosing a copy of his own *Transatlantic* poems. I was delighted with his favourable comment: 'Many congratulations on your book — you do give us the sense of what an enjoyable life Widor had and all that enviable

musical activity.' Other critics have positively remarked on its evocation of historical context, for which I feel indebted to Rowse's influence.

In our present age of excessive specialization, it seems inconceivable that any one person could cover so much ground as Rowse succeeded in doing — dogged by chronic ill health as he was in the first part of his career. This breadth of interest was a part of his generous nature, overflowing with the desire to communicate widely outside the confines of the academy — indeed *The Times* rightly called him 'The people's don'. It is easy to mock

his very human faults and failings, but it is much more important now to emphasise his outstanding achievements which should surely outlive him. I particularly like to remember him as he himself described the men he most admired — as one of 'the great encouragers'.

**Andrew Thomson reviews regularly for *The Musical Times* and has written biographies of Widor and d'Indy published by OUP.**

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## Race Relations in Magistrates' Courts

*Ray Honeyford*

In June 1997 the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) issued a publication entitled "Race and Religion: A Brief Guide for Magistrates' Courts". This was produced with the blessing of Laurence Cramp, president of the Justices Clerks' Society (JCS), and Navnit Dholakia, Chair, Nacro Race Issues Advisory Committee, and member, the Judicial Studies Board's magisterial (*sic*) working group of the Ethnic Minorities Advisory Committee. The foreword informs us that the Justices' Clerks' Society has already produced two race relations publications: *Dealing with Disadvantage* and *Black People in Magistrates' Courts*. Clearly magistrates' clerks have not been unmindful of their race relations responsibilities.

This is not necessarily a bad thing. After all we, in this country, have very strict race relations laws. And where are you more likely than a magistrates' court to find the law of the land being faithfully and vigorously upheld and respected? The public look upon such places as models of judicial rectitude; and, broadly speaking, this is probably

justified. However, there are certain features surrounding the issue of this publication which might well cause the thoughtful citizen a degree of anxiety.

For instance, this publication, although endorsed by the JCS, has actually been produced — according to its front cover — by a private, committed organisation with an agenda which is focussed exclusively on the rights and welfare of current and former criminals. NACRO is not specifically interested in the victims of crime. Whilst I in no way seek to deny the worthy intentions of NACRO, the fact remains that, in any discussion about crime and the criminal justice system, NACRO has a consistent tendency to stress the needs of criminals: its spokesmen are ever-ready to challenge any policy decision which they feel in any way transgresses offenders' real or supposed rights. NACRO's rather begrudging response to the paedophile register aspect of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 (News Release 1.9.97.), and to electronic tagging (News Release 12.11.97) provide suggestive evidence of NACRO's sensitivity regarding the

interests of criminals. In short, NACRO is an organisation with an agenda.

This raises the question of how far the magistrates' clerks should be collaborating with such a body on any aspect of their duties. If the fundamental duty of magistrates is to dispense justice in a strictly impartial and objective way, how far should their clerks be listening to an organisation which represents only one party to the judicial process — and the party which is generally at fault? After all clerks are figures of very considerable authority and influence; the person to whom the magistrates look for guidance and advice on a whole range of issues surrounding the criminal justice process. Under normal circumstances, then, one would hope that the JCS would not be linking up with NACRO or any other pressure group, since to do so would risk undermining public confidence in the courts — however worthy might be the stated intentions. So why, on this occasion, has the JCS been so willing to take the risk? The answer, of course, is that this publication touches on an issue which is deemed to have a special and

impregnable status — race relations. This is a subject which strikes fear into the hearts of all those well meaning people of liberal disposition whose greatest anxiety is that they might be labelled “racist”. If the JCS had refused to endorse NACRO’s views on race relations, there is little doubt that the JCS would have risked the fiery condemnation of the whole anti-racist establishment, its commitment to race relations orthodoxies would have been brought into question, and its allegedly racist disposition exposed to the public gaze. That is the fate of all public organisations which fail to obey the dictates of the all-knowing and all-powerful race relations lobby.

The risk, presumably, was too great. Like most of our institutions, whether public or private, the JCS has felt compelled to announce its orthodoxy in the matter of race relations. It has adopted the “cultural cringe”. In its extreme form this means that exotic, particularly non-Western, cultures have to be seen as wholly admirable, whilst the traditional, indigenous cultural heritage must be disowned, denigrated, or ignored. In the present context it means that magistrates are obliged to genuflect to immigrant cultures. The all-important imperative is not to give offence to those whose origins lie abroad. Put another way, the responsibility of immigrants to engage in those adaptations and changes incumbent on all immigrants has now been transferred to the indigenous society. If the courts, as traditionally constituted, do not suit those who happen to be black or Asian, then they must be metamorphosed into multi-cultural arenas.

For instance, magistrates, according to the NACRO document, must take great care to know about, and respect the main features of, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Judaism, Rastafarianism and “Chinese” — this mysterious designation takes in those who are Buddhists, Muslims or Taoists and who, presumably, happen to be ethnic Chinese. The authors are much exercised about the need for all magistrates to respect the festivals associated with these very diverse religions. There are twenty

four of these, excluding Buddhism, where “different sects will have their special days”. Now, assuming that the vast majority of magistrates are not experts in comparative religion, one wonders how far they can even begin to take in this theological gallimaufry. And, even if they could, how far would this assist them in judging the veracity of witnesses’ statements, the quality of the evidence, or the innocence or guilt of the accused? Is not the individual’s religion as irrelevant to a magistrate’s work as is the colour of his skin? Is there not a danger here of magistrates, desperate not to give offence, being distracted from their sole duty to dispense justice? Surely the appropriate attitude of a magistrate to anyone’s religion is to ignore it. The only reasonable demands from these various religions is to ask the courts to carry appropriate holy books for swearing on oath.

The same multi-cultural anxiety underlies the issue of language. According to NACRO the courts must display notices informing “all” that they may be asked to give evidence. This presumably means that all languages evident in this country must be employed for this purpose, since crime is independent of language. I wonder if anyone at NACRO or the JCS has any idea just how many different languages are now spoken in this country. It happens to be about 200. Are courts expected to display information in all these languages? Or just some? If the latter, precisely how many? And which should be the favoured ones? And on the basis of what criteria? And what about the costs? There is no guidance on these crucial issues in this document.

Nor, it seems, has much thought been given to racial monitoring. Whilst the courts are enjoined to engage in racial head-counting, there is no mention of why this is necessary. And I can think of a very good reason why the magistrates should have nothing to do with such a procedure. It is difficult to escape the thought that underlying racial monitoring is the notion of egalitarian racial outcomes: in this context this means that the various ethnic groups ought to be represented in crime

figures in the same proportions as they are in the general population. Once magistrates accept that, then they are going to feel disturbed if some groups seem to be producing higher crime rates than others. And they may well allow their judgements to be affected accordingly. That would not only be wrong; it would also be a misreading of reality, since types of crime vary systematically with race. We know this for certain. Not long ago, for instance, it was revealed that eighty per cent of muggings in London were being committed by Afro-Caribbeans — a violation of the racial egalitarian principle which caused uproar in the race relations lobby and its vociferous supporters, but which can no more be denied than the statistics about the weather.

Again, NACRO is much exercised by names and naming systems. A whole page is devoted to reminding magistrates of their heavy duty in this respect. “What you are expected to do is treat people with courtesy and address them properly.” (Do people as mature and well-trained at magistrates really have to be addressed in this insufferably condescending manner, as though they were recalcitrant adolescents?) But one wonders just what this particular fuss is all about. After all, long before the defendant and his counsel appear in court they will have had contact with both the police and the court’s administration, so the names will appear on the charge sheet. All the magistrates have to do is to ask how names are to be pronounced.

And what are the courts to make of this? “The Quran should be kept wrapped up in a cloth cover and unwrapped by the follower of the faith. Muslims prefer to wash their hands, feet or other parts of their body before they take the Quran in their hands.” Are courts really supposed to provide bath rooms to permit Muslim ablutions whilst the magistrates are kept waiting? Is that a practicable demand? And is it right in principle? After all, the courts of this country do not dispense Shari’a law — not yet, at any rate. And what about the precedent if this demand is met? How will the authorities react to other groups claiming special

treatment? We are told, for instance, that Rastafarians “view the use of marijuana (ganja) as a religious rite.” Does that mean that Rastafarians should be allowed to exercise this

“religious rite” in court? Just how far, one wonders, does the multi-cultural imperative have to be carried in our courts?

If I were a magistrate, I should view

this document with considerable irritation and not a little anxiety.

**Ray Honeyford is a former headmaster and writer.**

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## Gertrude Himmelfarb — an Appreciation

*Jonathan Dillon*

**G**ertrude Himmelfarb, one of the most gifted historians of this century, has written on nineteenth-century history and its influences on modern culture and society, and her recent *Demoralisation of Society*, which combines both of these areas, provoked considerable debate in Britain. Her previous work however, has gained far less attention than it deserves.

Himmelfarb was born in 1922 in New York. She gained her first degree from Brooklyn College and her master's and doctorate from the University of Chicago. Today she is Professor Emeritus at the City University of New York, a fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Historical Society, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She is married to neo-conservative thinker Irving Kristol, and her son William Kristol is editor of the American *Weekly Standard*.

There are four reasons why Himmelfarb's work merits, indeed demands, the attention of students and teachers of history and conservative thinkers. First, Himmelfarb employs an exemplary historical method in her study of nineteenth-century England. Unlike the scientist who might study the combining of atoms, the historian is concerned with human motives. Any history which is to be more than a

simple chronicle of happenings must seek to explain the complex interplay of events with thoughts, beliefs and feelings. One has only to consider the difficulties of apprehending the thoughts, beliefs and feelings of one's contemporaries, to gain some insight into the problem facing the historian. Such a task calls to mind the hyperbole of Sir Herbert Butterfield that “It takes a hundred years to recapture what was common knowledge at the time”.

Himmelfarb's approach to this is best illustrated by *The Idea of Poverty* (1984) and *Poverty and Compassion* (1991), her magisterial studies of nineteenth-century attitudes to poverty. She rejects any attempt to impose a pre-determined mind-set on the subjects of her enquiry, as exemplified by the ‘social control’ school of history. The ‘social control’ thesis asserts that the efforts of the nineteenth-century state were directed toward ‘regulating’ the poor. Since almost everything is perceived as evidencing ‘social control’, for example both rising or falling levels of poor relief, or both laissez-faire or government intervention, the thesis is incapable of falsification. It also says little about individuals' motives or actions. She also rejects the materialist, including Marxist, approaches of so many British historians who have conducted studies of the same period. Instead she tries to explain how indi-

viduals themselves understood poverty, how these understandings changed, and the beliefs, ideas and emotions which motivated some to contrive remedies for poverty.

In so far as she tries to examine the understandings of nineteenth-century people she can be said to employ what sociologists and historians, following Dilthey, call *Verstehen*. This is not meant in the narrow sense of R G Collingwood. As Himmelfarb explains: ‘I would not say ... that “all history is the history of thought”, or even that the history of thought determines all of history. I do believe, however, that there is a history of thought in all of history, and that the two are often intertwined and interdependent. Even the “hard facts” about poverty.... appeared to contemporaries as facts and functioned as such only as they were mediated by the structure of ideas, values, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and images’.

Himmelfarb is ‘individualistic’ in approach, not simply in the sense used by social historians, who might contrast individualist and structuralist explanations of poverty, or even in the broader sense of Sir Karl Popper's methodological individualism. The method is individualistic not merely because it stresses the consequences of individual action, but because it charts the mental world inhabited by

individual men and women, and then tries in a sophisticated fashion to explain their motives for action and their influence on each other.

This method is likely to be congenial to conservative-minded students of history, not least because it allows us to make a more informed judgement of nineteenth-century society. For example Himmelfarb has shown how the Victorians generally spoke not of 'solutions' to social evils, but of the rather more modest 'remedies'. It is precisely the use of twentieth-century concepts and values in judging the Victorians which leads to a devaluing of their efforts to come to terms with the problems of massive social change. The method also encourages balance in the judgement of nineteenth-century figures: thus Himmelfarb's discussion of Friedrich Engels, for example, results in an original interpretation of his ideas on poverty and a sensitive assessment of his character.

Secondly, Himmelfarb has succeeded in producing a more balanced interpretation of the Victorians. Without idealising their behaviour, for she does have some critical things to say, her effort is to produce a judicious and humane assessment.

One is reminded here of the wise words of George Kitson-Clark that 'the most important task of historical revision is to rescue real men and women who have been shrunk by historians into the bloodless units of a generalisation, or have become the ugly depersonalised caricatures of partisan legend or modern prejudice'. In this sense Himmelfarb is truly a revisionist.

There are three main charges on which the Victorians are generally indicted: the indifference of the middle classes to the sufferings of the poor, the oppression of women, and an irreconcilable conflict between public and private morality, resulting in near universal hypocrisy. On the first charge, Himmelfarb shows that the 'moral imagination' of the late Victorians grew to include a compassion not merely toward the pauper class but toward a large part of the working people. Indeed the period was one of great social

reform initiated by middle-class politicians — but perhaps more significant was the desire to uplift and improve the less fortunate through charitable effort. This is seen in the social morality of T H Green, the compassion of Arnold Toynbee, the civilising mission of Alfred Marshall, the 'scientific' approach of the Charity Organisation Society, and the paternalism of the Webbs.

Even Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree, whose studies have often been cited as evidence of the persistence of large-scale poverty and the inability or unwillingness of the Victorians to do anything about it, are shown to have said nothing quite so alarming. Booth's figure of 30.7 per cent of London people living in poverty included those poor who had 'sufficiently regular but bare income' (classes C and D), in addition to the 'very poor' who could not survive without outside help (classes A and B). This latter group constituted not the oft-quoted 'nearly one-third' but less than one-tenth of London's population. Similarly, Rowntree's figure of 27.84 per cent of people living in poverty in York, included those in 'secondary poverty' who had enough money to live on if they did not squander it, and those in 'primary poverty' (9.91 per cent) who lacked the income for 'physical efficiency'. Himmelfarb suggests however, that in their typically unsentimental concern for the poor, Booth and Rowntree both shared and enriched the moral imagination of their age.

As for the oppression of women, Himmelfarb demonstrates that despite their handicaps — being denied the vote, and being regarded as unsuited to the world of employment — middle class women were notably active in social movements of late Victorian Britain. In *The Demoralisation of Society* (1995) Himmelfarb reveals some interesting historical ironies in this context. For example, a very large number of the most politically active women opposed female suffrage, and the 1889 anti-female suffrage petition signed by over two thousand women stands as a notable example of female organisation and effort. Of comparable

importance is the role of working class women in the home, and here Himmelfarb cites the interesting research of Elizabeth Roberts. This suggests that women in working class families often had a more dominant role than their middle class counterparts, exercising power through both moral influence and control of family finances.

On Victorian morality Himmelfarb has much to say. In *Marriage and Morals among the Victorians* she traces the commonly held sour view of Victorian morality to Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* (1918). Strachey's irreverent portrayal of four prominent Victorians influenced a generation of historians. It also helped to institute the idea that, insofar as they publicly advocated a morality of which they privately fell short, the Victorians were guilty of hypocrisy.

For Himmelfarb the fact that some prominent Victorians (or members of any society) fall short of their moral code is not the crucial issue. What was notable about Victorian society was that there was a set of sincerely held moral beliefs throughout all levels of society. These, which encouraged a clear understanding of what constituted respectable behaviour, the Victorians referred to as 'virtues'. Even when they did transgress, the Victorians did not flaunt the behaviour or seek thereby to subvert the generally-held moral code. In *The Demoralisation of Society* Himmelfarb contrasts such 'virtues' with the moral 'values' of today, about which no one is very confident. The Victorians were not notably immoral or hypocritical and in their efforts to preserve their moral code they did much that is worthy of our emulation.

Of course not everyone will be persuaded by Himmelfarb's explanation of the change from virtues to values. Some will conclude that she attributes too much to the influence of continental thinkers, Weber and Nietzsche, whose impact even on British intellectuals was small. One might also wonder if in their own self-criticism, the Victorians unwittingly encouraged the subsequent vilification of their own society. Himmelfarb refers to this in passing, since she believes

that historians who emphasise the indictments made by Victorian intellectuals of their own society, have equally unwittingly accepted the notion of Victorian virtues. While this is undoubtedly true, it fails to recognise the extent to which the reports of Parliamentary commissions on factory conditions or the 'explanations' of foreign policy of anti-imperialists informed subsequent opinion.

Thirdly, Himmelfarb has made a major contribution to the understanding of key nineteenth-century thinkers and their influence. Her earliest major work, *Lord Acton: A Study in Conscience and Politics* (1952), is an impressive study of the religious views, historical work and political thought of the great nineteenth-century liberal. Perhaps the most interesting, although somewhat neglected aspect of this study is the account of Acton's attempts to encourage a reconciliation between traditional catholicism and liberalism. This is interesting not least because of the insight it provides into the form of liberalism, based on traditions and moral virtues, which Acton subsequently delineated.

Himmelfarb's *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* (1959) is an intellectual biography of Charles Darwin and a study of the social consequences of his ideas. It is important for three reasons: namely, its account of the early development of Darwin's ideas on evolution, its positing of a 'conservative revolution' following the publication of *The Origin of Species*, and Himmelfarb's contentious views on the scientific status of the theory of evolution.

Unlike earlier biographers, she deliberately avoids a portrayal of Darwin's 1831 voyage on the 'Beagle' simply as a 'necessary preliminary' to his theory of evolution. She is very conscious of the danger of hindsight and the tendency to read back into Darwin's early research and thought, ideas which have no place there. Thus she argues that Darwin's ideas on the mutability of species only really developed after 1837. This suggestion is treated as quite unexceptional in subsequent biographies of the man. She thus transformed our understanding of Darwin.

In terms of its influence on Christian belief, Himmelfarb proposes that the theory of evolution encouraged a kind of 'conservative revolution'. She suggests that although individual accommodations of the theory varied considerably, many of the ideas upon which Darwin's theory was based were familiar. Furthermore, where it destroyed religious conviction it seemed to lead indirectly to a renewed and reinvigorated morality.

*Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* has received a mixed response, particularly in consequence of its scepticism about the scientific status of the theory of evolution. It suggests that the theory is based on a narrow range of suppositions which do not, perhaps cannot, fully account for life as we see it. On its publication, it was argued that Himmelfarb had ignored more recent auxiliary hypotheses which had strengthened the theory of evolution; but the debate has recently been reignited by the publication of two anti-evolutionary works in the United States.

*On Liberty and Liberalism: The Case of John Stuart Mill* (1974) is a critique of Mill's *On Liberty* and the all-pervading influence of the absolutist form of liberty it advocates. Himmelfarb argues that the 'philosophers of antiquity', who were much more profound than Mill, would have rejected as a guide to all human conduct the "one very simple principle" upon which *On Liberty* is based. But such philosophers cannot speak with ease to men roughly imbued with modern modes of thought. Thus Himmelfarb relies upon 'another Mill' — the more sophisticated Mill of *Utilitarianism* — to criticise the Mill of *On Liberty*.

Himmelfarb asserts that the reductivist nature of the 'one very simple principle' has had perverse consequences which even the Mill of *On Liberty* could not have foreseen and would never have approved of. Thus it is precisely because this notion of liberty is not rooted in tradition or tempered by other values, that in cases where it fails to provide a simple solution government rushes in. Thus it is not even a very effective defence of liberty — and this is the great paradox of modern liberalism.

Of course some modern conservatives might wonder whether the paradox is explained more simply (in Britain at least) by the positing of a third, socialist, Mill who had so much influence on later liberals.

One of the most important aspects of these works (and of *Victorian Minds* (1968) — a collection of essays on nineteenth century intellectuals) is the influence of ideas, for good or ill, on the modern world. Himmelfarb traces the complex interplay of ideas, sometimes, as in the case of Darwin, ideas which formed only a minor part of or were tangential to the main theory, but which had lasting consequences. One cannot help but be struck by the great fertility of the Victorian intellectual milieu. She shows how even those who might be classed as part of the intellectual 'second division' in nineteenth-century England were outstanding when compared to modern thinkers.

Fourthly, there is the richness of Himmelfarb's work. By this is meant both the huge range of evidence she marshals in support of her arguments and the fecundity of her mind. A significant feature of *The Idea of Poverty* is its value to students of history researching numerous aspects of nineteenth-century politics, economy or society. Her sources range from the early work of Edmund Burke, through Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and London Poor* to the correspondence of Benjamin Disraeli. While not its central theme, those interested in the influence of Adam Smith on Burke, the impact of Malthus on the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, the nature of nineteenth-century government intervention, Disraeli's Tory Democracy, or early Victorian literature, would find this work a valuable resource.

One area of Himmelfarb's work of considerable importance to conservative thinkers, is her enquiry into the intellectual origins of the welfare state. The current debate on the future of the welfare state is constrained and unsophisticated. The chief protagonists either demand that the state play an ever greater role, or argue, generally on economic grounds, that further growth cannot be sustained. Those

few bold enough to question the consequences of the welfare state, tend to be dismissed as 'ideologically inspired' and possessing 'hidden agendas', by politicians and academics who genuinely (although quite unjustifiably) see themselves as above such things.

Himmelfarb's concluding chapters in *Poverty and Compassion* are valuable in this context, since they demonstrate that many of the most passionate Victorian advocates of government social intervention were under no illusion about its potential dangers. She points to the irony that just at the turn of the century, when intellectuals were turning away somewhat from socialism, social reform was being adopted on a much more comprehensive scale. It was these New Liberal reforms which so emboldened a later generation of socialists. Beatrice Webb herself was troubled by what Winston Churchill called the 'big slice of Bismarckianism' which was achieved before the First World War. Webb feared that these reforms detached state assistance from moral questions, that money allowances were not linked to individual

conduct. This was something which even Churchill acknowledged, but which he dismissed, as Himmelfarb shows, on the grounds that he did not like 'mixing up moralities and mathematics'. The total divorce of morality from social policy only truly occurred after 1945. Victorian advocates of government social intervention could hardly have imagined its current scale, still less would they have blithely accepted its negative consequences.

