The
Salisbury Review
The quarterly magazine of conservative thought

"Of course, any infiltration by the Argentinians would soon be spotted."

Mr Valiant for Truth
Roger Scruton

Belgrano Blues
Christie Davies

Act of Disunion
William Stirling

Race and Justice
Theodore Dalrymple

Barbarians' Tribute
Jonathan Story

Boris Goodenough?
Alec Marsh

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Contents

3 Editorial

Articles

4 **Act of Disunion**
William Stirling
6 **Boris Goodenough?**
Alec Marsh
8 **Without Prejudice**
Theodore Dalrymple
9 **Would Dave Sink the Belgrano?**
Christie Davies
12 **Reginald Maudling's Legacy**
Henry Oliver
13 **Barbarians Bringing Tribute to the Emperor**
Jonathan Story
16 **Quantum of Solace**
Brian Ridley
17 **Steamroller Justice**
Jan Davies
19 **The not so Sublime Porte**
Bill Park
21 **The Founder of Conservative Central Office**
Jonathan M Paquette
23 **Hungary: Revolving Door Politics**
Mark Griffith
26 **Guilty White Fellows**
Geoffrey Partington
29 **Hamlet Today – the Purge of Fortinbras**
Ralph Berry

Columns

32 **Conservative Classic — 46**
Orthodoxy, G K Chesterton
33 **Reputations — 35**
Charles Dickens
35 **Eternal Life**
Peter Mullen
36 **Roy Kerridge**

Arts & Books

37 **Robert Crowcroft**
on Conservatism
38 **Alistair Cooke**
on Attlee's War
39 **John Jolliffe**
on Richard Cobb's Letters
40 **M R D Foot**
on Douglas Haig
41 **Nigel Jones**
on Queen Anne
43 **Celia Haddon**
on Fossilised Ancestors
44 **Penelope Tremayne**
on Small Wars
45 **Mark Watterson**
on Bloody Sunday
47 **James Docherty**
on Scottish Emigration
48 **Frank Ellis**
on The Future of War
49 **Jane Kelly**
on the Royal Durbar
50 **A W Purdue**
on the Siege of Leningrad
52 **Film: Merrie Cave**
on *The Iron Lady*
53 **Ray Honeyford 1934-2012**
54 **Art: Andrew Wilton**
on Stolen Turners
56 **Music: Gerald Place**
on the Future of Classical Music

58 In Short

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We get a poor quality of atheist these days – though they make up in noise what they lack in wit. In the ancient world most of the atheists were cheerful and entertaining. Lucretius told us there is no God and no life after death but we're not to be scared, for 'Where I am, death is not; and where death is, I am not'. David Hume was just about the most genial atheist there ever was: 'I am dying as fast as my enemies, if I have any, could wish, and as easily and cheerfully as my best friends could desire.' The good old atheists urged us to enjoy life, or at least to be stoical in the face of misfortune and death. Moreover, they attended the same dinner parties as the believers – imagine the sceptic Hume over a bottle of wine with the fervent Christian Sam Johnson.

Today's atheists are a sorry bunch, because they take themselves too seriously: blame their small-mindedness, lack of imagination and dullness on their belief in Progress. Dawkins, de Botton, Pullman and their friends accuse believers of swallowing whole chunks of myth. Who are they to talk? Contemporary atheists all share an enthusiasm for the most preposterous myth ever invented: the myth of Progress.

The myth of Progress is the incorrigible presupposition underlying everything that is said. The mass media is sustained by it. You will hear several times a day on radio and TV: 'It's disgraceful that [insert some atrocity] is happening in the 21st century' – as if our present times were guaranteed automatic moral superiority over all previous ages. You will also hear barbaric occurrences described as 'medieval', but the Middle Ages were a paradise compared with our recent history.

Recall the millions slaughtered in the First World War and the millions more in the Second. Think of the Holocaust, of the twenty millions, at least, murdered by Stalin and as many as seventy millions killed by Mao in the name of 'liberation' and 'the cultural revolution.' The progressives believe that the Middle Ages excelled our times in cruelty, and wanton destruction. The age of Hardicanute and St Thomas Aquinas is better than the theatre of hell that was the 20th century.

