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The 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, 1830-1903

The End of Chinese Communism
Jonathan Guinness

Confrontations with Islam
Alfred Sherman

Living for 150 Years
Myles Harris

Tower of Babel
Theodore Dalrymple

Thug Britain
Alexander Story

A Very Un-English Heritage
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Maurice Cowling

Maurice Cowling, Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, who died on 24th August 2005 aged 78 enjoyed nothing so much as discombobulating the political and academic liberal establishment. He saw its widely vaunted tolerance and lofty neutrality towards competing conceptions of the good life as little more than cant masking a desire to suppress or marginalise traditional social institutions.

Cowling's close textual analysis of the thought of John Stuart Mill in *Mill and Liberalism* (1968) supported a rather different interpretation of the liberal philosopher than that which had long been accepted as gospel. The real goal of Mill's thought, argued Cowling, was a new Religion of Humanity, to be imposed on everyone by an enlightened elite, albeit in the name of a superior liberty, which would sanction, as a Christian social order had not, all manner of 'experiments in living'.

At the time it was first propounded, and for many years afterwards, Cowling's thesis came under sustained attack from liberal intellectuals. However, the managerial politics of New Labour has since made Cowling's critique seem all too credible. We have got used to hearing on the lips of our acting Prime Minister, Saint Anthony Blair, the shallow pieties which now do duty for our lost customs and virtues. This is just the sort of secular morality which Cowling traced back to Mill. And far more than liberty, it prizes the use of state power to make over society in its own image of emasculated (or as it would say, emancipated) humanity.

If there is an alternative to the ludicrous idea, as Cowling thought it, that political parties can 'give effect to Utopia', it lies perhaps in a settled religious establishment which directs people's eyes to ultimate aims and so deflates the grandiose pretensions of ideologies to 'immanentize the eschaton', as Eric Voegelin succinctly put it. In *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England* (three volumes, 1980, 1985, 2001) Cowling revived for our inspection the nineteenth and twentieth century thinkers who had not boarded the thundering locomotive of progress. The volumes constitute Cowling's magnum opus and are a testimony to one man's heroic effort (the fruit of twenty years work) to defy the zeitgeist.

Maurice Cowling was a founding member of The Salisbury Group and a founding father of its offshoot, *The Salisbury Review*, to which quixotic enterprise he lent his qualified blessing; qualified, because he worried that a 'magazine of conservative thought' might easily succumb to a conservative ideology. At the time of the *Review's* founding (1982), Cowling saw much to admire in Thatcherism, but not its 'mad-monk Hayekism' which would collapse politics into economics on the mistaken assumption that the free play of economic forces makes for a civilized society, instead of merely a prosperous one.

We like to think that his bracing scepticism, if not his bracing presence, remains among us. Our condolences to his widow, Patricia.

Ian Crowther

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Our culture, what's left of it, is still under destruction. As Theodore Dalrymple has noted, even the English language that holds Britain together is under attack. By encouraging immigrants to deal with officials in the language of their ancestors, not that of the nation, our élite is postponing the learning of English and creating a country that is divided linguistically. It is demeaning to the immigrants and a further triumph for planned fragmentation over natural unity. Such a change is in keeping with David Lovibond's observations of the neglect of our distinctive monuments, history and tradition by English Heritage, the Countryside Agency and the National Trust in favour of a multi-cultural sales pitch. Our ancestral tablets can decay, and our archaeological sites will be ploughed under in order to find money for outreach programmes to confirm alienated immigrants in their alienation. In the past those of undeniably Anglo-Saxon ancestry have found no difficulty in revering Boadicea and some of the most sensitive understandings of our culture have been provided by Jewish, Hindu and Chinese scholar-citizens. Now all this is to disappear. Continuity, like community and authority, is seen as bad for managed modernity, a world governed by imposed regulations rather than spontaneous solidarity.

The consequences are indicated in Alexander Story and Timothy Hudspith's account of Thug Britain. Entire areas are now ruled by 'feral teenage packs', who are able to intimidate the law-abiding majority with their violent and offensive behaviour. The police can do nothing against these 'vulnerable' aggressors, these law-breakers sheltered by the law itself. Tony Blair's answer is to induce, to use his own Mafia-and-Yardie term, 'respect' by means of yet more regulations. There will be a further replacing of common understandings by formal rules which is the essence of what he means by modernity. If the Conservative Party cries 'me too' and fears appearing to be the nasty Party, then who will defend the ordinary people whose communities are being destroyed? For whom will they be able to vote?

The conscious destruction of our own primordial solidarities is accompanied by a failure to perceive the threat of the excessive solidarity of others. Alfred Sherman reminds us of Europe's long, very long, confrontation with Islam which defeatists and appeasers do not wish to recognize. It is not just a question of defeating terrorism but of asserting our own identity against that of a backward, indeed medieval, but aggressive alien religious culture. It is striking that our modernisers are unwilling to bring their principles to bear against this recalcitrant minority and external rival. The heirs of those who wanted to disarm and retreat in the face of Soviet aggression rather than confront it are now equally cowardly in the face of militant Islam. Curiously, what they seem to fear most is not the consequences of any conflict but the very resoluteness of their own people. Better to be weak than to appear nasty.

Meanwhile, all is not well in the countries where Communism has failed. What will happen in China when Chinese Communist rule comes to its inevitable end? Jonathan Guinness has reminded us of the mass murder, the famines and the anti-intellectual book burning hysteria that linked Mao Tse Tung's China to Nazi Germany in ways wilfully ignored by our progressive Western media. China is now capitalist and its economy is growing fast, but can it achieve lasting social peace? Just as menacing is Andrzej Nowak's thesis of the Russian search for a new *Mein Kampf* to restore their self-esteem at a time of social and economic failure. Let us hope that they do not succumb to the geopolitics of Eurasia in which the West is once again defined as an enemy. Boris Volodarsky's account of the meddling in Ukrainian politics of Russia's successors to the K.G.B. does not give much grounds for optimism.

The End of Chinese Communism

Jonathan Guinness

The Chinese Communist Party is crumbling and its rule may well collapse within the next few years. That is, it is likely to go out with a bang. The present consensus in the West assumes a long-drawn-out whimper which could last for generations. The growing strength of the Chinese economy following the introduction of *de facto* capitalism has reduced the function of the Chinese Communist Party to that of providing social discipline for a free market society. An organization whose every principle and slogan is based on equality, whose members from childhood have been brought up to parrot doctrines condemning the exploitation of man by man, has taken on the task of keeping peasants and workers on starvation wages and making life safe for speculators. The Western media are too cynically materialist to see that a system based on such a glaring paradox can hardly be stable.

Certainly the country seems to be doing quite well, both for itself and for the West, especially the United States whose trade deficit it seems happy to finance. Consumers enjoy the cheapness of its brassières and tee-shirts, and companies which have invested there are getting better returns than they could secure in many Western countries, infested with genuine trade unions and socialists who mean what they say. People in the cities are getting richer, many entrepreneurs are making large fortunes. If anyone thinks about China at all, he is likely to assume that the new rich, having prospered under the Communists, will not give the party any trouble because 'you don't shoot Santa Claus'.

However, the threat to Communism does not come from the new rich: rather from those whose task is to make life safe for them. It comes from professionals, people in the administration and even the security services. It comes from what in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is called the 'outer party', members and ex-members of the CCP itself. A blistering indictment of the Party was published last November, printed in Taiwan, called *Nine Commentaries on the Communist Party*. It is well-informed, erudite and in parts horrifying to read. It calls Communism an evil cult and savages both Mao Zedong and the current boss, Jiang Zemin. The book's sales have been massive. In Hong Kong alone, 700,000 copies were sold in two weeks last December, and sales must by now run into many millions. Many of these copies will certainly have found their way into the rest of mainland China. Whether or not for this reason, there has been an increasing number of resignations from the CCP, said to exceed two million. In Chinese affairs one has to get used to large numbers, and the resignations probably represent less than two percent of the party members, but they are much more significant than this percentage implies, because resigning from the CCP takes courage. Party membership confers privileges, and resignation entails the loss of those privileges and attracts the dangerous attention of the authorities.

The *Nine Commentaries* originate from the Falun Gong, a group which in recent years has become conspicuous in the West for its peaceful protests against the persecution it has suffered in China since 1999. Many readers will have seen groups of people, largely but not entirely Chinese, doing quiet exercises in the streets and squares of Western cities to the accompaniment of wistful music played on a cassette. Notably, people from the Falun Gong perform every morning on the pavement across the road from the Chinese Embassy in London. The Falun Gong was started in 1992. It combines a version of qigong, the traditional Chinese system of meditation exercises, with the study of the writings of its founder, Master Li Hongzhi. Its beliefs are summarized in three Chinese characters usually translated as Truth, Compassion and Tolerance. The exercises are believed to bring improved health, as well as spiritual benefits. The practice of qigong has always been tolerated by the Communists because the exercises themselves cannot in common sense pose any threat, though the fact that most schools of qigong are rooted in traditional spiritual beliefs can cause suspicion because Communism opposes all independent religion, and all belief in the transcendental. Falun Gong, at first, seems to have excited no such suspicion, but there is some uncertainty about its early years; evidently the Communist authorities saw Master Li's principles as harmless. Who, after all, could object to *Truth?* Communism itself claims to represent truth. *Compassion*, too, can be given a Communist slant; the first words of the Internationale are 'Arise, ye wretched of the earth.' *Tolerance,* too, would have seemed all right, as long as it meant that the Falun Gong practitioner should tolerate Party rule and abstain from meddling with authority. In fact, just because the Falun Gong was harmless, it seemed

actually convenient, because if its innocuous beliefs spread they might divert spiritually-minded people from religions that were seen as posing a threat, such as Christianity, Islam and Tibetan Buddhism. If religious people could find satisfaction in the simple principles of Truth, Compassion and Tolerance, cleansed of all the doctrines that make other religions awkward to Communism; and if the group that preached these harmless beliefs was based in China itself and therefore under Party control; this would surely strengthen the Communist Party, not weaken it. Whether or not this was the reasoning, in its first years the Falun Gong grew at such a rate as to indicate both that it satisfied a need in its adherents and also that there must have been a measure of official approval. There are photographs from the period of huge crowds, in several Chinese cities, all practising the Falun Gong exercises. In a Communist country, this would not have been possible without the cooperation of the authorities. The number of Falun Gong practitioners grew to exceed that of Communist Party members; many people belonged to both. The practice spread outside China as well, and beyond the ethnic Chinese; it has proved able to appeal to people of all races in most countries of the world.

many thousands of the practitioners have shown extraordinary determination, facing imprisonment, forced labour, torture and death. They are quite as tough as the Christian martyrs in the Roman Empire

Then, in 1999, the CCP suddenly decided to reverse its policy and eliminate the Falun Gong. In April of that year the group began to be systematically attacked in the Chinese media, and in July Jiang Zemin, then General Secretary of the CCP, banned it explicitly and ordered the security services to crack down. They did so with great brutality and to the accompaniment of barefaced lies. For instance, Falun Gong's claim that its exercises were good for bodily health and made medical treatment less necessary was twisted into an allegation that practitioners were forbidden to visit a doctor. Given the complete control of mainland Chinese society by the CCP, it was thought that the Falun Gong could be got rid of in three months. This, however, was an illusion; many thousands of the practitioners have shown extraordinary determination, facing imprisonment, forced labour, torture and death. They are quite as tough as the Christian martyrs in the Roman Empire, and practitioners outside China make sure that the atrocities committed against them become known all over the world. They have also gained much support from non-practitioners such as myself. For several years after the persecution started, the Falun Gong avoided expressing any public opposition to Communism. Naturally the group protested against the persecution and highlighted mistreatment of individuals, but nothing it said could be construed as anti-Communist in the political sense. This was partly because they hoped that the policy might be reversed, especially as it became known that the decision to turn against the Falun Gong was personal to Jiang Jemin, and that he was not supported by the other members of his Government. However, it was also thought that for the Falun Gong to attack Communism politically would be to depart from its own nature as being inherently non-political.

As a friendly observer of the Falun Gong for several years, I always wondered whether this stance could be maintained, and sure enough the group has now turned on the CCP. It has recognised that Communist parties are of their nature actively hostile to any spiritual beliefs: as also to any general moral principles, Communist morality being identical with the interests of the Communist Party. Communist thinkers have been frank about this: Antonio Gramsci regarded the Party as Machiavelli's Prince in collective form and as replacing divine authority. 'In men's consciences, the Prince takes the place of the divinity or the categorical imperative, and becomes the basis for a modern laicism and for a complete laicisation of all aspects of life and of all customary relationships.' The attack in the *Nine Commentaries* on the CCP's materialist theory and totalitarian practice is not quite the same as the anti-Communist polemic we know in the West. Its roots are older, entirely Chinese and therefore much less familiar to a Western reader. Steeped as we are in our own culture, it is hard for us to realise that our anti-Communism is as Western as is Communism itself. The *Nine Commentaries* have a different flavour; reading them is like drinking goat's milk when one is used to the milk of cows. It is according to the criteria of Buddhism, Confucianism and the Tao that Communism is judged and found wanting. The *Nine Commentaries* present the CCP as a violent gang that seized power by using the dregs of society. They cite Mao's doctrine of perpetual revolution (which was, of course, Trotsky's doctrine as well) as a proof that the CCP believes in constant struggle rather than in social peace. The good days at the beginning when the land really was given to those who worked it were very short-lived. Land reform was accompanied by extreme violence that was wholly unnecessary, as is proved by the fact that Taiwan achieved land reform without violence. The famine of 1959 to 1961 was the world's worst ever (many will remember that in those years Mao's dupes in the Western media never stopped saying that at least in China everyone had enough to eat). The CCP is against thought: during Mao's

Cultural Revolution intellectuals were told to learn from illiterates. Mao boasted of mass killing; citing a particularly brutal Chinese emperor who burned books and buried scholars alive, he said: 'What can Emperor Qin Shi Huang brag about? He only killed 460 Confucian scholars, but we killed 46,000 intellectuals.' The CCP devastates the environment, showing no respect for nature. The CCP's persecution of religion is 'frantic': it only tolerates churches, mosques or temples run by its own people, who are unbelievers. As to the Falun Gong, 'When the CCP discovered that there is a group that does not fear its cruel torture and killing, it became even more manic.'

The *Nine Commentaries* are of course an attack, a polemic. This does not mean that what they say is untrue; most of it can be confirmed from other sources. It does mean that one does not look in this book for a positive message about what might follow Communism. All the same there is one, implicit rather than explicit. The message derives from Chinese values and suggests that future rulers of China might base a better society on those values. Two of the *Commentaries* are especially significant. *Commentary* number 4, 'On how the Communist Party is an anti-universe force', quotes the Tao-Te Ching from the 6th Century BC: 'Man follows the earth, the earth follows heaven, heaven follows the Tao, and the Tao follows what is natural.' That is, 'in ancient China people believed in complying, harmonizing and coexisting with heaven. Humankind integrates with heaven and earth, and exists in mutual dependence on them. The Tao of the universe does not change.' People are born with a feeling for right and wrong which is non-material; the CCP violates it because it believes only in material forces. It also violates and suppresses nature. 'Indiscriminate cutting of trees, levelling of rivers and filling of lakes have resulted in drastic ecological deterioration in China. Today, China's ecosystem is on the brink of collapse.' This of course is also happening in many other places than in China, but Western environmentalists see the damage in material terms. This *Commentary* implies rather that it is a violation of something sacred, rather in the spirit some environmentalists ascribe to native Americans. *Commentary* Number 6 is entitled 'On how the Communist Party destroyed traditional culture'. Fortunately, this title is not quite right. These very commentaries prove that traditional Chinese culture is most certainly not destroyed. It is strong in Taiwan and Hong Kong and among overseas Chinese; it is also very much alive on the mainland. This is the reason why the Falun Gong became so popular that the CCP felt the need to suppress it. This *Commentary* also refers to the violation of the environment, with this interesting quotation: 'A nobleman treasures wealth, but he makes fortune in a decent way.' Here we have a revival of the concept of *honour,* which is alien to all materialistic ways of thought including, of course, that of the West. Its reintroduction might do us all some good.

No Chinese really believes any longer in Communism as an ideal; it is a source of privilege and personal advancement, no more. As such, it could last a while longer; except that the portents of its end are proliferating. Among CCP's loss of two million members, some individual resignations and defections have been particularly significant because they concern medium-level members of the apparatus, the people who actually carry out party instructions. Chen Yonglin defected from the Chinese Consulate in Sydney and asked for political asylum, revealing that his job had been to monitor political dissidents and Falun Gong practitioners in Australia. Hao Fengjun fled to Australia and revealed that he had been an official of the '610 office' whose function is to crack down on the Falun Gong. The CCP has long denied that this Gestapo-like organization exists. Hao made an interesting revelation — namely that members of the security services are now reluctant to join the 610 office and that it is staffed by people randomly selected who, if they refuse transfer, lose their jobs. A third defection is that of Han Guangshen, who was at a rather higher level; he oversaw two jails and four labour camps in north-eastern China but defected to Canada because he was revolted at the treatment of the Falun Gong practitioners. Unfortunately, the Canadian authorities blamed him for the cruelties committed in his jurisdiction and refused him refugee status. He is appealing, but his case highlights a massive problem for the future; whether a change of heart can be recognized as genuine. In Han's case it seems obvious that he had everything to lose by defecting and should be accepted; others, however, will no doubt be harder to assess. Over recent years, many Falun Gong practitioners in mainland China have proved completely fearless and pulled off stunts that have embarrassed the CCP, knowing that they faced imprisonment, torture and possible murder. One of the most spectacular was the capture of a local radio and TV station over which, for an hour and a half, Falun Gong practitioners broadcast their point of view. The authorities closed in soon enough, but the effect, locally, must have been stupefying. On this and many other occasions the Falun

Over recent years, many Falun Gong practitioners in mainland China have proved completely fearless and pulled off stunts that have embarrassed the CCP, knowing that they faced imprisonment, torture and possible murder.

Gong have shown great ingenuity as well as almost superhuman courage.

The Olympic Games are to be held in Beijing in the summer of 2008. They will be shown on television all over the world, dominate the sports pages of all newspapers and also feature strongly in general news. The audience at the events will be not only from mainland China, but from all over the world. The police will of course do their best to prevent Falun Gong demonstrations from reaching the world's media, but they will probably fail. This is because some practitioners have proved that they do not care about the consequences of demonstrating. Equally important, the Falun Gong now has adherents in most countries in the world who are just as determined. No doubt all possible measures will be taken to stop such people going to the Olympics, but in practice they will not all be kept out. Many of them are not ethnic Chinese. Falun Gong supporters will, therefore, make determined efforts to demonstrate. All such efforts may be frustrated by police action, but the police presence will have to be so obvious that viewers all over the world will see China as a tyranny. Will foreigners be taken to police cells and beaten up? Will there be a flood of complaints to consulates? Or will the police action not completely succeed; will there be groups of spectators suddenly holding up Falun Gong slogans for the cameras? Will an athlete from some country or other who is a secret supporter of the Falun Gong win a medal and, standing on the rostrum, do the exercises and hold up a placard? One way or another, the CCP will be humiliated in front of the whole world. Millions of Chinese, at all levels, will come to see it as not being invincible. Inside and outside China, people will begin to hedge their bets; and this will be the beginning of the end.

Jonathan Guinness is the author of The House of Mitford *(Phoenix)*

Confrontations with Islam: a Longer View

Alfred Sherman

Not since the Turkish siege of Vienna in the seventeenth century, has Islam loomed so large in Western consciousness. Then, the fate of Western Europe, Rome included, was in pawn. When the siege was raised by a Polish expeditionary force, Europe breathed a sigh of relief and continued with its usual preoccupations, which included internecine strife in which the great powers did not hesitate to support continued Ottoman domination of Christian lands, to Europe's eventual cost. Once again, the mosque militant is in the centre of national and international debate, and siren voices of appeasement are not far behind. Correspondingly, to oppose appeasement is not to seek confrontation, but, on the contrary, to seek a viable basis for coexistence with Islam by what is variously called the West, the free world or, less assuredly, Christendom.

Once again, the West is part of its own problem. Since the Second World war, a European civil war, its members have permitted or even encouraged mass migration of un-assimilable Moslems, compulsively abstaining from consideration of the consequences, inhibited by reluctance to court accusations of racism and by the post-war habit of hoping that dangers ignored might go away by themselves. Attention has now been preempted by Islamic terrorism, in particular surprise at the success of terrorists and militants in indoctrinating locally-born youth, as though upbringing in Moslem ghettoes in northern Britain was a guarantee of sophistication, moderation or British patriotism. However, colonization remains a more lasting problem and danger than terrorism.

Al-Qa'eda and its offshoots are epiphenomena; the essence remains what it has been for fourteen centuries: the confrontation between Christian, or post-Christian, Euro-America and militant Islam, Islam's unlimited ambitions. A major difference is that from unrelated causes, the West has undergone a collapse in faith in its own mission, while Moslems have undergone a renewed sense of militancy, part of which is expressed in terrorism. This is not new, but a return to centuries-old militancy. Ever since the Arabs burst out of the Arabian Peninsula with their new faith and conquered a large part of the known world, they have regarded their victory as incomplete, in defiance of Allah's manifest will. Islam's failure to create polities viable by their own criteria, and their dependence on sub-soil oil wealth to fund their existence, have in no ways diminished their faith in their drive for world-wide dominion in the name of Allah. Their militancy coincides with and draws strength from a crisis of self-doubt in the non-Moslem world.

Historical comparisons are apt. Christendom's history is replete with armed conflict and ferocious persecution. The complete disappearance of Christianity in North Africa (excluding Egypt) after the Moslem conquest cannot be explained without reference to the ferocious persecution from Rome of the monophysites, which led North African Christians to accept Moslem rule as the lesser evil. The Great Schism, which led among other things to the sack of Constantinople by the Venetians and Crusaders, was a key element in the process which led to the conquest of the Eastern Empire by the Ottomans and its substantial Islamisation over the centuries.

The Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Europe were fought out in blood and fire. In the Thirty Years' War and consequent disorder, the Empire's population was reduced by over a third; whole regions were depopulated. The Peace of Westphalia, which brought the war to an end, introduced the principle of *cujus regio ejus religio* for several centuries, and led whole communities to migrate for the sake of religious rights. The Reformation set the stamp on England's singularity, marked out Ireland for nationdom, and divided the pre-existing Lithuanian nation into two separate nations: Lithuania and Latvia.

Ferocious persecution of whole populations over differences of Christian doctrine proceeded for centuries; denominational wars have yet to end in the Balkans. A case may be made out for seeing Moslem violence in that historical light; they are living in a different time-zone, in our middle ages.

Mass immigration underlies some of our problems; the tap must be turned off: the flow of Moslems into countries like ours must be stopped.

The scientific revolutions which shaped Europe after the middle ages led in the course of time to nullifying the Moslem military threat and to the establishment of European world dominion. This came to an end only after the Second World War, and brought about the creation of over fifty independent Moslem states in Asia and Africa, most of them to a greater or lesser extent Islamic. A few are rich from sub-soil wealth and use their wealth for conspicuous consumption, armaments and Moslem indoctrination abroad, but they have failed to pull their weight in world affairs, science, literature, social and political progress.

Moslem mass immigration to the West was a result of Islam's backwardness. Most Moslem immigrants to the West bring their backwardness with them and occupy the lower ranks of society, though credit is due to the many who took advantage of existing business and professional opportunities and made a contribution to economic life. The first generation of immigrants compare their lot favorably with what they left behind, but the following generations resent their inferior status, and are easy prey for demagogues and extremists. Terrorism is one consequence of this. It is intellectually simplistic, requiring no social or political sophistication or weighing of means and ends. History offers a guide: terrorism in Czarist Russia, Italy and Spain, the Arab world, Asia and Africa, has rarely had cut and dried objectives. It has reflected moods rather than considered strategies. Terrorists characteristically judge their activities by their physical impact rather than the political; terror becomes an end in itself, and above question. Hence it can become counter-productive in terms of its own objectives as its sponsors become victims. Both in North Korea and in Iran established governments continue to make use of domestic and foreign terrorism as an instrument of policy, as the British are now belatedly learning to our cost. The Iraq war has intensified the Iranian mullahs' capacity for harm, which Britain and France have been compulsively slow to recognise.

Suicide bombing, though not an absolute novelty, has come to characterize and shape the Islamic revival, in Iraq, Palestine-Israel, South-East Asia and North Africa. It generates powerful emotional force and appears to be increasing. If there are inbuilt limiting factors, as there were to the short-lived kamikaze initiative during the Second World War, they have yet to show themselves. Who are the suicide bombers in Iraq, and what are their perspectives? No one seems to know; we are fighting blind.

The political revival of Islam and its assault on Western society from without and within can be expected to last for some time; the resources needed to initiate and fund it are not large. Once alerted to it and pressed into action by public opinion, governments in free countries can neutralize it over time by patient police work. Moslem spokesmen in the West will put a price on their collaboration against terrorism; this will be supported by defeatists and appeasers. This must be questioned. The immigrants have already been granted rights, indeed privileges, which their own homelands do not grant to their own citizens, let alone to Christians. Proposals by some defeatists and appeasers to permit Moslems a virtual veto on British foreign policy are a danger signal. Where would it end?

Mass immigration underlies some of our problems; the tap must be turned off: the flow of Moslems into countries like ours must be stopped. Even then the high Moslem birth rate and continued fraudulent immigration will continue a momentum which will call for our uninhibited attention. Need discussion of repatriation continue to be taboo, when national safety is manifestly involved?

Defence against terror is not enough. Spelling out, revival and reinforcement of the values which made Britain great are essential. Judeo-Christian ethics cannot be treated as an optional extra, without disarming our society. They contain an aspiration for moral improvement, whereas the Moslem world remains sunk in its old ways, looking backwards, without aspirations to progress or respect for human rights. Hence Moslem legal systems remain as they were in the middle ages, with torture the main instrument of political and criminal investigation, women and non-Moslems rightless, the status quo exempt from questioning. It is not just democracy which is lacking in the Moslem world, but the political culture which underlies it, the basic concept of the duties inherent in the possession of power, without which democracy would remain purely formal.

The mass migration of Moslems into the West was undertaken to escape the shortcomings of Moslem society, but ends by reproducing them in the host countries. To draw attention to this is not 'Islamophobia' but legitimate self-defence. At a time when Moslem states are increasingly aware of the threat of terrorism, and the need to react, it is the masochistic Western policy-makers, politicians and judiciary who threaten to undermine our defences, what Margaret Thatcher dubbed 'the enemy within'. They should be stigmatized as such, without inhibition. As the first Count Sforza put it, God defend me from my friends; from my enemies I can defend myself!

Sir Alfred Sherman's book The Thatcher Interlude *was published in July (Imprint Academic)*

Shall We Live for 150 Years?

Myles Harris

There is a small Protestant churchyard near my house in Ireland. It stands on the side of a hill overlooking the Atlantic. It is an ancient place. Here and there among the graves of English divines who came to convert the Irish after 1650 — and failed — are unmarked stumps of rock. These are tombstones that have been here so long, some over twelve hundred years, that they have been worn away by the constant Atlantic gales.

I often walk in the churchyard. My ancestors, Catholics who exercised their right to be buried in Protestant ground by virtue of its being an ancient clan burial place, are buried there. At sixty four I have begun to dwell on the certain prospect of joining them. When you are young you think of death, but it is not until you are sixty that it becomes a presence, a stranger sitting in the corner of the room. Now and again the stranger stirs and you flinch, but then he is still again and you go on with your life.