What is distinctive about Himmelfarb's work however, is what is distinctive about all great history, what may be called its 'myriad minded' nature — its adroitness in drawing out complex and often hidden connections, its ability to enter the imagination of people remote from us, and its power to identify the deepest human concerns of a time and place. It is in these things that it possesses a capacity to improve the quality of thought and to develop the sensibilities of its readers. In the wake of 'history from below' and postmodernism, the advocacy of such a history will be perceived by some as outdated and perhaps even as

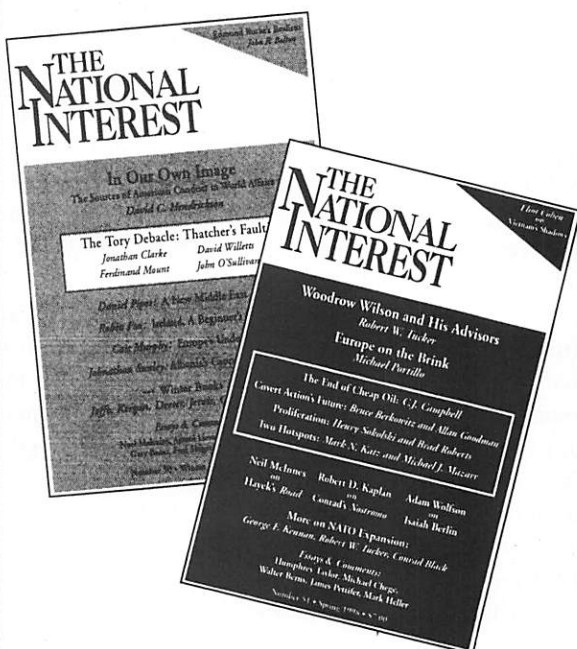
a prescription for intellectual servility. But it was precisely bestowal of such benefits, which could not be acquired from a single reading, that once inspired the common man to read and discuss great works of history.

Himmelfarb's work touches upon some of the central problems of our age — the decline of Victorian moral capital, the defence of individual liberty, the unintended consequences of the growth of the welfare state. That she sometimes says things which may make her readers uncomfortable or undermine their fondest hopes is a strength, and the political right are as likely to be discomfited by her as the political left. Her work is certainly a great antidote to the ideological fixations and the flight from truth of some members of her profession. But more than this it is, in its own right, great history.

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# Giving It Away

## *Chester E Finn Jr offers an open letter to Bill Gates*

Dear Mr Gates,

Many people, myself among them, are interested in what you will do with the \$40 billion or so you have accumulated. You have said that you intend to give away 95 percent of your fortune, but that you are waiting until your fifties before seriously embarking on the project. With your forty-second birthday recently passed, that means you have nearly a decade to continue building your company and your net worth and preparing for a task that promises to be more difficult than earning the billions in the first place.

I say more difficult because I am assuming, from your relatively modest philanthropic efforts thus far, that you want truly to do good and not merely to be thanked by some and noticed by many. On that assumption, and as one who has given considerable thought to the history and the current condition of American philanthropy, and who has lately come to administer a relatively small educational foundation, I want to offer some advice.

VAST SUMS are being given away in the United States today, the greater part by individuals with fortunes large or small or even with no fortunes at all. In 1996, for example, individuals at every level gave a whopping \$120 billion to charity; as opposed to the \$8.5 billion given by American corporations. Institutionally speaking, however, the biggest and by far the most influential philanthropic sector is made up of foundations. The country boasts a staggering 40,000 foundations, whose combined assets run to around \$225 billion and whose annual gifts total approximately \$12 billion.

If you were to enter this arena

aggressively, you could easily place yourself at the top of the heap in any ranking of philanthropic firepower. For better or for worse, you could make a real difference. That is why I mean to begin by offering you a cautionary tale or three.

Let me put the case starkly. For the past several decades, "big philanthropy" in this country has had little if anything to do with good works as that term is generally understood, and still less to do with buttressing the institutions and values of a free society. Instead, much philanthropic activity, especially on the part of foundations, is engaged in subverting those institutions and values.

Perhaps the most familiar example is that of the Ford Foundation. The story begins in the 1950's with the Grey Areas program, described by one recent student of philanthropy, Heather Mac Donald, as a "turning point in foundation history" ("The Billions of Dollars That Made Things Worse," *City Journal*, Autumn 1996). The central premise of this program was that the ordinary municipal agencies, charities, and political processes of American cities could not be trusted to do right by poor people. Rather, the whole "establishment" needed a radical shaking-up.

As Mac Donald shows, however; the means chosen for this shaking-up, epitomised in the slogan "community control", led to disastrous results, not only locally but nationally, when it was adopted as the favoured strategy of the federal War on Poverty. But the Ford Foundation was undeterred by experience. It spent the decades of the 60's and 70's sponsoring the

calamitous decentralisation of New York City's public schools, subsidising organisations that purported to speak for "victim" groups of every imaginable stripe, and replacing what had been a distinguished record of support for the fine arts with colour- and gender-coded aid for "artists" whose credentials were measured by the stridency of their "attitude".

When Henry Ford II resigned in 1977 from the board of the huge foundation that bears his family's name, not only did he publicly rebuke its leaders, staff, and grantees, but he privately called the institution a madhouse. Today, what that madhouse has wrought extends well beyond Ford's own palace in midtown Manhattan. For the Ford Foundation, as former Secretary of State Dean Rusk once remarked, is the "fat boy in the canoe", and what it does "makes a difference to everybody else." Foundations that have followed its lead include giants like Carnegie, Rockefeller, Mott, and Mellon, and many smaller and less famous ones.

The litany of effects is well known, and includes almost every aspect of the assault on authority that we associate with the 60's and 70's. Racial preferences, radical feminism, "peace studies", crusades for prisoners' (but not victims') rights, sundry efforts to re-shape American foreign and defence policies in general and, in particular; to support friendship with the Soviet Union, Castro, or the Sandinistas or to advance the cause of the PLO and the IRA — all these initiatives and more were funded at least in part, and in some cases were conceived, by American foundations.

By the 1980's, it was clear that these

efforts had succeeded, if not in changing the mind if the American electorate then in decisively affecting the outlook and the discourse of American élites. And so, as yesterday's student radicals greyed into today's tenured (but still radical) professors and policy wonks, the charitable landscape evolved as well. Thanks precisely to the earlier successes, it became possible to continue the anti-establishment project of the 1960's and 70's by other and even more effective means: *by funding the establishment itself.*

Universities and cultural institutions were the most obvious candidates for the new largesse, as were the mainline churches and media like National Public Radio. But so, it turned out, was government. Progressing from their earlier role as testing sites for favoured public policies, foundations now became virtually one with federal and state agencies. They began to design "collaborative" programs that blended private and public dollars, smudging the bright line between the proper realm of government and the distinctive 'domain' of charity.

Foundations today even *look* like government. Although staffers eat better lunches than do government employees, and are more apt to work in New York or Los Angeles (or Cleveland or Kansas City) than in Washington or Sacramento, the philanthropic world has developed a virtual civil service of "professional" employees who move from one foundation to the next while scaling the career ladder. Like federal bureaucracies, foundations are regularly lobbied by their "constituents," employ lots of consultants, and are caught in the hammerlock of political correctness. And like government, they have become smug, self-referential, and ossified.

As for the policies they embrace, and the programmes they fund, these, with honourable exceptions, still remain conceptual throwbacks to the 1960's, though the hard political edge of that period has partly yielded to a subtler attack on the morals, social standards, and traditional culture of Americans. Consider, if you will, this sampling of recent grants by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations:

- \$5,000 for "a documentary about women's sexual awareness and self-esteem";
- \$15,000 for the creation and production of "a new collaborative theatre piece entitled *Old, Jewish, and Queer*";
- \$25,000 for a catalogue of the show, *Prison Sentences: The Prison as Site/The Prison as Subject*;
- \$35,000 for an "interactive installation based on an Iroquois prayer";
- \$35,000 for "a one-year installation on the World Wide Web that will provide an ongoing discussion of gender, sexuality, and the justice system";
- \$35,000 for "an interactive, multimedia CD-ROM and related Web site about the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico";
- \$45,000 to "bring together local community organisations and performing-arts groups to address the issue of environmental racism";
- \$50,000 to the University of California at Davis to "enable feminists from abroad to participate in a residency programme at the university's Gender and Global Issues Group";
- \$86,500 to a New York centre to "evaluate community-based programs to counter homophobia among youth";
- \$250,000 to support resident fellowships in the humanities at the Centre for Lesbian and Gay Studies of the City University of New York.

To be sure, not all foundations are subsidising as much folly as Ford and Rockefeller, but the grants listed above are typical. If you were rash enough to attend one of the massive conclaves of the Council on Foundations, the industry's dominant organisation, or any of the smaller conferences of the "affinity groups" allied with it, you might think you had fallen through the looking glass. In Honolulu last May, for example, at the Council's 48th annual meeting, you might have participated in sessions on "racial identity, racial politics, and philanthropy" or on the "new paradigm" of "disability culture". You could have joined the "working

group on funding gay and lesbian issues". Or, if hungry, you might have dropped by for "multicultural snacks" at a "site session" devoted to the question, "Is the Statue of Liberty Merely a Myth?"

What I have said so far might lead you to the reasonable conclusion that, in establishing a foundation, the trick is to be clear about what *you* want to accomplish, rather than leaving it to "professionals" to decide. Indeed, many is the philanthropist who has failed to master that simple trick. No one who knew the late John and Catherine MacArthur, for example, could doubt that they would have been appalled by the use of their insurance and real-estate fortune to lavish grants on left-leaning intellectuals, performance artists, and race-and-gender specialists. The MacArthurs simply failed to provide guidance, and they were not around to make mid-course corrections.

Plenty of philanthropists, however, know exactly what they want to do, and, through a foundation or on their own, go about doing it in their own lifetimes. The problem is that their ideas are merely imitative of what the "professionals" are already doing, if not still worse. Thus, we must suppose that Ted Turner and Jane Fonda are hardly ignorant of the politics of the United Nations, or the wasteful and often harmful projects undertaken by its constituent agencies — projects now to be enlarged thanks to Turner's absurd but indisputably high-profile billion-dollar gift. We must also believe that the secretive Charles Feeney, wealthy from his ownership of the world's duty-free stores, knew what he was doing when he wove a web of offshore corporations and foundations to shield his sizeable gifts to, among other "charities," Sinn Fein and its military wing, the IRA. Perhaps he did not intend his money to buy the bombs that would be planted in London subways, but when you arm militant nationalists, that is one predictable result.

Walter Annenberg is a different story. Of this builder of *TV Guide*, great friend of Ronald Reagan, and former ambassador to the Court of St James, whose foundation ranks twelfth in size

in the country, perhaps the kindest thing to say is that he has allowed his affection for public education to blind him to its realities. Annenberg has given hundreds of millions to urban and rural school systems and sundry intermediary organisations, most of which are either part of the petrified education establishment or vendors of pedagogical snake oil. Advised by such eminencies as Vartan Gregorian, president formerly of Brown and now of the principal Carnegie foundation — this really is an incestuous world — Annenberg was surely aiming in all sincerity to make American education better. In sad fact, for all the improvement his generosity has wrought, he might as well have joined Ted Turner and poured his dollars into the sea.

Today's biggest wheel among do-it-yourself philanthropists is the buccaneer investor and currency trader George Soros, now giving away several hundred million a year in the U.S. and abroad. A refugee from both the Holocaust and Stalinism, Soros has an abiding hatred of authoritarian régimes. But his fondness for the "open society", a term he invokes in homage to his intellectual mentor, the philosopher Karl Popper, who coined it, has taken some strange turns and brought him some dubious companions and grantees.

On the board of the Open Society Institute, Soros's American foundation, sits Lani Guinier, proponent of the idea that only blacks can represent other blacks "authentically" and an early, ill-starred nominee as an assistant attorney general for civil rights in the Clinton administration. The institute is best known for funding efforts to decriminalise various drugs and to develop "alternatives to law enforcement" for addicts and dealers. Abroad, along with acts of genuine charity — to Bosnians in need of water; Gypsy children in need of kindergartens, homeless Hungarians in need of mattresses — Soros has become a major political activist pushing causes of the Left. His aim, he says, is to help rebuild civil society; if so, one wonders why his foundation is so preoccupied with "the integration of cultural, ethnic, gender, age, and other diversities"

in these countries and intent on overcoming "deep cultural prejudices against people with different sexual orientation". Surely civil society in the former Communist world has troubles enough of its own without being dragged into America's sexual wars.

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I have gone on about Soros both because he is throwing around enormous sums of money and because he could, like the Ford Foundation of the 1960's, become a pacesetter for his peers. He is 25 years your senior, has begun to devote much of his energy to philanthropy, and has plainly chosen to do it himself rather than leaving it to others or leaving it behind. But is he doing more good than ill? That is a real question.

Which brings me back to you. Although we have never met, I believe I know enough about you to think you appreciate the conditions that have allowed you to accomplish what you have accomplished. ("I'm rooting for Hong Kong", you wrote after a recent visit to China.) Without a free society, a liberal culture, a dynamic economy, a stable polity, the steadying rule of law, a meritocratic social structure, a sturdy civil society, a not-too-meddlesome government, and a nation mostly at peace, wealth like yours simply does not come into being. And yet, if the history I have recounted is any guide, the chances are strong that, understand all this though you may, your fortune could well end up like other

fortunes before it: squandered, or mispent.

To be frank about it, the start you have already made in philanthropy is not exactly encouraging. Besides writing cheques to Harvard, Stanford, the United Way, and various population-planning outfits, you have made some distressing moves. "The Road Ahead" technology-training programme you have established seems unobjectionable enough, but selecting an arm of the nation's largest teachers' union to administer it was either misguided or misinformed. The National Education Association (NEA) has stood behind virtually every destructive pedagogical fad of the last 30 years, and has blocked every sensible reform. To put it in terms I am sure you will understand, the damage done by the NEA to American education exceeds anything that the antitrust division of the Justice Department might ever do to Microsoft.

As for your most conspicuous effort to date, a handsome gift of \$200 million to help low-income communities obtain electronic hardware, software, and training to bring libraries "into the digital age," it, admittedly, has the virtue of being safe — a lot safer than propping up the education establishment or meddling in sexual politics in Eastern Europe. Who can be against libraries? Moreover, you are promoting something you know well and care a great deal about: computer technology and Internet access for everyman.

But libraries in the end are mainly mirrors of our culture and society, not shapers of it, and this is a moment for shaping — or rather reshaping. Think of philanthropy as you conceived of the software business: as a place that needs infusions of vision and fresh ideas as well as capital and hard work. If you seek immortality via good deeds, you could earn it by creating new institutions in fields that need them, and, crucially, by making sure these institutions embody healthy rather than destructive values.

Andrew Carnegie and John D Rockefeller, for example, both started universities. Today we could use some new ones that would stand as rebukes to the warrens of petty specialisation and even pettier political correctness

that too many established universities have become. They would not have the prestige of a Harvard or a Stanford at the outset, and you could not be certain they would not eventually go off the tracks. But that risk might be mitigated by devising internal structures different from the present arrangements — where is it written that the faculty must be in charge? — or by limiting what they could spend your money to do.

But institutions need not be big — or new — to make a difference. There are lots of little ones around that are already doing sound work, and there would be still more if you were to help lower the entry barriers. Many are faith-based social-service or educational organisations that care for the ill, feed the hungry, wean the addicted, and teach the young. Some participate in the United Way, which is already a recipient of your largesse; but many do not. Mainstream foundations often shun these islets of civil society, precisely because they stress responsibilities rather than rights, because they teach traditional moral and religious lessons, or because they insist their clients behave properly. Such start-from-scratch “alternative” institutions deserve your attention. Not only do they accomplish much with slender overheads, but they are also most apt to embody the core values of a liberal society.

If you were truly ambitious, though, I have still another suggestion, again drawn from the field I happen to know best — education — but tailor-made for your enterprising spirit.

One of the most promising developments in elementary and secondary education is the spread of “charter schools”: independent public schools, founded by parents, teachers, community organisations, and even by firms operating for profit. Breaking free of the bureaucratic monopoly, these schools follow their own curricular and organisational stars. They are still public schools — open to all, supported with tax dollars, and accountable for their results to whatever public authority issues their charter. The difference is this: if they do not deliver the results they promise, they do not sur-

vive. Nobody is forced to attend them. Like anybody else in the marketplace, including a behemoth like Microsoft, they must attract and retain customers.

The U S has about 750 charter schools today, up from 500 a year ago. Especially for low-income and minor-

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ity youngsters, they are starting to provide a stunning alternative to the wretched offerings of our public-school “Systems”. But charter schools have a big problem. Their political enemies — teachers’ unions, in particular the NEA, school-board associations, superintendents, education colleges, and the rest — have contrived to deny them capital funding. They get operating dollars (supposedly equivalent to what regular public schools get, though in reality often less), but no money for buildings, for technology, or even for desks and chairs. That lack of capital, together with politically-inspired ceilings on the number of charters that can be granted, is the principal barrier to the establishment of hundreds of additional schools.

Charter schools are what Walter Annenberg should have invested in, but did not. Suppose you took it upon yourself to seize his missed opportunity. Suppose you agreed to invest, say, \$2 million in each of the 2,250 additional charter schools that will be needed to reach the Clinton administration’s goal of 3,000 such schools by the year 2000. The money would go to capital costs — bricks and mortar, computer networks, encyclopaedias, swings, furniture, and so on. The bill would come to \$4.5 billion, barely a

tenth of your present fortune.

But charter schools are not the point. I offer them in the same spirit in which I offer the example of new universities, or support for faith-based social-service agencies: as an illustration of how you could, if you had a mind to, create promising alternative institutions in a country where, thanks in some measure to misguided philanthropy, a number of the established ones have become baneful to a well-ordered society. Andrew Carnegie built libraries to fill an information void. You could fund institutions to fill a void that is civic and moral.

And so we come full circle to the Ford Foundation’s now-forty-year-old judgement that the “establishment” needed shaking up. Today’s establishment needs shaking-up, too. But the parallel between then and now is deceptive. Many of our major institutions have been profoundly damaged by the radicalism that was enthusiastically subsidised by American philanthropy in the 60’s and 70’s. Today’s great opportunity is, by contrast, to help restore and reinforce the social order on which your own success rests, and, in the bargain, to ensure that tomorrow’s Bill Gates will have the same chance you did.

sincerely  
Chester E Finn Jr

PS Oh, yes: spend the money yourself. Or, if you must create a foundation, do not let it outlive you by more than a generation. And do not permit it to give a penny to the NEA.

**Chester E Finn Jr is John M Olin Fellow at the Hudson Institute and president of the Thomas B Fordham Foundation.**

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# Intellectuals and the Two Divisions of Labour

*Dennis O’Keeffe reinforces Paul Johnson’s attack*

**W**hy should I add secondary fire to the telling indictment of intellectuals published not long ago by Paul Johnson? He thinks the immorality of many leading Western writers in recent centuries vitiates their moral/political prescriptions while the involvement of intellectuals in the totalitarian movements discredits them as a class.

He agrees that art and morals are separate issues. He applauds the talents of his chosen writers and even in some cases their genius. If the *argumentum ad hominem* is ruled out for art, however, what legitimates it in the political instance? Johnson does not say. One might propose that art is private and political advocacy by definition public and that this makes a difference; but what kind of difference?

Consider Faulkner and Keynes (not on Johnson’s list). Faulkner’s boozing scarcely explains his novels, nor does Keynes’s promiscuous homosexuality inform his economics in any discernible way. Utterly contaminated advocacy, artistic and political, *does* exist, in the writings of criminally mad proselytisers, where evil, insanity and work form a seamless web. Sartre and Althusser exemplify this exotic phenomenon. This special case can be made; but Johnson does not make it, though Sartre is one of his intellectuals, as is Bertrand Russell, whom Richard Lynn sees truly as a psychopath.

Even in such unusual cases, the institutional ways in which perverse influences establish themselves need more commentary than the pathology itself, however discrediting. The question, we will see, is basically

structural. Anyway, apart from excoriating already disreputable souls, what does Johnson propose? He nowhere asks for censorship. Indeed, most of us in the free world, while deploring these evils too, are far from agreeing what to do about them.

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What about dishonesty? Marx often cheated, as Johnson notes. Our knowing this is not central to our rejection of Marxism, which would still be a wrong theory had Marx been as straight as a die. Johnson stresses the lies of second raters like Lillian Hellman and Brecht, but again, this fault tells us little about their considerable art or contemptible politics. Many intellectuals are of the “progressive” view. The idea that they are all scoundrels — which Johnson vaguely implies by not repudiating it — is as misleading as the popular belief that all politicians are crooks. Though cheating is quite common among scholars, it is not typical, or human advance would not be merely flawed, problematic and reversible, but impossible in principle. Indeed, when such dishonesty is generalised by political imperatives, intellectual

advance is wiped out, as our century has shown. In less fraught circumstances dishonesty of all kinds illustrates evil’s general parasitism on the good. Unless most people do not cheat intellectually, intellectual life becomes impossible. This is why we punish students for plagiarism.

Johnson’s targets are mostly advocates of socialism or totalitarianism. It is not, however, only they who are vain, hypocritical and ruthless. The Fall embraces conservatives also. Advocates of capitalism, religion, the rule of law and traditional culture can be very bad people and we all know examples. Does arrogance matter for instance? Karl Popper could be insufferably arrogant and rude. So what?

Even in its own terms Johnson’s approach seems random. We could study the vices he decries more systematically than he, aware that careful mapping might put some conservatives as firmly as socialists in the vicious category. But what would follow should “progressives” prove worse than conservatives on average? The answer is: nothing. In itself, listing faults takes us nowhere.

## **Hitchens on Johnson**

A look at a far worse offender may help. Christopher Hitchens hurls a ferocious critique at Johnson himself, aiming to turn his theme back on him, by gloatingly laying out his “faults”. These are then tracked down in his writings, especially *Intellectuals*. The central charge is snobbery. This should put us on our guard since, while snobbery may be unwise, it is surely a minor flaw. Unsurprisingly, then, Hitchens’s article proves slight, its malice revealed in the absurd claim

that Johnson writes badly. We also get “bad-tempered and drinks too much” — slight sins which would make Johnson at home in *The Salisbury Review*, and in most intellectual venues, socialist, conservative or otherwise.