Is it really progressive every year to murder 200,000 children in the womb – in the UK alone – largely because sexually incontinent people find that the prospect of caring for a child would interfere with their 'lifestyle'. You don't have to go as far as Belsen or the Gulag to see the fruits of Progress. Just stroll as far as the Tottenham Court Road on a Saturday night. Progress decrees that behaviour which was for centuries deplored is now celebrated as a sign of our moral enlightenment. Any kind of coupling – tripling, quintupling – is permissible between – among? – as many sexes or 'genders' as you contrive to invent. If I may put this epigrammatically, what was once a mortal sin is now only a lifestyle choice.

The idea of Progress originated with the Enlightenment and it was later empowered by the theory of evolution. 19th century philosophers and sociologists came to imagine that, as the species evolves physically, we also improve morally. Or as those learned students of human affect, The Beatles, sang, we're 'getting better all the time'. Naturally, the modern church has enthusiastically embraced the myth of Progress – blasphemously describing it as 'The Holy Spirit leading us into new truths'.

The fundamental objection to the myth of Progress is not on empirical or moral grounds but because it is absurd. It makes no sense to measure value or to assess good and evil merely on the criterion of the passage of time. It is illogical to think that the future will always be better than the past – as if what I intend to do next Tuesday is bound to be an improvement on what I did last week.

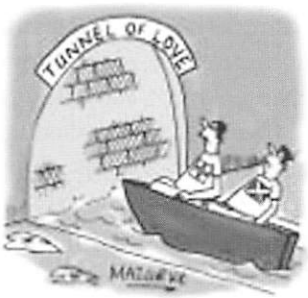
Chesterton once observed of a prominent Progressive: 'He said there was no right, no wrong, but only the gentle upward movement of the universe. And I wondered how, if there is no right and no wrong, he knew there was any *up* and any *down*.'

Act of Disunion

William Stirling

We make fetishes of political maps. There is something alternately unnerving or comforting about great swathes of primary colours splashed across the constituency maps marking the ebb and flow of political fortunes. Yet they don't really tell us anything. A whole blue paint pot is dropped on England in the 2010 election, yet only produces a coalition and one small spill across the border into Scotland.

An exasperated English Tory told me that Scotland had become a Scandinavian style socialist country, was irredeemably left wing and any attempt at a Conservative revival there should be abandoned. He did not say that the Scots should be allowed to go their own way and good riddance to us, but it was certainly on his mind.



When I argued that there was a sizeable constituency of small c conservatives in Scotland who didn't vote for the Conservatives, he asked, 'Who are they? And why are they all voting for left wing or centre left parties?' It is a difficult question to answer yet it has very important ramifications for the survival of the United Kingdom. I trotted out the old story of the 1955 election when the Conservative Party, or rather the Unionist Party as it was in Scotland then, had won more than 50 per cent of the vote (the only party ever to do so in Scotland under universal franchise) and returned a majority of Scottish seats to Westminster. 'Well what happened to all that?' was his plaintive reply. When you look at the old 1955 map, blue from John o' Groats to Gretna (yellow and red flecks notwithstanding very nearly the whole countryside is blue), as Scots Tories are wont to do, mournfully thinking 'Wull they no come back again?', it is important that it is not the distribution that is misleading, but the colour. The blue north of the Border in 1955 represented something rather different from the blue south of it.

Before 1886 Scotland was Liberal yellow, ensuring the party was the natural governing party of the 19th century. However in 1885, Gladstone, thinking that the recently increased franchise would be to the Liberals' advantage, and wishing to co-opt the Irish nationalists, then the third force in politics, to give him unassailable majorities, flew the 'Hawarden kite', in effect a bit of spin espousing a moderate form of Irish Home Rule. He sought to split a weak Conservative government but the device blew up in his face. It was too much for many Liberals, and the party split. Liberal Unionists, opposed to Irish Home Rule, crossed the floor and in the 1886 election Lord Salisbury won a landslide for the Conservatives, backed (though not in a formal coalition) by 93 Liberal Unionists.