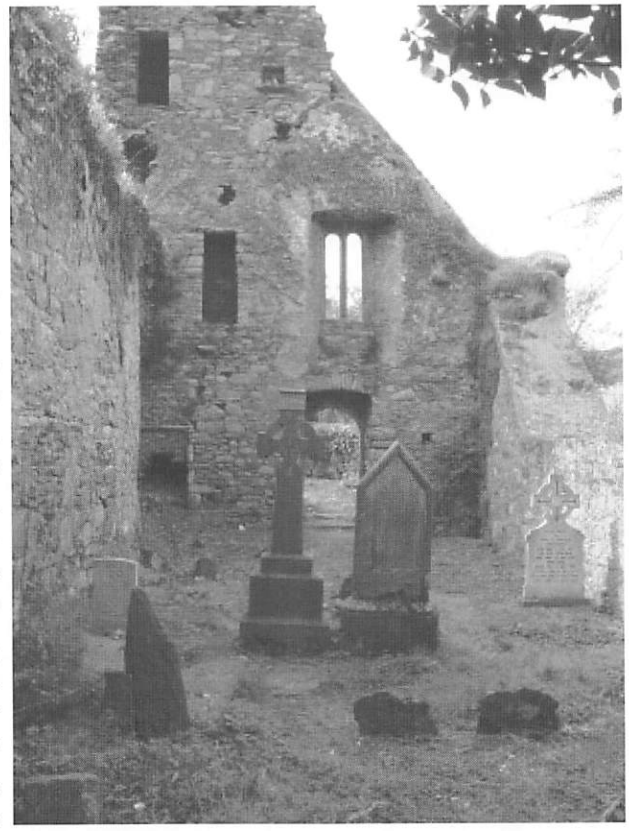
Faced with death people either deny it or turn to religion. Those in the churchyard had no doubt they would rise again, but in our rational century nobody thinks that is literally true. The graves will not open and the dead appear, remembering things as they were, greeting old friends, being surprised at how much the world has changed. Everything we know about physiology suggests that life after death is impossible. Consciousness is inextricably linked to brain function. After death the body corrupts absolutely. Within seconds of death all its cells cease to work. When your brain stops, so do you. This is the principle of judicial execution by hanging or decapitation. Chop off the blood supply or smash the spinal cord and you, your personality, your memories, everything that makes up that which is you, is expunged forever. It is the basis upon which we make decisions to turn off the respirators of people we think to be brain dead. Belief in an afterlife has to remain just that, a belief.

Science has left our society in a philosophical limbo over the question of death. Our ancestors, the people lying in this graveyard, were sure of the resurrection, not merely amiably disposed toward it like modern attendees at a Church of England sermon. They knew that when they died they would rise again, that the body was, like a suit of clothes laid aside for the night, to be put on again on the morning of the Resurrection.

21st century man is not so sure. When asked if he believes in life after death he tends to fidget and look away. In the time of the Hubble telescope, Darwin, Big Bang and quantum theory, it is hard to believe in the literal truth of the sacred texts. And in a hundred years how will we think? Standing in the graveyard where I am now what will somebody from the 22nd century think of this ancient monument to the fragility

of man? How long will people live in 2105? Will they believe in an afterlife? Will there be death at all? A closer examination of the graves reveals a powerful story. They are not a monument to the victory of death, but a record of its slow defeat. When the cemetery was first marked out, possibly three thousand years ago, life was pitifully short. Infant death rates could reach fifty per cent of all births, maternal mortality one in six of confinements. Adults would count themselves lucky to reach forty. War, pestilence and the unreliability of food supplies would keep the population small and death rates high. At intervals whole communities would be wiped out by visitations of disease or famine.

The first change to this state of affairs would have come around 500 AD. Soon after the Roman Empire collapsed missionaries fleeing the barbarians brought their books and ideas to Ireland. Their message was superficially Christian, but concealed within it were the powerful philosophical ideas of ancient Greece. Wrapped around this gift was the Christian theory of an afterlife and resurrection. In a world in which life was all too short, this brought hope, and when that hope was linked to the virtues of hard work and a moral life, if you worked hard on earth you would see heaven, the clans gave up their warlike life for farming. In a more stable world literacy, technology and law established themselves. Very slowly, almost imperceptibly, life expectancy began to increase. Taking into account interruptions caused by outbreaks of pestilence and war you can trace the added years of this relatively well off cohort by the dates on the tombstones. They follow a very slow but steady rise. Medieval society gave way to the Reformation, the Industrial Revolution came and even Ireland received steam engines and looms. Food supplies increased and housing improved (there would have been a dip due to the Irish famine but you will not find the Catholic poor in an expensive Protestant burial ground like this) but by the turn of the century expectancy was rising again. By the mid twentieth century people are living to their sixties. Then the curve takes off. By 1970 life expectancy reaches the middle seventies, by 2000 the tomb stones read 80 years or more. These figures will get higher. The number of pensioners in Western Europe is expected to double in the next fifteen years.



Yet this dramatic progress was not due to any fundamental insights into the ultimate nature of the cell. Rises in life expectancy in the 20th century were due to advances in sanitation, better food, an understanding of germ theory, safe surgery and the chance discovery of antibiotics. But these are crude insights into the basic mechanics of the body, they do not represent major intellectual leaps in our understanding of fundamental biology. Until the discovery of DNA doctors were in the position of car mechanics who could only change a car's tyres, wash its windscreen, hoover its carpets, bash out dents and keep it filled with petrol. If it really broke down it was the scrap heap. Nobody had the factory drawings. Now they do. DNA has taken them under the hood.

Since 1960 subtle and far reaching discoveries about cell chemistry, DNA and gene regulation have been made. We have moved from simple descriptions of the cell to an understanding of it as a marvellously complex digital information engine. Like exceedingly clever apes confronted with a computer we are beginning to dimly understand exactly how we can subvert it to our own purposes. Interest has particularly focused on stem cells. These cells, few in number in the body, contain master plans of how we are built. When stimulated they can grow organs or replacement tissue. Researchers have tried to find out what stimulates them into activity and how they can be induced to grow cells or organs to order.

There has been a recent success in this field. Using stem cells, surgeons at a hospital in East Grinstead, England, have found a way of restoring the sight of people some of whom have been blind for years. The patients they chose had had the cornea — the transparent 'window' in front of the pupil — destroyed by acids, alkalis, boiling metals or burns. The surgeons grew lines of donor corneal stem cells and laid sheets of them over the damaged area. They expected the new cells to create the new graft, but to their surprise

the victim's own cells copied the master instructions and 'pushing aside' the stem cells completely repaired the damaged eye with the patients' own native cells. A perfect transplant was achieved. A 65 year old man described catching a glimpse of blue on a nurse's uniform:

> It was the most emotional moment .... I couldn't believe it. For ten years all I had seen were shades of black and grey, then after I had the operation the nurse came by and I saw a flash of blue from her uniform. I went home and when I took the patch off my eye, I had my vision back. It is only when you lose something like sight that you realise how precious it is.

Another patient described how after the operation she saw her child, who had been born after she became blind, for the first time.

The corollary of this astonishing discovery is that it may be possible to repair any organ in the body using the same technique. *The Times* reported:

> A consultant surgeon at St Mary's Hospital, London, said that it was likely that such action could be mimicked in other organs, thus reducing the need for organ transplants....The hope is that stem cells will one day be used to generate large quantities of cells and tissues and possibly entire organs damaged by disease and injury.... it is a dream.

Another arm of the work on cells is research into ageing. To answer the question why our bodies get old we have to answer the question why the cells that make them up get old. Particularly vulnerable is the cell's delicate and vulnerable motor, an object called a mitochondrium, which as time progresses burns out in its own exhaust products even at ordinary 'speeds'. Efforts are being made to develop chemicals to protect this vital engine. In another striking discovery, scientists have discovered that human cells contain a tiny chemical 'hourglass' called a telomere filled with tiny strips of DNA 'sand'. Each time one of our cells replaces itself with a perfect copy, which all of them do at regular intervals, the hourglass in the cell sheds a grain of sand. When the last drop of chemical sand has fallen the cell stops repairing itself and begins to age. This and the failing mitochondrial motors in our cells combine to bring us down. Our faces wither, our arteries corrode, our livers shrink and we begin to die.

To many to even contemplate interfering with ageing is profoundly upsetting. It undermines the social order, kicks away cherished beliefs and takes God from his heaven. They insist that it will never happen, that it is too complicated, that we don't know enough and we never will. William Harvey who discovered the circulation of the blood in 1616 endured the same chorus of frightened dissent. John Aubrey, who met Harvey in 1642, recounts in his *Brief Lives*:

> I have heard him [Harvey] say, that after his *Book of the Circulation of the Blood* came out, that he fell mightily in his Practize, and that t'was believed by the vulgar that he was crackbrained; and all the Physitians were against his Opinion, and envyed him: many wrote against him. With much adoe at last it was received in all the Universities in the world.

It is true that Harvey's discovery had no immediate effect. Physicians continued to bleed their patients, taste their urine and sniff their stools until the middle of the nineteenth century. It was only then that rapid communications, the railways and fast printing began to allow physicians to share information. Today at my desk, I can summon almost any medical journal in the world on to my screen. If a doctor wants to show a patient to an expert on the other side of the world, he has only to turn on a video camera. Ideas are like genes, combine them and you get new organisms. In the eighties it was this rapidity of information transfer which enabled us to confront a novel and deadly disease, AIDS, caused by an organism that so deeply embedded itself in the cell it seemed impossible to get at it. But researchers were able to describe it, discover its weaknesses and tailor make drugs to kill it, all in the space of a decade.

What will the consequences be of success in the fields of ageing? Initially progress will be slow and costly, but any form of cell manipulation has the potential for mass application. Biological cures, like biological weapons, are easy to mass produce and are cheap. Just as a syringe of measles vaccine — a product of cell chemistry — costs around £3 while treating a complicated case of measles in hospital costs £3500, so a stem cell refurbishment of the heart might cost £2000 against £60,000 for a traditional transplant.

We live in an unstable, overcrowded world, created by a multitude of discoveries we eagerly accept and then are quite unable to control. Life extension will add to that instability. One threat is of a pandemic such as SARS. Large crowds of any species that are packed into one place frequently become diseased, be it chickens in a battery factory or 7 billion humans — many of them elderly — crowded on a tiny blue globe in space. We are lucky that AIDS is spread by sexual intercourse — a very slow way of spreading a contagion — and not by coughing. If it was spread by coughing we would be looking at a world population about one tenth of what it is now. Most pandemics might kill millions but they would not decimate the world's population. The Spanish flu in 1919 killed 'only' 30–40 million. But the flu killed more than the Great War. Many at the time thought that the terrible psychological effects of the

epidemic were a major cause of the social and political disruption that followed leading to the next war. This was in a disciplined population inured to privation and loss. How would our society, which sees life as a right, and has no sense of death or limitation, cope? If we are to have an epidemic, let us hope we will be left with a slightly smaller, chastened world population which, if it is fortunate, may be able to take advantage of the discoveries that indirectly brought about the epidemic rather than falling upon itself. Much will be a matter of chance. As Clint Eastwood said, 'Do you feel lucky?'.

I am not a utopianist. My instinct tells me that if there is a pandemic it will not be the most enlightened members of society who will rule the world after it has passed. But there is a chance we will somehow see things through to a successful conclusion. Just as mankind has, surprisingly, so far escaped destruction by its nuclear weapons, there is a chance that there will be no pandemic, or social disruption, that mankind might survive the Pandora's box of cell chemistry it is about to open, uninjured. It may even extract a necklace. Unless some huge and simple discovery is made in the next five years I am not going to see any of this. It disappoints me. I would love to know how things will stand in 2105 and what 22nd century man will make of this ancient burial ground. If I am right the world's population will by then be much smaller, but life expectancy will be hugely increased, perhaps to 150 years. It is highly speculative, but by then insights into the nature of mind and quantum computing may offer us a way out of our bodies we cannot even conceive of now. We will rise again but in a way that nobody, especially our priests, predicted. Ours will be a type of religious victory, a victory of knowledge, the word, over the flesh.

Myles Harris is a doctor and a journalist who has worked in England, and many other parts of the world. This article first appeared on the website of the Social Affairs Unit www.socialaffairsunit.org.uk

A Very Un-English Heritage

David Lovibond

It is evening, and the last of the summer light is lifting from the village. The stone cottages under the church tower are already dark, and out in the square the steps of the old cross are empty now. But up on the hill, where the Armada beacon flared and ancient tumuli interrupt the skyline, lengthening shadows show the banks and ditches, the terraced fields and hollow ways of an older village, an older England.

At this time of challenge and retreat for the English people, when their ownership of the national home is routinely denied, the preservation of landscapes redolent of ancestral connections might be thought the first duty of a public body devoted to England's historical and archaeological inheritance. English Heritage, the government's advisors in these matters, knows which side its bread is buttered and wholeheartedly embraces the appeasements and absurdities of multiculturalism. 'Our strategic aims are to acknowledge, respect and celebrate the cultural diversity of England's historic environment in all our activities' said Dr Simon Thurley, English Heritage's chief executive in his 2003-4 annual report. In the same spirit of *dirigisme* that recently persuaded the Countryside Agency to complain that the countryside was too stubbornly English, Dr Thurley's organisation has appointed a head of 'social inclusion and diversity' but made front-line archaeologists redundant, and found money from a severely reduced budget to provide 'funding to the Black Environment Network'. Out in the field, archaeologists dealing with the destructive pressures of development and modern farming methods find English Heritage's metropolitan priorities bewildering and irritating. In Wiltshire, county archaeologist Roy Canham says in the attempt to make English Heritage the kind of multi-cultural body the government would like, Dr Thurley is abandoning the core purpose of saving England's heritage. 'The Monument Protection Programme (the review of sites for legal protection through scheduling) has come crashing to a halt', says Canham. 'On the chalk lands above Salisbury, the richest archaeological landscape in Western Europe, virtually nothing has been done to protect the sites. It is a tragedy; they (English Heritage) are expending their energies in too many directions and distracted by

sending out messages on social awareness.' Canham cites the £1.5 million spent by the organisation on 'town centre projects', while only £40,000 could be found for vital archaeological agreements throughout the southwest. Frances Griffiths, county archaeologist for Devon, says scheduling is almost entirely in abeyance, 'there is a sense that archaeology is no longer cherished by English Heritage. They proclaim the inclusive agenda, but I have remote rural English communities here and I think they are as worthy of inclusion as Brixton.'

Dr Mike Heyworth, director of the Council for British Archaeology, says the key role of English Heritage is to show the link between people and place. 'But a lot of their initiatives give the impression they're focusing on Sikh Trails and the like', he says. This national Trail was run by English Heritage in conjunction with the Duleep Singh Centenary, and identified historic sites across the country (like Osborne House on the Isle of Wight) of importance to Sikhs. Another wheeze in Yorkshire saw English Heritage taking Asian youths to the site of Neolithic rock art on Ilkley Moor. The predominantly Pakistani-origin youths, reassured that the ancient drawings resembled those back home, were urged to produce their own versions — which were left on long term display in the Moor. Dr Heyworth says English Heritage places 'an over emphasis on their engagement with the government's social agenda, at the expense of a consideration of the deeper philosophical issues of identity'. Perhaps he was thinking of the 2004 annual report and its babble of 'an outreach team dedicated to developing community and outreach programmes to widen access to the historic environment by priority groups'. In other words, the English need not apply. I put some of these concerns to Simon Thurley who, despite the devotion of his organisation to cultural relativism, acknowledges nothing ironic in its name. 'We're committed to help all people of whatever background to feel that heritage means something to them and can be part of their identity.' Doesn't the unavoidable and overwhelming Englishness of so many places in their care, sit awkwardly with the growing millions who are resident here but look elsewhere for their sense of belonging? 'English Heritage has to show ethnic minorities aspects of the historic environment they can relate to.' The idea here is to disconnect all those mottes, castles, hill-forts, mounds, crooked cottages and country churches from the people who made them, to rob them of their inconvenient resonances, and repackage as merely so many components of the 'historic environment'. In much the same way, the Countryside Agency in its eco-speak literature strips the English countryside of its particularity and presents it as examples of wildlife habitat, bereft of national or even local connection, in which different 'communities' can take an interest without compromising their identity. Nor is the National Trust proof against the drive to un-English England. Of all people, these master purveyors of nostalgia and collective memory must know that the meaning and ability to engage possessed by the traditional countryside, its houses and sacred places, arise from the sense of stored-up centuries and the pervasive feeling that we are continuing in the fellowship of our ancestors? Tony Burton, the trust's director of policy, disabuses me: 'Our houses aren't merely concerned with English history. We show how the slave trade, international contact and even the workhouse have had their influence. The diversity of the places [in National Trust care] is a symbol of our commitment to multi-culturalism.'

When I put it to Dr Thurley that the beguiling power of a row of Tudor cottages or an archaeological site like Avebury in Wiltshire arises from long association with a settled people, he hoots in derision: 'This is a strange view. Genetically, only about one per cent of the English make-up will have come from the builders of Avebury.' So, unless it can be demonstrated that there are a few thousand years of genetic purity behind you, then forget any thoughts of amounting to a national people in rightful possession of a national home. Much wiser to accept that the English are at most a cultural community among others, equally valid, jostling for attention in an artificial political creation called England. The English are *not* from somewhere else, they did *not* bring their Englishness with them and plant it in a place not their own. It was through accumulated memories, shared history and commonly felt attachment to inherited territory, that disparate groups became a nation on home ground. Rooted in the land, shaping it and being shaped by it, the English took part of their meaning from the races that preceded them here, incorporating and absorbing the traditions and cultural monuments they found here into the national identity. The characteristic institutions of England, the countryside, the villages and the country houses, are native born; physical embodiments of the synonymity between national people and national home. There is nothing here that is alien to or does not belong to the English. The blurred remnant of a Mesolithic hearth, a Bronze Age bowl barrow high on the Downs, a Roman-British temple, the battle sites from a hundred wars,

It is not the business of English Heritage to put out sophistic policy statements and sloppily premised initiatives aimed at weakening the bond between the English and their history.

all entirely of England and the English.

This does not mean that the 'new users' targeted by Dr Thurley cannot appreciate the numinous places of England. But, invited, required almost, to maintain their cultural/national discreteness they can never be more than visitors to sites so redolent of the English identity. (In the same way, an Englishman may admire the Taj Mahal but it can never be part of who he is.) No amount of outreach programmes or breaking down of 'barriers to access' will turn an imam into an Englishman, or draw the Englishness from an old house or a Dorset meadow. Of course I see that to protect his diminishing budget Dr Thurley might think he must cleave to the busted nostrums of multiculturalism still peddled by Tessa Jowell. But I suspect that he is a true believer, a paid-up member of the Left-Liberal establishment that loathes all that England is as passionately as it loves the cultures turning us into Babel. To leech money away on the paraphernalia of diversity, to chase 'faith groups' and 'communities' who have no interest in England and its artefacts, while irreplaceable archaeological landscapes disappear under the plough for lack of management agreements, is a shameful dereliction. It is not the business of English Heritage to put out sophistic policy statements and sloppily premised initiatives aimed at weakening the bond between the English and their history. Dr Thurley's obligation is to identify and protect our archaeological inheritance, and thereby to remind the English that they are one of the great peoples of the world.

David Lovibond is a freelance journalist

Towering Babel

Theodore Dalrymple

The *British Medical Journal* for 13th August this year carried an editorial entitled 'Why the next census needs to ask about language'. It was written by a senior fellow at the Centre for Health Services Studies at the University of Kent. An author from such an institution is unlikely to advocate a retrenchment of public expenditure or a reduction rather than an expansion of services.

He ends his editorial with the following sentence:

> Given the persistent and pronounced ethnic disparities in health and health care and demands of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, NHS healthcare organisations are urged to make a case to the ONS (Office for National Statistics) for including language questions in the 2011 census.

With what end in view? There can be only one answer: to expand the number of people involved in producing pamphlets and in providing translation services for the people who have either migrated or taken refuge in Britain from scores of foreign countries, and who do not speak English. The cynical among us might suppose that this is a yet further expansion of the politics of clientelism. In the borough in which my mother lives, for example, locally-produced pamphlets, largely related to the claiming of publicly-funded benefits, are translated into Igbo, a major Nigerian language, even though the overwhelming majority of Nigerians living in Britain, and perhaps even all of them, already speak English, but one pleasant and well-paid job for an Igbo-speaker might easily translate into many votes.

Language is an important question for Britain, but our public services, if not our central government, gets it completely wrong. At my local airport I am always irritated on landing to see the sign for the line for British passports written in Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi. People who need the words 'British Passport' to be written in those languages ought not to have British passports in the first place. This is not the only effort made by viciously racist public authorities to enclose immigrant groups in little ghettoes of their own language. I was surprised to learn from some of my patients that you can take the driving test in Britain in any number of languages. You don a pair of earphones and hear instructions relayed to you in your mother tongue. Knowledge of the Latin alphabet, and hence the ability to decipher written road signs, is not necessary to pass the test, at least not if you are an immigrant from a country in which that alphabet is not used.

Incentives to learn the language, and therefore integrate into society, are reduced by these measures. By discouraging people from learning English and making it possible for them to get by without it in their dealings with officialdom, we threaten the balkanisation of the country into mutually uncomprehending groups with little sympathy for one another and no identity

in common. This works peculiarly to the disadvantage of women. Many immigrants and refugees come from countries in which the subjugation of women, in a way that we now find horrible, is the norm. If there is a sovereign method by which to keep these women in such subjugation, it is to deny them not merely the opportunity, but the absolute necessity to learn English: for then they are utterly in the power of the men in their group who do speak English.

I say this as a descendent myself of refugees on both sides of my family. Interpreters and interpretation are sometimes needed, in court, for instance, otherwise justice could not be done. There are also other occasions when compassion requires that interpretation be available, for example if a non-English speaking person, through no fault of his own, is completely isolated. In most circumstances, public services should not accommodate the language difficulties of immigrants and refugees, other than by providing them with English lessons. In my experience, the vast majority of immigrants and refugees have friends, relatives or acquaintances who can speak English; it is they who should interpret, free of charge of course, when it is needed. Far from being generous or broadminded, not insisting that immigrants and refugees learn English is mean-spirited and parochial. It says to the immigrant or refugee, 'We do not think you can master our language sufficiently to deal with us directly, and you will therefore never be full members of our nation. You will always be alien.'

There is a great danger in this particular attitude, both on the part of the immigrants and their descendents and of the natives. Even when the descendents of immigrants or refugees learn English as, of course, they almost all do, they are aware, precisely because of the official efforts at ethno-linguistic balkanisation, that they are not wholly British. The subtitle of the editorial in the *British Medical Journal* was 'Delivery of culturally competent health care... depends on such data [about language].' These are the weasel words of political correctness, which are usually a mask for sectional interest and power, usually that of an expanded public service. Does 'culturally competent health care' include the knowledge that young Moslem girls in this country will not confide in their Moslem family doctors because they believe, rightly or wrongly, that their confidences, like being forced against their will to marry a stranger when they love a man of another religion, will get back to their family, who will then lock them up? I do not think this is what the author had in mind, nor would knowledge of what language is spoken at home provide such vital understanding.

Theodore Dalrymple is a retired inner-city doctor

Boris Volodarsky

For the citizens of Europe terrorist bombs on the streets of London, Madrid or Ankara are much more significant than a political scandal in Kiev. But for the 50 million people who live in Ukraine plus for about the same number of Ukrainians resident abroad the political situation in their country is very important. They also think that in the long run it should be vital for the future of Europe. Analysing Russian, Ukrainian, German and English language media reports in the past six months, it is clear that Russia is about to win a propaganda war against Ukraine. It is especially well seen in what all Russian Intelligence Service (RIS) veterans recognize as 'active measures', in other words, an orchestrated media campaign aimed to fool the public at home and abroad.

From the beginning of this year what was formerly known as Service A (Disinformation) of the Soviet KGB has been actively engaged in restoring political damage caused by the Orange Revolution. They concentrated their efforts on two things: first, it was important to prove — in spite of all documentary evidence — that the Ukrainian President Yushchenko had never been poisoned and that all the conclusions of the American, Austrian, Dutch and German doctors and medical institutions are nothing else but unprofessional bluff. After Emil Bobi's article in the Austrian *Profil* [11 October 2004], Bojan Pancevsky published his interview in the London *Telegraph* [27 March 2005], followed by similar publications in the Hungarian *Rosszijszkij Kurier*, Austrian *Heute* and many on-line editions including the most recent analysis posted by the kompromat.ru — a KGB-sponsored Russian Internet site. They all brand Dr Lothar Wicke of the Vienna Rudolfinerhaus hospital as 'the voice of one

crying in the wilderness'. (As it is well known, Dr Wicke, an X-ray specialist, in his capacity as the Rudolfinerhaus head doctor, refused to accept the opinion of the physicians who treated Mr Yushchenko and who concluded that their Ukrainian patient was deliberately poisoned.) Dr Wicke ignored my invitation to discuss the matter in Vienna and so did Bojan Pancevsky who at least responded to my e-mail. It is, however, documented that the Rudolfinerhaus press conference, where Dr Wicke doubted the diagnosis of his colleagues, was arranged by Yffic Nouvellon of EuroRSCG, Paris, and his public relations team commissioned by the former Ukrainian president's son-in-law. Nouvellon also contacted international media offering 'evidence' that Mr Yushchenko had not been poisoned.

The second line of the Russian services' propaganda effort was to show that it was the opposition who was bugging former President Kuchma's office in 1999-2000 — a major scandal that became known as 'Kuchmagate'. Operatives of the SVR-FSB's departments in charge of the media were so successful in manipulating public opinion that the Ukrainian Security Minister issued a ban on all publications related to the topic. The scandal stems from voice files recorded in the office of the Yushchenko's predecessor as Ukrainian president, Leonid Kuchma. Because the president was unaware of the microphones and recording devices, things were said that make the Nixon White House tapes sound like Sunday-school songfests. Some transcripts, that had since been made public, exposed much of the dirty work preceding the election, details of the Kuchma regime's corrupt practices, the prosecution of businessmen and — most spectacularly — perhaps even the ordering of the murder of the prominent opposition journalist Heorhiy Gongadze. Killed on 16 September 2000, his headless corpse was found in a village near Kiev. The recordings have become the subject of speculation, controversy, accusations and counter-accusations over the past five years. Parts have been read out on Radio Free Europe and have whetted the Ukrainians' demand to hear more. Whether they will or not is still undecided, partly because no one knows definitely where the originals are. One thing is clear — they escaped the control of the Ukrainian administration — past or present.

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Who commanded the planting of the microphones? I believe I have the answer, though full documentary confirmation is still lacking. And I can throw light on the next question, too, the subsequent fate of the original recordings themselves. Even those who possess the copies (or so called clones) have been offered hundreds of thousands of dollars — and have demanded more — from various sides, those who want to suppress them as well as those who seek to profit from them, financially or politically. There is little doubt that the bugging operation was organized on the outskirts of Moscow, in the shiny headquarters of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR — the Soviet KGB's former First Chief Directorate) in Yasenevo. There, Department 8 of Directorate R was devoted to following (and influencing) developments in the newly independent former Soviet republics, including Ukraine and Belarus, that had chosen to remain in the Russian-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It supported the Kremlin's fierce determination to keep Ukraine under Moscow's wing.