Hitchens fails far more crudely than Johnson, though the direction of the error is the same. Johnson, for example, musing at length on the genius of the drunken oaf Hemingway, leaves Huxley’s literary verdict intact: “a most excellent and subtle writer.” Bad man, good writer, bad politics: so what? Somehow Hemingway is fit to delight us with fiction, but not entitled to advocate his preferred politics. Surely a like sinner might equally have upheld political decency. Hemingway’s evil bears not at all on his mistaken view that Communism was our way forward. Why not enjoy the novels, hate the politics and despise the man — pretty well what Johnson does?

Just so, whatever Hitchens’ charges they detract neither from Johnson’s writing nor from his defence of our civilisation. Even if he were provenly wicked — as he is not — his work would stand. Nor, were Hitchens a paragon of virtue, would he ever be in the same league. *Intellectuals* has flaws, but it is a fascinating read. Hitchens’s article is only a sour rant from an anti-anti-communist. We will return to it, very briefly, later; for the moment Johnson’s failings matter more. The world needs experts and intellectuals; but their potential for good or ill relates closely to complex contextual issues, the ignoring of which leaves discussion stranded and abstracted. In particular, to produce a more plausible argument, Johnson would have had to invoke a wider political economy.

### **The Need for a Systemic Focus**

Angry rummaging through enemy moral quarters, however extensive, is off target. Pursuing intellectuals as a class, which was Johnson’s second aim, and should have been his first, calls for systemic i.e. directly sociological, reasoning around a set of facts of which Johnson must be more than typically aware. First, with the partial exception of Brecht, all Johnson’s chosen writers lived in more or less free

societies. In this they conform to a general rule. Since the Enlightenment, all the world’s most destructive writers have lived in such societies; so have the most informative and benevolent ones. Innovative evil, a parasite of good, is born in freedom. Totalitarian states make such evil worse by realising it; but they do not create it.

The second point is related. Destructive writers have mostly depended for their influence on the state. Marxism’s effects, for example, were incarnated in Communist states. They have also often been ensconced in the public sectors of free societies, especially since the Second World War, with our intellectual life increasingly assimilated to “higher education”. Via our public sector, our Marxists legitimated Communism, even when they affected a scornful repudiation of it.

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Marxism in the West was doubly evil, both endorsing the Communist state and corrupting whole sections of our public life. And just as Communism promoted wickedness in art and politics alike, so in some parts of our state sectors, ideological subversion has become a political requirement. In this context the corrupting “intellectual” comes into his own.

Both under general and sectoral socialism, wickedness is rewarded, virtue penalised. In our society, many ideological ills — hatred of democracy, capitalism, the rule of law and traditional morals and mores — come mostly from the public sector. The ideologues who control teacher education, social work, welfare and many academic humanities departments in America and Britain cannot kill their

enemies. They can install in our midst fanatically upheld untruths. The fatal influence of Marxism and its Marxoid copies was only the best known case. Another is the myth — propagated by universities — that most men “exploit” women, an idea which could not run five minutes with the evidence. Yet another is the absurd notion that white people “owe” repentance and help to black people on account of past sins. The bedding-in of such deceit requires the elevation of witting or unwitting deceivers and the parallel suppression of their enemies. In free societies too, intellectuals are crucial in these processes.

Nor does the demise of Marxism change thought. Post-Modernism and deconstructionism have been even more nihilistic in doctrine and effect. Destructive ideas abound, sustained by the state and its resources. They need public money. They often reach out to private universities and the media, even commerce; but they are unsustainable without the state. It seems the destructive sociology of the modern state takes in our “democratic” kind as well as despotism tout court.

Sartre contributed vastly to the racial antagonisms of today’s world. His influence was systematically propagated in universities, via PhDs, academic books, undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Similarly, Althusser helped to destroy social theory, while Foucault and his peers have spread modern relativism. The oxymoronically named Post-Modernism has played havoc with arts and social sciences. Most of this chaos is driven by the public sector, where many “scholars” have won fame and fortune through promoting it.

Public finance subverts modern letters and social thought, a malady now at a critical stage. Victimology and relativism are promoted by academics preying on the weak products of secondary (usually publicly financed) schools, whose under-education they compound. The social and probation work, teaching and teacher-education to which their graduates proceed, are also mainly in the public sector, and dominated by like ideologies. The whole enterprise is supported by a

torrent of expensive "research," much of it worthless and some of it directly dangerous. Some of the mischief, such as the promotion of hatred between races and sexes, is widely endorsed by law. With or without legal backing, such moral infection spreads to privately financed journalism and broadcasting and even the employment policies of private companies; but its origin and sustenance are in the public sector. Johnson himself, in his brilliant chapter on Brecht, points out the pernicious influence in free societies of the state-subsidised theatre.

No well known literature makes these vital links. No one has gone far beyond Schumpeter in his shrewd initial observation that modernity tends to reward antinomianism. He too quite failed to spot how intimately public funds are involved in this. Johnson is himself well aware that mass education tends to be dysfunctional; but the only work dealing with the financial context of the mess is the short and superlative essay by David Frum, in *Commentary*, December 1991.

Johnson's erudition pours out shapelessly. He is right that sinister minds dominated totalitarianism, and knows the role they also play in the free societies. What he has not observed is that the political economy of the latter case echoes that of the former, in a special version. To do justice to his evidence, Johnson would have needed some more formal explanatory apparatus. His book as it stands is not even a thesis, let alone a theory: it is educated polemic around the loosely framed, unsustainable idea that people who lead immoral lives thereby discredit their political views.

Anecdotal biography yields valuable nuances, but only for the limited purpose of shading specific cases. Johnson has used this minor tool and neglected the major, a case easily shown. We may assume that the proportion of people born with wicked potential in late nineteenth-century Britain was as high as in contemporary Germany or Russia. The vast differences between Britain and these countries in the next century cannot be interpreted without systemic comparison.

There is first totalitarianism itself, in

which the errors of Rousseau, Nietzsche, Marx and others have been variously institutionalised. The long-run trend, most pronounced under Communism, but in some degree common to all forms, has been for state "experts" to replace the privately funded division of labour. This division of work, we now see, is modernity's economic backbone. Totalitarianism is an attempt to reverse this specialisation, which Marxism misunderstood, hated and denounced, as did, more weakly, its Nazi and Fascist copies.

The other case is the role of intellectuals in the free societies, working in their state sectors. Here the drive is not to replace but radically to modify market-driven specialised work, to reproduce it in "interrupted" form.

### **The Role of Intellectuals in the Totalitarian Societies**

Even here, Johnson says little of a systemic kind. What he says about Nazi intellectuals, though, is directly on target. Hitchens is angry with him for saying the Nazi ranks had a large graduate component, arguing that this is falsely to condemn "higher education". But why should its critics need false charges, so many genuine ones being available? Anyway, Johnson is right: Eichmann, for example, was a scholar of Hebrew and Yiddish, and he knew exactly what he was doing. Like Hitler, he probably knew the "race" idea was nonsense. And Johnson is more to be trusted in the winking out of nonsense than Hitchens is.

The charge of intellectual involvement is even truer of Fascism. Mussolini and his scholarly supporters are the perfect example, though it is better to stick to Nazism and Communism, Fascism being so indisputably in the minor league of wickedness by comparison. Moreover, as Johnson has noted elsewhere, another minor league oppression, apartheid, was also a creature of the intellectuals.

Communism has more claim to be a producer of intellectuals than any other system. Johnson has always underrated Marx's terrifying genius; but Hitchens hates Johnson's chapter on Marx for the wrong reasons. He is enraged, like many socialists, by the

fact that Marx was wrong, his theories inseparable from their dire empirical consequences. Nor do Marx's many moral faults have much bearing. The fatal errors of Marxism are factual and analytical.

It is when such moral faults are institutionalised in a political system that they matter. Take Lenin, expounder extraordinary of totalitarian praxis. He imposed his special stamp on Communism with devastating effect, and his combination of immense character and third rate intelligence has been a fatal mix (as it was also in Hitler and Mao). But, and it is an important "but", the context — the structure which interacted with Lenin's psychology — was crucial. In a free society, Lenin might have been a ferocious, bullying school-inspector, or a fanatical single-issue journalist. Beria and Stalin on the other hand would simply have joined the Mafia, as in my estimation would a man like Goering. The difference between them and Al Capone is entirely a function of the totalitarian system.

As Françoise Thom has shown, the Soviet system was from first to last a regime of the intellectuals, built by power-mad ideologues and destroyed by the academic hacks who were trying to reform it. Intellectuals as a class were responsible for the ruin it spelt for everything which was touched by it.

A few brave Russian scholars and writers discredited Communism in the world's eyes, and their names should be honoured forever. This too is a systemic question. Pasternak, Nadeszda Mandelstam and Solzhenitsyn were brave from within the prison. This required courage of an order few people are ever called on to show. Communism crushed dissent because most people were not brave enough to resist it. Who could ask them to be?

Communism and Nazism were what Bakunin and Machajski had foreseen as the worst of despotisms: the rule of ideological élites, uniquely equipped to criminalise their denizens. The systems made their intellectuals a managerial caste. Communism was able to abort a civilisation of brilliant promise, almost as if it had never been.

Nazism, in an extraordinarily short time, utterly degraded one of history's most outstanding cultures. Such examples show us that we ought to concentrate our modern gaze on the ideological caste generated in the public sectors of free societies.

### **Ideologues of the West:**

#### **Comparisons and Counterfactuals**

Here too, we need systemic comparison, this time of the public sector with the private, asking in what ways education, for example, would be different but for state monopoly and public funds. Such "What if?" questions prove the need for counterfactual thought. E G West has claimed that in Britain the advent of publicly funded compulsory education aborted spontaneous and more efficient developments, an argument taken across the whole socioeconomic range by Arthur Seldon.

On top of economic inefficiency, state education has led to intellectual vice. Marx is the outstanding case. He would be remembered just as an interesting thinker but for his institutionalisation in the murkier of the West's public bureaucracies, which joined with Communism proper to give his writings and spirit an unassailable global position. This fatal interaction gave Communism a few more unnecessary decades. The sudden demise of Communism proved what many of us knew. Western Marxists said they repudiated Communism, but secretly they sustained it and were nonplussed by its fall. No theory can survive for long without a homeland, and the Communist states were the homeland of Marxism. From now on the West's public bureaucracies will be the only sure homeland for our ideologues, a poor but probably enduring substitute for distant Utopia. Counterfactual thought thus will remain an imperative here too. After all nihilists like Foucault could not have taken hold of education in the free world without public finance and its sycophantic "scholars."

Public sector reform is now a prime task for our civilisation. We should remember this as we watch the West's antinomian intelligentsia lurch gracelessly out of Marxism into the equally

barren wastelands of Post-Modernism and Political Correctness. Soviet Russia (or Cuba or China) was the spiritual holiday home, but the replacement pathologies still have their home-base, their own dear hearths and sanctuaries, in the state sectors of free societies.

By historical mischance education and capitalism have been uncoupled. Education has become remote from economic and academic discipline. If Britain, the USA and other advanced societies ran their trade today as badly as their education we should all be poor. Totalitarianism tried to reverse modernity society-wide. State education and its allies (such as welfare) seek its partial reversal within their own patch and have pauperised a very large minority, both intellectually and morally.

All civilisational advance is *isipsofacto* intellectual and moral. Capitalist democracy is a product of intellectual and moral innovation *mediated by the division of labour and a robust civil order*. Its repair, maintenance and further advance, are also mainly questions of mind and morals. Representative government and market economy are products of the free society and not vice-versa, as Rostow and Baechler have shown. The market economy is not, therefore, civilisation's basis but its instrument.

Capitalism is clearly superior to socialism, demanding and producing far greater decency as well as more wealth and freedom. But its proper status is rarely understood. Capitalism is *less* central than say, Friedman will allow, more central than it was for Burke. Friedman treats it at times as the independent variable of civilisation. Burke sees its status as mainly empirical and pragmatic. Both are wrong. It is a dependent variable; but its status can be established *a priori*, as a necessary but not sufficient condition of civilised modernity.

Freedom and affluence die unless sustained by thought, hence intellectuals are necessary. It is salutary to note, moreover, that the two great voices in systemic study of the division of labour — Smith in economics and Durkheim in sociology — were both good men. Nothing intrinsic to intellectuals makes

them bad. And *pace* Johnson, even if Smith and Durkheim had been awful, *The Wealth of Nations* and *The Division of Labour in Society* would still have been masterpieces.

If we throw huge sums of unmonitored money at our scholars, however, allowing them for decades to dominate crucial subsystems of society, building their own unchecked version of a managerial caste therein, we get monsters like that sub-totalitarian sickness of the free societies, Political Correctness. The lesson is that free societies need mechanisms for keeping scholars under control.

Real specialisation, including the intellectual sort, is spontaneous and vibrant, effected through free exchange, often *commercial* exchange. Claims and suggestions are tried out through fierce debate and counterattack, as well as rigorous testing. The influence of those who inspired modernity, whose ideas have mentally equipped us for it, has been diffuse and remote and never deliberate. The authors of new thoughts on the individual, on property, freedom and limits to government power, did not know what vast effects these ideas would have. No one conceived modernity. Democracy and capitalism have no blue-print, only a totally spontaneous etiology. One of their constituent thoughts is that ideas — in business, accountancy, or science — must either be provisionally established or fairly discarded. Popper thus rightly identified falsifiability as the governing principle of the division of labour in its intellectual aspect, but this is just as true economically. Opinion and experience are thus linked.

The brilliant and affluent civilisation this constant testing has created owes much to scholars of eminence. The man in the street has probably never heard of Locke or Burke or Adam Smith or J S Mill; but their living ideas have passed into the fabric of civilisation.

The adverse form of our intellectual life is a parasite and parody of the division of labour, a mocking, destructive Doppelgänger. Our managerial caste is undoubtedly less ambitious than totalitarians proper. Its core tendency, all the same, resembles them in

replacing knowledge with ideology as the key credential of expertise. For example, in teacher education or social work, promotion is generally available only to those who endorse the entrenched ideology of the occupation. This ideology is a poor copy of Marxism, used, as Marxism was used, as the credentials of a real nomenklatura.

The rise of bogus expertise is over-

whelmingly based on public finance. Its routine economy is demarketised production and élitist monopoly, its leading ideologues depending on the institutionalisation of their ideas and an intolerant blocking of criticism and alternative practice.

Only if academic life is regulated by a framework of free enterprise can we properly re-establish our civil order. Only thus can we test and discard the

theories of learning, of knowledge, language, culture, morality, welfare and criminality, which have done so much to destabilise our societies, and generated despair in the midst of freedom and affluence.

**Dennis O’Keeffe is Senior Lecturer in the Sociology of Education at the University of North London.**

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## United Ireland Now

### *Daniel Hannan looks at Partition*

**N**orthern Ireland’s anguish stems directly from the Partition. It is that event — the forcible separation of people who should have had so much in common — that has condemned Ireland to institutionalised bloodshed, claiming 4,000 lives on each side of the border. So long as the Partition remains, there can be no constitutional stability, and so no real peace.

I am, of course, using partition in its correct English sense: the division of an entity that was previously whole. The entity that was partitioned in 1921 was the United Kingdom, a chunk of which became independent and, in time, legally sovereign. When Irish nationalists describe the transfer of Northern Ireland to the Republic as “unification” — or even “re-unification” — they are historically wrong. Ireland has never been united except under the British Crown. What they really mean is that they want to renegotiate the border: to partition the British Isles in a different place.

This could only make matters worse. The objection to the current Partition is that it leaves under the Crown’s jurisdiction in Northern Ireland half-a-million people who would rather be citizens of the Irish Republic (although, interestingly, no one seems to object to

the fact that one million Irish nationals live under the Crown’s jurisdiction in Great Britain). Redrawing the border so as to double the number of *irredenti* would double the discontent.

Which brings us to the heart of the Northern Ireland problem. Perhaps sixty per cent of the population oppose any change that would weaken their British identity, while forty per cent want more done to strengthen their Irish identity. By definition, the only way to reconcile these aspirations is to narrow the gap between Britishness and Irishness.

On one level, nothing should be easier. A man from Mars would find it difficult to understand why there are two states in the British Isles in the first place. None of the usual ethnic or linguistic criteria for nationhood seems to apply in this case. A glance at the current Irish cabinet reveals nine Irish surnames, six English or Scottish and one (de Valera) Spanish. John Hume and Gerry Adams both bear Scottish surnames. Ahern is an Irish name, but Reynolds and Bruton are English.

A look through any British telephone directory reveals that migrations have been even stronger the other way. A study at Bradford University in 1994 revealed that a quarter of Britons have Irish relatives, and that only six per

cent regard Irishmen in Britain as foreigners.

Culturally, too, the Irish Republic has long since passed its *apastron*, its moment of furthest separation, from the United Kingdom. A young Irishman, watching the BBC news, shopping at Tesco, supporting Manchester United, listening to Oasis on Radio One, might not readily understand the fervent sense of national apartness that led his great-grandparents to break away from the rest of the British Isles.

Yet that break-away is now a fact of life. It is academic to ask whether past British governments might, with a little sensitivity, have held the Union together. The Irish Republic, like any independent state, has worked to foster a sense of nationality among its citizens. According to a survey conducted by St Patrick’s College in Maynooth, only four per cent of the Republic’s population positively favour re-integration with the United Kingdom, with a further three per cent regarding it as acceptable as the price for peace in Northern Ireland. Political hostility to re-unification has evidently been untouched by the social convergence of the two countries.

Re-integration could, however, take a more subtle form than simple amalgamation. The proposed constitutional

settlement for Northern Ireland envisages a Council of the Isles, loosely modelled on the Nordic Council. Such a body would bring together politicians from Westminster, Dublin and Belfast as well as the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly. It would have no supranational authority, but it could become a mechanism for the evolutionary harmonisation of policies.

Differences between the British and Irish governments in the international arena sometimes mask the extraordinary day-to-day closeness of the two states. Where else do two sovereign countries allow their citizens reciprocal social security claims and voting rights? Where else do they pay for the university education of each other's students? Once a forum is established to address these and other matters of common interest, the two states will fall easily into the habit of aligning their policies. This will be especially true if the Council of the Isles is allowed to expand so that not only parliamentarians but, in time, local councillors and civil servants begin to meet under its aegis. Soon, as in the Nordic Council, MPs, TDs and Assemblymen would find that they were grouping themselves by political affiliation rather than nationality.

There would be nothing artificial about this. Unlike the EU, where common institutions have preceded common interests, the Council of the Isles would simply extend to government the kind of co-operation that Irish and British NGOs take for granted. It is the politicians' determination to stand aloof from such collaboration that is artificial. After all, in most other contexts — from special offers to historical societies, from advertising campaigns to restaurant guides — it is the British Isles that is taken as the natural unit.

Politics, uniquely, have remained immune to this organic convergence — largely because the various parties on the island of Ireland have colluded in exaggerating their differences. Southern Irish politicians have understandably wanted to underline the independence of their state, while Ulster

Unionists have tried to portray the Republic as alien and threatening. Untidy facts are brushed under the carpet. Who would guess, reading the myths of either side, that more Southern Irish Catholics died in British uniform on the first day of the Somme offensive than participated in the whole of the Easter Rising? Or that 50,000 citizens of the Republic volunteered to fight for Britain in 1939? Or that the Irish Guards and the Royal Irish Regiment continue to recruit heavily from the Republic today?

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***A young Irishman,  
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Manchester  
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To see quite how artificial the Partition is, try substituting "British Isles" for "Ireland" in the various stock nationalist arguments. The phraseology of common heritage, overcoming mutual suspicions and learning to share our patch of turf are surely more apt, as well as more historically accurate, in a British Isles context. And the specific assertions that all-Ireland institutions should deal with such matters as the environment, agriculture and tourism make far more sense when extended to the two islands.

What will drive the two states together more than anything else, however, is Europe. Again, the posturing of the two governments can disguise their everyday closeness, whether on tax, border controls or BSE. As Britain grows further apart from an increasingly integrated Europe, Ireland will have to make a choice: to plunge

ahead with the continentals, paradoxically trying to demonstrate its independence by surrendering that independence to Brussels; or to stick, perhaps reluctantly at first, to its biggest economic and political partner.

Who knows what models of integration might then emerge out of the Council of the Isles? A new Act of Union is plainly off the agenda, but it is surely not unrealistic to think that, as a first step, Ireland might rejoin the Commonwealth, and offer British nationality to its own Unionist citizens as the United Kingdom does to its Irish nationalist population. Britain, for its part, might reconsider the aspects of its own constitution most offensive to Irish opinion, such as the 1701 Act of Settlement that bars Roman Catholics from the Throne.

As the habit of co-operation grows, and past conflicts grow dim, it is possible to envisage a confederal arrangement, with a common foreign policy and perhaps a single currency (the Republic, after all, was in monetary union with the United Kingdom until Jack Lynch's ill-fated decision to join the ERM in 1979). Part of the trade-off with Irish nationalists might be that such a confederation would be between the island of Ireland and Great Britain: a revival, as it were, of the Gladstonian or Redmondite concept of an Irish Parliament linked into the United Kingdom. Significantly, the main opposition to this model came historically from Ulster Protestants, who understandably regarded it as less desirable than the *status quo* they then enjoyed. That opposition has since dwindled.

Whatever the eventual dispensation, the first step must be to recognise that the Partition runs against history, geography and common sense. As Sinn Fein's web-site puts it, it is "the source of conflict, injustice and division". That division is the relic of a tribal and obscurantist past. It has no place in the modern world.

**Daniel Hannan is a leader writer on the *Daily Telegraph*.**

# Readers' Survey

Well over half the readers responded to the questionnaires and we are grateful for the appreciation and the positive suggestions they contained. Most people were more than satisfied with the price, the quality of the content and production and many wrote that they would be willing to pay more to maintain the current standard. Some thought the cover colours were too garish — 'too much after a hangover'. We agree that they should be toned down but pastel colours are not visible on book stands — the Review is sold in London and some Barnes and Noble stores in the US.