The Liberal Unionists, mostly Scots, handed political domination to the Conservatives, helping to keep them in power until 1906, when the Liberals under Campbell-Bannerman won a landslide. In 1912 they formally merged with the Conservatives as junior partner – in England. In Scotland it was different. There were few Conservatives there, a rump that had never recovered from the 1832 Reform Act. Essentially a party of lairds and the adherents of the Episcopalian Church, it was scattered and disorganised, centred mainly in the Borders and parts of the North East. The Liberal Unionists, with numbers, organisation and the Kirk on their side were obviously going to be running the show, and the first thing they did was drop the Conservative name, which was then as now unpopular, in favour of The Unionist Party. The merger north of the border was a mirror image of that in England where the Liberal Unionists were subsumed into the Conservative Party, officially with the moniker Conservative and Unionist Party though the Unionist bit was eventually dropped. Some, particularly in Joseph Chamberlain's Birmingham, still campaigned as Liberal Unionists, as some did in Scotland taking advantage of the Liberal brand where it suited. Likewise in Scotland some Conservatives campaigned as Conservative Unionists in their old heartlands.

Eventually, a new party was being fashioned in Scotland, based on the principles of 19th century Liberalism, the Good Old Cause of Scottish Whig Presbyterianism and the new Liberal one of Empire and Trade. Thus the defining issues for the Unionist Party remained Irish Home Rule, and later working, middle and to a lesser extent upper class sectarian support for their co-religionist cousins in Ulster, and the importance of keeping the Empire as a going concern, for the sake of trade and industry.

George Dangerfield, in his book *The Strange Death*

of Liberal England, put forward various reasons for the collapse of liberalism, but in Scotland, Liberalism was not dead, but all around us in the form of Unionists. By effectively standing still, their political position moved to the right as the world of politics changed around them, while at the same time the Conservatives ('we are all socialists now') in the age of full enfranchisement moved to the left. (Thus they met pretty solidly on what was then the centre right.)

The Unionist Party was an identifiably Scottish party, independent with a markedly different political DNA to the Conservative party, and a staunch defender of the honour of Scotland. John Buchan, imperial proselytiser and Unionist MP for the Combined Scottish Universities, could say 'Every Scotsman should be a Scottish Nationalist' and be perfectly understood. Indeed a splinter group from the party left to form the nascent Scottish Nationalist Party. Nonetheless the Unionists marched in lockstep with the English Conservatives through the division lobbies, and produced two Conservative Prime Ministers: Andrew Bonar Law (MP for Glasgow Central) and Alec Douglas Home (Kinross and West Perthshire). To outside and even inside observers there seemed to be little to tell the parties apart. They were both efficient electoral machines that had support across society, and both believed in a certain sort of government.

The wheels started to wobble for the Unionist Party after their 1955 zenith. Suez exposed the fragility of Empire, and soon afterwards Macmillan's 1960 'winds of change' speech scrawled it on the wall. Other social trends like secularism and a decline in the importance of church-going weakened the Protestant Associations' importance among working class voters, who began to desert in droves to Labour. The 1964 election recorded a slump in the popular vote from 47 per cent to 40 per cent and in terms of MPs from 31 to 24 (what a bonanza that would be regarded as now). The *Daily Record* changed its allegiance from Unionist to Labour, and portrayed the party as the preserve of grouse-shooting lairds. Ted Heath added his own peculiar brand of anti-magic in 1965 when he amalgamated the party into the Conservative Party putting its leadership and organisation under the control of London. Calling it the Conservative and Unionist Party did not disguise what was far more than a name change. The Troubles in Ulster caused the party to further distance itself from its Orange Order Protestant working class voters, who finally split off for good after the Anglo Irish Agreement.