Late one Monday morning in July 1999, according to one logical scenario, the chief of Department 8 stepped into the spacious Room 2131, the office of SVR director Vyacheslav Trubnikov, to brief him on growing concerns about Ukraine. Neither he nor his chief cared much about the everyday abuses of the Kuchma administration — the concentration of power in the hands of the president and his son-in-law, their criminal and tax investigations of opposition politicians and businessmen, or the torture and killing of opponents and independent journalists by the police. What Department 8 had to report were signs that Kuchma was becoming more independent and pursuing interests opposed to Russia's. And the report was disturbing enough to cause Trubnikov to order the bugging of Kuchma's offices. He sought not only to keep an ear on these worrisome developments but also to collect compromising information that could strengthen Moscow's hold over the Ukrainian President. The bugging was carried out with the aid of SVR agents inside the Ukrainian administration, some of them Soviet KGB veterans now serving in its successor organ in the Ukraine, the SBU. Yevhen Marchuk, Secretary of the Ukrainian National Council of Defence and Security, and Leonid Derkach, Marchuk's successor as SBU chief, got the officers of Kuchma's Presidential Guard Service (PGS) to install the microphones.

The most recent update that I received from my sources in Kiev prove that SBU Captain Alexander Evko and a former FSB officer Alexei Nesterenko recruited Major Mykola Melnichenko of the PGS to secretly bug the president. One Vladimir Savchenko, most probably a Russian illegal, connected to Marchuk,

led Melnichenko to believe that the order 'came from above'. Viktor Medvedchuk, the much-feared Chief of Staff of the Presidential Administration, allegedly an old KGB hand, may also have played a role. Moscow's SVR, with its long experience in bugging operations, quickly provided all necessary equipment.

The operation produced first-class intelligence from the autumn of 1999 to the autumn of 2000 — when President Vladimir Putin's new SVR director Sergey Lebedev, shocked to find the President of the independent state was being bugged, shut down the operation. But a year of tapes had already captured vast amounts of compromising data. Gongadze had been murdered, a radar system had been illicitly sold to Saddam Hussein in Iraq, the persecution of opponents had been ordered, the tax system had been used illegally, and much more. Before Kuchma could act against the perpetrators, Savchenko fled to Portugal and shortly afterwards, on 26 November 2000, Melnichenko — taking with him copies he had secretly made of the voice files — slipped out to Ostrava in the Czech Republic where he stayed hidden for more that four months.

Then began the saga of the clones. Melnichenko spent his exile working with the recordings, copied some of the conversations on to the hard disk of his computer — and decided he could make money and political capital from them. RFE/RL in Prague was notified but didn't have a budget that allowed them to pay. They informed the American Embassy to whom Melnichenko told of the taped evidence that Ukraine had sold a secret radar system (*Kolchuga,* or Hauberk) to Saddam's Iraq, in the middle of the Iraq crisis. The Americans granted political asylum to him and he flew to the United States in April 2001. After that the United States suspended assistance to Ukraine.

Melnichenko, fearing for his life from Kuchma's retribution, turned to Moscow for help in May 2002. He wrote a letter to President Putin but received no answer. In the meantime, the Ukrainian SBU, alerted to the presence of the recordings in the Czech Republic, in the person of its deputy chief Petro Shatkovsky, went to Ostrava in May 2002, to negotiate with Melnichenko's friends with whom he had left them — and after a hefty payment returned to Kiev with copies of twenty CD-ROMs. When Kuchma learned (in Moscow) that the Russians had the originals and that Melnichenko was using copies only, he saw a way to deny the evidence, pretending that it had been fabricated.

With the presidential elections looming in 2004, Kuchma tried to end 'Tapegate' by buying all of Melnichenko's holdings. SBU officers met him in Strasbourg and in the South Tyrol, then in February 2004 in Vienna and offered a half-million dollars. Melnichenko's friend advised against accepting and demanded five million — and was refused. Negotiations continued in Moscow. Here Melnichenko wanted to please the SVR by offering taped evidence of the American recruitment of a Russian military intelligence colonel and of the Ukrainian recruitment of a Russian general. Since Moscow had been getting the original recordings, this came as no surprise to them but they were happy at now being able to use the information without compromising their own involvement.

Recently I saw President Yushchenko in Vienna attending the Ukrainian Church service. In front of the Holy Cross Viktor Yushchenko faced a difficult choice. Should he admit that the Russian SVR was directly involved, it will be very difficult to continue normal relations with Moscow, already disturbed by the poisoning, Putin's support for the rigged elections and mass anti-Ukrainian propaganda. If he doesn't, the investigation of the murder of Heorhiy Gongadze and many other victims of the Kuchma regime, who died before or after President Yushchenko's coming to power, will never be completed.

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New Left Theocrats and Thug Britain:

Campaigning in Denton & Reddish

Alexander Story and Timothy Hudspith

Denton and Reddish is a parliamentary constituency covering a large part of east and southeast Manchester. Many of those in private housing have themselves moved from parts of the inner city, such as Longsight and Levenshulme, that are now home to burgeoning immigrant populations, 'social housing' and social problems. In Denton and Reddish areas of spare land are dirty and vandalised, and shops are shuttered in the evening. The national phenomenon of 'feral teenage packs', dressed tribally in tracksuit bottoms tucked into socks, can be found at night wandering all over the area, or loitering around fast-food joints. Drinking and dope-smoking are common and swearing becomes louder and more profuse as the evening wears on.

A Labour stronghold since it was created in 1983, the constituency is split between Labour-dominated Tameside Council in the North and LibDem-run Stockport in the south; none of the wards that fall within the seat has any Conservative representation. By 1992, 19,000 voters in Denton and Reddish had given up on national politics. At this May's election, that figure is still nearly as high at 17,000. In February this year Alex Story, the Conservative Parliamentary Candidate, and Timothy Hudspith began a campaign to revive the Tory vote. We intended to walk every part of the constituency nine hours per day, six days a week, and knock on every door to evangelise our idea of conservatism — and those parts of the Conservative manifesto we believed were any good. At first we began knocking and talking without leaflets. We soon realized that this area had never been worked by any political party. Residents were amazed to see the first political canvassers in their entire adult lives — and Tories at that. Our amazement was the willingness of people, often lifelong Labour voters, to talk enthusiastically about their lives and thoughts on Britain.

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People were not apathetic about politics or their country's social situation; most would willingly break their tea for half-an-hour to talk to us. Top of the list of complaints is fear and disillusion at the criminal behaviour and incivility of the younger generation. We heard hundreds of first-hand accounts of the new brutalised Britain: male teachers being assaulted, female teachers being groped, householders being attacked for protecting their property or admonishing gangs for their language and behaviour; one member of Reddish Conservative Club kicked to unconsciousness by children while walking home from the chip shop one evening; victims of violence giving up on prosecutions because of intimidation. For all the tax that they were paying, people expected some protection from the police, but the police came so late when they were called that there was no point calling them — if they came at all. One afternoon in Audenshaw, an enthusiastic ex-serviceman-turned-policeman told me that the law-breakers knew all the rules. When he goes to tackle a thief or thug, they immediately claim to be asthmatic, knowing that under his 'rules of engagement' this forbids him from physically restraining them. Should they get to court and be faced with a custodial sentence, they claim to have a drug problem so that they get a 'community' sentence instead. The real crisis in law enforcement was not made plain to us until we attended a public meeting of the Tameside Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy Committee (*sic*) one evening in Denton. This is a national government-funded set of schemes based on the usual 'multi-agency partnership working with the community' approach to complicating and evading problems. The meeting was chaired by a Labour councillor and attended by several other councillors and scheme workers, plus a PC and WPC; but only a handful of local residents came along. The tone and real purpose of the meeting was set early on when one of the scheme's headmistressy administrators silenced a resident who complained about the confusing format of the grumble sheets they had been given to record incidents of disorder.

We were then treated to an incredible presentation by the Anti-Nuisance Co-ordinator that showed downward

sloping graphs in every major category of crime and disorder in the area. After 20 minutes I could take no more of the deception and at 8 o'clock went outside where I encountered two lads in their mid-teens beating up another against the shutters of a shop. After a few moments hesitation I walked over and intervened. The assailants turned on me, their faces screwed up and teeth bared in aggression — reeking of cannabis and lager — demanding to know who the f**k I was. They sloped off to the shadows when I dialled 999 on my mobile, shouting and gesturing insults. It took a whole minute for me just to get an answer, and it was a further twenty minutes of tense standoff until a police transit van bearing the slogan 'POLICE: catching criminals, protecting people' approached with its lights flashing, only to race by towards Manchester.

Back in the meeting again the Neighbourhood Liaison Policeman jumped up red-faced to declare that 'If any political party thinks it can solve youth disorder, then it is naïve!' We were quickly ushered outside, ostensibly to investigate why my 999 call had come to nothing. Outside the policeman became relaxed and candid. He described the frustrations of his increasingly impotent 'service'; that most crime and disorder is committed by youths, but these are officially classified as a 'vulnerable' group. If they are taken into custody an officer has to sit with them, while another makes calls to social workers. Politicians were not even on the same planet. He told us that the statistics and graphs presented in the meeting do not reflect reality — the public have stopped reporting crime, that there is a cultural gulf between bobbies on the one hand, and chief policemen and the Home Office on the other and most disturbing of all, 'the words "discipline" and "authority" are no longer in our vocabulary'.

The newest estates expressed a clear preference for the Tories; our second most favourable reaction came in the council estates; while interwar semi-detached houses were very mixed. The old terraced areas were completely unpredictable and loyalties very localised. Common among all of them was a shared perception and grievance that Britain is becoming an uncivilised and unjust country. 'It doesn't matter who you vote for, everything just gets worse'. They have come to believe that democracy is a sham. An authoritarian pseudo-liberal theocracy — or 'New Left' — has been running Britain for nearly thirty years. The irony of two decades of Conservative rule was that it saw the New Left take full control of the universities, the teacher training colleges, the BBC, and the departments of Whitehall where it implemented or frustrated the government agenda in education and criminal justice. In 1997 this establishment finally realised a philosophical union with an elected government, and has since been pressing ahead with its revolutionary agenda more or less unobstructed.

These things have taken place without any public resistance. While the decline in organised religion and a general relaxation of social mores since the war has certainly helped the rise of this pseudo-Liberalism, it owes its success to the use of psychological weaponry to neutralise opposition. Notions of nationhood, deference, authority, masculinity, heredity — all fail the test of 'inclusivity', and so our customs and conventional moral strictures have become targets for one or more violent denunciations of 'racism', 'sexism', 'homophobia', 'Islamaphobia' — even 'Europhobia'. While they appear simply to be terms of description, these words are ideologically loaded and preclude any independent thought or criticism — and so their users become unwitting supporters of the creed. Meanwhile that most potent tool for the destruction of the public's confidence and belief in its way of life — mass immigration — has been used to fragment traditional communities and dilute the national identity. We were therefore pleasantly surprised to find that, despite being officially denounced as 'repugnant' or 'extremist', the overwhelming majority of people we spoke to voiced conventional moral views — although they did feel it necessary to excuse them.

The continuing prevalence of these opinions offers a prospect to conservatives for a return to civil society and individual liberty. The victory of the New Left therefore appears superficial but because it dominates public services, broadcasting, and now the Armed Forces, it has become one of the most powerful influences in society. The social consequences of government policies that invert conventional morality and its prohibitions — even notions of work and reward, crime and punishment — have taken time to manifest themselves in changed human behaviour. Even more time has had to elapse for these changes to coalesce into the national phenomenon of feral teenage packs. Because the decline is gradual, it appears natural and immune to government action.

The double-edged human faculty to grow accustomed to awful things depressed us: the elderly in Denton have grown used to a society that would have seemed incredible to them in their youth; for the younger generations it is normal. Because it is accepted as natural social evolution, they are resigned to avoidance or fortification against the threat; and accept that the State can only contain it, but not cure it. This government is successfully conjuring the spectre of an Islamic terrorist bogeyman; more armed police, more cameras, ID cards and a national DNA database which all appear to have public backing. So the rotten pool of beliefs that has created Thug Britain remains

undisturbed at the heart of our institutions; the power of the state grows to contain it, and our liberty withers away.

If people believe they are trapped in inevitable social change, they give up on politics or come to see it as a commercial venture. Many pensioners and single mothers told us that they had never been better off than under Labour, but fell silent as we sketched out the darker picture: you forfeit your privacy and dignity to claim these benefits, you are besieged in your home at night because of disorder on the streets, you have no power to prevent your daughter's school being merged with the awful one down the road, a drug dealer that sells cannabis to children lives around the corner, untroubled by the police. One afternoon, we walked into the grounds of a factory, leaflets in hand, to be met by a gang of jeering young men in overalls on their tea break. After a few minutes of attentive silence they were asking for those leaflets.

The Tory Party must challenge this creed and its disastrous consequences with a systematic conservative critique. Thug Denton and Reddish is all the work of this ideology. We must convince 'Denton and Reddish' that their increasingly unliveable streets have readily identifiable political causes, that there is in fact a common enemy of the British people in what is underestimated and trivialised as 'political correctness'. If we are honest even if it involves a repudiation of past Conservative actions, then we can issue a credible political map to a civilised future. The Tories at present, in contrast to the Republicans in America, have not fought 'the culture wars'. The Republican Party succeeds because it is a standard-bearer for conventional morality. In this year's presidential election, '(Republican) moral values' was cited as one of the top three most important issues for voters — unheard of in any previous election. The received wisdom in our party is that expressions such as Left-wing or Right-wing are irrelevant to the public. This may be so, but the identification of, and fearlessly stated opposition to a common enemy of civilised British life is necessary because it is responsible for enormous human unhappiness.

the rotten pool of beliefs that has created Thug Britain remains undisturbed at the heart of our institutions; the power of the state grows to contain it, and our liberty withers away

We spent time on the doorstep contrasting the discipline-free 'education' delivered by the 'anti-elitist' Department of Education with a vision of diverse independent institutions with their own character and freely chosen curriculum hinted at in the manifesto and explained the idea of locally-elected police commissioners vis-á-vis Home Office control. These policies make complete sense but necessarily involve making enemies in Whitehall. 'That sounds really good, but I haven't heard anything like this being said by the Conservatives on TV or anything'. We were representatives of a party that was completely pulling its punches.

Notwithstanding the seeds of some potentially nation-transforming ideas, the 2005 Election Manifesto still amounted to a capitulation — the party has even begun dealing in the language and fallacies of the enemy ('gay or straight' / 'tackling child poverty' etc). The line taken on immigration did show potential, but it was badly let down by the absence of a convincing moral case (Michael Howard was nervous and evasive in his response to pointed questions from John Humphrys about cultural change and displacement of the indigenous population). If we believe a nation to be a cultural home, that a common culture is the basis for mutual understanding and social stability, and therefore a prerequisite of law and freedom, we can fearlessly articulate our opposition to mass immigration and the rest of the New Left agenda. But it has yet to happen. Given that we understand what it is responsible for, to talk of 'too much political correctness' in state schools is like meekly complaining about 'too much Nazism'.

Any reformation will require a debunking of the 'centre ground'. This mythical voting block exists in the minds of those who have lost their conservative faith. They believe that conventional black and white morality has disappeared and that the Tories must try and catch up with the grey moral haze of 'New Britain', and so they appear on TV without their ties, talk about the need for women-only shortlists, for the party to be renamed, decry the 'repugnance' of our immigration policy, and, like the BBC, say that the real source of voter apathy is that 'politics is all men in grey suits'. In thousands of conversations we never once heard any complaint of this sort. People are not apathetic or indifferent to politics, but the deadening Left Liberal consensus that grips this country and the Tory party has censored their views — and therefore their votes — out of the political debate. The new party must leave the 'centre ground'.

We met many people who had given up all hope of Britain's redeeming herself, and instead were emigrating to the Old Commonwealth countries. Hundreds of others intended to vote BNP; some talked with great foreboding of revolution, even 'we need another Cromwellian Revolution'. But there are still 17,000 people in this seat not emigrating anywhere but who have given up on any hope of improvement; staying inside after dark behind triple-locked front doors. In traditionally working class Labour strongholds like

Denton, many still vote Labour out of habit but sense that they no longer have a real home in that party. We listened to hundreds of people that bitterly resent mass immigration, rail at the iniquity of the benefit system and the rise of the 'do-gooder' in education and the police This country of exasperated Tories and disillusioned Labour voters is ripe for a new self-assured and *genuinely* Conservative Party that presents the nation with a passionate and relentless rebuttal of the status quo, and plots a convincing path towards a Britain of individual dignity, civility and culture.

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Timothy Hudspith is a City accountant

Letter from Greece

Napoleon Linardatos

The Egnatia Motorway across the north of Greece is one of the 'largest road construction projects in Europe'. Six hundred and eighty kilometers long and 24.5 meters wide, it requires the construction of 1,650 bridges, 74 tunnels, 50 interchanges, 43 river and 11 railway crossings. A modern Greek marvel in the making where at least half of the costs are financed by the European Union. In Greece today, a plethora of public works are completed or in progress thanks to the generous aid of the EU. Billions in funds have been transferred southward to the EU's only Balkan state member since its entry in 1981. By the 1990s, that assistance averaged about 3.5 per cent of GDP yearly. To put it in perspective, it would be as if the U.K. received around $62 billion from the EU in 2004. For almost a quarter of a century, Greece has been the beneficiary of a European willingness to become one cohesive whole, but despite all the bridges, ports, tunnels, roads and agricultural subsidies, Greece remains as far away from the European spirit as it did when it joined the Union.

There is always some optimism when a grand public project is announced. The Athens underground was supposed to solve the city's traffic problems, the Olympic Games were supposed to revitalize tourism, and the Egnatia Motorway is supposed to make Greece the economic tiger of the region. There are pronouncements of great hopes when a project is planned, followed by more pronouncements when the project begins, more pronouncements during the construction and a couple more at the opening or numerous openings. Finally pessimism seems to overtake everything. These public projects are like miracles without miraculous ends. The great leap forward is always postponed for a later day.

European assistance has been to Greece what oil has been to the Middle East; the lifeline of poor government, mischievous habits and exasperated hopes. *Kathimerini*, an authoritative daily newspaper, reported what the cotton subsidies have done in agriculture: there was cotton production of good quality in Greece, cultivated efficiently in the most suitable fields at a good price — now farmers receive subsidies that are up to three times the market price of cotton. Cultivation of cotton has expanded in millions of unsuitable acres. Excess well drilling has drained the valleys of their underground water, and pollution from the senseless use of fertilizers has been linked to serious health problems in the adjacent residential areas. This year the cotton farmers are to receive 690 million euros in subsidies. Since this amount is based on an agreed-upon quantity to be produced, farmers will produce more and attempt to get the national government to make up the difference. The common practice is to block major motorways with tractors; then the negotiations start.

Farming is associated with independence and self-sufficiency but the subsidy farmer is a new breed. He is entirely dependent on the political process, which he thoroughly cultivates, and his connection to the land is shallow. If the farmers are not out fighting for their 'rights,' then someone else will be: The teachers who do not want to be evaluated, contract civil servants who want to become permanent, policemen who do not want to police, students who do not want to learn. The list is long, reflecting a Greece cut to pieces with each faction trying to impose its absurd demands on the rest. The pre-eminent action of civic participation is to demand employment in the public sector, or to defend retirement at 50, to build houses illegally in the forest, or to exploit fully one's state-sanctioned monopoly.

For the local intellectual class, this is the triumph of politics. For decades now, progressive ideas are the only ideas in Greece. They have been so thoroughly instilled in everyone, from the first grader up to the Prime Minister, that they permeate everything. Any

movement in a different direction is anti-social, reactionary, liberal, or an Anglo-Saxon barbarity. Under the tutelage of progressive ideas there are privileges without duties, advantages without merit, crime without punishment and hard work with no reward. Can a society flourish under these conditions? What is the character and the purpose of the nation? Important questions, but in Greece they were decided years ago. The only questions remaining are who gets what, when and how. Not long ago I watched a TV report about an explosion in an illegal propane station in a residential area in Athens. The illegal market for fuel is thriving thanks to exorbitant taxes. The journalist reporting the incident mentioned the illegality without a shred of emphasis. It became worse when the owner of the station talked to the camera. I could not discern any expression of shame. She had just broken the law in a dramatic way and in the process put the lives of her neighbours in danger. None of this seemed to matter to her or anyone else. It was the noise and the spectacle of explosion that counted the most; a story reported for its cinematic value, where causes and consequences are unimportant.

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This is the relativism of everyday life. The most important thing is what you can get away with. It is the tragedy of the commons writ large; a public sphere where the private and the public meet under the most disadvantageous terms. Someone would expect that decades of policies intended to foster social cohesion would produce a society of benevolent people. Instead we have narrow-minded, cynical egotists gyrating in alternate states of self-satisfaction and self-hatred.

It is not surprising that between 1991 and 2001 deaths exceeded births by more than 40,000. The rearing of a family involves an unconditional commitment to another person, an undertaking whose emotional and financial costs are obvious and direct while many of the benefits are spread out in society and over time. A family man would say that nothing could compensate for the joys of family, but in a society where the individual perceives himself as the centre of the universe committed to the proposition that all joys and pleasures are equal, the family becomes just another choice among others. When duty and virtue have become antiquated terms that one only finds in books no one reads, we have a declining society entangled in the most petty and ephemeral affairs. Unburdened by the past, unimpeded from posterity, there stands the modern Greek: a person free of any civic and moral duties. The coming of the welfare state brought the monetarization of civic responsibilities and gradually degraded them to special interest sloganeering.

Unlike any other foe the Greeks faced in the past, the one that they face now has no armies laying siege to any walls. There are no occupiers trying to impose their customs and language, no military junta to imprison, torture or banish anyone. It is a foe that does not challenge their strengths but rather assuages their weaknesses. Instead of attacking the culture, it merely trivializes it by draining it of any transcendent qualities. There is no need to assail honesty, merit and hard work; they have simply been rendered irrelevant.

A commentator recently disclosed the slogan that the army is planning to use to attract recruits: 'A career with the security of the public sector.' In Pericles' funeral oration you find no such catch phrase. Pericles talks of 'the spirit in which we faced our trials and also our constitution and the way of life which has made us great,' of a city that is 'open to the world' and of 'men with a spirit of adventure, men who knew their duty, men who were ashamed to fall below a certain standard'. He reminded Athenians that 'happiness depends on being free, and freedom depends on being courageous.' In such a city, the soldiers met danger 'with a natural rather than state-induced courage'. And they did so not because they knew they would return to some secure government job, but because they wanted to preserve a city they were proud of, a city that 'future ages will wonder at'.

In the many narrow dirty sidewalks planted against ancient ruins, the many cars that flock the busy, grey streets of Athens, the cold boxy apartment buildings, the dim image of a city emerges, a gap reveals itself. A distance greater than the passage of time, of what we were once and the way we live now.

Napoleon Linardatos works in a commercial bank in New York

The Scientific Culture: Does Society Need It?

David Falla

The material world as revealed by modern scientific research has great richness and variety. At the highest level, existing on the largest conceivable scale, there is the apparently infinite Universe, as studied in cosmology, at lower levels there are systems that include our planet Earth with its human and other living organisms; and then there are structures composed of more basic entities which descend in scale, by way of molecules and atoms, to the fundamental particles to which all matter, whether animate or inanimate, can ultimately be reduced. Each individual human being represents a 'vertical cross-section' through all these levels, existing simultaneously as a speck in the Universe, a life-sized organism and a vast conglomeration of infinitesimal particles.

A professional scientist can in principle employ suitable apparatus, together with some expertise, to make observations of systems at any of these levels and in doing so contribute to whichever of the sciences is appropriate. All these studies, with their wide range of subject-matter, make up what C P Snow, the physicist and eminent novelist, has described as 'the scientific edifice of the physical world [which is] in its intellectual depth, complexity and articulation, the most beautiful and wonderful collective work of the mind of man'.

The creators of this edifice have in common their acceptance of the essential elements of the scientific culture: an analytical and often critical attitude of mind, a serious attempt at objectivity in observation; and the acceptance of an intellectual frame of reference built upon respect for observationally and experimentally established facts, and for conclusions logically derived from them.

We all want, even though we do not always need, the products of modern science and technology in all their variety. What we all do need, however, is to be influenced by those aspects of the scientific culture that could directly affect our thinking. Especially at a time when our general culture is adrift in dangerous intellectual shallows, we need to gain a better appreciation, not so much of the recent advances made in science — which are ably dealt with by the many scientific commentators and media correspondents — but rather of the actual culture of science, which so greatly values the knowledge and independence of mind possessed by the individual.

The culture that underlies the world of the sciences can be differentiated from, for example, that which underlies the humanities, — those studies which must always be allowed a pre-eminent place on account of their uniquely important subject-matter, namely ourselves. It is debatable whether or not C P Snow's original concept of 'The Two Cultures' (representing 'two polar groups... Literary intellectuals at one pole — at the other scientists...') should now be regarded as simplistic. There is an evident contrast, however, between the sciences and the humanities, not only with regard to their subject-matter but also with regard to the types of interaction associated with them: objective, impersonal and outwardly directed from ideally detached individual observers, in the world of the sciences; and more complex and subjective, with the personal involvement of observers or writers having no agreed centre of reference, in the world of the humanities. Although scholars in the humanities employ in their researches some of the elements of scientific method, their basic intellectual framework is that provided by the complex network of interactions, between scholars and critics, writers and commentators, which exist in a separate world superimposed on the one revealed by straightforward scientific experiment and observation.

Inevitably, different psychological types relate to the two different cultures. A definite personal trait amongst scientists is their tendency towards detachment from the general business of public life — arguably, where their presence is much needed — while arts graduates (representative of the humanities) who do not pursue their subject professionally, as scholars and teachers, tend to gravitate towards such pursuits as law, politics and journalism, where inter-personal interaction is the important, and sometimes it seems the only, relevant consideration.

So far, the word 'culture' has been used simply as a label to describe a group to which individuals having common characteristics belong. An alternative meaning of the term is illustrated by its use to describe a 'bacterial culture' for example, in which there occur complex interactions between the individual living components, which together form an organic whole

with a life of its own. Similarly, a human culture could be defined as an intellectual system having its own characteristic dynamic generated by the complex interactions of the component individuals. Such a definition would quite obviously apply to the humanities, but would it also apply to the sciences?

The answer to this question appears once an important aspect of the nature of science is realised. Suppose that a botanist is shipwrecked and stranded on a desert island but, having salvaged a microscope, is able to study the tropical micro-flora and make several original discoveries. Is science thereby advanced? One could argue that if the scientist remains in isolation, it is not. This is because the scientific process consists of more than the making of observations and the interpretation of the results obtained; it has also to include their communication to, together with their appreciation and acceptance by, the scientific community. In other words, science has to be set in a human context in order for it to advance, just as is so necessarily true in the case of the humanities. Both in the sciences and in the humanities, therefore, knowledge has to be effectively communicated in order for it to advance the total wisdom of the whole.

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This communication of knowledge is in practice even more important in the sciences than it is in the humanities, because scientific knowledge is essentially cumulative, with each step forward in its progress being the basis for the next. While it seems that scientists are often not natural communicators, most successful and productive scientists do indeed recognise the need for mutual interaction with their colleagues working in the same field of research, and appreciate the benefits that discussion and constructive criticism can bring.

It would benefit us all if the attitudes and values that pervade the sciences could be integrated into the wider culture. While such an integration is a *'sine qua non'* for the culture of the humanities, might it also be achieved for science? This integration of the sciences into the general culture is made more difficult. by the tendency of the scientist to be 'out on a limb' in relative isolation, constantly striving to further the growth of one particular branch — though usually it is just a twig — of the tree of knowledge, but often with insufficient concern for the overall state of the tree. Perhaps this is a consequence of overspecialisation, but progress in advanced scientific fields is so difficult that this situation seems unavoidable.

While it is desirable that science and its cultural values be integrated into the general culture, there are several factors that make this integration difficult: there is the particular psychology of the research scientist, with narrowly focused and directed intelligence; there is the isolation of the scientist, constantly preoccupied with specific problems in a specialised field of research; and in the background there is the widely held suspicion that scientists, outside their own fields of research, can be reluctant communicators. The scientist, one might conclude, is unlikely to pursue the aim of that integration with any enthusiasm.