Perhaps some people were unaware that the Review works like an academic magazine in that contributions are unsolicited and unpaid, so the quality of each issue is dependent on the material received at the time. We do of course ask as many people as possible and we are proud of the high standard and dedication our contributors have sustained over fifteen years. In the light of these facts and that the magazine only appears quarterly, some of the suggestions would not be feasible: for example that the magazine should appear bi-monthly or monthly, that there should be a review of current affairs in the last quarter or that we should list public debates and meetings. We would like to run reviews of plays and art exhibitions but timing makes this difficult. Several people mentioned themed issues. Three or four articles on the same subject — the environment was recommended several times — would be possible. Although the African issue was successful, devoting whole issues to a single subject is a project we would approach with caution.

We agree with the reader who observed that there should be a more positive engagement with the issues of the modern world rather than lamenting what is past; several others drew attention to the omission of science which should claim attention in view of its influence on religion and politics.

Some articles were deemed too recondite and some would benefit from more factual analysis and less assertion.

Many people wanted more articles on conservatism especially now that 'the Conservative party was beyond redemption'. Philosophical articles on conservatism's strengths and weaknesses relative to other philosophies along with keynote articles from public figures were suggested. Some readers thought that liberalism was the enemy and that there should be profiles on its major thinkers, rebutting it. One reader asked that opponents should be invited to contribute followed by responses to their points. There was an equal division between those who like news and views from remote places and the 'Letters' series and those who wanted the emphasis on domestic affairs.

More articles on music, more shorter articles and more articles from America were also mentioned. We would ourselves like more letters to the editor but that of course is entirely up to readers. We hope that contributors and would-be contributors will consider these observations. Undoubtedly the Review could improve and benefit from a substantial increase in circulation so as suggested we will put a subscription form in the magazine next time. In view of the Review's eclecticism and eccentricity, personal recommendation is often a more effective selling policy.

## *Sophist's Corner*

The Most Revd Richard F Holloway, Bishop of Edinburgh, Gresham Professor of Divinity, gave Public Lectures in Divinity at:

### **Unhappy Bedfellows**

**Thursday 4 December 1997**

Some scholars claim that Christianity was infected with an anti-sexual virus early in its history. It certainly seems to be the case that it has promoted a defensive and grudging attitude to human sexuality. This lecture will examine the Christian record on the subject. We will discover many paradoxes, including the arguable fact that Christianity, for all its ambivalence about sex and its official conviction that women bore a disproportionate responsibility for the fall of humanity, created a better environment for women than some other religious cultures that allowed men a freer rein.

### **Was the Trojan Horse Gay?**

**Thursday 18 December  
1997**

The question of homosexuality is one that threatens to split the Church. Some Church leaders and theologians argue that it is the Trojan Horse that will finally destroy the City of God; It is the grand apostasy that will force another great schism. It is this climate of intellectual panic that makes it difficult to look calmly at the subject. In this lecture we will look at the state of the question from a number of angles, scientific, theological and legal, while keeping a close eye on the debate in the Church.

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# Ernst Jünger

## *A D Harvey on the German First World War writer, who died earlier this year*

**E**rnst Jünger was among four pairs of brothers who served as officers in the 73rd Hanoverian Fusilier Regiment during the 1914-18 War. Five of the young men were killed in action. Two were dreadfully maimed. Jünger, though wounded seven times, was the only one 'to come through in a fairly sound state'. Three years ago, on his hundredth birthday, he was honoured all over Helmut Kohl's Reich as perhaps the greatest living German writer.

The book for which Jünger will be remembered is his account of his experiences as a frontline soldier, *In Storms of Steel* (called in the 1929 English translation *The Storm of Steel*). Jünger was proud to have been an officer in a regiment which, in the days when our King George III was Elector of Hanover, earned battle honours at Gibraltar and Waterloo, and he served during the second half of the War in the Army Group commanded by the eldest son of the Stuart Pretender to the thrones of England and Scotland. Another English association was that during the titanic offensives of 1918 he read *Tristram Shandy* in the pauses between action. Consequently, it seems not inappropriate that parts of *In Storms of Steel* read as if they could have been written by an exponent of the English school of military pastoral such as Edmund Blunden:

The forlornness and the profound silence, broken now and then by the deep tones of the guns, were emphasized by the sad marks of devastation. Torn packs, broken rifles ... shell fuses, deep shell-holes, water-bottles, torn books, ... a peach tree, whose supporting wall had gone, stretching out its branches for help, the skeletons of domestic animals still tied by their heads in their stalls, trenches cut through the deserted gardens where, smothered among weeds, are seen onions, wormwood, rhubarb,

and daffodils; in the neighbouring fields stacks through whose thatch the corn is shooting ...

But the overall tone of *In Storms of Steel* is unlike that of any book about the war written in English — or, come to that, in French or Italian. It is not simply that it extols bloodthirstiness and violence and the adrenaline-rush that comes in battle — the same is true, in more banal language, in the memoirs of, for example, Captain A.O. Pollard VC, later a writer of boy's adventure stories. There is something peculiarly German about Jünger's book. In the introduction to the first English edition, R.H. Mottram, himself a distinguished novelist of the war, referred to 'a sort of Nietzschean-Wagnerian atmosphere of heroics translated into terms of gas and tanks'. This is not altogether unjust — except that neither Nietzsche nor Wagner had experienced, or even dreamt of, what Jünger had lived through and if they had it probably would have given them a different message to preach. And to a large extent the Germanness of *In Storms of Steel* is a Germanness which Jünger himself helped to create. During the long peace of the nineteenth century people had been carried away by the overblown fantasies of Wagner and Nietzsche — as one might still be carried away by them today in the concert hall or the study — but nobody could seriously mistake their high-flown effects for real life. But what Jünger wrote about, horrible as it was, had been real life between 1914 and 1918 and, partly through his influence, was to be real life again between 1939 and 1945:

I looked back : four years of development in the midst of a generation predestined to death, spent in caves, smoke-filled trenches and shell-illuminated wastes ... almost without any

thought of mine, the idea of the Fatherland had been distilled from these afflictions in a clearer and brighter essence. That was the final winnings in a game on which so often all had been staked : the nation was no longer for me an empty thought vested in symbols; and how could it have been otherwise when I had seen so many die for its sake, and been schooled myself to stake my life for its credit every minute, day and night, without a thought?

Though he was never a Nazi, Jünger's writings made an immense contribution to the ethos of militaristic nationalism which was to be one of the foundations on which Hitler built. By the 1930s *In Storms of Steel* was a recognized classic of German literature, even featuring prominently in doctoral dissertations, while Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet On The Western Front*, a much bigger success abroad, was officially banned in Germany because of its anti-war message.

Jünger even influenced the semiology of the emergent totalitarian era:

In earlier wars, certainly, towns and villages had been burned, but what was that compared with this sea of craters dug out by machines? For even in this fantastic desert there was the sameness of the machine-made article. A shell-hole strewn with bully-tins, broken weapons, fragments of uniform, and dud shells, with one or two dead bodies on its edge ... this was the never-changing scene that surrounded each one of all those hundreds of thousands of men. And it seemed that man, on this landscape he had himself created, became different, more mysterious and hardy and callous than in any previous battle. The spirit and the tempo of the fighting altered, and after the battle of the Somme the war had its own peculiar impress that distinguished it from all other wars. After this battle the German soldier wore the steel helmet, and in his features there were chiselled the lines of an energy stretched to the utmost pitch, lines that future generations will per-

haps find as fascinating and imposing as those of many heads of classical or Renaissance times.

We can see here his generation's vision of the vast resources of the technological era, which man must master before it masters him, the simultaneous horror and fascination for the machine which the Nazis were to subordinate to their perverted idealism. The steel helmet which Jünger refers to became itself a symbol. In the 1920s Jünger was associated with a right-wing veterans organization calling itself the Steel Helmet (*Stahlhelm*) which later, in the last phase of the Weimar Republic, collaborated with the Nazi Party in the so-called National Opposition, and the helmet — not the sleek coal scuttle of the 1939-45 war but the larger 1916 model with Frankenstein bolts at the temples — was much more prominent in the work of German war artists than the English shaving-bowl was in English illustrations.

Even Jünger's rank as a company commander assisted the rhetoric of future horrors. Before 1914 the German word 'Führer' had been more or less innocuous, meaning driver, operator, person in charge, guide, or even guide-book. During the war however, as the standard term for the commander of a frontline unit, 'Führer' took on an almost religious significance, and received the same emphasis as an officer's military rank. One still sees in German cemeteries today the inscriptions on the graves of officers killed in the 1914-18 War, 'Leutnant

und Kompagnieführer' or 'Major und Bataillonführer.' In *Storms of Steel* was much the best-known personal record of such a 'Führer' leading his men from the front (the German version is sub-titled *Aus dem Tagebuch eines Stosstrupfführers*, from the diary of a shock-troop-commander.) When, in the 1930s, German academics squabbled over whether they had or had not given sufficient emphasis to the creative, constructive, initiating role of the 'Führer' in their discussion of comradeship and leadership, or follower-ship and leadership, in their disquisitions on the literature of the Western Front, they had Jünger in mind as much as Adolf Hitler.

During the 1930s many men with backgrounds, experiences and opinions identical to Jünger's embraced the Nazi creed: but Jünger remained a sceptic. He loved Germany, but was unconvinced by the Germany that the Nazis wanted to create. Nor was he convinced that the Second World War was necessary or winnable. As a young man he had written:

To have to crouch under fire without cover, belaboured without a pause by shells of a calibre sufficient each one to lay a fair-sized village in ruins, without any distraction beyond counting the hits mechanically in a half-dazed condition, is an experience that almost passes the limits of human endurance. For this reason the men who issued the order and threw hundreds of thousands naked and defenceless into the fire, took on themselves one of the heaviest responsibilities the mind can conceive. And yet, even though I may be one of the

victims, I can but admit they were right. Time works with heavy tools, and in the battle of some slag-heap of horror, over whose wreathed smoke rival conceptions of the world's future are locked in demoniac strife, it is not a question of the few thousand men who may perhaps be rescued from destruction, but of the dozen or two survivors who are there in the nick of time to turn the scales with their machine-guns or their bombs.

In middle age things no longer seemed so simple. Jünger spent most of the war as a captain on the staff in Paris. After the unsuccessful bomb plot against Hitler in July 1944 senior officers at the Paris H.Q. who were implicated were found to be on intimate terms with him and he was lucky to be able to retire quietly from the army — though of course his possible involvement in the anti-Hitler plot helped his post-war rehabilitation.

In 1929 Jünger wrote, "Time only strengthens my conviction that it was a good and strenuous life, and that the war, for all its destructiveness, was an incomparable schooling of the heart." It is a schooling which, one hopes, no future generation will have to undergo. Yet the chances are that, as the Germans debate a fitting memorial for this great writer, there will be more people in the world oiling their rifles than leafing through his books.

**AD Harvey's most recent book *A Muse of Fire* was published in April by the Hambleton Press.**

## *Notes on Reviewers*

Alexander Boot is Creative Director of an advertising agency.

Mark Brunton is a lawyer.

Hal Colebatch has practiced as a barrister and solicitor and is the author of ten books.

Richard Lynn is Professor of Psychology at the University of Coleraine.

A W Purdue is a Lecturer at the Open University.

Philip Vander Elst is a writer and the author of *C S Lewis* published by Claridge Press.

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# The State of Democracy in Hungary

*Zoltán Felföldi*

Political analysts, journalists and public figures have an everyday pastime in Hungary: thinking about the state of democracy in the country. Someone is always asking and trying to answer the question whether there is real democracy in Hungary. However, very few people seem to have a clear concept of what democracy means.

In the narrow sense of the word, as it was used by ancient Greek philosophers, democracy is a form of government: not the only form and not even the most desirable one. While democracy meant the rule of people or leaders elected by people, aristocracy meant the rule of highly respected men who got into leading positions because of their age, knowledge, experience, achievement, or successes, whether their own or their ancestors'.

The term 'democracy' today stands for some combination of these ancient concepts of democracy and aristocracy. Although democracy in the very narrow sense means that the will of the people (the majority of the people) is fulfilled and the leaders elected by them come to power, hardly anyone would agree that the Nazi regime was democratic just because Hitler's Party received a majority of votes. By the same token, we all remember those days when candidates nominated by the Communist party (The Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party in my country) were elected to Parliament with more than 90 per cent of the votes cast. Beyond procedural formalities, showing only the surface in this case, democracy should have a substantive meaning, as well. That substance is the idea which comes from the ancient Greek conception of aristocracy. Translated into modern words it means that the right people get the power, those who have merits, who have dem-

onstrated their ability to be responsible, whom we may trust that they won't misuse their power, who live a respectable life, who have had success in their life; and not the empty demagogues, who are good only at promising Heaven on Earth, who are full of frustrations and who want to be compensated for their lack of success in other fields by grabbing political power; or worst of all, who are criminals. This aristocratic requirement is a necessary prerequisite for calling a political system democratic in the substantive and not merely the procedural sense.

But how can the requirement be fulfilled? One way is to strengthen the role of those institutions in which members or leaders are selected on the basis of merit and achievement, rather than by majority voting. These include institutions such as churches, universities, academic institutions, the army, a non-elected upper house. Strengthening the role of families — whose structure is hierarchical, and not democratic in the procedural meaning of the word — also leads us in the same direction.

The other key to substantive and not merely procedural democracy is in the hands of the electorate. There is general agreement that the members of the institutions which have the ultimate power in a country should be elected in a democratic way i.e. by the majority of people, and that they must be subject to continuous monitoring. But the degree of democracy in a country depends also on the responsibility of the voters to elect the right people. I believe that there are people and political forces who in a substantive democracy could not come to power, but which have a good chance to come to power in my country. The current Hungarian Prime Minister was a member of the Communist secret police after the 1956

revolution. Several members of the government (including the Prime Minister) and the Speaker of the House held Cabinet positions in Communist administrations in the 1980's. Just to have an idea of what it means, let's imagine that in 1949 a 'democratic' German government comes to office without Hitler, but with Ribbentrop as Prime Minister and Göring and Goebbels as Cabinet Ministers! The conclusion one can draw from such facts is that whereas Hungary can be called a democracy in terms of procedures, it is far from being a democracy in substance.

The underdevelopment of the substantive half of Hungarian democracy is reflected by how people vote, by their political preferences. And it depends not only on their political sympathies — what they think about this or that party — but on how they think about politics in general, and what they expect from it. And this goes back to the magic twin of rights and duties.

Half a century of socialism has successfully killed off the sense of duty in Hungarian society. All of us were guaranteed a poor and bad, but safe and risk-free life in socialist Hungary. It was neither necessary nor desirable for people to think. The state took from our shoulders the responsibility for ourselves, for our family, for our neighbourhood and our nation. True, we did not have rights either. After the collapse of the Communist regime, thanks to a few intellectuals brought up on the ideas of 1968, we suddenly came to realise our lack of rights. But nobody had warned us that we had duties as well, and it seems that we still have not realised it. As a result of the Communist past the balance between rights and duties has been heavily tilted towards the former. Not being aware of our duties means that we expect all

sorts of pleasant things to be provided by others — in this case by the state — instead of providing them ourselves. We are continuously inventing and demanding new rights, while forgetting their personal cost, and this cost leads to irresponsible voting. The most visible sign of this was in 1994, just four years after the Marxist-Leninist regime collapsed. The Communists were re-elected to power in the vain hope of cheap bread and beer,

and with the expectation that they would re-establish the safe and risk-free life of the former decades when people did not have to look after themselves.

The possibility that Government can be changed via free elections, the fact that people vote and that they can actually change the Government, show that Hungarian democracy works in the procedural sense. But the presence in the political arena of people who

ought to be disqualified from being there, and the selfish illusion among voters that there is nothing to democratic politics apart from the granting of 'rights', show how insubstantial and dream-like this democracy remains.

**Zoltán Felföldi is a post-graduate student in Budapest.**

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## On Minding the Gap

### *William Norton offers a Guide to the Official Mind*

*"Mind the gap."*

From your rising in the morning to your lying down at night to rest, or alternative pastimes, you are continually presented with the need to take decisions.

*"Mind the gap."*

Persistent, pestering decisions about how you are to conduct yourself, think, speak, eat, walk or occupy your time. How tiring it is to have to direct your mind toward such questions in all the areas of your life, when you could more usefully devote your attention to, er, um....

*"Stand clear of the doors please."*

You are most fortunate, then, that so many large platoons of your fellow citizens are prepared to step forward and assist you in your quandary by helpfully telling you what to do upon every conceivable occasion.

*"In the interests of customer safety, flash photography is not allowed on any part of the Waterloo and City line."*

Nobody now believes in Communism, nor Leninism, nor Marxism, nor Bolshevism, nor any of the extremer forms of socialism. The Chinese leadership will soon be forced to find more fashionable excuses for running down their people with tanks. The collapse of the Berlin Wall has lent us a certain perspective from which we can see that Marxism was not quite as inspiring as once thought. Even the Berlin Wall itself

can now be seen as an excessive experiment in urban traffic control. With distance has also come relief. We have been mercifully spared the horrors and absurdities of a combined command economy and military dictatorship — a relief no less palpable because some of us were simply unaware at the time that such horrors and absurdities existed. Now, finally, we are free to concentrate upon providing you with more civilised forms of life.

*"You are reminded that New Street station is a no-smoking area. Please extinguish all smoking material."*

In this search we should not be too blinkered and Occidental-centric, nor should we succumb to a starry-eyed worship of the free market. Mines are mines, whether they be salt mines in Siberia, or coal mines in Yorkshire (or wherever the remaining few are left). Over-reaction is just as dangerous as repression; there is obviously a need for a humane and moderating force to curb your baser enthusiasms. Indeed, the former Marxist states were staffed with thousands of just such humane moderates performing just such humane moderation — in the lower ranks, perhaps — so they cannot have been wholly bad. Although Bolshevik tyranny was undoubtedly a rather unpleasant experience for some of the Eastern Europeans, the zealotry with which the oppression was applied by the leader-

ships did focus their citizens' minds upon the ideal of liberty, and engendered a healthy respect for the rights of free expression. Neither can we ignore the spiritual dimension to socialism, and its contempt of the purely selfish and material, symbolised in its bold, concrete architecture. Eastern Europe, compared to its original unreconstructed selfishness, has, therefore, been strengthened by the communist experience. A tribute to good, solid administration.

*"If symptoms persist for more than forty-eight hours, consult your doctor."*

*"Keep out of the reach of children."*

Left to their own devices, the People would likely as not do whatever they liked, and that would probably be wrong. We must be realistic and pragmatically accept that most people are complete idiots. The individual can be compared to an explorer, lost amid head-high grass, able to see neither his way forward nor the tigers stalking towards him. Ask yourself — be frank — do you want this explorer to be eaten by tigers? Can you leave him lost in the grass? What is called for is an elevated, aloof view able to see life whole and clear.

*"Silica gel drying agent. Do not eat."*

And then, when we consider a society of individuals stumbling around as it were in an ensemble Blind Man's Bluff we can confidently predict that they will succumb

to selfish, petty motives and desires, all pushing and striving against each other. The logical solution, of course, is for everyone to co-operate, to pull together for the common good, not tread on each other's toes. The modern world is a complicated place, full of lots of complicated things which, when examined by experts, can be seen to be quite complicated indeed, so you can see that the prospects of useful co-operation without a little assistance from above are pretty slim. Someone has got to step in and cut out all the waste, to allow the People to preserve the really important things in life. Whatever they are.

*"Do not feed the animals."*

So we really could do with a sort of socialism without the anti-social aspects, or a non-profit-making form of capitalism.

*"For your own security this card should be produced when collecting your key, charging items to your account throughout the hotel and should be kept separately from your key"*

The only feasible solution, of course, is to leave the People to be free to do whatever they like, whilst at the same time prudently supplying them with guidelines telling them exactly what to do. The only logical response to the collapse of communism is the systematic itemisation of all areas of legitimate social existence. We can now see through the small-minded distinction between public sector and private sector. Finally we recognise that privatisation and nationalisation are both old hat. The challenge for the future is to introduce into every part of society, whether it be owned by the state or not, the selfless, helpful attitudes of the dispassionate soul dedicated to public service, of the type to be found in any local Inland Revenue office. Where there is competition, let us bring community; where there is profit, let us cause loss.

*"This door must be kept closed at all times."*

This process of removing subjective self-interest from all areas of life I would call IMPERSONALISATION. Guidelines, regulations, handy little notices placed prominently on walls, are by far the most important boosts for a developing twenty-first century society. It is gratifying to note that these principles are most widely accepted in the European Union, and most entrenched in those regions of it formerly known as the United Kingdom. And they

are nowhere more accepted or entrenched than in that excellent impersonal specimen, the British Public Official.

*"Please note check out time is 12 midday on date of departure. We sincerely hope that you enjoy your stay."*

The greatest advances in impersonalisation have been made in the railway network. In a stroke of pure genius, British Rail was broken up into several overlapping operating divisions. We have learnt from Russia that a single, simple and co-ordinated railway service will oppress the passengers. By subtly preventing the formation of a centralised policy, the People are enabled to express themselves through transport policies of their own. So far we have been able to create a friendly atmosphere, free from the overtones of a police state, that railway staff have been consciously instructed to make themselves less visible. Members of the public can travel by train from one end of the country to another without seeing a single Railtrack employee. This is reassuring from a psychological point of view, for both sides are spared the stress of speaking to each other. The need to introduce the efficiency and discipline of the market has been addressed by calling all passengers "customers", but the coarseness of commercialism has been averted by running the system at a phenomenal loss. And wherever one looks inside a railway carriage one will see a helpful and informative sticker explaining something for which one can be fined £50.