Now viewed as the English party it could not prosper, and within ten years it had lost another seven percent of its vote, and repeated the same rate of attrition in the following two decades, leaving it down to 16 per cent of the vote and one MP in 2001. Like a starving man it was living off its fat reserves. It was not winning enough new members to replace those dying off, and was incapable of reinventing itself or staging even the mildest of recoveries in the face of its rival parties' misfortunes or even the revival of its foster parent party south of the Border. Devolution slicked a veneer of respectability by presenting the party with actual seats in an actual Parliament, even if it was a Parliament whose existence they opposed, and thanks to a form of representation they opposed, and still do, in many of their hearts. Now it is down to a membership of about eight and a half thousand, roughly on a par with membership of the London Library. The starving party has now reached the final core of its membership and voters fat reserve. And they are ageing. Rather like that map of Napoleon's invasion of Russia which shows the losses of his Grand Armée against a temperature chart, you can now tell how hard winter has been by the drop in Conservative voters.

The party is seen as such a lost cause that even their most predictable of supporters, lairds, (and, whisper it, Conservative party donors) are voting tactically for the SNP to keep Labour out. In some quarters even independence is seen as better than perma-rule by the Troglodyte West of Scotland Labour Party. In the last general election, despite an impressive financial blow-out in ten target seats, the Conservative vote went backwards as people voted tactically to stop Labour winning, but it wasn't all gloom: we did get an MP. Even more wondrously in Banff and Buchan, the Nationalist bunker that is Alec Salmond's old seat, an impressive candidature in the form of Peterhead fisherman Jimmy Buchan produced a swing of 11 per cent, turning the constituency marginal. In general though the Scottish Conservatives would appear to have dialled back to 1885, just before their rescue by the Liberal Unionists. But now there is no young Lochinvar sweeping in out of the West to scoop them into his saddle.

Shortly after my conversation with the exasperated English Tory, I volunteered for Murdo Fraser's campaign to become leader of the Scottish Conservatives. He led on a reform ticket, and the chief reform was to change the name to anything as long as it wasn't Conservative. He would also have decoupled the party from the English Party, and returned to, effectively, the 1912-1965 Unionist party, which would be identifiably Scots, and the only genuine centre right party in Scotland. It would have the same relationship with the Conservative Party that the Unionist Party had, or more accurately the same relationship that the German Christian Democratic Union has with the Bavarian Christian Social Union. He came close to winning in the first round, but eventually polled

45 per cent against Ruth Davidson's 55 per cent of the members who voted. Which is impressive when you think that the hard core of any party is naturally the most resistant to change.

The German comparison is the nub of the matter: Britain is slowly becoming a federal union, but the English have yet to realise it in the form of their own national assembly. The world of politics has its own system of plate tectonics, and long term underlying political forces that made parliamentary union between Scotland and England three hundred years ago and Ireland two hundred years ago (against much vociferous opposition in both cases), are pulling them apart again today. Hence Murdo Fraser's and others' wish for an independent party so that for once the Scottish Conservatives could be ahead of the game.

It is impossible to tell how well the Unionist Party would have done if it had not been subsumed into the Conservatives. It would still have experienced some sort of headlong decline in the Eighties thanks to the preponderance of heavy industry in Scotland. On the other hand it might not have been so comprehensively outflanked by the Nationalists from the Seventies onwards. What it would have been allowed to do was to reinvent and revitalise itself in terms of local Scottish political conditions. It might even have been able to make the running with devolution.

Some Scottish commentators (like Alan Cochrane and Allan Massie) say that the answer to the question 'what happened to all that?' is that it died. Forty years of socialism and state welfare has completely eroded the traditional Scots energy, entrepreneurialism and appetite for hard work. The state employs, directly or indirectly, somewhere between a third and half of all Scots, depending on the statistics, and the welfare bill is eye-watering.

Last year's bravura success of the Scottish Nationalist Party was as much a backlash against Labour as a victory for the notion of independence. However you cannot measure the appetite of Scots for centre right policies, because there is no credible Scottish centre right party for them to vote for. Perhaps it is time we had one again.

William Stirling is a screenwriter and journalist who stood in the 2007 Scottish Parliamentary election for the independent centre right party Scottish Voice

Boris Goodenough?

Alec Marsh

It's a freezing February morning in Battersea Park, south London, and Boris Johnson, dressed in a grey suit, red tie, and a shabby anorak that barely buttons up, grasps the microphone. Below him (for he stands on a bench like Coriolanus) is a crowd of some 200 local worthies in tweed hats, overcoats and Barbers. Mainly 'Friends of The Park', they are joined by local school children, joggers, four orange robed Buddhists, and a pair of King Charles Spaniels. We are here to see London's famous mayor open the park's new winter gardens.