Perhaps some inspiration from the humanities might be helpful. Alexander Pope's famous dictum that, 'the proper study of mankind is man' has been a rallying cry for the humanities, faced by the inexorable advance of science. But might not this proper study include that of the sub-species 'man the scientist'? The point of contact between the sciences and the humanities could be personified by the individual scientist, whose full membership of the human race is acknowledged and who qualifies as a subject fit for such a study. Thus might science be related to the human level of its active practitioners and, set in a human context, be more easily integrated into the general culture.

'Man the scientist' can be studied in several different ways. One way is through the history of science: the story of outstanding individuals and their achievements in their fields of interest. Any history of science must include the geographical, social and cultural aspects of life when a particular scientific advance was made; the consideration of all these factors sets science firmly in the context of the wider culture.

Scientific biography is very valuable. A human lifetime represents only a short chapter in any history, but even a single biography can provide a revealing portrait of an era. Eminent scientists are themselves inspirational in their devotion to the practice of research; they can embody those virtues inherent in the scientific culture. But, usually the general reader appreciates most of all the non-scientific aspects of the lives of the scientists portrayed: 'Perhaps these scientists are human, after all!'

Within the general subject of scientific biography lies 'the psychology of discovery,' as illustrated by accounts of those elusive mental processes that lead to scientific discovery and invention. Autobiographies by those who have been actively involved relate the part that intuition, as opposed to logical thought, plays in scientific research; they include accounts of failures and misconceptions, as well as those of successes and flashes of inspiration which, in spite of human failings, lead to progress. Research is essentially a human

activity, based on the instinct, of curiosity which we all possess. Scientists are the creative instigators, not the sole participants, in that great adventure of the mind that is modern science. A better appreciation of the human qualities of 'man the scientist' would enable everyone, including those who identify themselves more with the humanities, to enter into the spirit of that adventure.

The desire to set science in a human context should have important consequences for the formal education of professional scientists. Even before the process of their education begins, one has to educate the educators. Prospective science teachers could be encouraged to adopt a more human perspective from which to teach the traditional sciences; they could incorporate into their teaching of any particular branch of science some of its history, together with biographical accounts of eminent workers in the field and perhaps including some account of scientific method as actually put into practice by them.

For science students, the history of science could serve as a point of entry into the general study of history; while scientific biographies with literary merit could do the same for those wishing to make excursions into the realm of English Literature. (At the same time, students of the humanities could perhaps learn from the history of science, and also from scientific biography, some of the basic principles underlying the work on which eminent scientists of the past spent their lives.)

The distinguished literary scholar F R Leavis severely criticised the superficiality of the general culture from which the concept of 'The Two Cultures', with its clearly indicated division, had apparently emerged; he surely would have approved of any scientist, whose professional life is spent in the world of the sciences, having a consciousness and sympathies enlarged beyond that world, through the benign influence of studies in the humanities.

Outside the personal world of the individual scientist, greater efforts could be made to encourage a more widespread interest in that remarkable edifice of knowledge that is modern science. As well as leading to an improved 'public understanding of science', as now termed, such efforts could yield a further benefit: for if the intellectual world of the scientist were better appreciated, and scientists themselves better understood, then so might the cultural values of science come to be assimilated into the wider culture of society.

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Gulliver's Traumas: a Party's Breakdown

Barton Swaim

In the weeks after the last US general election, a number of prominent commentators for whom the results were unsatisfactory expressed themselves in terms so acrimonious that some even on their own side criticised them for having become unhinged. There was a great deal of indefensible rhetoric on the Left: the President's supporters were 'stupid', America itself had become something akin to al-Qa'eda, the President had deliberately cultivated bigotry in the electorate. Among rightward-leaning observers, the subject of mental instability became the source of much banter, especially after evidently credible reports were made of a new syndrome, Post-Election Selection Trauma or some such designation. Tina Brown, the New York Englishwoman whose liberalism is at least not unctuous, was almost alone in her ability to make light of her acute grief. Having spoken to a psychiatrist friend who confirmed a dramatic upswing in the number of depression cases after the election, Brown concluded that 'The small quotidian things are what people want in the winded city [that is, liberal New York]. Cut off the news, rent the DVD of *Doctor Zhivago*, surf the Web for a bargain holiday. Focus on trivia.'

These words brought to mind some remarks made by Jonathan Swift nearly three centuries before. In 1714, when Queen Anne died and George I ascended the throne, Swift's Tory party had been dealt a blow from which it would not recover till the 1790s. Swift had had to leave London, where he had worked as pundit-propagandist for the Prime Minister Robert Harley, and return to Dublin, where he lived the rest of his long life in bitterness and self-pity. Politics became obnoxious to him. 'My notion', he wrote soon after his party's ejection from power, 'is that if a man cannot mend the public, he should mend old shoes.' But his attempt to

keep his mind on the little things over which he had some influence did not satisfy, and events in London continued to vex him. 'As the world is now turned,' he complained to a friend in 1720, 'no Cloyster is retired enough to keep Politicks out, and I will own they raise my Passions whenever they come in my way.'

Swift had flown high. For a short time he had exercised as much power as a journalist could. His departure from that position, the anger, depression and ultimately, insanity into which he fell over the next three decades, are in some ways like the disposition with which Americans have become sadly familiar in recent years.

'Polarization' is nothing new. 'The Caballings, the Briberies, and Corruptions, as well as the Heats and Animosities of Parties, against this approaching Election, surmount all that have ever gone before them; never so much Money spent, nor so foolishly' wrote a usually fair-minded Whig Daniel Defoe about the general election of 1710. 'We strive not like Men, but like Devils, like Furies. We Fight not as if we would kill one another only, but as if we would tear one another's souls out of our Bodies.' The discord between the two parties corresponded to a series of profound and intractable disagreements about the scope and nature of political authority itself. Where did the right to govern ultimately lay: with the monarch, as the Tories believed, or with Parliament, as the Whigs believed? Should the landed nobility run Parliament, or should the nobility be required to share power with those responsible for the economic wellbeing of the country, the merchant class? Would political governance be coupled with the authority of the Church of England, as the Tories held, or were the Whigs right that non-conformists ought to have the right to vote, hold office, and worship as they pleased? Here was what Americans would now call a culture war.

The names Whig and Tory had only recently emerged, and the idea of a loyal opposition had yet to arrive. That partly explains, but hardly excuses, the view taken by most eminent Tories that their political adversaries did not differ on what constituted the national interest, but consciously disdained the good of the nation for partisan and personal gain. By the first years of the eighteenth century the Tories in Parliament were willing to do — or to have their journalists write — almost anything to maintain power. There seemed no limit to their vitriol. In November 1709, Henry Sacheverell, a Doctor of Divinity at Magdalen College, Oxford, preached a sermon in St Paul's in which, with vicious absurdity, he accused the entire Whig establishment of high treason and urged his listeners to 'put on the whole armour of God' and, by rather obvious implication, take the country back in some non-figurative way. The sermon set London ablaze with rumour and invective, but the number of Tories who publicly criticised this deplorable incitement to bigotry and violence was approximately the same as the number of high-ranking Democrats who, nearly three centuries later, could find the inner strength publicly to criticise presidential candidate Howard Dean for suggesting that George W Bush knew about the September 11th attacks before they took place, having been told by 'the Saudis'.

The Tories were essentially autocrats, and so refused to allow Parliament, the 'democratic process' as we would say today, to inhibit them on any important issue. When the Whig majority in the House of Lords threatened to reject the Treaty of Utrecht in 1712 — an agreement negotiated with France by the Tory leadership without even the knowledge of Parliament — the Tories in the Commons manufactured a majority in the Lords by persuading the Queen to create more peerages and filling them with toadies. Most of the Tories, especially those associated with the quasi-Jacobite October Club, genuinely believed that their opponents had neither the right nor the competence to govern. Any tactic, any accusation was therefore permissible.

Swift was by far the most talented writer in the Tory cause. He had been a moderate Whig only a few years before, but had defected to the other side because of, as he saw it, the Whigs' ungrateful treatment of the Irish clergy. He began working for Harley in 1710 as the editor of the party journal, *The Examiner*, for which he wrote a series of celebrated essays over the

course of the following year. For Swift, any writer or statesman who took a view dissimilar to his own was either a fool or, more likely, a liar.

> I have been sometimes thinking, if a Man had the Art of *Second Sight* for seeing *Lyes*, as they have in *Scotland* for seeing Spirits; how admirably he might entertain himself in this Town;

None of the lies Swift saw around him, of course, originated from his own pen: this despite the fact that one of his first *Examiner* essays had alleged that the Duchess of Marlborough, formerly the Queen's chambermaid and a staunch Whig, had embezzled royal funds, a rumour he knew to be untrue.

When the accusation of duplicity was not quite believable, Swift deprecated those with whom he could not agree as unqualified to participate in matters of high importance; as, in a word, stupid. 'Soldiers', he observed in the *Examiner* — Swift hated the military and could not abide military men in the political arena — 'may as well pretend to prescribe Rules for Trade; to determine Points in Philosophy; to be Moderators in an Assembly of Divines; or direct in a Court of Justice; as to misplace their Talents in examining Affairs of State.' As for himself, Swift felt, his own opinions were not compromised by any partisan motive or ideological interest. 'It is highly requisite that the People throughout this Kingdom, should, if possible, be set right in their Opinions by some impartial hand.'

Swift's task at the Examiner was to defend the Tory government's policy of conducting the war with France. The problem was that the Tories had no policy

Swift's task at the *Examiner* was to defend the Tory government's policy of conducting the war with France. The problem was that the Tories had no policy. Criticizing the preceding Government's handling of the war was certainly in order. Some of the original war aims *had* become ambiguous in light of new circumstances, and Britain's debt was mounting at a dismaying rate. But what was the alternative? Should they capitulate to the demands of Louis XIV, and allow French aggrandizement to go unchecked? Rather than producing a substantive answer, even a wrong one, the Tories persisted in impugning the motives of those who had begun and were then conducting the war.

Swift was hired to do exactly that. In November 1711 he published a treatise, a political hit-piece of the first order, *The Conduct of the Allies and of the Late Ministry in Beginning and Carrying on the Present War.* Some of Swift's criticisms were hypocritical but plausible, like his contention that the allies should have put more emphasis on the naval theatres: concentrating on the land war, he wrote, was 'the wrong strategy in the wrong place' — though neither he nor any other Tory had never advocated that alternative when it might have mattered. Other points were similarly plausible but unrealistic especially the argument that Britain had shouldered too much of the burden and made insufficient demands of its allies. The really explosive accusation came last. The war itself, he alleged, had been deliberately prolonged by the Duke of Marlborough — the Captain-General of the British army and closely associated with the Whig cause — for no other reason than financial gain. 'Whether this War were prudently begun or not, it is Plain, that the true Spring or Motive of it, was the Aggrandizing a particular Family.' The Tory party in Parliament gleefully took up the duty of investigating this last claim, and not surprisingly found some financial peculations. The Duke had misused funds to build his palace; not quite the same as prolonging a war for profit, but enough to force him to resign in disgrace and undermine the war.

By these tactics the Tories gained much in the short term. But their policy, or rather non-policy, had been that of merely relying on the favour of the Queen. It had worked for a time, but Queen Anne died in August 1714. Her successor, a German prince, happened to be one of the allies so shamelessly maligned by the Tory propagandists. The Tory party was finished for a long time. Many of their leading lights, realizing that their strategy of using royal power to effect their aims was now impossible, had carried on secret communications with the Pretender and, by extension, Louis XIV, thus opening themselves to credible charges that they loved power more than they loved their country. Many of the most prominent Tories aided the Jacobite revolt of 1715, and so completed their party's disgrace. By this time they had little choice, having long since manoeuvred themselves into a position in which disaffection looked like disloyalty.

The party's greatest error, however, was not tactical but attitudinal. The Tories had long assumed that they possessed a right to govern by virtue of their allegiances. They stood for the monarch, for the Church of England, for the landed nobility, and thus for England herself. And these allegiances authenticated the competence and worthiness of those who held them. But in an open and fluid polity the eighteenth-century electorate, though tiny by modern standards and beholden to a corrupt system, was neither wholly manipulable nor unresponsive to public opinion. The Tories might have been able to check the forthcoming Whig ascendancy by consolidating some set of policies on the big issues, but to do so would have required them to address their

opponents in terms of parity and civility, which would have amounted to an admission that those opponents were something other than interlopers and idiots.

Here, too, Swift symbolised his party's plight. In *Gulliver's Travels* he still insists that the well-bred and educated ought to govern by reason of their good breeding and education. When Gulliver visits the land of Laputa in Part III, he marvels that everyone, even the common people, were disposed 'towards News and Politics, perpetually inquiring into Public Affairs, giving their Judgments in matters of State; and passionately disputing every Inch of a Party Opinion.' 'I rather take this Quality', he goes on, 'to spring from a very common Infirmity of Human Nature, inclining us to be more curious and conceited in Matters where we have least Concern, and for which we are least adapted either by Study or Nature.' Although it is never safe to interpret *Gulliver* as a fixed allegory, it is clear enough that Lemuel Gulliver's bizarre journeys represents at some level Swift's own journey into the world of politics in the age of Queen Anne. Gulliver finds his encounters extremely distressing, often longing to return to his wife and children. But like his creator he cannot stay away; he only remains at home for short intervals, never satisfied with the trivia of domestic life. 'I stayed but two Months with my Wife and Family; for my insatiable Desire of seeing foreign Countries would suffer me to continue no longer.'

In the end, of course, Gulliver is driven mad. He wishes desperately to be in Houyhnhnm-land again (the land where the only rational beings are horses and humans are vile brutes), but he knows he is not wanted there, and is in any case not a Houyhnhnm but a man, a Yahoo. Having identified for a time with the ultra-rational Houyhnhnms, he finds it impossible to live a normal life among his fellow men, and at the end of the book he can hardly bear to smell his wife and spends most of the day with horses — even as Swift, having been accustomed to the power of the intelligentsia, could not endure that power now rested with others. England had taken a different path from that which he had urged, and he could not forgive her. At his death in 1745 he had been insane for years: one of the saddest and most significant instances of life imitating art.

Mending old shoes had not helped. Nor, I suspect, will watching *Doctor Zhivago* and surfing the Web for bargain holidays.

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The Spiritual History of English

Andrew Thornton Norris

> The chief glory of every people arises from its authors
>
> Samuel Johnson, 1755

One fundamental aspect of our culture to have escaped attention in recent times is the relationship between religion and literature. This may be because each has receded from its former place at the forefront of the culture and because these recessions are related. In his 1948 *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* T S Eliot described the 'culture of a people as an *incarnation* of its religion,' adding that the, 'way of looking at culture which I have been trying to adumbrate is so difficult that I am not sure I grasp it myself except in flashes, or that I comprehend all its implications.' While modern people might like to believe that they can do without Christianity this does not mean that religion can be so easily avoided, although it may be that literature can.

In 1927, at the time of his own conversion to Anglicanism and naturalisation as a British subject, in a *Criterion* review of Bertrand Russell's *Why I am not a Christian*, Eliot argued that '...one ceases to be Christian only by becoming something else definite — a Buddhist, a Mohammedan, a Brahmin...' The recession from Christianity has not resulted in a mass of such conversions, let alone Russell's, merely the attenuation of Christianity into a variety of sub-cults that coalesce around the simple premise that belief in the Christian religion is either outdated or irrelevant, with little or no agreement as to why or what should take its place. From Eliot's perspective this is merely an extreme form of Protestantism and the variety of doctrines that have taken the place of orthodox Christianity are more or less explicit versions of lapsed Christianity, with genuine atheism or actual conversion being equally rare, and a generalised agnosticism the consequence of a determination not to think about religion.

The attempt of these secular or godless religions to ignore religion and concentrate on making the best of this world has not however resulted in the successful transcendence of belief in the supernatural, merely the relaxation of the spiritual discipline theology provides as a bulwark against superstition: belief in human progress or perfectibility may for instance depend on faith in the ability of technology to liberate us from history or to alter human nature. Meanwhile the plethora of beliefs and doctrines that has succeeded Christianity constitutes the disagreement that lies at the heart of its civic aspect, liberalism, and the democratic system it implies. Without that disagreement there would be no need for the religious impartiality that liberalism proposes, which almost imperceptibly becomes a doctrinal attack on religious belief *per se*: the pursuit of political freedom becoming a veil for relativism.

Modern politics have made the existence of a literary high culture impossible, because all authority beyond that of the 'will of the people,' is rejected thereby undermining those standards necessary to establish literary excellence: popularity becomes the chief criterion of literary success. This is the political incarnation of modern religion and a common feature of the recession of Christianity and Literature; its literary incarnation is similarly predicated on the denial of authority external to the individual, in matters artistic as well as spiritual or political. While the artistic culture is created by and for people whose sole external political or spiritual authority is the negative one of democratic liberalism, no artistic authority is acknowledged beyond that of individual taste; the attempt to establish any sort of hierarchy being elitist, racist, patriarchal, or otherwise an affront to the dignity of free-thinking or feeling individuals. For many the pursuit of art has itself become a form of religion whereby the individual explores, uncovers and is ultimately united or re-united with his own true self, whether in creation or consumption. Art becomes a form of autonomous spiritual exploration that is fundamentally incompatible with the religious order that existed before the modern period, and with orthodox Christianity *per se*, where religion is a separate activity with moral claims. It is rather a religion of art, a religious belief in writing and the self-becoming of the individual writer or artist, its significance for society and its status as a moral end in itself.

This culture achieved its clearest incarnation in Romanticism, which had its origins in the Eighteenth Century, but was first observed in the Renaissance and has never really left us. Its early stages of development were largely a fruition of what had gone before, with a new element, Renaissance Humanism, effectively a revival of Classical Humanism, which went on to triumph at the Civil War and was illustrated in literature by Cowley and Milton. Their Elizabethan and Jacobean antecedents had been formed by the combination of the old and new cultures, and their particular achievement, as well as the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Authorised Version*, were perhaps a consequence of the fine balance between the two. Carlyle described it as '...the outcome and flowerage of all that had preceded it...attributable to the Catholicism of the Middle Ages.' Romanticism proper was partly a literary reaction to the Enlightenment, but was also associated with the revival of interest in ancient Greece. This was convenient for its political associations with democracy and republicanism, liberty and equality, all of which were in turn, a reaction to the remaining legacy of Roman Imperialism from the Middle Ages. It was accompanied by a regard for literature in the vernacular, including Anglo-Saxon and Celtic literature, or what sometimes passed for it, a preference for the Elizabethans and Jacobeans over the English Augustans, an acknowledgement of the spiritual paternity of Milton, and was thus a further rejection of the Latin cultural tradition that had been associated with ecclesiastical Christianity for over a thousand years: Southey described it in 1807 as being a school 'half -Greek half-Gothic,' and it was equally corrosive of Latin classical tradition.

Even Eliot did not entirely overcome its criticism of Johnson, who in his Late Renaissance Latinity had believed that 'modern English poetry began not with developments in the vernacular but with Cowley and Milton, of opposite [political] principles; but concurring in the cultivation of Latin poetry in which the English, till their works ... appeared, seemed unable to contest the palm with any other of the lettered nations.' Indeed Eliot in his poetry self-consciously fell foul of Johnson's criticism of the Metaphysicals' use of 'heterogeneous images yoked by violence together' and 'thoughts, so far fetched as to be not only unexpected but unnatural.' In doing so he set out to re-discover the essence of the Metaphysical Poetry that he considered to be so 'highly civilized' and especially relevant to the complex society of his day. 'What it makes manifest, and this is its great importance in the history of civilisation, is the intimate relation between our philosophical beliefs and our private feelings and behaviour. That is, indeed, one way of testing our philosophical beliefs.' He developed a view of poetry with its apex at the time of Dante, when the mind and the emotions were fused in a sensibility that saw the 'senses thinking' or 'sensuous thought,' such that Dante could offer 'the most comprehensive and the most *ordered* presentation of emotion that has ever

been made,' partly as a consequence of the order and comprehensiveness of Thomist, or Catholic, theology and philosophy. The ongoing 'disintegration of the intellect' meant that this supremely 'metaphysical' moment was to be repeated, but to a much lesser degree of perfection in the Schools of Donne and of Baudelaire, while there was 'as sad a decline in subtlety of feeling between the Metaphysicals and Gray and Collins as in 'elegance and dignity' between them and the Romantics.'

The problem with espousing 'classicism' in the Twentieth century, perhaps even in the Eighteenth, was that whilst, 'the "romantic" mood is always with us, as an impulse to break down accepted conventions, the "classical" requires a settled and self-confident society with widely shared assumptions to sustain it' and it thus 'amounted to nothing more than another version of romantic nostalgia'. Eliot accepted some of this in his essay on Baudelaire, saying that '... a poet in a romantic age cannot be a "classical" poet except in tendency'. He also viewed the distinction as one, 'between the complete and the fragmentary, the adult and the immature, the orderly and the chaotic,' which depended on the willingness to accept external authority in morals, and political life: a distinction essentially between Protestantism and Catholicism, Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy. Romanticism is by contrast a sanctification of the imagination, akin to the sanctification of other faculties such as reason or empathy, which would be impossible to the orthodox believer, despite his recognition of the power of art to communicate his own message. This sanctification for Eliot was part of the 'disintegration of the intellect', part of the 'dissociation of sensibility' from the intellect: the abandonment of intellectual and spiritual engagement for the pure pursuit of self and sensation through creation, the rendering helpless of criticism through the rejection of external standards beyond apparent authenticity and power of expression. There had been a 'progressive deterioration of poetry...since the thirteenth century ...' which had 'produced the poetry of Dante, and of that greatest of English poets who came so soon after him ... Chaucer,' and, 'this deterioration was probably only one aspect of a general deterioration'.

Ted Hughes as Poet Laureate in 1993 described the metrical aspects of this history from another angle, the challenge to orthodox metre from unorthodox, the challenge to quantitative, classical or continental metre from native, alliterative forms, which he somewhat controversially related to the struggle between the English Church and 'what it would call Paganism resurgent'. This 'had been the dominant theme of European poetry ever since' Shakespeare, while Chaucer 'was the sensitive underside of the [Norman] courtiers,' whose 'innovation was to naturalise in an English poetry the alien culture of the court.' This was one of his last critical forays; in his first in 1962, in the last years of Eliot's life, he had himself addressed 'Context'. Speaking of the relationship between the French Revolution and the English Romantics, the apparent unrelatedness of the poetry of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Blake to the 'important issues', 'social and political' of the day and the later obviousness of that connection in spirit, Hughes remembered that 'strange observation' whereby 'Damon, quoted by Plato, says that the modes of music are nowhere altered without changes in the most important laws of the state'.

The attempt of these secular or godless religions to ignore religion and concentrate on making the best of this world has not however resulted in the successful transcendence of belief in the supernatural, merely the relaxation of the spiritual discipline theology provides as a bulwark against superstition

Formal qualities of works of art and their subject matter are thus closely, if mysteriously, related to the broader values they incarnate. The most profound criticism is that which elucidates this relationship most clearly, the relationship between beliefs and literature, whether that relationship is direct or indirect. Our subject is specifically the spiritual history of English, but this approach might be applied more widely, and indeed to the other arts, while a consideration of the spiritual pre-history of the literature, and a comparison with its sister literatures, especially the Latin tradition, will be important. Finally, the spiritual poverty of language is itself of the highest spiritual significance, the widespread use of jargon and code especially in academic presentations of intellectual and spiritual matters being a deliberate impairment of communication, a refusal to speak intelligibly, a practical rejection of the possibility of a common criticism and judgement, and a disdain for truth itself. And we are living with the consequences of that now.

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What Is To Be Done?

Looking for a Russian 'Mein Kampf'

Andrzej Nowak

According to *the Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (third edition, 1977) totalitarianism is 'a tendency of bourgeois political thought that unites *statism* and *authoritarianism*'. This combination seems ironically suitable for recent Moscow developments. There is the harassment of — mostly Jewish — entrepreneurs, the corrupt conduct of elections, the state control of television and other media, the wholesale centralization of power. Finally, there is the war on the Chechens as a separate symbol of the contemporary Russian mind.

There is, however, a different, but no less characteristic sign of historical regression: namely a revision of history as well. In 2003, the Ministry of Education noticed that some school history-books were critical of the current regime: these were immediately removed. Putin had all 107 school history books pruned, leaving teachers with only three approved ones. The most favoured makes no mention of Stalin's ethnic deportations (to avoid a 'distorting' connection with the Chechen war), largely reduces the Great Terror to 1936-38 and describes the Putin years in laudatory terms. Richard Pipes opines that the antidemocratic actions of the administration are not being inflicted on the Russian people but actually supported by them.

To understand Russian chauvinism and anti-liberalism and their part in Putin's success, we have to start from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Empire is not only the Russian Federation's Alpha — it is its Omega. Right after 1991, in a time of acute identity crisis, Russian policy defined the Russian Federation as the continuation of the USSR, effectively as a temporarily weakened superpower, pursuing its former greatness and bent on revenge. This identity, fixed as early as 1992-1993, supplies the matrix of Russian foreign policy and its inherent neo-imperialism.

There could be no greater contrast with post-Nazi Germany. Could anyone imagine contemporary Germany as a continuation of the Third Reich, desirous of its restoration? Hardly. But the Weimar parallel holds precisely at present. Political elites and ordinary Germans alike felt cheated and humiliated after 1918 by the Versailles treaty, which paved the way both for the revanchist ideology of *Mein Kampf* and the charismatic leader who would realize its imperial practice.

Is there a Russian *Mein Kampf* project? In the Russian totalitarian tradition the guiding question has been: *What is to Be Done?* — as posed first by Chernyshevsky, and then by Lenin himself. How can Russia's historical mission and imperial destiny be secured? The answer seems so vital for Russian self-esteem. Where are Russians looking for an answer?

Mostly in geopolitics, on *Mein Kampf* lines. This seems natural in the world's largest country, its sheer vastness the last indisputable symbol of its former power. The new geopolitics of the past 15 years has focused on the concept of *Eurasianism*, or as I prefer to call it, *Eurasism*. To date there have been three stages in its development.

In the last Gorbachov years and during the early Yeltsin presidency, Gorbachov preached the 'End of History' thesis, according to which the Soviet Union would be accepted in the 'Common European Home', and a kind of ideological convergence would triumph, along with geopolitical agreement with the US over Eastern and Central Europe, sealed during the Malta talks between Gorbachov and George Bush. Russia's elite expected Russian entry to the Western world, on equal terms with its leaders.

Russia's intellectual orphans were defensive in those days. Once again inspiration was to come from Russian tradition. Defeat in the Crimea had resulted in reforms aimed at catching up with the European *avant-guarde*. The work of Nicholas Danilevskii represented a reaction. The West, he claimed, would never accept Russia, but after cheating and depriving her of her natural sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, finally would try to steal Russian identity, her soul, by forced reforms and adaptations to the Western model. Danilevskii's civilisational pluralism was a counter to the Eurocentric vision of universal history. He might be considered the great grandfather of the modern Russian intellectual struggle against the cultural/political 'hegemony' of the West/USA/Europe.

His ideas were historically continued by a group of Russian emigrants who — after the Bolshevik Revolution — coined the actual term: Eurasianism. Their leader, Prince Nicholas Trubetskoi, might be called a *Eurasian Marx*. He printed his manifesto

in 1922 under the symbolic title: *Europe against Humanity*, where he stressed that Russia is the successor not only of the Byzantine-Orthodox tradition, but of the Mongol conquerors as well. By keeping her separate, Eurasiatic identity, Russia would be able to defend the whole world from Western claims to the role of the only civilisational model.