*"Should any member of staff receive a report by telephone of a bomb having been placed in or near the building, obtain as much information as possible."*

People used to worry about something called the Establishment. How quaint and old-fashioned that seems now. There is no need to fear the existence of a shadowy and unelected group of privileged persons controlling our lives. You have the Administration to do that, on a rational and logical footing, and far more humanely. The system works because we all know how to work with one another to make the world a better place. The recent so-called privatisation of the railways, I am glad to say, will do nothing of the sort, since the Department of Transport has no intention of letting any one receive a franchise if there's the slightest chance of them destroying the

present system. At one time there was indeed a very real risk that privatisation would have created a number of successful, freely-competing businesses. Now, that might well have led to a superficially cleaner, more punctual service, but would there not have been something missing? Trains like that would have lost the old familiar sense that they were a nationalised industry, so instantly (in fact odorously) recognisable and reassuring. How fortunate that, whatever the original political intention behind the reforms, there were enough British Public Officials to be spared from seeing to the Health and Education reforms to ensure that the rail reforms were handled appropriately.

*"To avoid danger of suffocation, keep this wrapper away from babies and children."*

There is a social dimension to transport, and our finest official minds know that there is more to a railway than merely running trains. The new system now allows for the employment of tens of thousands of excellent officials, who otherwise wouldn't be able to find a job.

*"Do not operate while the train is standing in the station."*

I could multiply examples from the Health Service, where the British Public Official has boosted surgery by introducing paperwork, or from our schools (or rather, your schools), where the use of league tables allows the British Public Official to identify and quarantine teachers who are working too hard and letting their colleagues down.

*"Packaged in a protective atmosphere."*

We are all liberal, moral relativists, and we recognise that there are no easy answers, and no quick fixes. This is, of course, a great pain, because there is nothing that would be so useful as an easy answer or a quick fix. Naturally, the only sensible way out is to pass a piece of legislation listing all the approved easy answers and permitted quick fixes. With the force of law behind them, everything can be rapidly settled, and if you disagree, you can see us in court. We discard the Hidden Hand of Adam Smith for the Friendly Fist of Harriet Harman, and it is a vast improvement.

*"Do not cross the line."*

With communism out of the way, we no longer need capitalism, and the result has been an overwhelming victory for good, steady, liberal — but spookily also radical

—compromise. We can now look forward bravely to finding useful employment for the several million civil servants (for some use must be made of them) in the great cause of the future: turning the People into Good Citizens. They so need the assistance.

*“So far as driving is concerned, the word ‘night’ includes the periods of dusk and dawn — not just the hours between official lighting-up and switching-off times. Towards dusk it may well be wise to put your lights on before lighting-up time, even if it is not legally necessary.”*

The role of the Friendly Fist can be seen most clearly in statutory regulations. Greater love hath no man than this, that he set out their lives for his friends. I can easily think of one area crying out for reform. Haven't you ever been irritated by people milling about inside department stores during the January Sales? You will have closely observed how the jagged randomness of their flutterings from one counter to another always manages to bring them under your feet. And they repeatedly purchase that last raffia hat, or cotton kedifeh, or cashmere kaftan just as you reach the second place in the queue, and you know that in their ignorance they will never fully appreciate it as much as you would have done. It would be far more sensible to draw lines on the floor to divide shoppers into lanes, put in a few traffic lights, cones, crash barriers etc. so that we could go directly to whatever we want without suffering harm or harassment from other people. I have spoken to Harriet, and Jack, and Peter, and we have a draft regulation ready to go on this one at the moment. Such helpfulness is the natural role of the state, which alone can impose the Olympian aloofness and impersonal objectivity required. The long-term aim is to forcibly ration out the January Sales among the other eleven months, to sensibly choke off the problem at source — but this will not be introduced until Richard Branson has agreed to it.

*“The tyres of your car are, or should be, your only contact with the road”*

With the defoliation of the Communist East we have seen an explosion of anarchy, violence, intolerance, murder, religion and wealth. It is no longer possible to adopt a complacent and blinkered attitude here in the West. Capitalism and communism, being economic theories for distributing power, are just as bad as each other, and

neither teach the People how to be good citizens. In so far as it matters, both systems are morally equivalent. In being equally bad, they are equally unstable and equally hypocritical cover-ups. How long before Basingstoke becomes another Bosnia? Or a new Sarajevo springs up amid the cul-de-sacs of Sunningdale? The very unlikelihood of the impending disaster should spur us on to neutralise all possible sources of difference and conflict. The reformed society of the future offers the hope of Ethical Cleansing.

*“In a properly arranged car park there are markings to show you where to put your car. Unless you find a space at the end of a row, you will have to fit your car into a gap between two other vehicles.”*

The People are rightly wary of Big Ideas, since they often turn out to be cynical public relations gimmicks. We shall therefore precede our policies with a massive marketing campaign to fully reassure and educate them to the great benefits of Impersonal Administration. Then we shall start on the Ethical Cleansing of all social institutions to remove bias and prejudice. First off we're going to get all the serious misfits: the drink-drivers, the fox hunters, the single-mothers, the deep-sea fishermen, the tediously disabled, the smokers (well, perhaps not them, just yet), and the cattle farmers.

*“Even at the risk of seeming rude, be ready to drop out of any conversation if the road needs more attention — or if an argument seems to be developing!”*

All forms of intolerance will be rooted out by prescribing what is and what is not acceptable conduct. Any one so obscene as to deny Salman Rushdie his basic human right to insult any religion he likes, for instance, will have to be silenced. The People will soon come to realise that these new arrangements are enacted for their health — spiritual, moral, economic, as well as physical — backed up by a series of crushing fines for the rich to encourage support among the poorer classes. It is found in practice that the most effective way of healing social division is to inflame it, and thereby undermine the position of the rich and talented (unless, of course, they are Treasury ministers, who are often misunderstood). The clarity and purity of our intentions will be seen to defuse any irritable squeamishness.

*“If you drive to work every day, leave yourself more than the bare time for the journey, especially if you have no regular parking place and have to look for one.”*


The future lies in Small Ideas, and Impersonalisation is one of the smallest ideas I have come across. It is all about Re-inventing Government and Empowerment. It is about Real People and the small, local scale where real things really matter. It is because it all happens on such a small scale that it requires a large centralised bureaucracy to make it work. Treating the People as individuals would be impossible if we could not divide them into groups for convenience, and as for reforming every nook and cranny, that couldn't be done without the backing of a huge state apparatus. It is much easier to empower the People if they aren't actually given any power. Morally they receive it, but factually it is all held for them by a committee somewhere with far more experience of administration. We used to worry about the detachment of justice from law. Now we realise that this has created the prospect of a great advancement. We can leave justice on one side, and get on with changing the law as we like.

*“Remember the neighbours — and children who may be asleep. Close your car doors quietly and don't rev your engine unnecessarily.”*

It's as simple as that. I offer you these ideas from a very great sense of public service, which motivates all of us who love humanity, in an impersonal way.

*“It is one of the qualities of a good, safe driver that he recognises his own limitations.”*

**William Norton is a solicitor.**



*The intellect  
is always  
fooled by the  
heart*

La Rochefoucauld

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# Love, Hate and Jewish Identity

*Jonathan Sacks*

**O**n its face, the subject of Judaism and Jewish identity should not count for much in the world. There are world-wide some 1.9 billion Christians and 800 million Muslims, as against a mere twelve million Jews. Throughout the Diaspora, Jews are a tiny minority surrounded by large non-Jewish cultures. In the Middle East, Israel is a tiny country surrounded by a vast constellation of Arab states. We are less than a quarter of a percent of the population of the world. In terms of numbers our influence should be minimal.

Yet I dare to say that Jews and Judaism are of interest and even influence in a way that cannot be accounted for in terms of numbers alone. No one put this better than the American writer Milton Himmelfarb: "Each Jew knows how thoroughly ordinary he is; yet taken together we seem caught up in things great and inexplicable.... The number of Jews in the world is smaller than a small statistical error in the Chinese census. Yet we remain bigger than our numbers. Big things seem to happen around us and to us."

Let me begin my account, if not at the beginning of Jewish time, at least at the beginning of modern Jewish time: 1789, the year of the French Revolution and the birth of the modern secular nation-state. On August 26 the French National Assembly issued its Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, with its ringing opening assertion, "All men are born, and remain, free and equal in rights." The question was: Did that include Jews? Were Jews free? Were they equal? Were they citizens? Were they men?

The questions were real. At the very time of the Declaration anti-Jewish riots broke out in Alsace, the first and ominous indication that the secular

nation-state might not end anti-Jewish sentiment, but merely secularise it into a new mode, to be given (in 1879) the name "anti-Semitism." Later in 1789, speaking in a debate on the eligibility of Jews for citizenship, the Count of Clermont-Tonnerre spelled out in a fateful sentence the terms on which Jews could be included in the new political dispensation. "The Jews," he said "should be denied everything as a nation, but granted everything as individuals." "It is intolerable," he continued, "that the Jews should become a separate political formation or class within the country. Every one of them must individually become a citizen; if they do not want this, they must inform us and we shall then be compelled to expel them."

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***It is difficult to predict which of the conflicts will be the most damaging — between Israel and the Diaspora, between secular and religious Israelis, or between Orthodox and Reform Jews outside Israel***

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Thus was born what eventually became known as *der Judenfrage*, the "Jewish question," whose relatively innocent formulation gave rise, in 1941, to the *Endlösung*, the Final Solution. The theory and terminology came from Germany. Some of the mythology, specifically the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, came from Russia. But it was in France, a century after the Revolution, that a Viennese journalist,

Theodore Herzl, covering the Dreyfus trial, came to the conclusion that there was no future for the Jews in Europe and that the secular nation-state, far from ending anti-Semitism, had in fact given it a new and potentially terrible rebirth; and that there was no future for the Jewish people unless they constructed a nation-state of their own.

I go back to 1789 because contemporary discussions of Jewish life — issues like outmarriage, Jewish continuity, and Israel-Diaspora relations — often seem to me to lack depth because they lack a sense of historical background. And there is an historical reason for this, namely, that the world's two greatest Jewries, Israel and the American Jewish community, are themselves relatively recent phenomena. Until 1840, almost 90 percent of the Jewish world was to be found in Europe. Even more significantly, the Jews who made the journey to America or Israel did so precisely to forget Europe, to break away from its prejudices and disabilities, and to discover, or make, a new life in a new world. The strange contemporary blindness to Jewish history was born in a specific rebellion against Jewish history — a history that could be written in terms of wanderings and expulsions, inquisitions and pogroms, martyrdoms and exclusions, the powerlessness and homelessness of "the wandering Jew."

It is for this reason that we cannot understand where we are unless we first understand how we came to be here. Israel cannot be understood as simply a secular democratic state on the European model, or American Jewry as a typical version of American pluralism and denominationalism. These are part, but only part, of the Jewish story. The Israeli and American Jewish communities still carry

within them the pains and tensions of the European Jewish experience, and even today they are shaped by what they were created to forget.

The modern Jewish experience was characterised by two phenomena. The first is that Jews were, to use John Murray Cuddihy's phrase, "latecomers to modernity." There was no long pre-history, such as occurred in Christian Europe, of Renaissance, Reformation, the Wars of Religion, and the birth of Enlightenment. Jews were thrust late into a complex set of challenges — the intellectual challenge of Enlightenment, the political challenge of Emancipation, and the social challenge of integration. What Jews believed, how they lived, and how they organised themselves came under sudden and concerted attack — sometimes in the name of progress, sometimes in the form of prejudice — and after centuries of exclusion from the mainstream of European culture they were radically unprepared for it. This alone would have constituted a crisis of massive proportions for the continuity of Jewish faith.

It was, nonetheless, the lesser of two crises. The other, whose significance it is impossible to overstate, was the double bind modernity itself placed on European Jews, giving rise to the phenomenon eventually termed "Jewish self-hatred". The results were summed up by Max Nordau in his speech to the First Zionist Congress. The "emancipated Jew in Western Europe," he said, "has abandoned his specifically Jewish character, yet the nations do not accept him as part of their national communities. He flees from his Jewish fellows, because anti-Semitism has taught him, too, to be contemptuous of them, but his Gentile compatriots repulse him as he attempts to associate with them. He has lost his home in the ghetto, yet the land of his birth is denied to him as his home." Much has changed since those words were spoken a hundred years ago, but we still live with their consequences.

The Enlightenment presented European Jews with a messianic promise and a demonic reality. The promise was a secular and rational order in which anti-Jewish prejudice would be

overcome and Jewish civil disabilities abolished. The reality was that the more Jews became like everyone else, the more irrational and absolute became the prejudice against them: they were capitalists, they were communists, they were too provincial and parochial, they were too rootless and cosmopolitan, they kept to themselves, they got everywhere, they were disloyal, they were suspiciously over-loyal. The more assimilated they became, the more anti-Semitism grew.

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***For four thousand years Jews were a people in search of God. Today Jews, more than any other group in the Western world, are a people trying to escape from God***

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The history of nineteenth-century Jewry is the tale of a dozen different attempts to find a way out of this trap from which there was no way out. The extreme response was a flight from Jewish identity through outmarriage, conversion to Christianity, or, wherever possible, the declaration that one was religionless. Among those who shrank from the conclusion that Jews could survive only by ceasing to be Jews, there was significant difference between Western and Eastern Europe. The Count of Clermont-Tonnerre had asked Jews to decide whether they were individuals or a nation — in other words, whether Judaism was a private religious confession or whether Jewry was essentially a collective entity, a people. Historically, of course, the answer was both; but the new European nation-state no longer permitted that reply.

In general, the Jews of Western Europe decided in favour of Judaism as religion-without-peoplehood, those of Eastern Europe in favour of Jewry as peoplehood-without-religion. Hence there emerged in the nineteenth century a set of entirely new constructions

of Jewish identity: in the West, Reform and Conservative Judaism, in the East, the movements for Jewish culture and even political autonomy in the Pale of Settlement. As these failed in their aims of normalising Jewish existence, there emerged perhaps the greatest revolution in modern Jewish life, the Zionist movement, less an ideology than a collection of conflicting ideologies, some secular, some religious, some political, some cultural, some attempting to restore ancient traditions, others determined to destroy them completely and build a totally new kind of Jew.

The First Zionist Congress took place in 1897. A century later, we inhabit a Jewish world in which in one sense everything has changed, and in another, nothing has changed. During the twentieth century, some of the most epic events in Jewish history have taken place: the Holocaust, the founding of the State of Israel, and the transfer of Jewish life from Europe to Israel and America. But the divisions in Jewish life today are almost exactly what they were a hundred years ago — between religious and secular, between Orthodoxy and Reform, and between those who see a Jewish future only in Israel and those who see a continuing role for the Diaspora. Between the first and the eighteenth centuries, with very few exceptions, a single Judaism prevailed — the Judaism of the Mishnah and Talmud that today we call Orthodoxy. In the twentieth century, there has been no new Judaism. Even the apparent exception, the Reconstructionism of Mordecai Kaplan, was only a translation into the American context of the earlier ideas of Ahad Ha-am. So the immense diversity of answers to the question "Who and what is a Jew?" all had their origin in a single century and continent: nineteenth-century Europe.

In 1897, Orthodox Jews believed that Reform would disappear: it was only a way-station on the road to total assimilation. Reform Jews believed that Orthodoxy would disappear: it was wholly incongruous with the modern world. Zionists believed the Diaspora would disappear: it was threatened equally by seduction and rape, assimilation and anti-Semitism. The

non-Zionists believed that the hope of Jewish nationhood would disappear: the task of reviving an impulse buried for eighteen centuries was simply too great. We now know that every one of these predictions was wrong. Reform Judaism still exists. So does Orthodoxy. The state of Israel has been born. The Diaspora survives. Every option in Jewish life then exists today, and history has not yet delivered its verdict on any of them. The conflicts that, it was believed, would be resolved in the course of time have simply persisted and if anything grown in their intensity.

It is difficult to predict which of the conflicts will be the most damaging — between Israel and the Diaspora, between secular and religious Israelis, or between Orthodox and Reform Jews outside Israel. Each of these groups denies the other's definition of reality; and the possibilities of dialogue are severely limited. Each rift has the potential of dividing Jewry irreparably into two. Four years ago I published a book on Jewish unity entitled *One People?* Several friends in the United States wrote to me to say that it was a brave analysis but already too late. In America, in their view, Jews were no longer a single people. That has been the view of many Israelis about their own society for some time.

I am deeply concerned about these divisions, especially in Israel, for an obvious reason. The Jewish people has often been threatened by hostile civilisations, from ancient Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome to the Third Reich and the Soviet Union in the twentieth century. But the most fateful injuries have been those the Jewish people has inflicted on itself: the division of the kingdom in the days of the First Temple, which brought about the eventual defeat of both halves and the loss of ten of the twelve tribes; and the internecine rivalry in the last days of the Second Temple, which brought about the destruction of Jerusalem and the longest exile in Jewish — indeed, in human — history.

There have been only three periods of Jewish sovereignty in four thousand years. Two ended in and because of internal dissension. The third age of sovereignty began in 1948, and al-

ready Israeli society is dangerously fragmented. Israelis themselves tend to downplay the danger, and even after the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin there has been too little effort at the highest levels to bring secular and religious groups together into some mode of mutual understanding. I believe this is a grave mistake, and I have said so to successive Israeli Prime Ministers and Presidents. To survive, Israel must be not only a *medinah* but also a *chevrah*, not only a state but also a society. The democratic process alone does not guarantee the existence of the body politic; it needs in addition some minimal shared culture and identity. Israel at war is defined by its enemies. Israel in pursuit of peace is less easily defined, and more difficult to govern. That surely must be one concern for the future.

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***The American Jewish community will continue to have an influence on Israel in the way it has in the past... Its real contribution has not been money, or the sway it has exercised over American foreign policy, but the people who have gone to live there***

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Beyond the question of Jewish unity there is another contemporary anxiety, namely, Jewish continuity. Jewish continuity is seen as a problem, first, in demographic terms. Jewish communities in the Diaspora are in decline, relative to Israel, relative to the larger societies of which they are a part, and even in absolute numbers. Continuity is seen, second, as a problem of outmarriage, most notably in the United States, where the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey showed that of young Jews who had married since 1985, 52

percent had been outmarriages where the non-Jewish spouse failed to convert. It is seen, third, as a problem specifically of the Diaspora, for the obvious reason that Israel has grown and outmarriage is not a significant problem in a country where Jews form a majority of the population. The problem is seen, fourth, in terms of the classic theory of the nation-state, whether in its American or Israeli version. The American version is called the "melting pot," for the United States is the place where immigrant communities inevitably assimilate. The Israeli version is called *shililat hagolah*, negation of the Diaspora, which maintains that Jews can survive only within a predominantly Jewish society and culture.

I find these characterisations inadequate. The problem of Jewish continuity is not first and foremost demographic. There were times, most notably after the Spanish expulsion, when the Jewish population fell to one-sixth of what it is today, yet the same concerns were not expressed about the future survival of Jews and Judaism. Nor is it simply a problem of outmarriage. It is a problem also of non-marriage, late marriage, and low birth-rates. Nor, as recent research by Charles Liebman and Steven M. Cohen has shown, is outmarriage evenly distributed within the Jewish community. Reanalysing the data of the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, and categorising Jews as actively, moderately, loosely, engaged or disengaged, they discovered that the outmarriage figures in these four sectors were as follows: among the actively engaged, 5 percent, among the moderately engaged, 10 percent, among the loosely engaged, 19 percent, among the disengaged, 49 percent. Outmarriage is thus only a symptom of the larger problem of disaffiliation.

More controversially, I would argue that the problem of continuity is global and affects Israel no less than the Diaspora. In the past few years, several surveys of young Israelis have shown an alarming lack of knowledge of and interest in the Jewish heritage. This has translated itself into a significant body of Israeli thought known as post-Zionism, which would see Israel

not as a Jewish State but as *medinat kol ezrachehah*, a “state of all its citizens,” requiring abandonment of the Law of Return, rewriting of the national anthem, and severing links, not only with Jews world-wide, but also with Israel’s biblical past and Judaic culture. There is collective as well as individual assimilation; and what appears in the Diaspora in the form of outmarriage appears in Israel in the form of secularisation.

If therefore the problem is global, it is not to be understood in terms of the dynamic of the nation-state. Jews in the Diaspora do not inevitably disappear. Even a moderate degree of religious observance or communal affiliation guards against outmarriage. And even a state in which the majority of inhabitants are Jews does not of itself ensure the continuity of Judaism. I therefore come back to my earlier analysis. The problem of Jewish continuity was born, not recently, but in the early days of the Jewish encounter with modernity. The most acute remark was made by Mordecai Kaplan in the opening sentence of his 1934 book *Judaism as a Civilization*: “Before the beginning of the nineteenth-century all Jews regarded Judaism as a privilege; since then most Jews have come to regard it as a burden.” I would put it more pointedly still. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jews defined themselves as the people loved by God. Since then most Jews, wittingly or unwittingly, have defined themselves as the people hated by Gentiles. No burden, especially the burden of being hated, is something decent people want to see handed on to their children. That is why we have had so few Jewish children.

Consider the most salient definitions of Jewish identity today. In Israel, as expressed by writers such as Amos Oz, it consists in living in a secular democratic state guided by the principles of the Enlightenment. In the United States, in a famous survey conducted in Los Angeles in 1988, in answer to the question, which qualities do you consider most important to your Jewish identity, 59 percent replied “a commitment to social equality”. A mere 17 percent chose “religious observance”.

Nothing could be more striking than the fact that a people whose very reason for being in the past was to be different, chosen, particular, should today define itself in purely universalist terms, forgetting — surely not accidentally — that it is precisely in our particularity that we enter and express the universal human condition. I am reminded of the remark of the late Shlomo Carlebach after a lifetime of visiting American campuses: “I ask students what they are. If someone gets up and says, I’m a Catholic, I know that’s a Catholic. If someone says, I’m a Protestant, I know that’s a Protestant. If someone gets up and says, I’m just a human being, I know that’s a Jew.”

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***The seminal Jewish experience for the past two centuries has been the flight from particularity, and both the Israeli and American Jewish communities are its heirs***

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The seminal Jewish experience for the past two centuries has been the flight from particularity, and both the Israeli and American Jewish communities are its heirs. Most Jews did not set themselves the self-conscious goal of ceasing to be Jews or ensuring that their children would not be Jews, whether through conversion or outmarriage or other forms of disaffiliation. But they set themselves two other goals, one more modest, the other more radical. The first was to be less conspicuous as Jews. Hence Sidney Morganbesser’s wonderful definition of Jewish identity as *incognito ergo sum*. In the Diaspora that involved lowering the ritual content of Jewish life. In Israel it involved the pursuit of a new identity *kechol hagoyim*, “like all the nations”. The second was to work for a world where religious differences no longer made a difference. Hence the essentially anti-religious lib-

eralism that runs like a thread through Jewish intellectual life from Spinoza to Amos Oz and Alan Dershowitz.

What is remarkable about both the Israeli and American Jewish communities is that in both countries Jews are markedly more secular than their Christian or Muslim neighbours. For four thousand years Jews were a people in search of God. Today Jews, more than any other group in the Western world, are a people trying to escape from God. Given the pain and tragedy of Jewish life for the past two centuries, indeed the past two millennia, that is not surprising. But it suggests that the crisis of Jewish continuity is due not to the failure, but precisely to the success, of Jewish strategies. As the Talmud records of a much earlier crisis in Jewish life, during the Hadrianic persecutions, “By rights we should issue a decree not to get married and have children, and let the seed of Abraham come to an end of its own accord.” What Jewry faces today is a failure of the will that sustained our ancestors across the generations: the willingness to be human by being different and thus testifying to the dignity of difference.

What is likely to be the outcome? I don’t know. There is a difference between prediction and prophecy, just as there is a difference between optimism and hope. Certainly in the immediate future the Diaspora will decline in numbers. In Israel and America, Orthodoxy will grow. Other groups will feel threatened by this growth, and there may be angry confrontations. Israel’s dependence on financial and political support from the Diaspora will diminish, but it is already minimal, and rightly so, because no sovereign state should have its domestic policies determined by those who do not live there. It may well be that Israel and the Diaspora will drift apart politically. That will worry those who see the relationship as primarily political. It will give less concern to those who do not.

Though I am not an optimist, I am nonetheless full of hope. I see a new generation of Jews emerging, for the first time in many generations, with an undamaged, uncomplicated sense of Jewish identity. They recognise

Judaism's spiritual power and moral grandeur. They are searching for personal meaning, moral guidance, and stability and structure in their lives. They have been touched by the outreach movements, and they are beginning to reconnect with Jewish observance and *talmud Torah*, the study of Jewish texts. Almost every adult education program we run in Britain is today oversubscribed, and there is a huge demand for new Jewish day schools.

This new generation, though personally committed to Orthodoxy, is far less interested in waging war with Reform — it is more secure, less easily threatened, more interested in opening the source of Judaism to everyone than in building defensive walls. At long last it has moved beyond the vicarious sources of Jewish identity — anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and support for Israel — toward a genuine personal encounter with the elements of Judaism that made it a source of inspiration for a hundred generations: its love of family, community, education, and philanthropy, its way of translating abstract ideals into simple daily practices: *kashrut*, *Shabbat*, the sanctity of family life, the choreography of *kedushah*, of Jewish holiness and difference.

Demographically, Diaspora communities will continue to decline for a while, but they will reach a plateau and then begin to grow again. We know from all recent research that the single greatest influence on whether we will have Jewish grandchildren is religious observance in the home: our British data suggest that this outweighs any other influence by a factor of at least five to one. Even a simple act like lighting candles on Friday evening makes a difference. There is a core of committed Jews in all major Diaspora Jewries, and they will not decline in numbers. The Diaspora is not about to disappear.

The Jewish community in the United States, however, may have to rethink its approach to politics. The American Jewish community is unusual in that it has predicated its influence, whether on Washington or Israel, on demographic and financial power. Politically it has acted as a pressure group. The European Jewish model was quite different. It used the instrumentalities

of *shtadlanut*, personal relationships and informal influence, neither of which depends on the numerical size of the community. American Jews may have to relearn this style.

The American Jewish community will continue to have an influence on Israel in the way it has in the past, which is not always the way it thinks it has. Its real contribution has not been money, or the sway it has exercised over American foreign policy, but the people who have gone to live there. Two of the most significant developments in Judaism this century — the *Hesder yeshivot* and the *Ba'al Teshuvah yeshivot* (religious seminaries for those who serve in Israel's armed forces, and those who are returning to tradition) — have largely been led by American rabbis who live and work in Israel.

What all of us will have to relearn is the fundamental truth with which I began. Jewish influence has never been predicated on numbers. In the last year of his life Moses told the Israelites, "God did not set His love on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples." (Deuteronomy 7:7) Jews have had an influence out of all proportion to their numbers because of their loyalty to God, their commitment to a morally ordered society built on justice and compassion, and their courage in being true to their heritage while enhancing the lives of others. That, said Moses, was our "wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations." It still is.

The idea that nearly destroyed us as a faith in the nineteenth century was that Jews could solve the problem of anti-Semitism. The truth is that only anti-Semites can solve the problem of anti-Semitism. We can be vigilant against it; but we must never internalise it and let it affect our self-identity. It is time for us to stop defining ourselves as the people hated by Gentiles. Perhaps it is even time for us to re-establish our dialogue with God.

The Holocaust and the birth of Israel, the two most significant Jewish events of the twentieth century, both had their origins in a single concept — the nation-state. It was the nation-state that gave rise to the "Jewish question," and

it was the nation-State that gave rise to the most powerful Jewish answer, namely, that Jews must have a state of their own. There is every indication that the twenty-first century, with its worldwide communications, multinational corporations, and international lobbies, will be one in which identities will no longer be defined by the nation-state. They will be both more local and more global — built around communities on the one hand, international communication on the other. Historically that is what the Jewish people has always been: a global people built around strong local communities. The Israel-Diaspora relationship will be transformed by this change. If the focus of the twentieth century was the Jewish state, in the twenty-first century it will be the Jewish people.

Just as Jews were latecomers to modernity, so we have been latecomers to post-modernity. Alone among the faith communities of the world, Jews welcomed secularisation. It seemed to promise an end to religion, and therefore to religious persecution. In a sense it did — but persecution persisted, only now without the restraints of religion. Jews have been living for some time in a condition of ambivalence and trauma, ambivalence about themselves, trauma about their relationship with the world. But time heals. And the Jewish people has never failed to recover from catastrophe. We are an ancient people, twice as old as Christianity, three times as old as Islam. And if history teaches us anything it is this, that Judaism survives not by numbers but by the quality and strength of Jewish faith. We always were an obstinate people, too obstinate to let go of God, too obstinate to be defeated by history.

**Jonathan Sacks is Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth and author of *Faith in the Future* (Mercer University Press).**

**This article was originally published in *First Things*.**

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# Social Work Training and the Rehabilitation of Offenders

*David Fraser discusses its alleged success*

There are now 200,000 offenders subject to supervision in the community, mainly by probation officers trained in social work, whose intervention with these offenders is based on skills learned on university social work courses backed by the Central Council for the Education and Training of Social Workers (CCETSW). The high reconviction rates of these offenders under supervision in the community makes it clear that these supervision programmes fail to protect the public from further offending. The majority placed under supervision are males under 30; in 1995 the reconviction rates for those under 21 years was 77%, 21-24 years 66% and 25-29 years 60%. Against a background of a 4.9% detection rate the *reoffending* rate must be assumed to verge on 100%. Reoffending refers to all the crimes committed by a criminal, and reconvictions refer to the small number of these crimes which are successfully prosecuted.

These official Home Office statistics are the only relevant yardstick to measure the effectiveness of penal measures which allow many persistent offenders their freedom, and which so obviously put the safety of the public at risk. The results contradict the many claims made by the Probation Services that the so called 'what works' research provides evidence that community supervision is successful in reducing offending. The 'what works' research reports cannot be taken seriously. When their 'research babble' has been decoded, what is found is not only that the reported results of these community supervision schemes do not equate with 'success' in terms of protecting the public, but that they threaten public safety.

For example, the Hereford & Worcester Probation Service reported '16% fewer reconvictions within two years for offenders supervised on a special community programme than for those released from prison'. This is a meaningless claim as far as protecting the public is concerned; what is relevant however, is that based on the reported 68% reconviction rate for the supervision group, and the 4.9% detection rate, it is possible to estimate that the 53 offenders on the scheme are likely to have committed as many as 500 offences during the two year period covering the programme and the follow up period. None of these crimes would have been committed had a prison sentence been imposed. Assuming only two victims per crime (a direct and an indirect victim) this means that about 1000 people were affected. In addition to the financial losses incurred by the victims, they would have paid a high price in terms of the legacy of fear, anxiety, a general loss of confidence, despair over the loss of irreplaceable family items, and a reduced sense of privacy.

The sophistry contained in the research report of Izzo & Ross (1990), provides another example. These authors reported an 18% reconviction rate measured over nine months for offenders supervised in the community on a 'cognitive skills' programme, compared with 48% and 70% for other types of community supervision. This impression of 'success' for the vaunted cognitive skills approach soon fades away when their results are projected over the more normal two year follow-up period used by the Home Office to investigate offender reconviction rates in England & Wales. Measured in this

way, the reconviction rate for those on the cognitive skills learning programme, hailed by many as a 'successful example of what works in reducing offending', equates closely with the disastrous overall 57% reconviction rate for all offenders supervised in the community. Thus in reality, these damning results illustrate the high price paid by the general public for the experimentation.

The reconviction rate of the offenders supervised in the community on the much heralded STOP programme run by a South Wales Probation Service was 65%. No distortion of the English language could interpret this as an example of 'successful' supervision of offenders in the community. Based on the 655 offenders who attended the scheme and the 4.9% detection rate it can be deduced that many thousands of people were victimized by those offenders in the STOP programme and during the follow-up period. Almost unbelievably, the STOP report glosses over this incontrovertible evidence of failure, and resorts to research babble to give the impression of success. As an example it declares that the results for those who finished the course were better than for those who dropped out. *This is irrelevant, since the public has to cope with the offending behaviour of all those on the programme, not just the finishers.* Another tactic used to create the illusion of success was the claim that the actual reconviction rate of those attending the scheme was '16% lower than their predicted reconviction rate'. Such comparison may fascinate some academics but they are a red herring as far as concerns the public, whose sole interest is in the actual level of crime in the community.

These examples are but few of the scores of social-work-oriented community supervision programmes which play down the impact of the offences committed by offenders on these schemes. Given their failure to protect the public, why do the courts continue to use community sentences for persistent offenders unmotivated to change? Over the last three decades sentencers, prey to their own uncertainties, have been vulnerable to the vociferous anti-prison lobby, and to the influence of probation reports offering undisguised mitigation for offenders, invariably presenting alternatives to custodial sentences, regardless of the risk they pose to the public. In some probation areas, the slavish adherence to ideological dogma has in the past been reinforced by official instructions from senior managers to their staff not to recommend prison or even use the word 'custody' in their court reports. Official records of sentences passed by judges and magistrates illustrate the effect of such intimidation; they show unarguably how, over the last decade, courts have favoured the freedom of the persistent offender rather than the protection of the public; they have sentenced increasing numbers of offenders unmotivated to reform to community programmes of the sort described above, this giving them a licence to go on offending and victimising yet more people. This is an abdication of the court's

primary responsibility to protect the public, especially considering that the offender's criminal history is made known to the court before sentence is passed. No one has the right to risk the safety of the public with 'programme experimentation' which, in the vast majority of cases, is doomed to failure. Far from protecting the public from further crime, community supervision of persistent offenders puts the public at risk. This truth is clearly illustrated by the extrapolation that the overall 57% reconviction rate of the 200,000 offenders under supervision in the UK equates to millions of offences committed by them during their period of supervision, and it is the innocent public that bears the brunt of this catastrophic failure. The failure must be placed also at the door of the university social work departments, which teach techniques and skills that fail to stop offenders unmotivated to change from committing more crime. Thus, viewed in this light, it becomes easier to understand the decision of the previous Home Secretary to withdraw Home Office support for CCETSW based training courses for probation officers.

Courts should more properly exercise the conscience and forbearance of the community by reserving community sentences for those offenders who demonstrate genuine remorse for their actions and who show some degree of motivation to change. Persistent of-

fenders unmotivated to reform should be sent to prison for longer and longer sentences, which would afford the public maximum protection from them for the duration of their sentence and could eventually be a deterrent. We should resist being bullied by fallacious ideological argument into thinking negatively about prisons. Recent statistics show that the reconviction rates of those released from prison are marginally better than for those offenders placed on community supervision. However, the reconviction rates of those released from prison are a distraction and unrelated to the success or otherwise of supervision in the community. If, in addition to protecting the public, prison reforms the criminal then that is a bonus. If, on discharge, ex-prisoners re-offend, this merely confirms that a custodial sentence was right in the first place. Prisons do not create criminals or make them worse criminals; prisons are mere bricks and mortar and therefore can not be held responsible for further offending; the decision is solely the responsibility of the individual who chooses a life of crime.

**David Fraser is a retired Probation Officer.**

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# Editorial

The societies studied by the Victorian anthropologists were organic communities, bound by kinship, which sustained themselves through myths and rituals devoted to the idea of the tribe. In such communities, the dead and the unborn were present among the living. Rituals, ceremonies, gods and stories were the private property of the tribe, designed to enhance and fortify the experience of membership. Birth, marriage and death were collective and not merely individual experiences, while the crucial process of acculturation — the transition from raw human material to a responsible adult member of the community — was marked by rites of passage, trials and ordeals, through which the adolescent cast off his childish wilfulness and took on the task of social reproduction.

In the society of the Victorians themselves, there existed a common store of myths, rituals and ceremonies which created a comparable sense of the divine origin of society, and its absolute right to sacrifice. Adolescents were instructed in the ancestral religion, and made to respect its rites. Crucial human experiences like birth, marriage and death were still collective experiences, in which individuals passed from one state of membership to another. Erotic feelings were regarded as the preparations for marriage. They were duly sublimated — which means, not idealized only, but also *ordealized*, hemmed in by interdictions. Marriage was (as it has always been) the principal instrument of social reproduction. But all the institutions of society played their part, and all contained their ceremonies of initiation. The transition from adolescent to adult was marked by complex forms of induction, which reinforced the view that all stages of existence prior to the adult state were but preparations for it. In exploring primitive societies, the Victorians were delighted to discover simpler and more transparent versions of an experience which lay at the heart of

their own civilisation — the experience of membership, enhanced by a common religion, and by the rites of passage which lead to the full adult state, the state in which the burden of social reproduction is assumed.

None of that is true of modern adolescents, who have neither the tribal nor the modern urban experience of membership. They exist in a world protected from external and internal threat, and are therefore rescued from the elementary experiences — in particular the experience of war — which renew the bond of social membership. They have little or no religious belief, and what religion they have is detached from the customs and rituals that form a congregation. Erotic feelings are no longer regarded as the preliminary to marriage, which has itself been downgraded into a condition of partial servitude, to be avoided as an unacceptable cost. In the absence of any perceivable social penalty, sexual release becomes readily available, and courtship disappears as a time-wasting impediment to pleasure. Hence sex has broken free from the process of social reproduction, to become readily available in all its forms, as an intrinsically adolescent experience. The rite of passage from the virgin to the married state has disappeared, and with it the 'lyrical' experience of sex, as a yearning for another and higher state of membership, to which the hard-won consent of society is a necessary precondition. All other rites of passage have similarly withered away, since no social institution demands them — or if it does demand them, it will be avoided as judgemental, hierarchical or in some way oppressive. The result is an adolescent community which suffers from an accumulating deficit in the experience of membership, while resolutely turning its back on the adult world — the world in which the burden of social reproduction must be finally assumed.

Now all human beings, whatever their

condition, are social animals, and can live with themselves only if they also live with others. There is implanted in us the need to join things, to be a part of some larger and justifying enterprise, which will ennoble our small endeavours and protect us from the sense that we are ultimately alone. The deficit of membership must therefore be made good, but in another way — without the rite of passage to a higher or more responsible condition. Hence new forms of 'joining in' arise. Unlike armies, schools, scout troops, churches and charities, these new forms of joining in need not involve participation — unless of a rough and undemanding kind that imposes no discipline on those who opt for them. They centre on spectacles rather than activities.

The paradigm instance is the fan club. The modern adolescent will follow the actions of his favoured team or group or idol, and adopt those actions as his own. Hence the emergence of professional sport as a central drama in popular culture. Football, for example, has lost its original character as a form of recreation and become instead a spectacle, through which the fans rehearse their social identity, and achieve a kind of substitute form of membership, not as active participants in a real community, but as passive respondents to the virtual community of fans. Football hooligans are not the peculiar and perverse criminals painted by the press. They are simply the most fully human of football fans — the ones who wish to translate the only experience of membership that has ever been offered to them, into the natural expression of a tribal right. In a sense, the membership offered to the fan — in which a mesmerised passivity neutralizes the desire for action — is the greatest safeguard we have, that modern societies will not fragment into tribal sub-groups, contending for scarce resources in the concrete jungle. And we should therefore be grateful for professional football, and for all the

other ways in which an icon of membership is offered to those who might otherwise chase after some adolescent version of the real thing. For when tribal groups emerge in modern conditions, they take the form of teenage gangs, whose initiation ceremonies forbid the transition to the adult world, and are designed to arrest their members in a stage of rebellion. The first concern of such a gang is to establish a right to territory, by violently erasing all rival claims.

The teenage gang is a natural (if destructive) response to a world in which the rites of passage into adulthood are no longer offered or respected. We do not say that such a world is a healthy one. But it is our world, and we have to make the best of it. Pop culture is an attempt to make the best of it — to make oneself at home in a world that is not, in any real sense, a home, since it has ceased to dedicate itself, as a home must dedicate itself, to the task of social repro-

duction. Home, after all, is the place where parents are. The world displayed in the culture of youth is a world from which the parents have absconded — as these days they generally do. This culture aims to present youth as the goal and fulfilment of human life, rather than a transitional phase which must be cast off as an impediment once the business of social reproduction calls. It promotes experiences which can be obtained without undertaking the burdens of responsibility, work, child-rearing and marriage. Hence sex, and especially sex divorced from any long-term commitment, becomes of paramount importance; so do experiences which involve no cost in terms of education, moral discipline, hardship or love — the paradigm being drug-taking, which has the added advantage that it shuts out the adult world completely, and replaces it with a cloud of wishful dreams. When the adult world is mentioned, it is in order

to pour scorn on it as a delusive fiction or a source of tyrannical constraints.

The vision of ‘cool Britannia’ should be understood in this context. It is an attempt by politicians to come to terms with, and in some way even to celebrate, the fact that British society has lost the will to reproduce. ‘Cool’ means ‘adolescent’, and it encodes a denial of the world of responsibility and child-bearing. A serious political vision will be forthcoming only when young people are no longer pandered to, when they are offered trials, tribulations and ordeals; when the public as a whole, including the young, accept the need for forms of membership in which sacrifice and obedience are the norm. Will this ever again be possible? That, surely, is the question that all conservatives must ask; and unless they can find the grounds for saying ‘yes’, they will have no real answer to Mr Blair.

## Letters

Sir,  
Ray Honeyford’s article (Spring 1998) explains an important aspect of our multicultural society. As the official policy in Germany during the 1930’s and 1940’s, anti-semitism was imposed by the Nazi hierarchy without public debate or intelligent discussion of its possible social, political and economic consequences. To challenge it publicly was impossible and, ultimately, unthinkable. Having accepted it most Germans ceased to think or talk about it: any guest at a dinner-party who was indiscreet or forgetful enough to refer to the misfortunes of a Jewish neighbour would be met by a moment’s uncomfortable silence until someone re-directed the conversation into safer channels. It was the ideal politically correct policy.

In Britain in the 1990’s, multiculturalism and racial equality has been imposed without serious con-

sideration of its long term social and economic consequences. Since it cannot be challenged by protest or debate it is now institutionalised, accepted without thought or reflection. It too has become the ideal politically correct policy.

There can be no serious debate about multiculturalism and racism so long as critics of the present policies can be dismissed as belonging to an uneducated and dangerous underclass — as many do, but there are many others for whom discretion remains the better part of valour.

Peter G Addison  
Ipswich

Sir,  
Although the grim and grimy stalinopolis of 1984 never came to this airbase-island, I was interested to see your Spring issue feature terms like

“Newspeak” and “prolefeed”, the former in Ralph Berry’s article on prevalent euphemisms and Patricia Lança’s dissection of gendecide, and the latter amid Hal Colebatch’s wisdom on juvenile fiction. For Orwell’s masterpiece retains subtle symbolic parallels with our present “society”, from the high-tech destruction of privacy to the instant glamorisation or demonisation of public personalities. No giant military face adorns our buildings, but Britain is being “rebranded” by an “inner party” with unmilitary figures — like Tony, Mandy, Chris and Harriet — on parade.

Of course, anyone can trawl through many classic examples of political or sci-fi “dystopias” and pick out predictive hits: Huxley’s *Brave New World* and Raspail’s *Camp of the Saints* were notably successful. E M Forster’s *Machine Stops* parabolically anticipated computernet dependence and

breakdown, though he also assumed an accompanying improvement of the human intellect which, as Richard Lynn and Antony Flew contend, is not happening. The interesting “prophecy” in Orwell, however, is the reduction and bifurcation of cultural discourse into “ideospeak” and “idiotfeed”.

For some time, as reading matter and television programmes have generally tended to deteriorate in content, academics have been acquiring a special language, first marxian and more recently deconstructionist, while the populace has engaged increasingly with telescreened amusement, first soap and then porn. The attempt to break a “leftist” bias in public service broadcasting just by commercial competition has merely accelerated an all-round dumbing down in taste, manners and imagination, the “democratic majority” fallacy imposing a counter-educational veto on effective resistance to vulgarity and violence.

Lord Reith’s broadcasting standards of “information, education and entertainment” aimed to maintain the cultural quality of an entire nation. Now Sir Christopher Bland combines con-

cern to have women and ethnic minorities managerially represented with a so-called “ratings-driven” output. This well illustrates what Orwell called “goodthink” and “prolefeed” in the sort of institution which reportedly inspired his Ministry of Truth.

A century ago H.G. Wells visualised an overpopulated London where low-grade “consumers of debased mass media” are “incessantly bombarded with crude advertisements, beamed at them by televisual or radiophonic means” and “there are no books any more, only videos or porn-videos, labelled in simple phonetic English”; I quote from *Intellectuals and the Masses* by John Carey, who seems less impressed by the novelist’s percipience than annoyed by his radical plans to prevent such a future.