This concept found its passionate follower in the Soviet Union: Lev Gumilev, (the son of Anna Akhmatova and Nikolai Gumilev, two great Russian poets), GULAG inmate, and — after release — author of many books praising the Mongol heritage. Russia should become open to the influences coming from Asia rather than from Europe, the latter being always anti-Russian: this idea, propagated by Gumilev, earned him the title of the father of contemporary Eurasism. He died in the early 1990s, after seeing a great revival of anti-European sentiments.

They developed in the second stage of contemporary Russian, *Mein Kampf* style writing. It was opened in 1993 with the NATO bombardments of Serbian positions in Bosnia, with the first NATO enlargement talks, that were considered a further encroachment of the West into the Russian sphere of influence. Russia had not caught up with western standards of living, and felt herself estranged from the West. This new stage was given an appropriate name by an American book: *The Clash of Civilisations*. This was the time of the greatest triumphs of Eurasism in Russia.

Its peak came with *Foundations of Geopolitics*, first printed in 1997. If any single book could constitute a Russian *Mein Kampf*, it is this. Its author, Aleksandr Gel'evich Dugin, born in 1962, stresses his debt to Danilevsky and Gumilev. His family background is four generations of senior Russian military. Young Dugin travelled extensively to Western European countries where he established ties with leading figures of the European *Nouvelle Droite*. There he started his own variant of conservative revolution — just for Russia. Going back home, he launched his 'Pan-Russian Political Social Movement "Eurasia"', first convened in 2001. The Russian Ministry of Justice registered the 'Eurasia' movement, reported to have branches in fifty regions of Russia. In the meantime he founded his own publishing house, began to edit his own journal, being supported in all his efforts by the Russian General Staff. In 1998 Dugin was appointed geopolitical advisor to the speaker of the Russian State Duma. By 2001 he was close to the centre of power in Moscow, closely linked with elements in the Presidential Administration, the secret services, the military and the leadership of the State Duma.

He preaches a primordial conflict between sea-faring states and civilisations, now represented by American 'Atlanticism' — and land-based states and civilisations, now defended by Russia-Eurasia. Drawing extensively on interwar German geopolitics, he 'improves' its findings with the idea of Belgian geopolitics theorist, Jean Thiriart, who recognised the Russified Soviet Union as the final bastion of civilisation in Europe overrun by rootless American consumerism. Russia must regain her empire in Eurasia. Dugin depicted its boundaries in 2001: 'Eurasian space is the territory of Russia, the countries of the CIS and a part of the adjacent territories to the West and to the South, where there is no clear-cut geopolitical orientation'. That means: the whole territory of the Soviet Union and at least all its former outer empire — 'to the West and South'.

Russia must halt the disintegration of the state and its zone of influences and fortify her political centralization. Then she should find proper allies: Europe would be the best. The task of Moscow is to tear Europe away from the control of the U.S. (NATO), to assist European unification, and 'to strengthen ties with Central Europe under the aegis of the fundamental external axis Moscow-Berlin.'. The formation of a 'Franco-German bloc' is crucial. 'In Germany and France', Dugin asserted in 1997, 'there is a firm anti-Atlanticist tradition'. A Grand Alliance must embrace Russia and a Europe dominated by Germany, the two powers dividing spheres of influence in intermediate territories. They should eliminate altogether the Atlanticist *cordon sanitaire* in this region. The U.S. would be finally expelled from Eurasia.

the Ministry of Education noticed that some school history-books were critical of the current regime: these were immediately removed. Putin had all 107 school history books pruned, leaving teachers with only three approved ones

In March 1999 the speaker of the Russian State Duma urged that this doctrine be made a compulsory part of the school curriculum. Before the end of 2000 president Putin declared publicly: 'Russia has always perceived itself as a Eurasian country'. Dugin reacted enthusiastically: 'There will be a Eurasian millennium'.

So, are we really moving towards a thousand year Eurasia? In fact, Dugin's ideas correspond perfectly with Russian psychology: 'there is an alternative to the failed love affair with the West; there is the tradition of messianism; and there is the proximity of Asia... The regime stands in need of a new ideology, but of a traditional one, 'integral and great'. All of this is happily combined in Eurasianism' — noted a

commentator from *Moskovskie novosti* (May 1-14, 2001).

But President Putin soon seemed to follow a different path: that of reconciliation with the US, especially after September 11, 2001. Does it signify the end of Eurasian ideology's short career? To understand this paradox, we must recall that Dugin is not a completely independent political thinker: he has been sent with a mission — first to the West, in late 1980s, then to his own country. He was sent by his KGB patrons, just as the oligarchs were sent by their KGB patrons to tend and to multiply the Soviet state assets — and now are asked to give them back to the owner. Dugin does not influence state policy, he just serves his patrons, and he has done his job well.

But now there is a new stage, the third one, in which Eurasist ideology gains a new meaning. It might be called the *Revenge of History,* this time after the title of a Russian book, published by academic philosopher, Alexander Panarin. This stage coincides with Putin's ascendancy but, more importantly, with change in the international arena. It is not the Russian position that changed, but that of the West, or rather the US and Europe followed the lines taken by Russia previously. The threat of militant Islam pushed the border between good and evil southward, and this change confirmed that the Russian cause has been just. The West (if it still exists) became more 'Russian' and not vice versa. Instead of talking about human rights, western values not accepted as universal in Russia, President Bush, after the terrorism of September 11, declared a new war. President Putin, while eliminating his own 'terrorists' — that is Chechens, gets applause from the West: from the US or from the 'old Europe'. At the same time a growing split between the Paris-Berlin axis and Washington makes room for a new, and promising, revival of Russian imperialism.

Where will the Russian *troika* run in this new, favourable situation? As Zbigniew Brzeziński reminds us, Putin's regime is more like Mussolini's Fascism than the more truly totalitarian Third Reich or the Soviet Union. Just as *Il Duce* centralized political controls over the economy without nationalizing it, 'evoked national greatness, discipline, and exalted myths of an allegedly glorious past', so President Putin 'is trying to blend the traditions of the Cheka with Stalin's wartime leadership, with Russian Orthodoxy's claims to the status of the Third Rome, with Slavophile dreams of a single large Slavic state ruled from the Kremlin.'

Putin still does not need his own 'Mein Kampf' — just like *Il Duce*. But in the intellectual and political atmosphere that his power stirs in Russia, and with his political agenda of a 'civilized revenge' for the humiliation of the Russian/Soviet imperial dignity, there is still a potential for something more 'ambitious'...

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On Managerialism

David Webb

To the chagrin of many conservatives, repression of free speech and the pursuit of social engineering have characterised both Labour and Conservative administrations in the United Kingdom for several decades. Leaders and officials of the Conservative Party all think that formal electoral democracy needs to be manipulated to manufacture consent for rapid cultural change along the lines set out by the liberal left. Some conservatives have argued that the solution to such 'managed democracy' is a rolling back of the state, which has played a key role in funding social engineering. A 'rolling back' of the state is not the right approach to defending liberty because a 'managerial revolution' described by the US Trotskyist-turned-conservative, James Burnham, has transformed both public and private sectors in a way that requires conservatives to take on the managerial culture of the private sector as well.

The key to understanding state and society is to analyse the social élite as a whole, and not just 'the government'. We are constantly told that we live in 'democracies', and we do indeed participate in an electoral process once every four years. But, as the US conservative, Sam Francis, who died recently, pointed out, in an exposition of what he called the Machiavellian tradition (the theory of élites of Pareto, Mosca and Burnham, drawing on the ideas of Machiavelli), democracy is not a distinct form of government, but a form of oligarchical rule. According to the writers of the Machiavellian tradition, all

societies are ultimately run either by aristocracies or by oligarchies; democracy as such is not possible in a complex society. Furthermore, the oligarchy owns the means of mass communication and can lead public debate. Even where the oligarchy's preferred candidates fail to be elected to public office, most of the business of running society continues in the oligarchy's hands. The key question is not the way in which the government (narrowly defined) is selected, but rather how the social élite is constituted and how it governs society.

A new social class, the managerial élite, has risen to power in Western society. Francis argued that the American élite had been transformed, boosted in particular by the presidencies of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt, who both sought to wrest power from the Congress and to expand the size and competencies of the bureaucratic élite. The First World War and the experience of the inter-war years gave a huge boost to support for the bureaucratic government that has since been installed in all Western societies. Policies ostensibly designed to improve the lot of the unfortunate have had the fortuitous effect of boosting public-sector employment and requiring more consultants and managers. The real parasites of the welfare society, however, are not the system's client-recipients of welfare, who are expected to vote for managerial policies, but the members of the bureaucracy themselves.

However, it was not just the state bureaucracy that was entrenching its control over society; as corporations became larger, so they too fell under the sway of a bureaucratic élite, with the result that, for Burnham, Western society was no longer controlled by a 'bourgeoisie', or capitalist class. The larger scale of industrial and commercial operations today has fostered a new type of professional worker, trained in corporate management. It is not necessarily in the interests of the managerial élite to reduce the numbers and salaries of managers. However, these people cannot be dispensed with. A single capitalist owner cannot manage a large company single-handedly. Bureaucracy is thus not a creature of the public sector alone, but a significant a feature of the private sector.

Francis explained that the mass media, churches, the universities, the police force and the armed forces have come to be controlled by very similar élite groups: the Church of England needs accountants and personnel managers just as much as any multinational corporation. The private sector also increasingly resembles the public sector in bureaucratic waste. Social engineering with its political campaigns has resulted in a mushrooming of related élites in the private sector. Under 'equal opportunities' legislation all companies in the UK are required to take part in such campaigns. Politics is now largely in the hands of experts who have worked in no other field. Senior politicians have 'handlers', advisers drawn from the pro-managerial intelligentsia who can determine in advance what does and does not constitute a 'gaffe'.

This transformation of the workplace has rippled from the boardroom down to the lowest rungs of management, made easier in this country by the dumbing down of the higher education system. Universities, as well as conducting 'research' that maps out policy directions for the élite, perform an important function in preparing, not just future members of the oligarchy itself, but also lower-level managers who throughout their careers will strongly support the oligarchy's social and political agenda. Managerial positions provide employment for many of the middle-class voters who once voted Conservative.

Conservative governments have accepted the growth of the bureaucratic élite just as much as governments dominated by other parties, resulting in a continual dilution in the aims of the conservative movement as it adapts itself to aims of the bureaucratic élite. An analysis of society is needed before drafting a political programme. As a former Trotskyist, Burnham analysed society in class terms. He concluded that, just as in Marxist theory, feudalism gave way to bourgeois capitalism, so a further transition has taken place, to managerial capitalism, run by a new managerial élite.

In the 19th century, liberal conservatism was a stable fusion of old-style Toryism, which was characterised by support for the monarchy and the Church of England, and classical liberalism, which implied support for the free market and individual liberty. Most industrialists were self-made men, not corporate managers. Government did not tell companies whom to employ, whether in the pursuit of civil and political equality or otherwise. Education and healthcare were in private hands or provided by the church. Conservative moral values remained relevant to the bourgeoisie, as businesses and other wealth could be expected to be handed down within the family. Interestingly, Francis explained that, although the rather looser moral and sexual code of the new managerial élite has thrown up ethical problems and is not yet a stable moral code, it is incorrect to see the new moral code as a sign of civilisational decline; rather, it represents the coming to power of a new élite. Members of the new oligarchy *are* concerned to provide their offspring with good educational opportunities. Nevertheless, membership in the managerial group does not depend on family connections: no senior civil servant or personnel manager plans to pass his job on to a family member.

The managerial élite see society as meritocratic. Family values, often important to individual members of the oligarchy, are therefore of tangential interest to the élite as a whole.

The irrelevance of traditional moral values to the new managerial élite is mirrored by their ignorant rejection of the role of a common culture in social cohesion. Francis explained that the ideology of multi-culturalism reflected the thinking of the managerial élite which has come to see society in increasingly 'technocratic' terms. The managerial élite is now increasingly operating globally, so national cultures and cultural clashes within the population are a problem to be smoothed away. The 20th century produced a truly global economy, with tastes and fashions in all countries increasingly modified in line with a 'McWorld' vision of corporate capitalism. The need for such multinational firms to pay lip service to multiculturalism belies the extent to which the world is being homogenised. If national borders register at all with the senior executives of such companies, it is as obstacles only. The problem for the rest of society, however, is that the stance of the new élite removes the basis for individual liberty, which can only be founded on a nation-state with a common culture. The absence of an accepted cultural compact affords opportunities to a bureaucratic élite to develop in both the public and private sectors to 'manage' cultural conflict or even, as they hope, to foster rapid cultural change.

In a genuine nation-state, the role of culture is to bind society together. Culture is, or at least, should be, those things that British people in Britain have in common, and includes history, language, religion, food, dress and manners. In an oxymoronic multicultural society, such things divide society. Conservatives have often hoped that multiculturalism is not working. This view is mistaken. The more multiculturalism appears to be foundering, the more culture needs to be managed by the élite. The more cultural conflict there is, the more employment, not just at the top level, but also in middle-class positions for the hangers-on of the oligarchy, in central government, local government and all companies of any size, there will be. The new élite is comfortable with an enhanced role in government for quangos and even transnational bureaucracies based abroad, like the European Union, as they encourage technocratic solutions to political problems and create managerial job opportunities. A greater role for the judiciary in striking down legislation and pushing cultural change also reflects managerial instincts that the democratic process should not be allowed to impinge on policy making. Oddly enough, electoral democracy is an article of faith, reflecting their belief that technocratic government can gain political legitimacy by operating within a bloodless democracy. In managerial eyes, a democratic mechanism *as a form of social management* is an indispensable ingredient in rational governance.

The Conservative Party's response to managerial politics has been largely to follow its instinct for power and abandon policies that contradict the trend towards social control by bureaucracies, whether domestic or transnational, public or private. However, this *ad hoc* approach undermines attempting to defend our traditional liberties. Modern managerialism cannot be eliminated, but we must conceive policies to take on this group. Announcing an early withdrawal from the European Union would show clearly that the party was embarking on a head-on assault on managerial politics. Plans to reduce the size of the state are frequently said — reflecting the propaganda resources of the managers — to be unrealistic. We must respond by dusting off plans to close down entire departments of central government known for their involvement in political manipulation, like the Department of Education. All central government units involved in social engineering should be investigated and numbers of managerial consultants should be cut drastically back.

Quangos such as the Commission for Racial Equality need to be closed down. Judges who have built their careers on unconstitutional judicial activism need to be replaced, as do police chief constables personally associated with the promotion of multiculturalism. The BBC needs to be reorganised, sacking all managers who have abused their control of our public service broadcaster to promote multiculturalism; the BBC needs to be given a statutory duty, enforceable in the courts by the lowliest citizen, to promote British, and only British, culture. Local Education Authorities should all be dispensed with, with some of the money saved going directly to schools. The council tax should be abolished and local governments required to live within their block grants. Individual citizens need the right to hold local politicians individually legally and financially accountable for money wasted on social engineering and politically correct causes.

Conservatives often aver that privatisation can help to address the dominance of managerial politics — see Dennis O'Keefe's argument in his paper published by the Institute of Economic Affairs, *Political Correctness and Public Finance*, that political correctness has flourished because of state-financing of education. However, the problem is not public-sector education as such, but the nature of the managerial society. Were the entire higher education sector privatised tomorrow, students would still take out loans to attend courses that improved their chances of taking up positions in the managerial élite — many of which require an

adherence to managerial politics. We cannot merely 'roll back the state' and allow the managerial politics of the private sector to continue. We must undermine the managerial class by closing down politicised non-subjects in higher education, and cutting the number of university students. We need to pull the rug from under the feet of the middle-class managers by outlawing political campaigns, whether in the churches, the universities or the workplace. Anti-harassment codes that challenge the dominance of British culture in this country must be made illegal. Freedom of speech and freedom of association must be established in law. Anti-discrimination suits in employment tribunals and the law courts need to be abolished.

Conservative policies need to reflect a more challenging attitude towards the managerial authorities. Unquestioning support for the police force was appropriate during the days of Dixon of Dock Green. Nowadays, the police force is a fully paid-up part of the managerial élite, playing a thoroughly discreditable role in the enforcement of controls on free speech and free expression. Our attitude towards closed-circuit TV cameras, identity cards, stop-and-search powers and speed cameras needs to reflect our opposition to the new élite. Finally, we need to oppose absurd military adventures designed to impose so-called democracy on far-away countries. Liberty is much more important to conservatives than lip service to democracy. Recent interventions abroad have been coupled with the intensification of social controls at home in the cause of the prevention of 'terrorism'. Identity cards and telephone taps entrench and deepen the control of the managers. Such is the perverse internal logic of managerial politics.

David Webb is the Manager of a publishing company

History Began Here

Lee Rotherham

Hollywood has today returned to the land of Mesopotamia. Cinema goers who follow the life trail of *Alexander* will gaze in awe at the conqueror's entry into Babylon, the vast and dreamy metropolis. But dust has long since settled on the finery, and the pomp of yesterday is silent. In the empty arena, Macedonian guardsmen until recently had been replaced by Coalition Force Poles.

There was a time when the litter of history in Iraq was treated with either curiosity or contempt. Three centuries ago, the trailblazing travellers from the West saw the sites of the two rivers almost as an extension of the Grand Tour; an opportunity for an experience, and perhaps a souvenir. There are reports of excavations being undertaken as social events, with tea being served over the exposed bones of princes. Tourist archaeology gave way to the dedicated amateur, and finally to the professional. At the same time, our understanding of the mass of sites has increased exponentially. We have come to learn the names of monarchs in this land where in ours we can but reflect upon the mute skeleton of a henge, or a silent grassy mound wrapped in fog: imposing, but still. Now we know the land of the two rivers as a birthplace of culture, a world revealed by its cuneiform tablets and carved boundary stones. More striking in the modern age, we remember it as the place of fantastic art and awesome ziggurats that rise out of the baked desert. A stroll in the British Museum reminds us of its treasures that stretch back to the dawn of organised commonwealth, and roll on like the Tigris through Sumer, Assyria, Babylon and Persia, Greece and the Byzantine borderlands, the Abbassids ...

Tragically, with political disintegration has come disorder and loss. A nation's heritage is always at high risk at moments of arrogance and barbarism, when the links with the past are broken. We remember the devastation of Afghanistan's national museum (and indeed of its celebrated Buddhas); there is the surrender of Angkor Watt to the jungle; Ceaucescu bulldozed and Mussolini tarmacked their highways through history. Iraq has suffered likewise. When the old regime crumbled, the vacuum provided an opportunity for the looters. We all saw and were shocked by the TV shots of public buildings being pillaged as people rushed out to grab 'their Iraq back', quite literally. Much of what was taken was restored in the aftermath, as conscience crept in to replace the vanished fear. With the restoration of ordered government, museums have once again come under the protective arm of the state. Curators keep watch over the nation's accumulated treasures. Civilisation has seemingly returned, but the protective cloak of the state has its limits.

Dhi Qar is the province that lies to the north west of Basrah. It is the home of some of the greatest archaeology in Iraq, including fabled Ur, Eridu, Uruk and Larsa, but also to around 800 known sites, most

of which have still to be excavated. It is also home to 12 of the British Museum's 48 Most at Risk locations in the country. Most relevant, it is where the Italian Brigade is located. This means it falls within the Divisional sector that is run by a British general. In other words, it is our shared responsibility. Dhi Qar's provincial capital is An Nasiriyah. During one of the occasional bouts of conflict with Muqtadah al-Sadr, Mahdi Militiamen rushed the museum compound and trashed the place. Looters targeted the library, burning more than 4000 books, maps and documents. The curators are still trying to set the place straight. The difficulties run far deeper. Archaeologists are facing a constant fight against the diggers. Armed with little more than a shovel and a bottle of water, someone can decamp to the middle of the desert and take pot luck. He might make a few dollars for his family or himself; the real payback comes down the line, when the cuneiform tablets he steals could make thousands. There is a lot of potential profit once the goods get on to the overseas markets. Who knows what those dollars end up buying back in Iraq.

There have been attempts to fight back. The Italians, with their expertise in combating the tomboroli in their own country, have been heroic. Carabinieri have been deployed locally and done the best of a difficult task. But their attempts to cooperate with the Dhi Qar Director of Archaeology, Abd al-Amr Hamdani, are naturally hampered by the dictates of geography. How can you protect so many locations at once?

The answer is simple: to get the Iraqis to look after them. There is plenty of will: in the aftermath of the burning of the museum, local Iraqi newspapers denounced the pillage, and a demonstration was held in protest. The antiquities team is prepared to do the job. The problem is, of course, finding support from above. Understandably, Baghdad's priorities, as with Washington's and Whitehall's, for the moment lie in simpler stuff: feeding the people; supplying drinking water and electricity; stopping car bombs; and delivering a constitution.

But that doesn't stop *us* from helping. A year ago, I was in the country, having been mobilised as an army reservist. I saw the people on the ground; their motivation was obvious. All they wanted was the backing. Many of the sites already have monitoring watchtowers. Hamdani's plan involves hiring local guards. Under their current status, Facilities Protection Service personnel can carry weapons and detain people for up to twelve hours. However, there are too few of them at present to act as an effective network of spotters. They are at present undertrained, exposed, intimidated, and without backup. But linked by walkie talkie, spotters on top of these towers can keep an eye on an ancient city, and call for support when needed. Best of all, manpower costs in Iraq are low. For want of a few thousand dollars, these ancient sites are being carved apart before archaeologists can even learn their names.

There are other gaps that must be filled. An Nasiriyah's museum needs to be restored, as a focal point for civic pride. There needs to be more international cooperation on relic traffickers. We may consider reviewing our own laws on plunder, and cooperate more closely with the auction houses over provenance. Today Dhi Qar in the British zone needs our help. While our soldiers and diplomats help sort out the land of Saddam, the cultural heritage — and Iraq's future as a tourist haven — is being sapped. We are losing the trace of Gilgamesh, and the echoes grow ever more mute in the land of the Flood.

Lee Rotherham served with the TA in Iraq
Readers who are interested in learning more about how to help the Dhi Qar archaeological team in terms of supply of books, or funding a watchtower, can contact the author c/o Skeptika, PO Box 50160, London SW1P 3XU.

Public Choice

Hadrian Wise

What does it take to win a contract in the public sector these days? I ask because I recently had a proposal turned down by a major governmental organisation, and although it was not the best proposal ever written, the 'feedback' I received on it was unsettling, especially when the work we were bidding for was an extension of what we had previously done for the same organisation to their express satisfaction. My proposal had failed, I was told by a representative, because it was not detailed enough, too few employees were described, and too little was said about 'equal opportunities' and 'diversity'.

On the first point, I suppose they were right: the proposal was not detailed. It was only six pages long, whereas the four other proposals they considered

were apparently each about 50 pages long, describing exhaustively how the firms submitting them would 'manage' every stage of the 'process'. On the second point, they were right again: I gave brief profiles of only myself and a colleague, and we were not enough, even though I had previously done the work single-handedly. And on 'diversity', they were also right: I had said only that we abided by the law, refraining from waxing lyrical about the joys of diversity and neglecting to submit a 'diversity profile' of our small firm's ten staff — far too bald. They applied their criteria fairly, but were they not bizarre criteria?

Proposals to private-sector firms have to be concise and readable, avoiding unnecessary detail, stressing the benefits the work will bring and using jargon sparingly. Otherwise, they will not be read, let alone accepted. Senior managers do not have time to wade through acres of dense prose, neither do they have the expertise or operational experience to judge the detail of how you will do for them what you do, they just want to know *what* you will do and why it will be good for them. While a sprinkling of jargon is unfortunately *de rigueur* in business correspondence today, most businessmen, even those who use a lot of jargon themselves, are grateful whenever they are presented with a document written in plain English, the more so the more senior they are. The 'diversity' or otherwise of their suppliers' staff is irrelevant; it is their competence that matters.

Yet in the public sector, it seems, people have the time and energy to read absurdly detailed 50-page proposals for work of doubtful value in the first place that meander on irrelevantly about 'diversity'. Why? It is yet another unintended consequence of government's counter-productive efforts to make itself more efficient and give better value for money to the tax-payer, redoubled since the publication of the Gershon Report, which allocated £6bn 'efficiency savings' to better procurement of goods and services. It started when the government first introduced compulsory competitive tendering to ensure a 'level playing field' for firms wanting to work for public-sector organisations, so that instead of relying on cosy relationships with established suppliers, public-sector managers would have to consider proposals from companies who *might* be able to do it better, more cheaply. This made sense, but also meant managers had to spend time and money putting jobs out to tender and considering the proposals they received, delaying the work and potentially making it more expensive. After all this, they might end up making the wrong decision anyway.

Ah, government thinks, but if we can *ensure* they make the right decision, we should save money after all. But how to ensure it? Step forward the Office for Government Commerce. This slightly shadowy body, responsible for securing Gershon's efficiency savings, lays down guidelines by which public-sector organisations should 'manage' the 'tendering process'. What are these guidelines? I urge you to visit the Office for Government Commerce's web-site, www.ogc.gov.uk, have a look round the Byzantine electronic labyrinth to be found there, and write and tell me if you have the faintest idea what a public-sector manager putting out a contract to tender is supposed to do — I am little the wiser after hours stumbling around there. There is guideline upon guideline upon guideline. As soon as you reach one set of guidelines, you are directed to another more detailed set of guidelines explaining how you can meet each of the original guidelines. If, for example, you click on the 'Successful Delivery Toolkit', which helpfully 'brings together policy and best practice in a single point of reference', then click on 'Procurement Lifecycle', which 'sets out the process for acquisition with EC procurement rules' (now don't tell me you didn't realise 'Europe' would be involved), then click on 'Supplier Selection', which 'covers the process of assessing suppliers during the initial procurement stage', you are told under 'Assessment of Responses' that the EC Rules provide a list of the criteria that may be used 'where they are relevant to the delivery of the contract', and then directed to OGC guidance on Supplier Selection (which is where you thought you were), Procurement, and 'Questions for supplier assessment', a 22-page list of criteria, including 'diversity', to take into account when choosing suppliers, but presumably only where they are 'relevant', for which one supposes there must be other guidelines somewhere else.

Anybody who takes this stuff seriously is going to spend a colossal amount of time choosing suppliers. Any potential supplier will have to spend a colossal amount of time convincing him they are worthy of it. And time, unfortunately, means man-hours, which in the public sector means tax-payers' money. Most sizable public-sector bodies (NHS trusts, local education authorities) have entire *departments* devoted to procurement. Even if these people are invariably choosing the best-value supplier for every job, the cost of employing them may well exceed any saving made — who knows?

It is, in any case, a big if. To be chosen, a supplier has to jump through all the hoops the OGC says it must, describing in enormous detail precisely what it will do, and showing how it meets any other criteria (which may involve 'diversity' or 'sustainability') deemed 'relevant' by the procurement people. Smaller firms, by and large, simply don't have the man-hours available for this, especially when it may not actually bring in any revenue. It is only large, established firms, and

perhaps firms that specialise in public-sector work, who can do it. So the enormous effort put in by successive governments to break up cosy oligopolies in public-sector tendering has created the perfect conditions for cosy oligopolies to flourish. It could be that the firms chosen under this system are the best for the job but equally, it could be otherwise, as describing a job in the peculiar language of public-sector management, and doing it well and cheaply, are different tasks requiring different 'skills'. So all the money spent trying to *ensure* we get the best suppliers for the job has been wasted.