D L W Ashton,  
Sheringham, Norfolk

Sir,

An unintended discrepancy slightly blemished Sir Rowland Whitehead’s brilliant and moving article on the saintly genius William Tyndale (Spring 1998). He wrote: “Language transfer is not like currency exchange or the

switch from imperial to metric. Words have a special visual identity, a musicality, an aural and cultural context.”

Citing forms of automatic conversion in order to contrast with the intricacies of linguistic translation, he chose a good example in currency exchange but a singularly inappropriate one in the switch from imperial to metric. It is precisely “a special visual identity, a musicality, an aural and cultural context” that distinguishes our traditional weights and measures from the abstract barbarism of the metric system. Miles, yards, feet and inches, pints, pounds and ounces, are embedded in our language. Abandoning the glories of the Tyndale and King James Bibles for one of the moronic modern translations is, indeed, exactly parallel to the compulsory replacement of imperial by metric measures. They are both parts of the process of dumbing Britain down. Freedom of expression and choice, and access to the peaks of our civilisation, are no longer suppressed by burning a few heretics, but by universal imposition of departmental regulations and EU directives.

Vivian Linacre  
Edinburgh

## Reviews

# The Big Black Book

*Philip Vander Elst*

**Le Livre Noir du Communisme: Crimes, terreur, repression,** Stephane Courtois, Nicolas Werth, Jean-Louis Panné, Andrzej Paczkowski, Karel Bartosek, and Jean-Louis Margolin, Robert Laffont, Paris, 1997.

In his book, *Les Abus de la Mémoire*, the Bulgarian writer, Tzvetan Todorov, writes: “La vie a perdu contre la mort, mais la mémoire gagne dans son combat contre le néant.” Inscribed on the title page of the first chapter, this quote aptly summarises the central *motif* of

this outstanding book, the latest valuable addition to the growing literature about the Communist holocaust in the twentieth century.

Following in the footsteps of previous chroniclers of the human cost of Communism, like Robert Conquest,

Richard Walker, Kurganov, Maksudov, Solzhenitsyn, Suzanne Labin, and Geoffrey Stewart-Smith, to name only a few, the authors have produced a wide-ranging and magisterial survey of the record and crimes of Communism in Europe, Asia, Africa

and Latin America. There are not only individual chapters on the history and record of all the different Communist regimes, but also separate sections dealing with the history of Communist subversion and terrorism, as well as maps and photos of the Soviet, Chinese and other *gulags* — including pictures of executions and massacres.

But what is most welcome about this book, is its serious attempt to understand both the causes and the significance of Communism's crimes against humanity, as well as the nature of its wide international appeal to so many twentieth-century intellectuals. It is also encouraging that this exercise has been undertaken by a group of distinguished French and central European scholars, given the post-war pollution of the French cultural landscape by France's large fellow-travelling Left, the most powerful and vociferous in Western Europe during the whole period of the Cold War.

What, then, are the central themes, facts and conclusions presented in *Le Livre Noir du Communisme*?

First, that Communism nowhere fulfilled its promise of social and economic liberation for the 'wretched of the earth'. Instead of ushering in a new millennium of peace, plenty and social justice, all Communist regimes, without exception, have been totalitarian tyrannies governed by dictatorial party élites and sustained by a secret police, a pervasive apparatus of official censorship and propaganda, concentration camps for dissidents, and the systematic use of terror and torture to stamp out all actual and potential resistance. In the process, they have not only impoverished their peoples and destroyed most of their physical and cultural heritage, but have also provoked a greater loss of life world-wide than the two world wars of this century. To quote the authors' summary of their statistical findings, the minimum estimates of the number of people murdered by Communist régimes since 1917 are as follows (my translation):

“USSR: 20 million dead.

China: 65 million dead.

Vietnam: 1 million dead.

North Korea: 2 million dead.

Cambodia: 2 million dead

Eastern Europe: 1 million dead.

Latin America: 150,000 dead.

Africa: 1.7 million dead.

Afghanistan: 1.5 million dead.”

This gives a total figure of over 94 million victims for the global cost of Communism this century. Other expert estimates suggest that this figure, terrible though it is, may be too low. Professor Kurganov, for instance, in a 1964 study quoted by Solzhenitsyn, calculated that the Soviet regime alone had slaughtered 66 million people. Similarly, a detailed study by Jean-Pierre Dujardin, published in *Figaro Magazine* in November 1978, estimated the total human cost of Communism to be as high as 143 million dead. But whatever may be the variations in these calculations and any revisions of them resulting from fuller access to Communist archives since the collapse of the Soviet empire, one thing is abundantly clear. It is an undeniable fact that Communism has been more destructive of human life than Nazism and Fascism. And it is in making this point explicit, that *Le Livre Noir du Communisme* has caused such a *frisson* in French political and intellectual circles.

For decades most commentators, not only left-wing ones, have tended to classify Hitler's Nazi regime in a unique category of evil because of its horrifying racism and genocidal destruction of European Jewry and other supposedly sub-human racial groups. The authors of *Le Livre Noir*, however, make a special point of underlining the equally inhuman character of Communist ideology and practice. Not only is class hatred as reprehensible as race hatred, but to depersonalise individuals, by regarding them as anonymous members of particular social categories, is to deprive them of their shared humanity, so making it easier to exterminate them. Hence the Communist practice, originated by Lenin but inspired by Marx and the Jacobins of the French Revolution, of condemning whole sections of society to death without taking any account of individual guilt or merit. Communism, in other words, is just as much an ideology of genocide as Nazism.

To quote the sombre conclusion of *Le Livre Noir*: without attempting to

position Nazism and Communism within some gruesome hierarchy of human cruelty, “the facts are nonetheless stubborn and show that the communist regimes have committed crimes affecting around a hundred million people, as against the 25 million victims of Nazism. This simple finding should at least draw attention to the similarity between the regime which since 1945 has been regarded as the most criminal of the century, and a communist system which preserved its international legitimacy until 1991, and which, even today, remains in power in several countries and retains its followers throughout the world.”

If, then, the parallels between Communism and Nazism are striking and undeniable, what are the fundamental causes of the disease of modern totalitarianism? How does one explain both the appeal of Communism and the contrast between its utopian vision of brotherhood and social justice, and the terrible reality of Communist rule? What is the link between Communist motives and Communist practice? Here again the authors of this book contribute valuable insights and provide an accurate summary of the answers to these questions which have emerged from the critical literature about Communism produced in this century.

Whilst drawing attention to the impact on Communist regimes of local historical factors, like the influence of Russia's autocratic tradition and the dehumanising impact of the First World War, *Le Livre Noir* rightly concentrates on the deeper ideological and psychological causes of Communist terror and tyranny.

The key to understanding Communism's dehumanisation and extermination of its opponents is to be found in its political utopianism. Believing, like the French Jacobins, that they alone possessed the knowledge of how to create a perfectly just, happy and harmonious society, Communist leaders asserted their right and duty to crush all opposition, since in their eyes, resistance to their rule was inherently immoral and perverse. Furthermore, since the moral end for which they strove was of such transcendental importance, any means were justified to achieve it. Hence the

now historically familiar phenomenon of intellectuals sacrificing whole populations on the altar of intellectual abstractions. Hence, too, its institutional corollary: 'the dictatorship of the proletariat' wielded by a monopolistic ruling party dominated in turn by a self-selected revolutionary élite.

In repeating and exploring this standard analysis of Communism, the authors raise a deeper question but fail to pursue its wider logical and ideological ramifications. Noting Communism's claim to be a 'scientific' theory of society which gives its practitioners the tools to remodel humanity according to an infallible blueprint, *Le livre noir* locates the source of this fallacy in the general intellectual climate of 'scientism' which increasingly characterised Western culture in the late 19th and early 20th century. The widespread belief that the development of society and all human activity could be understood, explained and controlled by reference to a few easily discoverable scientific laws, inevitably promoted the idea that societies can be experimented with by an élite of central planners armed with all the resources of modern science and technology. In a similar fashion, the Darwinian concepts of evolution and natural selection in the field of biology

encouraged the notion that human life also involved a 'struggle for survival', and that social progress therefore required the elimination of reactionary classes and inferior races. But having exposed the influence of social Darwinism and scientific materialism on the development of Nazism and Communism, the book's concluding chapter omits any discussion of the possible connection between all this and the decline of religious belief amongst the educated élite within Western societies. Yet this is surely a crucial question for all those who truly care about liberty and human rights.

To a Christian Conservative like me, it is no accident that one of the consequences of the spread of atheism and agnosticism has been a loss of belief in any absolute moral code governing human behaviour. But since a free and humane society cannot exist unless we value other human beings and recognise their right to life, liberty and property, a philosophy which denies the objectivity of moral values implicitly removes a crucial barrier to tyranny and evil, and its spread is therefore bound to be destructive of our civilisation. The other logical consequence of atheism — that it reduces human beings to the status of complicated machines put together by chance — also

destroys human dignity because it implicitly denies free will and empties human life of all ultimate significance. And since it is psychologically easier to destroy robots than to kill living persons made in the image of God, the logic of atheism once again promotes totalitarianism.

What, to conclude, has been most tragic about the twentieth century, is that its totalitarian horrors were wholly predictable and avoidable. Christian historians and thinkers like Lord Acton had already taught their 19th century contemporaries that fallen human nature is corrupted by excessive concentrations of power, and that the survival of liberty has always depended upon the recognition that the Law of God is above the State and protects freedom of conscience. Other Liberals, like Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill, Bastiat and Mazzini, were equally explicit about the danger to freedom of abolishing private property and establishing State-controlled economies. But despite all their lucidity and eloquence, these sages warned in vain, and millions of their fellow Europeans were needlessly sacrificed to the Moloch of Socialism.

Has there ever been a more dreadful monument to the folly of despising the past and ignoring its lessons?

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# A Steep Descent

*A W Purdue*

**The British Century, a photographic history of the last hundred years, Brian Moynahan, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997, £30.**

**Hope and Glory. Britain 1900-1990, Peter Clarke, Penguin, 1996, £8.99.**

Ends of centuries are times for balance sheets, soul-searching and analysis. Millennia should be too, but few in our ill-educated society have the imagination for such a long-term audit,

so we put up pavilions of fun to celebrate a transitory "cool" identity. We have, however, the capacity to look back over a hundred years and for the first time we have a century of photo-

graphic and cinematic records to assist our memory. We can, at least superficially, rewind the century, watch jerky figures leap from their trenches at the Somme, observe the

great dictators on their rostrums, attend coronations, or even watch our younger selves consort with long-dead relatives. But, if the film archives are considerable, the records provided by still photographs are enormous and the capture of the single moment, a street or café scene, as much as a second of the action of battle, women chatting on a street corner or a family on holiday, as much as a politician on the hustings, gives us a unique entry to the past.

Centenaries being a massive publishing opportunity, Brian Moynahan has followed up his *The Russian Century* with *The British Century*, like its predecessor, a photographic history of the century, accompanied by a text. Even the first cursory flip through the book reveals that the photographs, culled from a wide range of collections, have the power to bring the past alive, from the earliest sections evoking the might and confidence of empire, as imperial rulers and their satraps gaze confidently at the camera from their verandas or over their shot tigers, or illustrating the workforce of a mature industrial society at its work and leisure, to the later sections which take us back to the sexual and cultural revolt of the 'sixties, the nadir of British self-confidence of the 'seventies and the brittle materialism of the 'eighties. Much of our century is certainly there, the Tommies in the trenches or dead or dying before the barbed-wire, the groups of desolate unemployed from the thirties, the scenes of the Blitz, the strange phenomenon of the Teddy Boy, and the fashions, stars and poets of every era; but much is missing. What is little represented, where it is not absent, is middle England. We have upstairs and downstairs, affluence and squalor, and Ascot and industrial unrest, but too little of suburbia, the grammar school or the modest family holiday. Nor are there many photographs of the lifestyle of the skilled working class. The reasons for this are not difficult to find. The rich, the famous and the glamorous, like the poor, the deprived and the destitute, provide arresting subjects for the photographer and the

photographic researcher, as do wars, strikes and protests, but the daily life of the broad middle of society is less photogenic. Yet one can argue that it was amongst the broad middle strata and in the degree to which their hopes and aspirations were confirmed or confounded that the reasons for the remarkable stability of twentieth century Britain are to be found.

Moynahan has, nevertheless, produced a fine book in which the text does the photographs justice. This is popular history at its best: accessible and written in a lively style but with an effort to make the complex comprehensible to the general reader without condescending simplification. This is no mere coffee table book but a succinct account of Britain in the twentieth century.

Save for the cover picture of Winston Churchill inspecting bomb damage to the House of Commons, there are no photographs in Peter Clarke's *Hope and Glory*, which takes a worthy place in Penguin's excellent History of Britain series. Readers of *The Salisbury Review* will find much to disagree with, for Clarke's social-democratic sympathies are evident throughout the book, but this is a distinguished piece of historical writing, brilliantly organised, erudite, witty and rarely dogmatic.

More interested, perhaps, in hope than in glory, Clarke emphasizes that, if the century has seen the decline of Britain as a great power, most Britons are at the end of the century better-fed, better-housed and with more security and opportunity than at its beginning. Like Moynahan, he nevertheless faces the question of decline, arguing that "relative decline in Britain's position during the century was, of course, inevitable" which is close to Moynahan's view that "The century started at such a height that descent was certain". It is difficult to dissent from such propositions, though whether the descent had to be so steep can be questioned. There were, after all, trade-offs, not only between military, imperial and economic power on the slope of decline, but between all three and the demands of a mass

electorate for new social benefits. Thus participation in World War I weakened economic power, which in turn weakened imperial and military power after the war, while the failure to maintain military expenditure at pre-war levels, due, at least in part, to a preference for expenditure on social welfare, further weakened Britain's ability either to defend the Empire or to intervene decisively in Europe. Debilitated further by World War II and still overextending herself after 1945 in pursuit of a welfare state and great power status, Britain began her final *dégringolade*. For at least the first half of the century the descent was made greater than it need have been by an inability to make the hard choices, and tactical withdrawals that could have resulted in a less precipitate decline from the lofty, if unsustainable, position of 1900.

If the difference between British power then and now is most arresting, there are parallels as well as differences with Britain's contemporary problems and those of the early years of the century. Ireland, as ever, was a major source of concern, though now older unions and the very concept of Britain itself or at least of Britons, are also in question. A major political and economic divide between tariff reformers and free traders ran through the Conservative Party, as that between Euro-sceptics and Euro-federalists does now. Then there was the question of reforming the House of Lords...!

What do we make of ourselves at the end of a turbulent century? Still confident but in reality bereft of power, Britain staged a major exhibition in 1951 seeking to establish, perhaps, a post-imperial identity. Moynahan describes it thus:

a fantasy world built on twenty-seven acres of cleared bombsites in London. It was dominated by a Disney-like "Dome of Discovery" and the "Skylon", a pointed aluminium device suspended over the site. There were pavilions for "fun, fantasy and colour" and "contemporary" furniture moulded in bent shapes with spindly legs and ball feet

At least some things don't change.

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# The Social Problems of Race

*Richard Lynn*

**Race Matters**, Michael Levin, Praeger, 1997, \$65.00.

Michael Levin is a professor of philosophy at the City University of New York. His new book begins with an analysis of race differences in intelligence and personality and proceeds to a discussion of the social implications of these differences. Starting with intelligence, Levin documents the extensive evidence that blacks in the United States score on average about 15 IQ points below whites and Asians, and that blacks in Africa score lower still. He provides an extensive discussion of the arguments and evidence for the causes of this difference and concludes that it is largely genetic. His reasons for reaching this conclusion are that intelligence has a high heritability; the low black IQ is present in pre-school children and hence cannot be attributed to inferior schooling; the smaller average brain size of blacks; the absence of any improvement in the IQs of blacks adopted by white middle class families; the failure of head start programmes designed to raise black IQs; and the high IQs of Asians and Jews in the United States, suggesting that minority status and discrimination by the majority does not adversely affect intelligence.

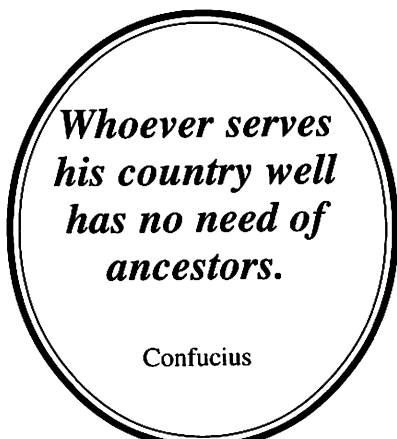
These arguments have been stated before although they are not widely known and Levin has done a useful job in updating and consolidating them. He moves onto new ground when he proposes that there are also important race differences in personality. He assembles evidence suggesting that blacks live more in the present than whites and Asians and are less concerned about the long term results of

their behaviour. For instance, studies have shown that if black children are offered a small candy bar now or a larger one next week, they overwhelmingly opt for the small one now, whereas white children tend to go for the large one next week. The inference is that whites look ahead more than blacks. One of the consequences of this is the high black propensity to crime, because crimes tend to be committed by those who live in the present rather than the future. Levin assembles statistics showing that black crime rates in the United States are about twelve times higher than those of whites for robbery and nine times higher for murder. He assembles arguments which lead him to the conclusion that this personality characteristic of blacks also has a genetic basis.

The second half of the book is concerned with the problems of what society should do about these intractable differences. Levin's general position is a libertarian one, that the state should ignore them and allow all citizens to find their own level. He argues against affirmative action policies on the grounds that they are attempts to compensate blacks for injustices done to blacks over a century ago in the times of slavery, and he says that present day whites who suffer from affirmative action cannot be held responsible for the actions of long dead whites. He argues further that, if we have to judge the question historically, whites discharged their duties to blacks when many of them gave their lives in the Civil War in order to free blacks from slavery. He argues that in

contemporary times blacks owe a debt to whites because of their high rates of crime against whites. He argues also that the police may legitimately stop and search blacks more than whites because of a higher actuarial probability that they are engaged in criminal activities, and that everyone is sensible to avoid blacks on the rational grounds that they are more likely to be attacked by blacks than by whites or Asians.

Although Levin is concerned with the social problems arising from race differences in intelligence and personality in the United States, precisely the same problems are present in Britain and much of continental Europe. Very rarely are they discussed with Levin's candour. These issues have become, like sex in the Victorian era, something which most people know exists but hardly anyone dares talk about in public. Yet with continuing high levels of immigration of third world peoples into Europe and their high fertility, these are immensely important problems. For those who are concerned with them, Michael Levin's book is the place to start.



*Whoever serves  
his country well  
has no need of  
ancestors.*

Confucius

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# Tory Graphics

*Mark Brunton*

**The Odd Thing About the Colonel and other pieces**, Colin Welch, ed Craig Brown and Frances Welch, Bellew Publishing in association with the *Daily Telegraph*, 1997.

It is mostly thanks to Colin Welch that British Conservatives have, in the comment pages of the *Daily Telegraph*, a daily journal of Conservative thought as well as a quarterly magazine.

This anthology, chosen by Welch's daughter Frances and her husband Craig Brown, provides a timely and heartening dose of first class Conservative writing, an antidote to the fashionable triviality of "emotional literacy" and "Cool Britannia" which we must currently endure.

Peregrine Worsthorne's introduction describes how Welch, despite a Keynesian proprietor and unideological editor, transformed the *Telegraph* from a paper of the "middle way" to a paper of the "Thatcherite right". As deputy editor Welch gathered around him a team of superlative quality including T E Utley, Michael Wharton and John O'Sullivan. He undoubtedly helped create the intellectual atmosphere which allowed the Thatcherite reaction to the post-war consensus to achieve its successes.

Welch was deeply influenced by his experiences as an Infantry Officer during the 1944 - 1945 North West Europe Campaign. During the campaign his battalion suffered 170% casualties in ten months. War induced in him a hatred of disorder, violence and anarchy. The fragility and preciousness of civil society and the dire consequences of its collapse were indelibly impressed on him. The enemy he fought was a "Caliban-like revolt of greed, lust, hatred, envy, cruelty and destructive rage".

This sense of the fragility of civil society and its institutions perhaps accounts for one of the most perceptive pieces republished here, a 1961

*Encounter* article on the "Lady Chatterley Trial". Welch believed that the decision to prosecute was mistaken, exposing the law to ridicule and providing vast unwarranted publicity and acclaim for the book. He was not worried by any threat to the moral health of those buying the book out of casual voyeurism. His argument was with Lawrence's philosophy and the Bishop of Woolwich and other Christian apologists for the book. He demonstrated that the book is an assault on the Christian concept of marriage. According to Welch, Lawrence sought to regenerate humanity by freeing it from the tyranny of the intellect, of the soul and of Jesus Christ. He wrote "If this is not a doctrine designed to deprave and corrupt I do not know what is".

Nearly forty years on we survey a society in which the tide of sexual liberation ushered in by the Lady Chatterley trial has largely swept away Christian marriage and the sexual mores which upheld it. Welch insitinctively understood the frailty of social institutions in a way that many clergymen did not. They were ostensibly preaching a religion founded on a belief in Original Sin but in their hearts they subscribed to the Liberalism of their secular peers. Accordingly they were incapable of recognising Lawrence's book for what it was. Contemporary Conservatives are in a very different position to Welch. He sought to defend Christian-based social customs which were widely adhered to. We live in a society where they are despised by the clerisy and viewed with incomprehension by most of our fellow subjects.

Parallels can perhaps be drawn between the social and moral revolution which occurred in Britain in the 1960's and the revolutions which deposed the Marxist regimes of Eastern Europe twenty five years later. A collapse of belief in the secular religion of Marxism led to a fatal demoralisation of the Communist ruling class. Our national élite, influenced by decades of academic Liberalism, stopped believing Christian and ancestral values. In consequence social practice based on such values collapsed.

Since the Britain of the early 1960's was a very stable and secure society, it was comparatively rare to have Welch's sense of its fragility. Largely as a result of the triumph of Liberalism we live in a very different society. For it to recover its health the beliefs which were lost must be regained. We cannot pretend to believe things that we do not, just because we like the benign social consequences of those beliefs. The fundamental task of modern Conservatism is to find ways of restoring belief. Perhaps a way towards this, not available to Welch in 1961, is to point to the fruits of Liberalism as evidence of the falsity of the Liberal view of man and the truth of the religion it replaced. "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits".