There is a better way to do public-sector procurement, to run the public sector in general, but it would take an almost unimaginable change in thinking. It is simply to employ people with common sense, let them use their iniative when making decisions, and let their managers use *their* judgement when evaluating those decisions. It wouldn't bring us perfection, but it would be a less complicated, less expensive, and for the workers less stultifyingly Kafkaesque route to imperfection.

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The Art of Musical Performance

Andrew Earis

The BTI Centre for Performing Arts in Raleigh, North Carolina, was recently the setting for an unusual performance when an audience gathered to hear the famous pianist Alfred Cortot play Chopin's Prelude in G major. There is, of course, nothing unusual about a piano recital, except in this case: Cortot had died some forty years before. This was no supernatural experience, nor was it a recording of Cortot's playing. There was a grand piano there, but the piano stool remained unoccupied throughout the performance; instead, the piano was operated by a computer. Eighty-year-old recordings of Cortot's playing had been studied in detail in an attempt to reproduce digitally on a computer-controlled piano the so-called 'Cortot sound', that is, Cortot's style of playing, ranging from the precise pattern of notes he played to the pressure he exerted on the piano keys.

This concept of reproducing an individual's style of musical performance may seem strange at the outset but viewed pragmatically, it is hardly surprising that we should want to use modern technology in this way. It is only in the twentieth century that we have been able to record world-class performances for both ourselves and future generations to enjoy. Music is unlike other art forms in one respect: literature and works of art, for example, have obvious and direct physical manifestations: the printed page or the painted canvas. Music differs from these in that, for most people, the physical manifestation of music lies in its performance. While for most art forms there may be a direct link between the art form and the individual appreciating it, such as that between book and reader or painting and viewer, with music a performer must provide the link between the written score and the listener. Why, then, should we not attempt to recreate the performances of past masters? To recreate an individual's performance, however, we must consider what it is that makes a musical performance successful.

The success or the 'art' of great musical performance is the way in which a performer expresses the meaning of a work to a listener. The only guide a performer has in carrying out this task is the written score; this indicates the notes that must be played, along with their durations, as well as overall markings for the piece such as basic tempo, dynamics and other performance directions. Musical notation in itself, though, is often found wanting: a rendition of a piece that is faithful in every way to the notated score, an exact reproduction of the printed page, is likely to be mechanical and lifeless in performance. This is because a performer's task is not just to play the score accurately, but also to interpret the music for himself and make expressive choices in his performance which will enable him to convey his interpretation of the work to the listener. This often involves adding to or deviating slightly from the notated score.

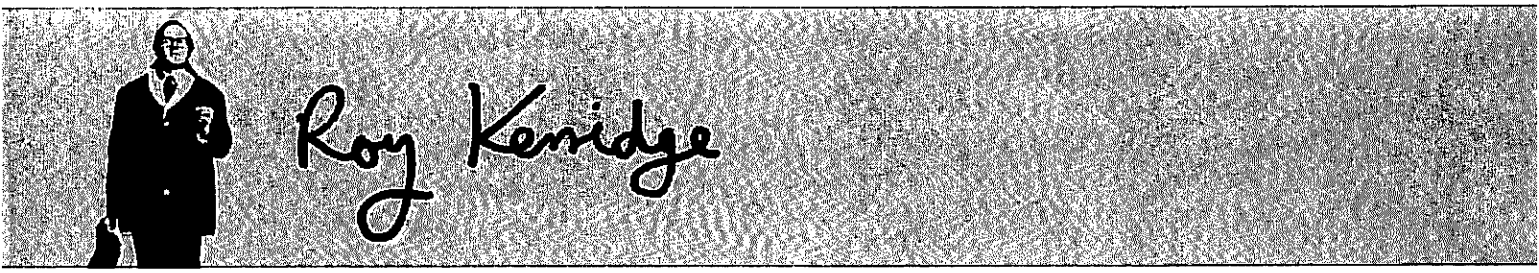
How does a performer make these choices? Interpretation of a piece can include assessing the musical intentions of the composer; such insights can be gained from the composer's manuscripts, letters and personal recordings if these exist. The performer must bring these insights and join them with his knowledge of the musical genre and understanding of the underlying structural and stylistic constraints of the piece in question. Ultimately, though, interpretation and expression in music are highly personal: although

the expressive element in any performance should lie within certain boundaries so as to be in keeping with the overall style of the piece and the period in which it was written, many choices as to the style and nature of the performance can only be made by the performer himself. No two performances, even when given by the same performer of the same piece, are ever exactly the same.

There are a number of musical devices that a performer can use to convey musical expression and meaning. At a basic mechanical level, the performer can control timing (when notes are played and released), dynamics (variations in the intensity of notes and chords), tone quality (timbre), articulation (the degree to which a performer detaches individual notes from one another), vibrato, pitch and, for a piano, pedalling. The nature and number of these features depends on the instrument being played and continuously evolve as the performance progresses. Any performance is a complex interaction between a number of these expressive devices.

We have seen that a combination of factors is brought into play in musical performance: an accurate rendition of the notated score, a performer's knowledge of the musical genre and understanding of the piece, as well as the performer's own interpretation of the piece through the use of various expressive devices. So is it really possible to capture the magic of an individual's performance purely by attempting to imitate the musical devices he uses?

Although re-creation of a particular individual's performance style may seem an exciting prospect to start with, a way of turning back time and recreating the excitement past generations felt when hearing a particular performer, it quickly becomes apparent that a digital reproduction of the musical devices that a performer uses, however accurate, is simply not enough. It would be rather simplistic to assume that we could digitally recreate all the elements that combine to make a successful musical performance. The true magic, the true 'art' of a musical performance lies not only in the accurate reproduction of a notated score or a combination of various musical devices, but in the aspects of musical performance that cannot be digitally reproduced: the highly personal and unique interpretation of a piece of music, as well as the electric atmosphere of a concert hall whose audience know they are in the presence of an accomplished musician.



I once read a novel by Disraeli, 'Contarini Fleming', in which the Ruritanian student hero goes wild over the works of Voltaire. He starts a Voltaire Society, and to his surprise, the more debauched and less serious students became eager members. In the holidays, the Voltaire Society secretly move into a ruined castle and vow to 'live by the principles of Voltaire'.

Without quite meaning to, they swiftly become brigands, harrying the peasant farmers near their retreat and stealing from them. Just as they are about to kidnap a peasant bride at the church door and have their way with her, the soldiery arrive and they all run away to their homes. The high ideals of youth always seem to end this way. I was entranced by books of working class life, and declared myself 'working class'. No one had the wit to tell me to do some work to prove it. Middle class youths who declare themselves working class never build walls or even dig gardens. They just behave like hooligans. If the purpose of the working class is to annoy the older generation of the middle class, then hooligans must be super workers. I have never read much Marx, but I believe he considers that the function of the working class is not to work — that would be too obliging by far — but to overthrow the middle class and everyone else and give the key of the country to Marxists.

There is a type of middle class socialist who sees no dignity or use in labour, and regards every workman as a sufferer under capitalism who must be set free and allowed to go to university. This philosophy has reached English workers themselves, hence the welcome now given to Poles who are still willing to work. Laws passed to protect workers from capitalists, and in particular from capitalists bent on sacking them, have led to workers hired on contract, with no permanency or security. Northerners come south on

contract, as the idea of work persists more strongly far away from the south of England. Recently I went to stay in Plymouth, and found not only my boarding house but every boarding house in the street of small hotels was filled with Northern or Midland workmen, all skilled or semi-skilled.

'There is a big construction going on in Plymouth up by the bombed church,' the waitress told me at breakfast, 'it'll be offices and a shopping centre, I think'.

The 'bombed church', preserved as a war memorial on a busy traffic island, is just that. Plymouth was badly hit in the war. Near the dockyard you can see where bombs had been dropped in a line, going downhill to the sea. Every bomb-site has now sprouted a council house in a long street once composed entirely of elegant Victorian villas.

The contract workmen in my hotel street 'worked hard and played hard'. On Friday, the hotel bars did a roaring trade. Semi-nude girls appeared as if from nowhere and led the mostly married men to the night clubs of the town centre. Later the men returned, drunk and staggering. Local Plymouth men appeared to be taken on contract for unskilled heavy labouring. Heard on a bus: 'Capper was laid off for fighting'.

Lady: 'Oh no!'

Man: 'Fraid so. He'll get twelve months wages but knowing him it won't last long'.

Conservative Classic — 20

Richmal Crompton's 'Just William'

David Ashton

> The hope of the Sunday school, feeling that he had been hiding his light under a bushel too long, said: 'I think it's cruel killin' wild animals.'
> 'Oh, do you?' said William. 'I s'pose you'd rather they killed you?'
> 'Yes, I would,' said the young humanitarian unctuously. He was attacked by his neighbours on either side and subsided temporarily, rubbing his bruises, his face wearing an expression of smug satisfaction as of one who has suffered for his faith.
> 'Well, if there's no more hecklin' about Conservatism,' said William, 'we'll have the votin' . . . Hands up those who want to vote Conservative.' Every member of the audience immediately raised a hand.
> 'That's me,' said William complacently. 'I'm Prime Min'ster now . . .'
> 'What are you goin' to do for us first?' said the boy with red hair.
> 'Do for you?' repeated William indignantly. 'I'm not goin' to do anythin' for you. I'm goin' to *rule*.'

If Walter Bagehot was right in saying the very 'essence' of Toryism was 'enjoyment', the magnitude of merriment produced by millions of 'William books' might alone entitle the series to a place in our classical constellation. The typical conservative temperament, valuing fun and friendship, familiar customs and private pursuits, higher than obsessive ideological campaigning, feels naturally at home with entertaining fiction of this kind. Devoured by children and adults alike, these stories have evoked expressions of affection especially, as it happens, from so-called 'right-wing' admirers, among them Auberon Waugh, Colin Welch and Lord Tebbit.

William was 'conceived' by Richmal Crompton Lamburn, a classics teacher turned novelist, and Thomas Henry Fisher, whose memorable illustrations have influenced cartoonists like the *Daily Telegraph*'s Garland. Their imaginary child has become a favourite figure in popular literature and byword allusion, somewhere in iconolatry between Sherlock Holmes and Billy Bunter, and an inspiration to other writers. Despite serendipitous plots, more like farcical sitcoms than ordinary juvenile adventures, the central character's 'exuberant verbosity' skilfully combines credible content with ear-sensitive timing. The actor Martin Jarvis, who adapted about a quarter of all 38 volumes for radio, said of Richmal Crompton: 'The maturity of her narrative line was just as identifiable as P.G. Wodehouse and Charles Dickens'.

A clergyman's daughter, she was raised to respect middle-class standards, which her unkempt and unruly 'rapscallion' tests to hilarious limits. Described as 'true blue' by a close friend, she actively supported the Conservatives. Soon after she died, a Bow Group article used her unique creation for light-hearted remarks on party policy, but a feminist literary scholar, Alison Light, noted in *Forever England* that her work would bear serious investigation for its 'conservative modernity'. William stories reflect, albeit in caricature rather than idyll, the self-contained serenity of much outer-suburban and village life that actually continued in this 'fairest isle' for a protracted period alongside changes in fashion and class structure.

As any fool knows, 11 year-old William Brown stays the same age — along with his 'secret society' of 'Outlaws', his censorious family and comical villagers — throughout the fifty years that ran nationally from Bonar Law until Edward Heath, several notably quixotic episodes coming in the intervening wartime period under Churchill. During his persistent contests with authority the original scowling scamp gradually 'grows' into a relatively charming rascal, many of whose escapades eventually become more public spirited, if no less uproarious — 'rescuin' people in deadly peril or nippin' crimes in the bud' and 'suchlike'.

Not just a 'nasty rough boy' with a hearty appetite and muddy clothing, William exhibits other junior male traits that the author fully understands and then dramatically exaggerates. Hence his instinctive appeal to real children, particularly whenever he rebels against pomposity and hypocrisy with practical jokes or vociferous argument. The young egoist, who breaks greenhouse windows and fights insufferable rivals, is no 'mindless vandal with nothing to do'. He is a captain of private enterprise, and a symbol of curiosity, independence and showmanship. Though 'wore out' by foreign languages and schoolroom geometry, his fertile brain repeatedly invents schemes to supplement his easily blown pocket money, from funfairs ('Hollydays at Home') to psychotherapy ('Mental Trubbles Kured').

His abundant ambitions for a future 'career' embrace even membership of parliament, since he can make speeches on 'nearly everything' and would get paid anyway, but he would prefer an outdoor life — as an explorer, admiral, space traveller, or famous detective. Such premature flights of fancy lead him, for instance, to the disguised entrapment in the Old Barn of a harmless entomologist with a mysterious attaché-case:

> 'Hail, Comrade!' he said, holding his moustache on with one hand and making a sweeping gesture with the other. 'I'm Stalin come over to England to fetch thy papers about the atom bomb. I'm flyin' back to Russia 'ere nightfall an' I'll take them along with me. Thee will be well paid for thy trouble, but I haven't any change on me at present. I'll send thee a postal order from Russia when I get there. Hist! Not a word! Give me the papers and begone!'

This is not the only occasion that finds him in earnest combat against Soviet conspiracies.

Richmal Crompton frequently satirises starry-eyed do-gooders and reform-mad utopians, like the educationist who advocates 'No Discipline but Suitable Mixing' or the tradition-hating protest marchers from 'Newlick University'. Excluded by brother Robert from a 'bolshevist' society, William sets up his own 'branch' in retaliation, and later follows the fascists by obtaining coloured material from sister Ethel for 'Green shirt' armbands, the collapse in the first case of equality in ownership by his literal redistribution of property, and the outcome in the second of applying the colony concept of living-space to an empty garden, providing humorous lessons all round. In another yarn a recognisable Miss Cliff worries about 'offending' her Persian guest: 'I'm afraid the carpet's Axminster... Ought the tea-table to face the east? I believe that's an Oriental custom. If he doesn't sit on the floor, I wonder if he'll object to a leather chair? Or is that Hindoos?' However well-meant, William's grunting impersonation of the visitor under an improvised veil is not perhaps an idea entirely acceptable in today's vibrating poly-ethnic 'society', to a children's librarian or even a new police chief.

While his creator avoids using William as an overt mouthpiece, her personal distaste for vulgar politicking is detectable when his untutored yet resourceful mind is excited by current affairs, whether 'penshuns for boys' or 'savin' the country'. After backing the Liberals at the hustings in the expectation of cheap food, he is assured by the local Conservative candidate that his party has a similar policy. 'You?' he said. 'The Rackshunaries? But — if you're both tryin' to make bread cheaper why're you fightin' each other?' 'You know,' said Mr Cheytor, 'I wouldn't bother about politics if I were you. They're very confusing mentally . . .' And William's own 'Gen'ral Election' ends with the reflection: 'I'm sick of politics altogether. There isn't any *sense* in 'em. I'd sooner be a Red Indian [*sic*] any day.'

An assured patriotism nevertheless suffuses the genre. It emerges quite explicitly when William and his loyal little platoon of Ginger, Henry and Douglas plan an exemplary welcome for an airman 'decorated by the King' and, subsequently, parade a picture of the newly crowned Elizabeth II through the town with red, white and blue bunting.

Richmal Crompton did not live to see the accelerated explosion of the changes in technology, morality and taste scarcely touched upon in her final output. When William considered 'pop singers' or a 'television invention' these were minor phenomena in his objective universe, not a powerful combination that harmfully overwhelms the subjective culture of childhood imagination and behaviour. He could climb trees and meet tramps without 'safety' precautions. The little 'savage' opposed to table manners at any rate had a

dining table in his house, and if 'anyone would think' his father was 'a communist' from the way he 'treated' his son, at least he had a father, who was the married breadwinner for a 'bourgeois' household.

William's world, of course, has largely disappeared: the global superstore has crippled the small farmer and vacuumed the market town; massive motorways have replaced rural railways; condoms and cannabis claim precedence over conkers and catapults in the playground. Old soldiers are passing away, and far fewer vicars come to tea. Even Bromley's green spaces that inspired the particular scenery are under direct threat.

The author's death in 1969 leaves an unspoiled, authentic account of a happier country, and inadvertently a measure of values. 'William is the ultimate in political incorrectness,' wrote Digby Anderson. 'That is why the stories are so popular with ordinary people — evoking as they do a Britain unpolluted by minority activists... There is no desire to subject young impressionable minds to social engineering. They are just good stories in which disaster threatens but which turn out all right in the end.'

It is right to defend and it may be possible eventually to restore the basic values of human scale, healthy childhood, local identity, and the loud laughter feared by pretentious officialdom. Before then, circulating William, if necessary in samizdat, and enjoying his exploits as an 'internal migration' — once again 'under the bedclothes' — could become an act, paradoxically, of 'political' resistance.

True conservatives are the Outlaws now.

William books are published by Macmillan.

Reputations — 11

Sapper Reassessed

Jonathan Oates

Sapper was the pen name of Colonel Herman Cyril McNeile (1888-1937). In the 1920s and 1930s he was one of Britain's best selling authors of fiction. However, he is virtually unknown now. Where his work is known, it is often seen as reactionary and racist. I want to assess the criticisms levelled at his books, arguing that such criticism is simplistic and that Sapper's views as expressed in his fiction changed with the international climate. From 1920 until his death in 1937, he wrote twelve novels and nine collections of short stories. His best known character was Captain Hugh 'Bulldog' Drummond, who, like his creator, was a recently demobilised officer, but who spent his time combating the plots of criminals and spies. The adventures involve a number of his pals, all ex-officers, and in the first four of the Drummond novels, the villains are headed by Carl Peterson, a Moriarty-like figure. In recent years, his work has been condemned. Sapper has been accused of expounding reactionary, anti-semitic and racist views, with a dose of sadism thrown in. This is unfair.

Drummond's politics are clearly conservative and anti-socialist, but are not reactionary. In the first novel, he addresses would be revolutionaries thus 'There are many things, we know, which are wrong in this jolly old country of ours; but given time and the right methods I am sufficiently optimistic to believe that they could be put right... Not by revolutions and direct action will you make this island of ours right... Evolution is our only chance — not revolution'. Those fermenting revolution are said to be motivated by greed for money and power, else they are deemed insane.

Yet Sapper is not wholeheartedly in favour of all aspects of the status quo. He has an ex-soldier remark 'If there was more like 'im [Drummond] and less like 'im' — he indicated a stout vulgarian rolling past in large car and dreadful clothes — 'things wouldn't happen such as is 'appening'. A hit against the 'hard faced men' who had profited from the War. A few of the short stories concern the plight of unemployed, starving men. There is certainly sympathy for the lot of the Common Man. On one occasion, Drummond addresses a Communist agent 'And as for your miserable dupes — those priceless fellows who follow you blindly because — God help them, they're hungry and their wives are hungry — what do you care for them?' When Inspector McIver visits Drummond's club, he refers to the inmates in unflattering terms: 'this futile crowd of cocktail-drinking men... idle, perfectly groomed, bored'.

Villains are often foreign — but not always non-European. In the first novel, the three financiers involved in funding revolution are all German or of German origin. One of the thugs employed by

Peterson is also German — Drummond remarks 'The scum certainly would not be complete without a filthy Boche in it'. Having said that, when Drummond has to escape by killing this German, he tells him 'now I have killed you. I'm sorry about it; I wasn't particularly anxious to end your life. But it has to be done'. In *Jim Maitland*, one Baron von Stockmar is aggressive and unpleasant, described as 'a huge gorilla dressed in clothes' and as a 'thick-voiced, foul mouthed brute'. Jews, though, feature rarely. Is Peterson Jewish? In the first novel he announces 'I... have no nationality. Or rather, shall I say, I have every nationality. Completely cosmopolitan...' It is probable he is merely undefinably foreign. Jews appear among the minor villains. Two Jews who are also 'White Slavers' are horse whipped in *The Black Gang*, and there is 'a pale, anaemic looking man with an unhealthy skin and a hook nose' in the same book who is a member of Peterson's gang. In *The Final Count*, a pal of Drummond's disguises himself as 'a nasty looking Jew clerk'.

Not all foreigners and Jews are depicted as being wicked. Although a villain's Chinese servant in one of the Drummond short stories appears shady, he turns out to be a sympathetic character. In a Ronald Standish short story, though suspicion is directed to a group of Indian circus performers, they turn out to be quite innocent. There is even a sympathetic and tactful German officer, Count von Tarnim of the Prussian Guard, who is referred to as 'a sahib'. In one short story, there is a reference to 'a coloured gentleman' on board ship, and though he has no role in the plot, is not referred to with any malignity. The helpful shopkeeper in *Knock Out* turns out to be Jewish. Samuel Aaronstein of Whitechapel is described by Drummond as 'my old friend' and provides him with a disguise. Furthermore, it is often British characters who are the villains, including ones who are socially prominent. Henry Lakington, a brilliant scientist, is the most repellent character in *Bulldog Drummond*. Sir Raymond Blantyre, an unpleasant financier who pays for a murder to be committed in another tale, is an Englishman. There is an English baronet who is the co-leader of the plot in *The Island of Terror*. Charles Latter, MP, is in league with Bolsheviks in *The Black Gang*.

The comment about sadism and bullying in the stories cannot go unanswered. It is true that there are nasty scenes — Lakington is, after a fight, pushed into an acid bath. Drummond thrashes a Mr Benton and Maitland flogs a bar owner in a remote island. Yet none of the 'victims' are innocents. All are murderers, would-be killers or extremely vicious. None can be punished by the law. It may be recalled that Sherlock Holmes takes a horsewhip to a blackguard in one of the short stories by Conan Doyle.

The last two Drummond novels, *Bulldog Drummond at Bay* (1935) and *Challenge* (1937), contain strong anti-appeasement messages, and at least at the former date this was an unusual public position to hold. They are probably the author's views and an attempt to alert an apparently complacent public into the need for rearmament to try and maintain the peace. In the former, there is a conversation between a politician and a financier in which the latter points out how weak Britain's defences are, and how war is inevitable because of the scale of disarmament, forced by public opinion, which has taken place. He concludes 'To stop two strong men fighting, you must at least be as strong yourself'. If this were not enough, towards the end of the book is a speech made by Drummond to the same politician.

> You did not go through the last war as a combatant. We did, and we don't want another, any more than some of the pacifist young gentlemen today, who have never heard a shot fired in anger. We know the horrors of it first hand; we are all out to prevent it again if we can. But we maintain that the present policy of cutting down our fighting forces to the extent that they have been reduced, is the most certain way of precipitating it.

In *Challenge*, the same message is preached; this time by a certain Humphrey Gasdon, who points out that Britain has many enemies, but is no longer feared as she once was. 'How the devil can we expect to be when our armed strength might just cope with a three years' defensive war against Guatemala?' There is an implicit reference to Churchill when he says 'One or two men at home have the courage to proclaim the truth; but the vast majority don't care'. The League of Nations is dismissed as 'that damned hot air factory' and there is a cutting reference to the Oxford Union's declaration that its members would not fight in any circumstances. The ineffectuality of British policy, though motivated by morality, over the Italian invasion of Ethiopia is also discussed. The English are shown as being complacent, with late Victorian mindsets.

Sapper was a highly successful writer of thrillers in the 1920s and 1930s, despite, or perhaps because his work lacked any literary pretensions. The criticism of his works in recent decades is anachronistic and unfair; the result of selective quotation and limited reading. Some may find some of the terms used to be offensive, but they are of their time and are not all pervasive or representative. The political messages in the final Drummond novels are also noteworthy. The stories are easy to read and are a good antidote to political correctness.

ETERNAL LIFE

Architecture is the reverence paid in stone and glass to public space. All public space is precious and the ancient Greeks regarded it as something almost holy. One of the first treats I was offered when I arrived in the City was to go to a lecture — by invitation only — by Richard Rogers at the Lloyds Building which he had designed. I went as a country bumpkin fresh into the great metropolis and eager to be instructed about the subtle arts of the higher architecture.

The great man stood in front of his distinguished guests and, flicking over an easel of photographs with a desultory gesture like a tired man looking at flies, talked incoherently for twenty minutes. I have partially understood the English language since I was about two years old, but I barely comprehended a word. Then it was announced there would be questions, but questioners were dismissed, as Rogers merely kept up his earlier monologue which was solely about himself and his superior buildings. I was then given a tour of the Lloyds building — that structure with its innards on the outside. Here I did gain some understanding. The main office including the ceiling was almost entirely in black, so this offered some insight into the high incidence of suicide among City workers. There was a movement in 20th century architecture which sought first to shock and then to draw attention to the architects themselves, to turn them into rock stars. One thinks of Le Corbusier and his machines for people to live in — though his gang usually preferred something high renaissance in the South of France. Corbusier wanted to pull down Paris in the interests, as he put it, of 'hygiene'.

The Bauhaus or the Leninist ideas of the Russian Constructivists produce nightmares. My Russian friend reprimanded me for comparing the Barbican to the Lubyanka prison: 'The Lubyanka is a masterpiece compared with the Barbican'. One recoils before the works and worse, the architectural philosophy, of Mies, Fry, Loos and Giedion. But God is good. By the 1970s there was a backlash and it became possible once again to praise Belcher and Lutyens. Peter Palumbo's hideous Poultry scheme was rejected though Number 1 went ahead. We thank God for small mercies. Architecture has largely recovered from its brutalist nightmare and once again we see around us structures of great beauty, with the character to inspire.

Compare the superstar pretensions of some modern architects with the anonymity of the men who built the cathedrals — knowing usually that they would not even live to see their work finished. Remember the first essential of architecture, as of all arts and skills, that first of all it is a craft and a trade. The great composers were proud to be thought craftsmen. Bach saw himself as a journeyman, turning out a cantata every week for use in the church on Sunday. A craftsman knows his materials and handles his craft lovingly. His motives are heartfelt. In the same way, I am proud to be a priest with my priestcraft.

The Greeks knew that the purpose of architecture is the public good. Buildings and the spaces between them and town squares were designed with the *res publica* in mind. In an age when politics had meaning, public space was sacred space. Streets and squares were supposed to reveal the character and soul of the people. What do our public spaces say about our character, our soul? The word 'soulless' actually has tangible meaning in some of these places. Goethe said, 'Architecture is frozen music.' And when you look at the great European buildings of his day, you see an incarnation of the classical and baroque proportions of Bach and Mozart. What music do we see frozen in the buildings of our public realm? Is too much of it still heavy metal?

The architect has his own purpose and vocation and it is to design for the pleasure of man and the glory of God. If he forgets the pleasure of man, he will not glorify God who made man in his own image. If he forgets the glory of God, he will give us an inferior vision of human nature. The cathedral builders knew this and so they built with their feet on the ground and their eyes uplifted to heaven. In some quarters God himself is called the Great Architect. He is the true architect but not the detached operator who builds merely mechanically. He is not the Designer imagined by the philosophers of the Enlightenment — a God who made the world and then left it to its own devices. God puts himself into his creation and the creation bears his imprint. He enters his own creation as a man in Jesus Christ. Our God is not the sort of God who might design a square mile of concrete blocks in the middle of Birmingham and then take himself off to live in Provence. Our universe is not a machine but a house fit for Christ to live in. And he did live in it. That is why our first movement must always be towards reverence. There are, after all, such things as holy things, and among them, one hopes and prays, holy buildings.

Peter Mullen

Sir,
Michael St John Parker referred in his review of Deepak Lal's *In Praise of Empires* (Summer 2005) to the profound effect that Oxford historian J R Seeley had on the political thinking of Britain in the late 19th century. I wonder if he knew the influence his book *Ecce Homo* had on C P Scott when he was an undergraduate. Scott credited this book with having given him the anchor for his conscience and his imagination throughout his life. It gave him the peace and strength of mind that comes from a settled outlook and conviction on the duties and mysteries of life.

The high standards of journalism which Scott brought to the *Manchester Guardian* and which deservedly won his newspaper international admiration have never been achieved since nor surpassed. His development of business news coverage was a critical factor in the rapid expansion of Manchester in the late 19th Century. His newspaper was the first to report on the great famine in India and the plight of the poor in England.

Don Briggs
Knutsford

Sir,
I think and hope that Christie Davies is wrong. (*SR* Autumn 2005.) He assumes that we are now totally spineless and will just let ourselves be swamped. But the turn-out to support 'England' in cricket shows that we still have some sense of identity. The London bombs have finally given groups like 'Right now!' the courage to say it as it is. The time for a happy solution was 1969, following Enoch Powell's clear warning, but MPs since then have been both cowards and traitors, with their 'Don't talk about it', sweeping it under the carpet.

If the government will not act to start the deportation of illegal immigrants and their families, and maximum support for repatriation for other Moslems, then either the BNP will get the vote or we shall start civil war, with the police (just as worried as anybody else) being expected to arrest people who are by then fighting for their country in the only way that seems open to them. There will be ugly scenes and rivers flowing with much blood, ours and theirs.

The party conferences showed how the politicians are trying to keep local, temporary issues at the fore, to distract from the more important, long-term problems of turning the immigrant tide, getting us out of the EU and teaching infants to read. When will politicians start to include patriotism in their policies?

Mona McNee
Liverpool

Sir,
Both Seamus Heffernan and Irwin Stelzer wish to equate neo-conservatism with the current policies of the Bush administration including deficit spending and preemptive strikes. Stelzer seems to derive neo-conservatism from the democratic liberalism of Wilson and Teddy Roosevelt.

A socialist, Michael Harrington coined the term in its contemporary usage. It came to designate those people who favoured limited government intervention in business, a limited welfare state, stricter moral standards and a more aristocratic approach to educational standards. As such, neo-conservatives have been far from enthusiastic to the idea that democracy is the answer to all our political problems. The notion that Irving Kristol is a pontifex maximus of the movement is unrealistic. Leo Strausss and his followers have had a greater influence. Especially weird is the inclusion of Tony Blair as a 'neo-conservative'.

The term has been widely misused by journalists most of whom are far from expert in political and social philosophy.

Norman R Phillips
Illinois
USA

Sir,
Merrie Cave (*SR* September 2005) rightly blames feminism for the changed relationship between the sexes. However, feminism has contributed to a general deterioration in good manners. People in buses and trains not only no longer give up their seats to women, they do not even give them up to the elderly or infirm.

Sylvia Wood
Milton Keynes

A Frustrated Tory

Barbara Biddell

The Life and Adventures of William Cobbett, Richard Ingrams, Harper Collins, 2005, £20.

Richard Ingrams has given us a very readable biography of William Cobbett, and anyone with a sense of history can draw their own parallels between Cobbett's time and ours. It takes us from Cobbett's country upbringing and toil in the fields round his birthplace, Farnham, to his entry into Parliament on the front bench of course, for Cobbett was no back-bench shrinking violet. Cobbett is shown as a boy who followed his own agenda, despite his father's orders, and was prepared to accept the consequences of his disobedience to achieve his goal. He never changed. To Cobbett his opinions were always right: he followed them to their logical conclusion wherever it led him, to London, Canada, France, America, dinner with Prime Minister William Pitt, Newgate Gaol, Long Island and New York, on horseback through the counties of England, to Scotland and Ireland, and finally to his farm at Ash in Surrey.

Cobbett discovered for himself the power of the press. He knew his own ability and made a fortune from words which he later lost in his farming projects. After his bankruptcy in 1820 and the loss of his estate at Botley his daughter, Anne Cobbett, writes that he said to his family: 'Help me to work children and I'll earn as good a place as Botley back again.'

Richard Ingrams emphasises the influence of Cobbett's *Political Register* in attacking government corruption; this makes the book compelling today. In 1806 Cobbett rides down to the Honiton election. He had put himself forward as a candidate, but withdrew in favour of Lord Cochrane. At Honiton Cobbett discovered the bribery of voters and intimidation of opponents. Had Cobbett been here during the last election what would he have written in the *Political Register?* What would he have made of 50 postal votes being sent to one address, without apparently those dispatching these votes realising that anything was amiss? Cobbett would have ridiculed them to extinction. What would Cobbett have made of the present unreformed electoral districts which give so much more opportunity to one party than another? What epithets would Cobbett have chosen for a Prime Minister who could countenance this? Richard Ingrams has found some nice quotations. Cobbett wrote of Brougham, the promoter of the Poor Law Bill, 'This man was a sprawling lawyer for several years. He is the weazel, he is the nightmare, he is the indigestion.'

Richard Ingrams, as a journalist, is very aware of the power of the press. Cobbett points out that when a man makes his private opinions public, his private life can be held up for scrutiny but Cobbett decries what he calls the 'babble' of the day as 'The particulars of who walks or rides out with the King: ... of the breakfasts and dances at Frogmore; ... of the cabinet and other grand dinners.' Cobbett would have been amazed and horrified by the papers now, the intimate details of the lives of the Beckham family, of pop stars and football coaches. He would have found this an insult to his intelligence. He used the considerable influence of his *Political Register* to defend freedom of speech and the reporting of proceedings in parliament. When the press was excluded from the public gallery in 1809, he used his *Political Register* to show that the mover of this resolution, Charles Yorke, was immediately rewarded with a pension of £2,700 a year, and when Francis Burdett revealed this in the *Political Register*, Burdett was put in the Tower of London. Cobbett's journalism inspired the crowds who rioted in the streets of London. What would Cobbett have written of a Government which bypasses the House of Commons, is managed by cabals in Downing Street and which leads the country into war on questionable evidence?

Cobbett's *Political Register* and his twopenny pamphlet, later nicknamed *Twopenny Trash*, was read by or to the labouring people. Cobbett made them aware of the important part they played in a stable society. In 1816, when they were afflicted by starvation and unemployment, he urged them to press for Parliamentary Reform by peaceful means. They followed his lead. England was saved from a 'French Revolution'. Cobbett, as Richard Ingrams shows, was a conservative; he wanted to see working people happy and content with their station in life and he wanted to contribute to that happiness. Even as he fled to New

York he described the country in Warwickshire, with its beautiful hedges, 'herds and flocks of fine fat cattle and sheep on every side ... numerous stacks of wheat'. What would he have written of John Prescott's plans to cover our remaining countryside with houses?

Cobbett's *Political Register* was no easy read. It was closely written, densely printed and required the reader to engage his mind. With its enormous influence, it is a complete contrast to today's photograph-filled publications. Richard Ingrams has shown us what we are missing. Of course there are some leader writers with intelligent articles, but there is no Cobbett week by week holding the misdemeanours of the government and its ministers up to terrifying ridicule. In the end Cobbett achieved his purpose, the reform of the House of Commons. He made Parliament relevant to the people of England: unfortunately it seems to be irrelevant to many of their descendants today.

Anyone making a study of Cobbett would be disappointed that Richard Ingrams has not been more specific in his references. Sometimes he just quotes 'Nuffield'. Those who have worked on Cobbett's papers held at Nuffield College in Oxford know this is not sufficient. Many other quotations have been used: the references given can refer to a book but not its page number. Cobbett himself was very meticulous in his writing. He gave every paragraph a number, so quotations from Cobbett's books are easy to find. Ingrams has been taken in by a coloured print of Cobbett's farm at Barn Elm which was wrongly labelled when it was published in the nineteenth century as 'The Birth Place of William Cobbett, Farnham, Surrey'.

The Conviction of Conservatives

David Ashton

The Strange Death of Tory England, Geoffrey Wheatcroft, Penguin/Allen Lane, 2005, hb £20, pb £8.99.

The Conservative Party, often described as the oldest in Europe, was in government for most of the last century. It has presided over, or ineffectually delayed, the transformation of the greatest imperial nation in history, the first workshop of the world and mother of sovereign parliaments, into an overcrowded offshore island, whose 'foreign policy', 'domestic legislation', economic fate and demographic composition, are largely controlled by external forces; and in the process the party itself has lost much of its '*raison*' if not yet its '*être*'. No mean achievement indeed.

Although many factors contributed to this downward spiral, especially the social impacts of warfare and hedonism, political decisions played a part important enough for detailed dissection.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft convicts the Conservatives who did so little to 'conserve their country'. After briefly chronicling the history of an administrative caste with its once respected officers and gentlemen, he charts the bumpy descent, from Eden to Avernus so to speak, that eventually replaced a patrician 'magic circle' by the present celebrity circus. A depressing narrative of windy changes and ministerial contretemps is brightened by quips: Heath was 'unfailingly graceless'; 'When Enoch made a joke it was no laughing matter'; 'Major spoke like a man who had learned English from a crumbling British Council phrasebook, using expressions like "Fine words butter no parsnips", which had long since been unknown on anyone else's lips'.

Westminster and Whitehall must operate, well or badly, within increasing international constraints. The author asks the old question whether our post-Commonwealth role is to participate within a United Europe or serve as a client of the United States. (Has the final answer returned with bloodstains not only in Basra but also in Belfast where aid and adulation for gangs fronting 'child murder and ethnic cleansing' came from Americans?) It was this issue that toppled 'Iron Britannia' with calamitous consequences for her successors, while residual admiration for their economic competence soon expired when speculators exploited our ERM vulnerability and part of our reserves was 'wasted in a doomed attempt to shore up sterling'; a clear comment itself upon the reality of sovereignty supposedly vested in an electorate 40 million strong.

The widespread collapse of state-socialism in its 'public ownership' form has not resulted in a revival of aristocratic values. 'Class war' has been superseded by culture wars. The reluctance of Anglo-Saxon 'masses' to build barricades for bolshevism, of course, was a reason for the subtler subversion by 'new left' agenda-networkers to bring about their 'egalitarian society' on the back of 'minority' groups and under the noses of local and national democrats. The 'retreat from Moscow' of Scargill's comrades was succeeded by institutional infiltration by students of Marcuse. The perennial menace of Jacobinism, now in its 'political correctness' mutation, is corroding our police and defence forces.

Wheatcroft quotes W H Auden's prophecy of a time when devotion to country and family would be diverted

to pets and tumours, childish daubs elevated above masterpieces, bandits and invalids celebrated above generals, statesmen and philosophers. Its fulfilment coincides with the rise of Tony Blair, ignorant of history and hostile to tradition, neither Labour nor genuinely Tory, whose instincts are 'matched by a fatuous cultural modernity ('I've always been a great Led Zeppelin fan')'. This *jeune premier* creature attained office partly through a switch-around in propaganda images of the two main parties, but he is obsessed with perpetual 'change-making' rather than solid, constructive action. Never discount his professed determination to wipe out the 'forces of conservatism' as empty rhetoric merely typical of his thespian eloquence.

Over two decades ago Labour historian Asa Briggs predicted that Conservative governments would not be concerned primarily with the conservation of 'yesterday's world' which then pre-occupied public debate. The current problem is whether Conservatives can conserve themselves.

During three centuries of developments in royalty and religion, agriculture and industry, and different dangers overseas, several 're-inventions' occurred, some quite radical. The 'stupid party' eventually recovered from the Liberal landslide in 1906 and the Attlee ascendancy in 1945 with a fair amount of 're-invention'. But today what is needed is more like resurrection, and neither policy nor enthusiasm may be enough to work the miracle. Why bother to canvass or even vote for another gaggle of career politicians after their scramble for a futile foothold on some overloaded 'centre ground' media-defined by 'tax or spend', plus a bit of TV endorsement from Gay Muslims? The reduction of elections to a narrow EU-regulated domestic agenda, a competitive recital of lies, and a parade of pygmy personalities, brings not only Parliament but also the nation to nullity, with immediate effect on turnout and long-term implications for 'direct action'.

'Voiding politics of its content', which Wheatcroft sees as Blair's crowning achievement, may not, however, prove so clever in a real world of recession and violence. The inheritors of Toryism, therefore, should at last 'respect the past, offer redress for the present and prepare for the future' in the light of their long, distinctive experience. They need to recombine two supreme ideas bequeathed by that old re-inventor Benjamin Disraeli: rescue the realm and 'elevate' the condition of its people — 'culturally' rather than 'commercially'. His ancestral proverb says that where there is no vision the people perish, but the vision of a conservative revival, for anyone in its ranks who measures up to the task, must be to ensure that our British people as such do not perish.

The Tory Party is 'national, or it is *nothing*'.

All Fall Down

Christie Davies

The Politics of Decline, An Interpretation of British Politics from the 1940s to the 1970s, Geoffrey K Fry, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, £55.

Geoffrey Fry has written a political history of Britain between 1945 and 1976 that is clear, incisive, accurate and damning. It is not an 'interpretation' but a horribly accurate story of our slide from victory in World War II, to bankruptcy in 1976, with the country surviving only by surrendering to the IMF to get a loan. The nation that had been a member of the 'big three' in the year of victory had by 1976 become the Uruguay of the Northern Hemisphere. It is a depressing tale but not, though, in any sense a depressing book, for Fry's lightness of touch and savage sense of humour are most entertaining. Until now I had not believed that a historical tome could make a reader laugh out loud about Sir William Beveridge. Fry has been able to mix tragedy and farce because of his amazing command of sources from the technical economics of Sir John Hicks' comments on Keynes to political biographies of the ungood and the ungreat to the innumerable command papers that it is a pleasure not to have to read for oneself.

The planning of the decline began even before the war ended with the establishment of the consensus on Keynesian economics for full employment and the creation of the welfare state. It proved an extremely popular recipe, but one for disaster in a country already in debt and utterly dependant on international trade. It was made worse by the Labour party's decision to nationalise large sections of industry and make them part of the welfare state, part of a policy of the creation of fake jobs paid for out of taxation, inflation and the deflection of investment away from new and more profitable forms of manufacturing and services.

When the Conservatives were in power they dared not confront that key source of strife and inflation, the trade unions, nor were they willing to impose the kind of monetary discipline that would have made it impossible for employers to grant inflationary pay rises. Monetary stringency would have prevented employers from passing their increased costs on to the consumer; they would have been forced to shed labour, but the voters would not tolerate higher unemployment, which was why Macmillan sacked Thorneycroft, Birch and Powell and why Heath encouraged Barber's wild

spending policy. The ensuing inflation not only led to balance of payments crises and low growth, but seriously impeded the working of the price mechanism and distorted patterns of investment. No wonder a senior Treasury official wrote of the government: 'It is not very surprising that Tories have no principles ... it is historically right and inherent in Conservatism. But it is surprising that they are such cowards.'

Fry's book has brought back horrid memories of attending Nicholas Kaldor's tendentious lectures on the selective employment tax. The pretence was maintained that there was a shortage of labour for manufacturing industry. Hence the encouragement of immigration and the attempt to tax thriving service industries, Britain's future, and squeeze labour out of them into the dinosaurs of manufacturing. Yet, labour was used so ineffectually in manufacturing that these policies were misguided and damaging. The endless 'rescues' of bankrupt over-manned firms employing over-paid and restrictively-practiced metal-bashers were both a measure of Britain's economic failure and reinforced it. Fry argues that Keynes treated the British economy as a closed system immune from the world of international trade, assumed perfect competition and ignored the existence of the trade unions. His successors, the left-Keynsian servants of socialism, reduced Britain to being a pauper nation, forced in the 1970s, the nadir of British economic history, to grovel to join the EEC on any terms the French would grant and then to the IMF for loans. The long run had come. Britain was dead. With economic decline came military and diplomatic decline. The murderous partition of India, the roots of the Israel-Palestine crisis and the chaos that followed the great burp of change in Africa were all the product of that decline. As Fry points out, the Americans did not help matters. They came late and hysterical to the Cold War, as they had done in the two previous wars, and deliberately accelerated the decline of British power.

It is worth reading Fry's books just for his caustic humour at the expense of the more absurd characters taking part in Britain's tragic drama. He notes that Sir Stafford Cripps' 'taste for knitting was not widely known', that when in office little Manny 'Two Hoots' Shinwell was 'sustained by those below him in the manner of a table tennis ball on top of a fountain', that the Conservative government of 1951-5 conducted itself as if its guiding principle was 'Who Dares Loses' and that Ted Heath behaved 'like an inverted Theodore Roosevelt, tending to speak harshly but being unwilling or unable to wield a big stick'.

For me the real eye-opener, though, was Fry's account of Roy Jenkins' resignation of the Deputy-Leadership of the Labour Party in 1972 when the Shadow Cabinet committed itself to a referendum on British membership of the European Community. Jenkins was against referenda 'because their extensive use (would be) the likely enemy of many progressive causes from the abolition of capital punishment to race relations legislation'. Jenkins' undemocratic sentiment is congruent with the cynical use by opponents of capital punishment such as Sidney Silverman of Burke's famous claim that MPs are the representatives not the delegates of the people. The abolitionists found in it a justification for ignoring and despising the electorate's strongly held views in support of capital punishment. Fry wryly points out that Burke stated this view *after* he had been elected for Bristol in 1774 and that he did not dare to stand for Bristol again in the next election in 1780.

Fry has written clearly and soundly about what Lord Hailsham called 'a period of national humiliation and decline the like of which I do not know that the British nation has ever experienced in recent history'. *The Politics of Decline* is a worthy successor to his earlier *The Politics of Crisis (1931-45)*. One more generation of progressive myths and weeds has been scythed flat by the hand of Fry.

Half-crystallized Diamond

Derek Turner

Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive, Jared Diamond, Allen Lane, London, 2005, hb, £20.

Bill Clinton is a fan. So is Bill Gates. He is lionized by large segments of the US and UK scientific and literary establishments — with the *TLS* suggesting humorously that so wide-ranging is his expertise that he is a committee rather than a single person. He has won a Pulitzer Prize. *Science* has said that *Collapse* is 'probably the most important book you will ever read'. All this adulation from the great and bad does not *necessarily* mean we should distrust what Jared Diamond has to say about life, the universe and everything — but it does mean we should be on our guard. Diamond's books are highly ambitious. They aim to explore the geographic, cultural, environmental and technological factors which have led past human endeavours into extinction. He argues for a new kind of history based on science, that can make worthwhile predictions instead of merely describing 'one fact after another'. He does not succeed in these goals, and is unlikely ever to be numbered amongst Gibbon,

Spengler or Sorokin. Yet a book by one so idolized does deserve attention, and not only because it sheds light on the narrowness of vision of our present opinion-formers. Diamond does have some interesting, and even some salutary things to say.

His work is admirable in some ways. It is characterised by lucidity, erudition, an enviable grasp of detail and certain politically incorrect insights. He is neither gung-ho progressivist, pointing out, for example, that farming peoples were often shorter and less healthy than their hunter-gatherer forebears, nor a gloomy deep ecologist. He is right to maintain that everyone, whatever kind of society they live in, should be concerned about avoidable ecological damage — and that the effects of such damage have often been catastrophic, and could easily be again. Where he goes wrong is trying to formulate a catch-all, even slightly dogmatic theory to make a unified field of his careful but essentially unrelated observations. The subtitle is irritating: 'How societies choose to fail or survive'. Yet, like political careers, virtually all societies end in failure, although some are clearly longer-lived than others, and tribal nations often survive massive politico-cultural transitions. Pedants will say that none of these have *chosen* to fail.

The author uses a 'five point framework' to help explain societal collapse: environmental damage, climate change, hostile neighbours, friendly trading partners, and the society's responses to its problems. These points all boil down to a rather reductive view — that ecological pressures are the chief threat (although not the only one) to our past and present comfort and, perhaps, future existence. This framework is inadequate when it comes to complex societies. Societies fall or prosper for dozens of different reasons, or combinations of reasons: new religions, new ideologies, dynastic upheaveals or imperial overstretch; Rome, Mesopotamia, the Ashokan Empire or even modern Britain would have made more instructive studies than the rather atypical ones he has selected. Even on the superficial level of ecological arguments, he skims over certain problems, or potential problems. It is curious, for example, that presently fashionable 'peak oil' arguments are relegated to one footnote.

Diamond cites Easter Island, Pitcairn Island, the Anasazi Amerindians of the southwestern USA, the Maya, and the Greenland Norse as examples of societies that did not make the grade. He contrasts these with some societies that succeeded in coping with encroaching ecological challenges — the Pacific island of Tikopia, the agriculturists of central New Guinea and Tokugawa era (1603-1867) forest managers in Japan. Few would dispute his ecological-reductionist analysis of Easter Island, whose inhabitants laid waste to their woodlands, leaving the island eventually without shelter, building materials, fuel for fires, and the fauna which depended on the woodland (small wonder that the island, with its colossal statues sticking up from the eroded fields, became grist to the mill of Erich von Danicken). I am willing to take it on trust when he says that the Mayans died out because of a mixture of recklessly intensive agriculture, drought and constant warmaking (at least he does not have any illusions about 'noble savages' who sat around living in harmony until the evil Spaniards turned up with their guns, germs, steel and crucifixes).

The fascinating story of the end of the Greenland Norse is shrouded in freezing mist. Diamond says there were many factors, such as travel time from Scandinavia, the settlers' perverse distaste for eating fish, their propensity for fighting amongst themselves, environmental damage and climate fluctuations. Diamond also says that they had a 'bad attitude' towards the Inuit, referring to them as 'wretches' and slaughtering them on sight (although he knows, from his experience of meeting isolated tribes in New Guinea, that 'first contact situations' are always fraught with danger). Echoing the writings of anthropologist Thomas McGovern, Diamond implies that the settlers might have survived had they been less Eurocentric and less Christian, and learned from and eventually intermarried with the Inuit. He does not seem to understand that they would consequently no longer have been Norse. An obvious counter-argument is that, like the 'Lost Colony' at Roanoke, one of the reasons they failed is because they lost contact with Scandinavia, as their homelands were swept by mass epidemics and political unrest in the late 13th and early 14th centuries.

Finally, he discusses industry and globalisation, and 'reasons for hope'. These are less than reassuring, — amounting to an insistence that social problems are rarely intractable, if people will only think about them, and that ecological consciousness has become more widespread. Diamond's writings should be regarded as a work in progress. It would be beneficial for him (and perhaps for us) if he could scrap his political preconceptions, expand upon his ecological thesis, and take into account the latest findings from sociobiology. Perhaps then he might approach intellectual magnitude — as opposed to modishness — as a historiographer.

Cut it Out!

Anthony Daniels

Stakes and Kidneys: Why Markets in Human Body Parts Are Morally Imperative, James Stacey Taylor, Ashgate, 2005, pb £16.99.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, there is no waiting list for kidney transplants, unlike in Britain, or indeed in most western countries, because Iran allows a market in body parts. People can sell their kidneys for transplant to those people who need them; hence there is no shortage. James Taylor, an academic philosopher, says that we should take a leaf out of the Islamic Republic's book. Of course, there might be other explanations for the absence of a waiting list for kidney transplants in Iran like insufficient diagnosis of chronic renal failure. In a country in which liberties are not much respected, sales of kidneys may not be truly voluntary. The author does not consider these possibilities. Nevertheless, his defence of what he calls a regulated market in spare parts of the human body is unflinchingly honest. It certainly makes you think about the unthinkable. His prose is not a pleasure to read, but there is no deliberate linguistic obfuscation in it either.

Taylor's case rests on two main philosophical legs: respect for human autonomy and utilitarianism. These are, of course, very different principles, and it is not entirely easy to see how they can be reconciled. One of the objections to a market in body parts is that the vendors, who are usually very poor, are not really free, but are somehow 'forced' by their poverty into selling parts of themselves. Taylor, rightly in my view, will have none of this: provided the vendor is informed adequately of the potential drawbacks of his sale, he acts with full autonomy. Only people can coerce: circumstances cannot. Oddly enough, he does not point out that the great majority of people who are very poor and have the choice to sell their organs do not choose to do so, otherwise the price of a human kidney would be very much lower. If a poor man wants to sell part of himself, then a respect for human autonomy requires that we should let him. It may be his best chance of obtaining a capital sum with which to start a small enterprise that will lift him out of his poverty. Autonomy is a principle much in vogue among medical ethicists but Taylor does not explain why this should be so. He is therefore addressing people who take it for granted that respect for autonomy is a fundamental principle of sound medical ethics. But is it? Clearly, it is right that doctors should not impose their will on patients of sound mind. A surgeon should not force an operation on a patient who is unwilling to have the operation, even when he knows that it will do the patient good. But that is not the same as the surgeon being prepared to do whatever a patient of sound mind wants. A surgeon of good repute will not amputate the leg of someone merely because he wants it, even if he threatens suicide if he does not get what he wants. The principle of autonomy operates a veto, but does not itself legislate. It is therefore not as important a guide to correct action as Taylor thinks it is.

The second leg on which his argument rests is utilitarian. He argues that a market in human body parts, particularly kidneys (since they are paired organs, and a man can survive perfectly well on one alone), will lead to the saving of many lives. Other methods of organ donation have proved inadequate to meet the demand. The end, that of saving lives, justifies the means, that of selling body parts. Take the case of a schizophrenic double murderer, incarcerated in an institution for the rest of his life, and beyond any hope of a cure. Two model citizens, highly productive and beneficial to society, but both in chronic renal failure, could be saved if he were to donate his kidneys to them. He has no autonomy to respect, first because he will be imprisoned for ever, but more importantly because he cannot understand the decision confronting him: he can neither consent nor refuse. The thoroughgoing utilitarian will say either that the man's kidneys should be taken from him, since two valuable lives are thereby saved at the expense of one worthless life, thus adding to the sum of human happiness, or that they should not be so taken because a society in which such a thing could happen is one in which the exercise of arbitrary power is bound to be encouraged. While two lives would undoubtedly be saved at the expense of one, this would have to be set against the fact that the general insecurity, and therefore misery, of life will be increased.

I cannot pretend to give a wholly consistent and convincing account of the basis of medical ethics, but I think Taylor's combination of respect for autonomy and utilitarianism is neither consistent nor convincing. A man's relation to his life and body, or even his body parts, is not that of straightforward ownership, as he suggests. There are many instances of genuine ownership which do not confer upon the owner unlimited rights. I own my house, but I may not burn it down even if by so doing I endanger no one else: it is still arson. Ownership, even where it is unequivocal, does not confer unlimited rights. Taylor does not recommend a completely free market in human organs, in which the buyer may seek out the vendor who offers the lowest price, but wants quite stringent regulations: for example, the vendor should be properly informed of the drawbacks of his proposed sale, and post-operative care of a high standard, to minimize medical

complications, should be offered him afterwards however poor or desperate the vendor is. This seems to me to undermine the argument for autonomy which requires that mentally competent people be left to make their own decisions, including getting the best bargain. they can. If we introduce regulations to protect the vendors, we are being paternalistic. The way is thus open to forbid the sale of organs altogether.

Taylor does not realize that regulations of the kind he proposes are particularly difficult to enforce in countries where people are most likely to want to sell their organs. For example, it is difficult to know of a marriage contracted in rural Pakistan whether it is voluntary or forced. Girls are sometimes killed there if they do not consent to marry the husband chosen for them by their parents, and any subsequent police enquiry (if there is one at all) can be easily and cheaply bought off. It is not difficult to envisage how the outer forms of organ selling might be complied with in such a society, but the meaning and purpose of the regulations evaded altogether. Many people will be instinctively (I almost said viscerally) opposed to the sale of human organs. They will not know how to explain further their moral intuition to someone who does not share it, just as it is impossible to explain the attractions of music to the tone deaf. I doubt therefore that Taylor's book will convince many people, even those who are predisposed to welcome the market place as the solution to many, if not quite all, human problems. But no one could read this book without recognizing its genuine spirit of enquiry, and the author's willingness to follow arguments fearlessly wherever they take him.