Philip Larkin has established in the national consciousness, as the twin harbingers of the 1960's social revolution, the Lady Chatterley trial and the Beatles. This anthology includes a *Spectator* article on the latter. At a time when advancing years are cloaking "Beatlemania" in a rosy,

sentimental nostalgia, Welch's horror of the phenomenon at first surprises, particularly if the reader is too young to have first hand memories. The piece is effectively an assault on the whole youth culture/pop music phenomenon which has assailed the western world for over forty years and which shows no sign of abating. Musically sophisticated, Welch had limited regard for the music of Lennon and McCartney. However his true objection was to the cultural phenomenon, the facile leftist political and social views, drug-taking, the self abasement of the old before the disrespectful parvenu young and the severance of parents from children. He was also aware that the whole thing was driven by its capacity to make large sums of money for record companies whom Welch compared to the capitalists Lenin said would sell him the rope with which to hang them.

Much of Welch's time on the *Daily*

*Telegraph* was taken up with combatting the errors of the brand of democratic socialism espoused by the Labour Party. Welch did so from a position of intellectual principle "the respectful, if unworthy follower of Burke, de Tocqueville (and) Hayek". Hayek's dictum that without theory facts are dumb was quoted approvingly by Welch. He was fundamentally opposed to the British tendency to praise "pragmatic befuddlement". This is very relevant to Conservative politicians in the aftermath of the 1997 General Election defeat. Does any phrase better describe the last Conservative administration than pragmatic befuddlement?

In a recent interview John Major seemed genuinely perplexed as to why so many in his party objected so vigorously to being made citizens of a European Union to which they owed legal duties. Why could they not be sensible, eschew "ideology",

and revel in such triumphs as the National Lottery and the Citizens Charter? Why worry about the erosion of such abstractions as the sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament when there is a Lottery-funded National Sports Academy?

To recover its fortunes the Conservative Party must follow Welch's example of intellectual rigour. The Conservative Party may at times have been the "stupid party", but Conservative ideas are not stupid. An intellectual Conservatism has now defeated re-distributive egalitarianism. Read Welch's review of Anthony Crosland's books on the mixed economy and marvel that any intelligent person could have held such ludicrous views.

The Conservative Party must now reclaim its intellectual patrimony (manifest at its most lively and endearing in Colin Welch) and rejoin the battle of ideas. It could then regain its place as the natural party of Government.

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# Adamantine Faith

*Hal Colebatch*

**Santamaria: A Memoir**, B A Santamaria, Oxford University Press, \$35.00.

Bartholomew Augustine Santamaria has been one of the most amazing people in public life anywhere. He and Sir Robert Menzies (Australia's greatest peace-time and war-time Prime Minister) are the only two modern Australian political figures of truly heroic stature. His life was a demonstration of what one man can achieve. Santamaria died in February, hypocritically praised as an Elder Statesman by an Australian media that had in general ignored or vilified him during his life. This recently-published memoir may stand as his testament.

It is an enthralling personal account

and a comprehensive handbook of the political, cultural and moral history of Australia and of the West in the last 50 or so years — years in which Santamaria fought the Left in such a way as to add new lustre to the term "cultural combatant". While Santamaria writes with serenity and grace, it is also a record of how foolish, short-sighted, treacherous, lukewarm and cowardly some natural allies were. "Conservative" political, religious and cultural combatants can expect little support from those they defend.

This is the story of a man of enormous intellect who thought from the beginning

in terms of establishing not an intellectual debating society but a movement, an organisation, a network, both to defeat Communism and to stand against the spiritual, cultural and intellectual diseases of which Communism was the most concentratedly virulent. The book contains moving portraits of and tributes to Archbishop Mannix, Professor James McAuley, Denys Jackson and others of the few who took on the Left in Australia and won some battles. Australia after the 1940s never looked like becoming a Communist country, but without these men things could have been very different.

Son of poor Italian immigrants, Santamaria might have craved compensatory money and power. He writes: My mother's family had owned a few hectares of vineyard, but my father's family was landless. They would today be classed as uneducated... My first language was neither English nor Italian, but a dialect of the Aeolian Islands...

The security of worldly success in Establishment terms could certainly have tempted a man from such a background possessed of great intellectual abilities. But Santamaria, having completed a Law degree, turned his back on a prestigious and lucrative legal career to fight for what he believed was right, not merely as a youthful crusader, but unwaveringly from before the Second World War to the present day. He spent a long life in politics — in his ninth decade he remained a doughty fighter — without seeking personal profit or power save that of persuasion.

Nor did he seek formal political office, though he walked with Prime Ministers and Cardinals. Many of his enemies, like the demented Labour leader Dr Evatt, he long outlived. Others, like Whitlam, he saw dwindle to irrelevant ghosts of the past, while he continued, year in and year out, to run the National Civic Council from a modest Melbourne office, and, one believes and hopes, to rejoice in his religious and family life and his most impressive number of children and grandchildren. Professor McAuley urged him once to rest:

Soon you must return to tasks  
That sicken and appal:  
The calumnies will never cease,  
Look only to the sign of peace,  
The Cross upon the wall...

But, Santamaria said, "we were built a little differently". Though McAuley never wavered in the struggle until his death in 1976, he could be bruised by the tawdryness of political activity and needed at times to come up for air. Santamaria never rested. He created the National Civic Council (NCC), which defeated the Communist Party, and the Labour extreme Left, in key unions during and after the Stalinist depths of the Cold War, and played the major part in creating the Democratic Labor Party

which kept a Communist and extreme Left-tainted Australian Labor Party out of office until 1972. For all this he deserves heartfelt gratitude.

The DLP was maintained in the face of media hostility that grew deeper as the cultural Left consolidated its hold. In contrast to the rapturous reception given the trendy-Left Australian Democrats since they were launched as a political party, the DLP — when it was mentioned at all — was soon continually caricatured in the media as reactionary, fanatical, clerical and worse. As Santamaria commented: "... many years later Professor Peter Wilkes, having stated his own viewpoint on Australia's strategic situation in terms identical with the DLP analysis, added: 'I do not want to sound like a member of the DLP'." It was a DLP Senator, Jack Kane, who finally exposed and destroyed the traitor and KGB agent of influence Wilfred Burchett, an event which endeared the DLP to Australia's intellectual establishment even less. The DLP faded away in the 1970's but the NCC continues as a force for conservative social and Catholic values. It had some similarities to the Christian Democrat parties of post-war Europe but was probably unique in English-speaking countries — it consisted largely of Catholics providing an organisational and intellectual spear-head for conservative and anti-Communist politicians who were themselves not notable for their organisational abilities at the union level nor, often, for their concern for abstract and moral political issues in general.

Vilified for decades by the Left as the ultimate dark force, Santamaria soldiered on with adamant faith, good humour, vast learning and much personal kindness, doing good by stealth. Probably no-one in Australia and few people in the world have been the subject of so much lying malice, but Santamaria, as well as being a modest man, remained a radiantly good-natured and often remarkably forgiving one. It is significant that, while enemies have attacked him in every sort of snide and open manner, I cannot recall a single instance when even the most bitter, treacherous and unscrupulous of them

ever felt they could credibly suggest he lacked integrity. I was commissioned by some of his friends to write a poem for his birthday a few years ago, and described him there as one of those Quixotic knightly figures who refused to surrender when Marxism as the wave of the future towered over them.

For those he led, the fight was on many fronts: from down-and-dirty and physically dangerous union campaigns and mundane and thankless duty manning sweltering polling-booths to a good deal of such intellectual debate as Australia has had.

It is hard to say what success he has had in campaigns (why not call them crusades? — here that is no derogative term) to maintain Christian values and defend Catholicism in particular from the ravages of modernism. The degradation of culture and defeat of even ordinary decency can seem today, in moments of pessimism, universal, but, as Cold War Warriors know, appearances of enemy strength can be deceptive. Certainly, the NCC realised that there is a cultural war to be fought in the aftermath of the Cold War, unlike some of the rabbit-paralysed-in-the-headlights parties of conventional conservative politics.

Santamaria might look back knowing he had been on the right side from the Spanish Civil War to Vietnam. Long before anyone on the conventional Labour Left, he argued against the White Australia policy on moral grounds.

The NCC's journal *News-Weekly*, now in its 54th year, has been a great achievement with slender resources. It was the first to expose the Whitlam government's deliberate abandonment of anti-Communist Vietnamese when Saigon fell and among the first in the world to expose the Pol Pot genocide. With Peter Coleman's *Quadrant*, it was among the few forums in Australia that advocated sanctuary for Vietnamese refugees when they were at sea in leaking boats and the Left were reviling them as reactionaries, prostitutes, black-marketeers and drug peddlers fit only for shark-feed. A new religious journal, *AD 2000*, is a considerable source of annoyance to those enamoured of the lunatic perversions of religious modernism. What a pity the

NCC did not get its people into the media and publishing houses as well as unions when it had the chance! Is it too late even now?

This memoir can hardly be a single narrative sweep: it touches upon a multitude of stories, events and personalities. But it is all meat — this is a story without padding or waffle, told by a uniquely qualified witness to, and maker of, history.

The last part of the book has, perhaps inevitably, something frustrating about it: with the Cold War ending in the death of the Soviet Empire (as well as the gutting of overt and covert pro-Soviet political and cultural ramps throughout the West), the succeeding social and cultural malaise seems both intractable and almost indefinable. The chapter “One brief shining moment”, on the substitution of style for substance in Western politics, uncannily anticipates some of the weirdness of Blairism. Santamaria saw much of Catholicism, once the ultimate rock of resistance to Communism, turn from being the solution to part of the problem.

I find the economic arguments of this

latter part of the book questionable and recently an increasingly strident anti-free-market note in *News-Weekly* has been leading it in the direction of some strange bed-fellows (Santamaria argued strongly, and I think correctly, for a new Marshall Plan to help rebuild the economies of post-Communist East European countries, but then *News-Weekly* denounced the fact that the Ukraine was now selling wheat on traditional Australian markets). To put it bluntly, if *News-Weekly* is going to continue dealing with economic matters it will need a trained economist. There is a danger that criticism of economic rationalism will become economic irrationalism.

However, Santamaria is surely right to argue: “it is difficult to envisage the revival of Christianity in Western countries unless it is predicated on the revival of the family as its base.” He makes it a depressingly circular dilemma when he goes on: “The crisis of the family cannot be solved without a cultural regeneration, which involves philosophical, moral, religious and cultural factors that go far beyond any political solution.” Without the family, Christianity will

not regenerate; without Christianity, the family will not regenerate.

Santamaria’s prescription to break this vicious circle included a home-maker’s allowance for married women to allow them to remain out of the work-force and in the family role. It might be worth trying. Could the political climate be created? Santamaria was never either a conventional socialist or capitalist but he surely spoke for all conservative cultural institutions when he said the NCC’s most important task was to develop an agenda for beyond the year 2000. We are in a sense facing a post-Cold War *tabula rasa* and the thought that tomorrow automatically belongs to no-one is not necessarily pessimistic. Santamaria concludes with the words of St. Paul:

In all things we suffer tribulation, but are not distressed.

We are straitened, but are not destitute;

We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken.

We are cast down, but we do not perish.

This is an uneven book but that is part of its richness. As the memoirs of public figures should be, but too seldom are, it is candid, illuminating, sometimes inspiring, and often very wise.

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## A novel by any other name

### *Alexander Boot*

**The Spirit Wrestlers, A Russian Journey, Philip Marsden, Harper Collins, £17.99**

For a century or so, Russia has had a run of bad luck with Western visitors. Where are the Fletchers, Chamberlains and Custines of yesteryear, when we need them more than ever? For, at the time of Ivan IV or Nicholas I, Russia was many things, most of them disagreeable, but one thing it wasn’t: a

modern ideological state. Modern ideology discourages neutrality; it breeds an ideological response of one type or another.

Until 1989 most Western visitors were fellow travellers. Now they are just travellers. The former didn’t feign impartiality. The latter do. The former

deified Russia for being communist; the latter deify it for not being communist. Both are ‘useful idiots’ — or worse. But that’s not the only thing they have in common. In our accursed century travellers, fellow or plain, influence Western policy. That imposes upon them the unfair responsibility

their feeble shoulders simply cannot bear.

Our ignorant journeymen blow into Russia for a few hours, like TV personalities; a few days, like columnists; a few months, like travel writers; a couple of years like correspondents. Some have more Russian than others (most have next to none), some are better-read than others. The results are the same: the Russians twist them around their little fingers.

Mind you, the Russians are past masters in the art of duping foreigners, rivalled only by the French. The French are Germans pretending to be Italians. The Russians pretend that their ostensible barbarity belies hidden depths of goodness and sagacity. The outside world is never short of hook-line-and-sinker swallows, except that in Russia's case the resulting indigestion is more severe. Russia, you see, has rather large bombs with which it either explicitly threatens or implicitly blackmails the West. Mistakes of judgement can thus become not just embarrassing but perilous.

Philip Marsden seems to withhold judgement, adopting the pose of dispassionate observer. As he roams Russia's southern reaches in search of marginal sect members to chat up, he merely reports what he sees. A Russian reader would describe this fashionable stratagem as 'lying like an eye-witness'.

That is not to say the book is poorly written. On the contrary: Marsden is an excellent writer, one endowed with an artist's eye for detail and a musician's ear for cadence. I enjoyed his prose, thinking 'this man ought to write fiction'. Alas, it didn't take me long to realise that that is precisely what he has written.

Marsden is not disingenuous — he simply doesn't understand Russian or the Russians well enough. This impression starts with the title. 'Spirit-wrestler' is a terrible translation of 'dukbobor'. The Dukhobors are a sect of spiritual Christians; they fight for, not against, spirit. 'Spirit champions' would be much less misleading. And, while we are on the subject of wrestling, translating 'ikonoborets' as

'icon-wrestler' is correct in meaning but not in style, considering that there exists the time-proven English word 'iconoclast'. In general, there are more howlers in this book than in an average wolf pack. At random:

*"One night when it hit thirty-three below... most Muscovites agreed that it wasn't a cold winter."* Nonsense. Take it from a former Muscovite, thirty-three below is *very* cold. Schools are out at minus twenty-five; at minus thirty-three no Muscovite will go out unless he has to. But many Muscovites will mislead a gullible foreigner, playing into his romantic misconceptions.

*"If Odessa is the father of crime, then Rostov is the mother!"* (Three separate quotes.) Sorry, but it's the other way around, and the phrase 'Odessa mama, Rostov papa' is known to every Russian past age three. A Russian is as likely to say it in reverse, as a New Yorker to refer to his city as The Big Pear.

*"...the river was full of icons. They took them down from the churches and threw them in and I went down to watch them floating to the sea,"* remembers Marsden's interviewee. Again, nonsense. When Bolsheviks wanted to destroy icons, they used them for firewood. A Russian Orthodox ritual does, however, involve floating icons down rivers when the ice melts in the spring.

*"Surikov's celebrated picture of the Old Believer Boyarina Morozova...., as she is dragged through the snow to her death."* In Surikov's celebrated picture, it's not Morozova but her sleigh that's dragged through the snow. And she's going not to a scaffold but to prison.

*"...non-Russian republics whose location had, until then, drawn looks of blank indifference from all those I'd asked — Karachai-Cherkessia, Kabardino-Blakaria, North Osetia, Ingushetia."* Marsden wouldn't have drawn such looks from any Russian who had completed primary school, where elementary geography is taught thoroughly.

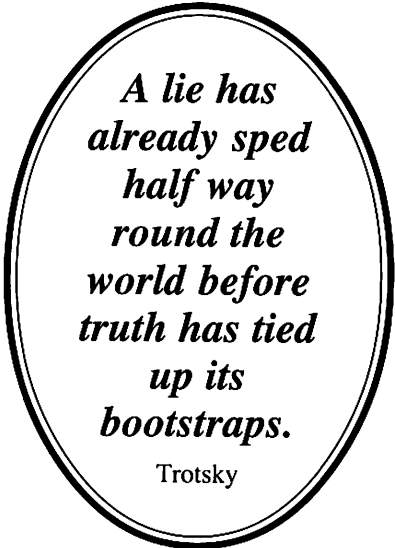
*"Natalya's working life had been spent as a teacher of ideology — 'People's Enlightenment' was the term she*

*used."* Natalya may have used that term, but it means not ideology but primary and secondary education. You know, the system that teaches where Ingushetia is.

*"Far from being the time of hope, the twenties appear with hindsight to be merely a breathing space."* A better-educated hindsight would see the twenties as a time of mass executions, gassing of Tambov peasants, famines killing millions, desecration and robbery of churches, shootings of priests. Some breathing space.

*"Our universe is naturally flawed, they [the Yezidis] say... and that distinguishes them from all the other faiths of this faith-soaked region... It was a riposte to all those dreamers — from Christians to Communists — who clog their thinking with the way things should be and ignore the way they are..."* Ignorance of, and bias against, religion is a dubious starting point for a writer who attempts to describe religious sects. Every major religion proceeds from the assumption that the world is 'naturally flawed'. That's why the Jews were punished in the Old Testament and Christ's sacrifice was necessary in the New. As to referring to communists as 'dreamers' and lumping them together with Christians, that echoes H G Wells, Shaw, the Wells and other Western fellow travellers.

By all means read this book: it's to be enjoyed for the well-crafted fiction it is. But it's not to be trusted.



*A lie has  
already sped  
half way  
round the  
world before  
truth has tied  
up its  
bootstraps.*

Trotsky

# In Short

*Federal Britain: No longer unthinkable?*  
John Barnes with contributions from:  
Ferdinand Mount, Noel Malcolm, Lord  
Alexander, Centre for Policy Studies, 57  
Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL, £9.00.

At least the Centre for Policy Studies remains true to its original inception and raises awkward questions. John Barnes' analysis gives a lengthy summary of everything that is wrong with the British political system at the moment. His suggested solution of a federal constitution for the United Kingdom is unsatisfactory since it is likely to increase the main problem which is simple: there is just too much government. He concentrates on the question of democratic accountability and hardly touches the whole problem of democracy. Were he to look at it he would see that many of the faults he sees in the House of Commons, the House of Lords, hardly mentioned in his paper, tries to correct, getting nothing but ill-tempered abuse in return. Barnes remains curiously naïve about the European Union. Of the three respondents one, Lord Alexander does not mention it, Ferdinand Mount loftily disdains any discussion of it and only Noel Malcolm sensibly points out that the break-up of the United Kingdom into its component parts (or whatever other federal structure we may be talking about) cannot be discussed without looking at the EU's role. A federal constitution will be easily swallowed up by the great Euro-state. What keeps the United Kingdom together, thinks Noel Malcolm, is sentiment. For the moment he is right. The real dissatisfaction is with government not its geographical source. More layers of it will not solve the problem. Loosening its stranglehold on people's lives will strengthen the sentiment for the United Kingdom as the dissatisfaction will cease to find spurious outlets. But this will not last. The developments in Scotland since the referendum and the English reaction to the result, not to mention the most recent agreement in Northern Ireland are all harbingers of the same: the

sentiment for the Union is being eroded. The dark future is being brought about through apathy and ignorance as much as deliberate destruction.  
Helen Szamuely

*Ulster for Beginners*, Patrick Crozier,  
Friends of the Union, P O Box 1261,  
London SW3 4JP, £3.50.

If only our politicians could be induced to read this short pamphlet even if they read nothing else on the whole vexatious subject of Anglo-Irish relations! Patrick Crozier outlines the history of Ulster, the problems of its immediate past, its troubled present and, at the end, hints at some possible solutions that could avoid what now looks like an increasingly dark future, in a simple language that is truly comprehensible even to an absolute beginner. Time is running out for Northern Ireland and for the United Kingdom. The latter may not survive the determined onslaught of the present government. Our main weapons are knowledge and understanding. Those who think they know and those who think they do not; those who care about a seemingly obscure province and those who are too tired to think of what is happening there; they could all do worse than read this informative and cogent pamphlet.  
Helen Szamuely

*A 'Coming Home' or Poisoned Chalice?*  
Helen Szamuely and Bill Jamieson,  
Centre for Research into Post-Communist Economies, 1998, £8.50.

When the Berlin Wall and the Soviet empire collapsed, one expected that all the ex-communist countries that had been independent in 1939 would rejoin Europe as democratic nations, and would join the EEC. They looked forward to being protected from any disorder or aggression from their eastern neighbours by membership of NATO, to joining a large, prosperous free-trade area, and to receiving the grants that they observed flowing to other poorer mem-

bers of the EEC. This timely study shows that the benefits expected from the EEC are not happening, and are not likely to happen with the present structure of the EU.

Proposed enlargement has led to protectionism from those already inside the EU. Tariff barriers against agricultural products have not been removed, though this was promised. Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy was promised long before this enlargement was an issue, but each time it is discussed the votes of small farmers in France, or Germany, or Greece, or somewhere, are vital to someone, and all useful changes are put off or vetoed. Since the total EU budget is agreed to be fixed, Polish farmers, who are numerous, cannot get more without some other farmers getting less.

All these ex-communist countries are now democratic, and benefit from not being ruled by Moscow. EU members are also democracies, so it is probably believed by the aspiring members that the EU itself is a democracy, and that they would make it a bigger and therefore better democracy. This book points out that it is not, and it would not be! Those who are democratically elected, to the European Parliament, have very little power, and those with most of the power are not elected.

The authors show, with a wealth of figures, that the EU is highly regulated, and therefore necessarily economically inefficient, that their non-wage costs of employment are much higher than in eastern Europe. The EU countries are non-competitive with, and lagging in growth behind, other less regulated countries. The eastern European countries are also likely to lag if they are dragged into, and burdened by, the *acquis communautaire*.

This book shows that the EU, as it tries to become both a political union with a single currency and a federation of about twenty-six nations, is heading towards disaster and must rethink the whole basis of its existence. It is to be hoped that the political class of central and eastern Europe will read this book alongside the propaganda they receive from Brussels.

Robin Cave

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