Confrontations with Islam

Alfred Sherman

Islam, Islamism and the West, Caroline Cox and John Marks, American Foreign Policy Council, Washington DC, 2005.

Baroness Cox began her career as a nurse, then moved into academic, educational and humanitarian activities. Her activities at the Centre For Policy Studies attracted the attention of Margaret Thatcher; she was awarded a life peerage and appointed to a ministerial post in Education. However, she proved too radical for the educational establishment, whose fruits are visible for all to see, and returned to independent educational and humanitarian activities, prominent among them Christian Solidarity Worldwide and International Islamic-Christian Organisation for Reconciliation and Reconstruction. John Marks is a physicist, schoolteacher and university lecturer and outstanding campaigner for educational standards against the tide.

Their concerns have given rise to this frank academically respectable study. It is even more timely here than when it was first published in Washington earlier in the year. The USA had its 9/11. Britain has now suffered Islamic bombing at the hands of native born Moslems and beneficiaries of the country's excessively generous asylum provisions. The authors rightly eschew excessive concentration on terrorism for the wider problem of the latest stage in the centuries old confrontation between Islam and 'the West', or whatever we choose to call ourselves.

The book's main emphasis is on the philosophical difference between 'the West' and Islam; 'in the beginning was the word'. 'There is a clear conflict between the approaches to knowledge and truth and the academic and ideological modes.' During the early middle ages, the Moslem world was intellectually more advanced than 'the West' and more dynamic, in spite of the vicious blood feuds which ravaged the Moslem leadership and polities. Christendom had been stagnating; Islam permitted analytical thought. This changed when enquiry was stifled throughout the Moslem world, or as it was said at the time, the gate of individual judgment, babulijtihad, was closed. The Koran and commentaries were cast in stone, and that was that. It took centuries for this to be translated into intellectual, scientific, economic and military stagnation, but the writing was on the wall. The authors show parallels with the intellectual degeneration which occurred in the Soviet Union, and the similarities between Stalinism and Islam.

Islam is characterized by great riches as well as great poverty. The authors trace the billion-dollar expenditures world wide by the oil-rich Saudi regime in fostering reactionary Islam, including madrassahs, campaigns against critics, terrorism, and bribery. Although some of these activities are turning against the royal regime itself, and it can no longer afford these expenditures, re-thinking at the top is still some way off.

A leading Saudi royal recently announced that 9/11 was the work of the Zionists. Do he and the many other Moslems who parrot these claims really believe them? This is not easy to answer, because it entails analyzing the meanings of 'believe'. I am reminded of a remark

by a senior French Algerian affairs officer: 'Ne dites pas que les Musulmans mentent. C'est qu'ils ont une autre part de la verité, de la notre.' Westerners have been blamed for al-Qa'eda's acts of terror in Saudi Arabia. The leading Saudi cleric, the equivalent of the Archbishop of Canterbury, recently declared that the world is flat; no dissent was allowed. The mindset developed by centuries of Islam appears to preclude rational thinking.

The authors recognize the limits to the encouragement of rational thinking in the Moslem world. To this end, they call for: systematic analysis of the writings and spoken statements of ideologists, their allies and apologists; monitoring Moslem organizations and their sources of funding; scrutiny of their media; support for Moslems who adhere to the academic mode of thought. These are essential adjuncts to political legal responses to terror. To that extent, *Islam, Islamism and the West* is a primer for rational enquiry.

Apologists for Islamic terror, or rejection of Western society and its obligations, claim that Moslems world-wide have legitimate grievances over their treatment. On the contrary, the study demonstrates that the boot is on the other foot, that over large areas of the world where Islam holds sway, in Africa and Asia, Christians and animists — and for that matter dissenting Moslems — are persecuted, in some cases to the point of extinction. 'Christian Solidarity Worldwide' documents these persecutions in the name of Allah mercilessly.

Terrorism is merely the tip of the iceberg, the Islamic mode *in toto* is the problem. The study's prescriptions are particularly timely for present-day Britain, when the Government is running round in circles, announcing bold and untried remedies one day and retreating from them the next, and treating terrorists as a small unrepresentative minority rather than the exponents of a system. The authors make it clear that far from compromising with and appeasing this assault on reason, the West must reaffirm its values, 'to develop adequate responses to challenges to their survival'. Their study is a reaffirmation of the morality of reason and the dangers of compromising our values. Their message, that the preservation and extension of freedoms cannot be taken for granted but must be actively pursued, deserves adoption as a text for survival.

Land of a Thousand Scandals

Merrie Cave

A Throne in Brussels: Britain, the Saxe-Coburgs and the Belgianisation of Europe, Paul Belien, Imprint Academic, 2005, £25.

'England is at present living under Belgium's tyranny' declared Princess de Lieven in 1837. She was referring to the first King of the Belgians' interference in British affairs following his nephew Prince Albert's marriage to Queen Victoria. De Lieven was more prescient than she realized. Belgium is an artificial state created at the conference table and nobody expected it to last: 'Belgium has no nationality and, given the character of its inhabitants, it can never have one' announced Leopold I. Artificial states are usually unhappy places; they are unreliable allies, often corrupt, and lack the rule of law and genuine democratic rights. Paul Belien's thesis is very important: today we face a European super state on the model of Belgium. If it collapses it will prove that the United States of Europe cannot work either. 'Have we not been called the laboratory of Europe?' wrote Léon Hennebicq in1904. King Baudouin remarked that 'the European construction can best help us resist the temptation of egotism and narrow and disastrous nationalisms.' No wonder the eurocrats adore the country.

This book is the first popular history of Belgium in English and an excellent example of how history should be written: a lively narrative enlivened by fascinating and exhaustive detail is wrapped around the story of the obscure Saxe-Coburg family who were jolted into pan-European dynastic influence when Leopold was selected to become the first King. A very unattractive bunch, they have always played a secretive and undemocratic role, unloved by their subjects and with the exception of Baudouin producing numerous illegitimate off-spring. Recent research has revealed that Prince Albert was probably Leopold's son. They have no real attachment to the country spending much time in their houses abroad and regarding Belgium just as a family business. I had not realized that the King of the Belgians is the most powerful of all Western monarchs, often choosing prime ministers and interfering in the formation of governments. The 'Pharaoh of the Congo' Leopold II, the first totalitarian ruler of the modern age, thought that colonies would nurture nationalism. He even considered invading Holland and forcing the Dutch to transfer its overseas

colonies to Belgium. When the Congo was finally taken over by the Belgian state, all the incriminating evidence was burnt on Leopold's orders, a feat not even managed by Hitler and Stalin. When Leopold's hearse was being driven through Brussels onlookers shouted insults at the corpse and spat at it.

Flanders had for centuries been one of the most prosperous areas in Europe but it soon became one of the poorest because of linguistic and economic discrimination; two Flemings were sent to prison in the 1860's for daring to speak Dutch in court. The Flemish hit back with a movement for cultural emancipation; later its members (Flamingants) made political demands in opposition to the Belgicists. The Belgicist (also socialist) philosophy was the brain child of the medieval historian Henri Pirenne who maintained that the Belgians were an ancient people therefore giving Belgium the right to be regarded as a genuine nation. In the twentieth century Belgium became a vast welfare state involving huge financial transfers from free-market Flanders to socialist Wallonia. Every time Flanders tried to reform the welfare arrangements Wallonia vetoed them. Belgium is a corporatist corrupt state run by 'Social Partners' where major decisions are taken by the trade unions and employers' organisations completely outside the parliament. In 1970 the Belgian constitution was changed to keep the Flemish majority in the minority position in which it had languished since 1830. Half the top jobs are reserved for the Wallonian minority and fifty per cent of all investments must be made in Wallonia.

The two world wars illustrated Belgium's unreliability in international affairs. Walloon privates were allowed to march with empty rucksacks while the Flemish who comprised 80 per cent of the army had to carry stones in theirs. The Francophone army censored all references to Flanders which did not mention Belgium as well. Compare the situation to today when all references to England or Britain that do not simultaneously mention Europe might be prohibited. Disillusioned Flemish soldiers founded the Front movement but because Albert kept his troops out of any offensives the Flemish remained loyal to the King even though they continued to hate Belgium. Albert I was prepared to withdraw if the Germans would reinstall him in Brussels, but the Germans bargained for a separate Flemish administration. In 1918 when the Belgian army was put under Allied command, militant Flamingants were put in the front line. With peace an ugly anti-Flemish purge began; the mob plundered Flemish houses and shops while the police looked on.

During the Second World War the Flemish position became worse. Many of them were driven to collaborate with the Germans because they hated their own state so much while many anti-democratic Belgicists who before the war had flirted with Nazism and anti-semitism joined the resistance. The King refused to abandon his Nazi sympathies: 'I do not want to turn against a system of ideas of which I am inclined to approve' and after D-Day the King and his family were deported to Germany. No wonder Churchill was reluctant to restore Belgian independence. Only the threat of civil war persuaded Leopold to abdicate in favour of his son Baudouin. While the royal family has never apologised for its Nazi sympathies, the Belgian establishment accuses the Vlamms Belang of being run 'by the sons of former Nazi collaborators'.

In the post war period without a strong police and judiciary, political corruption, money laundering and political assassination flourished while the immigration of Moroccans and European civil servants reinforced the frenchification process. The Dutroux affair scandalised the whole world. The trial of this notorious paedophile was delayed for many years through gross incompetence and corruption leading to a complete loss of confidence in the judicial system. The government tried to restore its image by posing as an international moralist and extending hospitality world wide. Belgian magistrates provided a risible spectacle when allegations were lodged against Pinochet, Sharon, Arafat, Castro and Saddam Hussein — even Tony Blair. The 'Quick Citizenship' Bill brought Belgian citizenship on demand to anyone who lived in the country for two or three years. Belgium became a safe haven for international criminals whose new passports let them travel freely through European countries and without a visa to America. Many terrorists benefited from the Quick Citizenship Bill: Tarek Maaroufi masterminded the murder on 9 September 2001 of Ahmad Masood the leader of the anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan. Islamic terrorism was regarded as much less dangerous than Flemish secessionism. In 2004 the Vlaams Bloc, the country's major party, was banned, the court declaring it a racist organisation. Later it regrouped as Vlaams Belang. In a recent interview Elio Di Rupo, leader of the Francophone Socialists, was asked: 'What will happen if the Flemings use their majority in the Chamber?'

'That would be the end of Belgium'. The journalist objected: 'That would be democratic rule, a majority in parliament.' Di Rupo said 'Then democracy will be the end of Belgium.' Belgium's unhappy history demonstrates that without a national consciousness public morality withers away. Will the Belgian disease become the European disease? All power and good fortune to the people of Flanders and Vlaams Belang!

The European Dilemma

Lee Rotherham

Alarming Drum: Britain's European Dilemma, Peter Morgan, Imprint Academic, 2005, £19.95.

The EU has been compared in the past to a bus, or a train, which passengers may or may not find themselves urged to catch before it leaves the station, but at present, a fairground might be more appropriate. It's a bit like the dodgems: lots of sitting around listening to cheesy music waiting for other people to settle down, followed by short barely controllable bursts of frenzy with lunatics bumping all over the place.

The timing of Peter Morgan's book has made it become, if not outdated, then 'uncurrent'. The (in my view, temporary) overthrow of the European Constitution by the happy referenda in France and the Netherlands have added an extra dimension to European politics that is missing in this work. That is not the author's fault, and no reason to reject this volume. The writer is clearly an illuminatus on the subject. He has extensive business experience on the continent, was DG of the Institute of Directors in the Europe-frenzy years at the start of the '90s, and ended up for eight years in the European Economic and Social Committee. This is an institution so peripheral to real policymaking and of such meaningless Darwinian justification that even pro-Europeans are asking for it to be abolished. However, crucially, it also set him on the inside track on how the EU operates.

This is a proto-thesis rather than a book. The last third of the work is one gigantic series of annexes, many of which are superfluous. Lists. More lists. Lists everywhere. Even at times lists found floating like tumbleweed into the main text. Do we need a list of the portfolios of Commissioners; a map with Mount Everest arrowed; or weighty footnotes involving the number of landing craft supplied by national contributors on D-Day? Other statistics which would have been more fitting are missing, such as comparative statistics on armed forces and capabilities today. I can, however, almost forgive him the morass on the continent's sundry nations by his description of Belarus alone: 'located on the main tank route between Berlin, Warsaw and Moscow'.

Anecdotal comparisons are a different matter. To learn that France in 1948 was so economically backward that in the whole of the Department of the Lozere there were only three bathtubs... that is a learning thing, a statistic of beauty. It is in this general area, of the concept of the EEC as a supposed mechanism for the revitalisation of Europe's heart after the war, that the author shines, tearing apart the false miracle by explaining the true comparative state of the Six and how catch-up was inevitable, not least obviously given Britain's servitude to greedy unions. Morgan misses the point on a couple of key occasions, though with such masses of archery the odd lost volley may be inevitable. The whole point behind the 'neighbourhood' clause in the Constitution is not to 'annex' countries, but precisely the opposite: to provide a status for countries the EU does not want to annex. This probably would include, in Giscard's mind at least, Turkey, Islamic North Africa, and any place with the syllable 'rus' in it. It also provides a mechanism whereby countries that wanted to leave or remain outside of the EU could find a way of achieving EEC status alongside but separate from an integrated Union. It is a profoundly important article and little appreciated. Its non-inclusion in an otherwise superlative section on membership and non-membership of the EU is consequently felt. I am not sure how 'cookies' will be 'activated' in response to a crisis, but then I am more Sesame Street than PC World. A more obvious distraction comes in the language section, where the Turkish language groups are miscalculated, and French Canadians would revolt over their inclusion with the Anglophone total. Ceaucescu also was not the only Soviet satellite leader to be executed, as both Nagy and Najibullah would attest.

An astute observer might spot that the number of vetoes stated as lost in the EU Constitution varies somewhat with the count, ranging from 39 to 63. Morgan here apologises by noting the difficulty in how you actually enumerate them; a fair point, considering the UK Government itself has supplied identically incorrect statistics, and the official Amsterdam veto count of 16 is more accurately 19. The cynic might simply here observe that Tony Blair has, since 1997, signed up to the loss of well over 100 vetoes, which is more than all his predecessors put together. What an achievement!

Despite these faults, Morgan makes a brave stab at how the principle of 'shared competences' works, or rather, how the Commission appropriates powers to itself over time. There is some game comment on how Brussels has become a 'Mecca for lobbyists in a vacuum of accountability and responsibility', a diatribe long overdue from analysts. I am equally delighted by the warnings against 'civil society', which from experience prove often to be a double misnomer, and mere representatives of their own blinkered selves. There are sound analyses on the reality of the differences in European legal systems, and a brave though brief linkage of religion and political cultures.

What we have is less a sit-down-and-read volume, than an abridged textbook involving compiled lecturer's notes. Fortunately, the lecturer is an astute one, but the juxtapositioning of opinion with fact and tabulation can jar. It is the taramasalata of EU studies; key seasoning for a feast, but an over-rich meal of itself.

IN SHORT

Red Star over Hollywood, The Film Colony's Long Romance with the Left, Ronald Radosh and Allis Radosh, Encounter Books, San Francisco, 2005, $25.95.

Hollywood is fond of weaving fantasies about itself and one of its favourite ones is about the 'dark days' of McCarthyism, of the black list, the horrors of people sacked, lives ruined, tragic destinies unfolding. Without dismissing it completely, one must say a good deal of it is rot. Most of those fired found jobs in America (often under another name) or in Europe; those questioned by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) lied their heads off about their membership of the Communist Party and twisted and turned to protect themselves but also to ensure that the Communist agenda was foremost.

Above all, Hollywood has never faced up to the truth about its own flirtation with Communism and its behaviour in that 'low, dishonest decade', the thirties. There has not, until now, been a proper examination of the black lists instituted by Party hacks against writers and producers who would not toe the line; the strikes organized by the Party; the money collected for Communist causes, the support for Stalin's terror expressed by those 'martyrs', the attempted and, sometimes, successful Soviet propaganda pushed into films.

Radosh and Radosh have done the world an enormous favour by their meticulous research of published and unpublished sources, their lengthy interviews with many survivors. The story of Hollywood and Communism is a good deal more fascinating than the usual rather glamorous and one-sided presentation of it. But it is a good deal more sinister as well.

Of course, there are heroes as well: the actors, writers, directors who realized what was going on and without necessarily supporting HUAC quietly turned the industry away from its flirtation with the Left. One thinks of Ronald Reagan, especially, but also of Gary Cooper and Melvyn Douglas; of Elia Kazan, whose hatred of Communism pushed him towards being a friendly witness; of many others who managed to oppose Hitler without supporting Stalin and who have been pushed out of the story by the preening hypocrites of the Left. Their story is told here as well.
Helen Szamuely

Darwinian Conservatism, Larry Arnhart, Imprint Academic, 2005, pb £6.95.

Northern Illinois University's Larry Arnhart provides an original and stimulating introduction to major areas of debate and literature on the profoundly complex implications of evolutionary theories and of escalating genetic research for social policy and religious belief. He contends that biological concepts, derived ultimately from Charles Darwin, are closely consistent with conservative views of human nature and values such as familial bonding and private property, in realistic contrast to 'leftist' projects aimed at moulding people into 'perfect' and/or 'egalitarian' communities. He thus takes a third position well away from previous poles of 'social darwinism', represented at their extremities by the libertarian anti-statist Herbert Spencer and the authoritarian statist Adolf Hitler, who went in different directions (except for shared opposition to 'racial crossing').

The writer looks briefly at Francis Galton, whose 'eugenics' (readers should remember) sought to mitigate the presumed painful effects of 'selection' — in a cultural context that transmitted respect for marriage and aristocratic ideals. He examines the emerging opinion that 'biotechnological power' could, and should, not only eliminate a few illnesses or disabilities but also work positively to create a 'fitter' or generally 'improved' species; the 'vision of utopian eugenics' updated. His comments deserve extensive discussion — especially when 'casual' abortions, and grotesque changes to traditional reproductive patterns, co-exist haphazardly amid 'democratic' hostility towards intellectual and aesthetic 'elitism'.

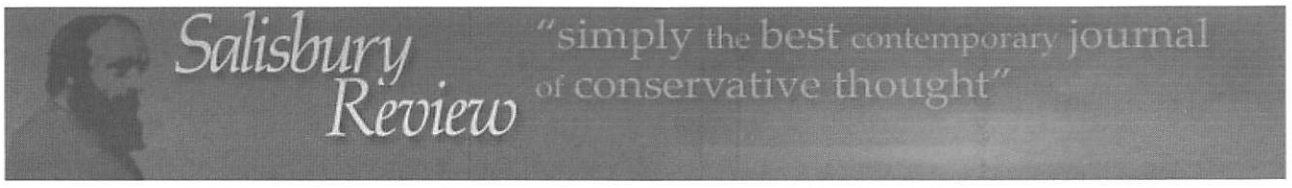
Professor Arnhart's scientifically informed critique of anti-conservative egalitarian 'optimism' is cheeringly

'optimistic' for conservative readers! This outstanding Societas Essay is strongly recommended.
David Ashton

Race, Vincent Sarich & Frank Miele, Westview Press, 2005, pb £10.99.

Some of those concerned about 'race' relations have lately been calling it 'racism' even to think that 'races' exist at all. Semantic as well as scientific difficulties are involved in serious questions that have fallen under a taboo. It has always looked to most people, including scientists, that the human species has long consisted of population clusters, fairly distinguishable not only by skin colour but also other features largely determined by heredity, although there are various mixtures and intergrades since people are not absolutely different and can interbreed with one another. These groups have been known as 'races' just as diverse sorts of dogs are called 'breeds' or 'crossbreeds', and even though the creation of canine varieties resulted from a different process, no sane dog-lover would say that 'breeds' were an 'illusion' or a 'dangerous myth'.

The Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at California University, Berkeley, joins *Skeptic* magazine's senior editor in effectively challenging ten crucial claims of the latest 'anti-racist' position with historical and biological facts. Notwithstanding a few pages of mitochondrial mathematics, this is a powerful polemic rather than a bland textbook on the 'reality of human differences'. It has annoyed the 'race-deniers' so much that it should delight believers in freedom of scientific enquiry and honest presentation of research findings.
David Ashton



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Demonstrable Failures

Am I my brother's keeper? The internet company Yahoo seems to think so. When Chinese dissident Shi Tao posted an internal Communist Party memo on the internet last year about possible social unrest on the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, he was arrested, and in April this year sentenced to 10 years in prison. The Chinese authorities tracked him down with the assistance of the Hong Kong based arm of his internet provider Yahoo. Yahoo, a world wide company, (they may send and fetch your e mail) was unperturbed.

'Just like any other global company, Yahoo must ensure that its local country sites must operate within the laws, regulations and customs of the country in which they are based.' said a local spokeswoman.

But the media organisation 'Reporters without Borders' accused Yahoo of becoming a 'police informant' to further its business. 'We already know' said the organisation, 'that Yahoo collaborates enthusiastically with the Chinese regime in questions of censorship, and now we know it is a Chinese police informant as well.'

In September this year the BBC reported that Yahoo had concluded a $1bn deal for a stake in one of China's biggest internet companies.

Other internet companies have been accused of supressing dissenting views on the Chinese internet. Microsoft was, reports the BBC, accused of censoring bloggers. The company's reply was Delphic.

'Like other global organisations, we must abide by the laws, regulations and norms of each country in which we operate.' This is the mantra of global capitalism. If you make people rich, they will become democratic. There is little sign of this in China where thousands of people are put to death by lethal injection each year, whose courts are a satire on justice, but whose gross national product continues to rise. This horrible regime illustrates the other side of the globalisation coin. As a country gets richer, its authorities are able to purchase more and more sophisticated apparatus to restrict the freedom of its citizens. If that country is morally corrupt, it drives freedom further underground.

And as our own democracies weaken, so we too will fall prey to the weed of global capital. Electronic companies have had no compunction in selling identity cards to the British government, and are following it up with a road surveillance satellite system. If it is built, and it seems likely as we all prefer new cars to freedom, within a decade every time you leave your house a camera will track your movements from kerbside to kerbside.

Globalisation is a Pied Piper. It holds in its hands a magic flute called technology. Immoral, indifferent to suffering, its eyes only on profit, the bewitching tune it plays promises a future in which we will have all the toys we ask for. All we have to do is to leave our carefully constructed nation states with their protecting walls of privacy and rights, and follow. But like the children of Hamelin, ahead of us are the depths of the River Weser.

Myles Harris

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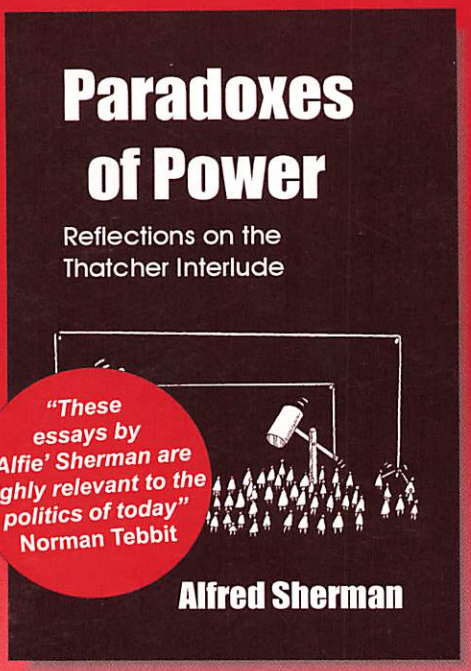
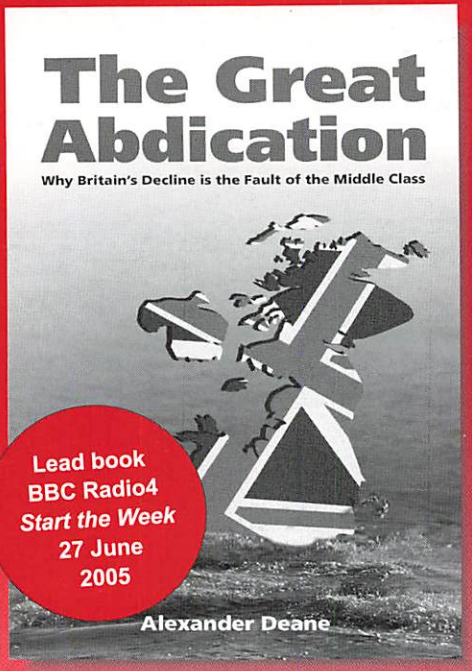


Born in 1919 in London's East End, until 1948 Sir Alfred Sherman was a Communist and fought in the Spanish Civil War. But he ended up an indefatigable free-market crusader. *Paradoxes of Power* describes his early relationship with Sir Keith Joseph and his own role in the formation of the Centre for Policy Studies in 1974. Sherman examines the origins and development of 'Thatcherism', but concludes that the Conservative administrations of the 1980s were, primarily, an 'interlude' and that the post-war consensus remains largely unscathed — 'we are back where we started'.

In her memoirs Lady Thatcher herself pays tribute to Sherman's 'brilliance', the 'force and clarity of his mind', his 'breadth of reading and his skills as a ruthless polemicist'. She credits him with a central role in her achievements, especially as Leader of the Opposition but also after she became Prime Minister.

184 pp. (hbk.) ~~£17.95/$34.90~~ **14.95**



The middle class provides British society with its stability and strength. According to Alexander Deane's *The Great Abdication*, our middle class has abstained from its responsibility to uphold societal values, and the enormously damaging collapse of our society's norms and standards is largely a result of that abdication.

The institutions of political and social governance provide a husk of functionality and mask these problems for those that do not wish to see, or do not care.

To restore Britain to something resembling a substantively functioning country, the middle classes must reinstate themselves as arbiters of morality, be unafraid to judge their fellow men, and follow through with the condemnation that necessarily follows when individuals sin against common values.

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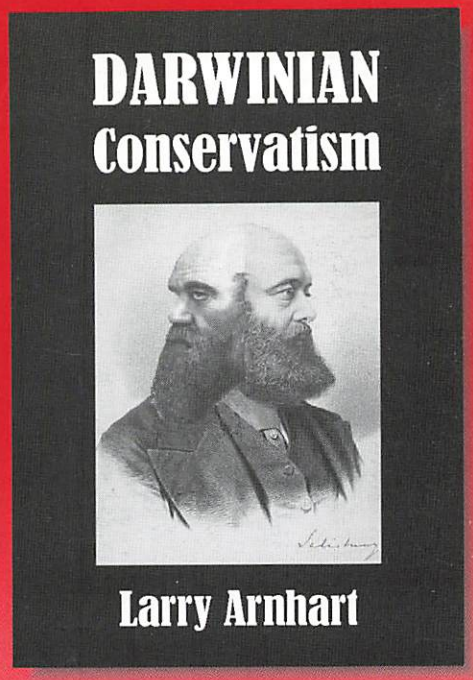

The Left has traditionally assumed that human nature is so malleable, so perfectible, that it can be shaped in almost any direction. *Darwinian Conservatism* objects, arguing that social order arises not from rational planning but from the spontaneous order of instincts and habits. Darwinian biology sustains conservative social thought by showing how the human capacity for spontaneous order arises from social instincts and a moral sense shaped by natural selection in human evolutionary history.

Larry Arnhart is a professor of political science at Northern Illinois University. He is the author of *Aristotle on Political Reasoning*, *Political Questions: Political Philosophy from Plato to Rawls*, and *Darwinian Natural Right: The Biological Ethics of Human Nature*.

160 pp. (pbk.) ~~£8.95/$17.90~~ **£6.95**

Lady Thatcher and Alexander Deane, author of *The Great Abdication* at the launch of Sir Alfred Sherman's *Paradoxes of Power*, Centre for Policy Studies, 27 July 2005

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