'As I was cycling here this morning, eluding my convoy of outriders,' says Boris, pausing for laughter, 'I saw what an amazing thing London is. What an incredible thing the city is. It is the most incredible invention of mankind, isn't it? What an amazing thing we have produced as a species.' His voice, a soft growl, lingers on the s and then rises, loaded with awe. 'I looked at the bridges. I looked at the houses and I thought, the city is the perfect environment for human beings to congregate. People don't recognise this. But it is a fact, an unromantic but true fact, that the city is the best place in which to exchange ideas, the best place for economic activity; human beings who live in cities live longer than those who live in the countryside – they do, they are better educated, better fed, there are many more opportunities for reproduction in the city than there are in the countryside.' 'And,' he presses on, rising to his verbal climax, 'by 2050 the rest of the human race will have cottoned onto this, and most of the population of the planet will be living in the city – cities like London.'

The burghers of Wandsworth are in seventh heaven as Boris the skilled orator changes tack and lets the levity drain from his voice: 'Of course that presents us with a challenge because we know in our souls,' he says earnestly. 'We are dislocated, deracinated from our roots as hunter-gatherers, we feel it in our souls, and we yearn to create green space in the cities. That's why I congratulate everybody on what they've done here. I think it's an absolutely beautiful achievement.' Amid a rapture of cheers, the mayor descends from the bench and is pressed adoringly by the genteel throng. Even a reporter from *The Guardian* gazes, slack-jawed,

momentarily bewitched by the 'Boris-effect'.

Elected in 2008 by 1.1 million Londoners, Boris had the biggest direct mandate in British political history. In May he fights his old enemy Ken Livingstone in what the editor of the *London Evening Standard* tells me will be a 'fight of two titans both offering two visions for London'. Yet how far apart are these visions? In February Boris declared he would bring the suburban rail network in London under the control of City Hall. This is stealing Ken Livingstone's clothes. Boris has also maintained Ken's widely hated congestion charge zone, and in other areas such as immigration and welfare benefits he seems on the left, recently referring to Cameron's attempts to limit housing benefit in London as 'ethnic cleansing'.

So what is Borisism – is he even a Tory anymore? 'Oddly enough one of the people he resembles in style if not in politics is Ken Livingstone,' says Peter Kellner, who runs the online pollster YouGov. 'They're both outside the conventional mainstream of their parties; both have developed a particularly personal brand, almost separate from a party brand, and both can engage in a turn of phrase. It's a credit to both of them that when they talk you instantly want to hear what they're saying. You may not agree with it but they have a refreshingly human way of talking.'

'I find it very hard to judge Boris's political location,' he adds. 'With most prominent politicians you can draw a line from left to right and plunk their mugshots in a particular place and say, John Redwood is out to the right, David Cameron's a little way to the right, Nick Clegg's somewhere around the centre, Ed Miliband's a little way to the left and so on. But it's very hard to know where to place Boris on such a scale. Plainly he's to the right of the centre, but I'm not sure how far right because his writings and his policies seems to me to be ideologically quite thin.'

When I ask if Boris has been a 'Tory' mayor, the phone-line goes dead for about five seconds. 'The reason I hesitate is that, listening to him, he couldn't be a member of the Labour party. He's clearly on the right, but it is more a set of instincts, mannerisms, ways of talking and thinking rather identifiable policies.'

Is there a Johnsonsian brand of Conservatism?

'I don't know what Borisism is, other than a perfectly proper desire to get as far as you can in politics, which I don't blame any politician for', says Kellner.

Another politician who has a refreshingly 'human way' of talking is the former Tory minister and London mayoral candidate Steve Norris, who ran for mayor in 2000 and 2004. 'The thing about Boris is that he is unique,' says Norris. 'He's more of a rock star than a politician.' Norris rejects the idea of Boris creating a new form of urban Conservatism. 'That would be to suggest something radical about Boris's approach which would relate to policy. There is an urban Toryism of which many of us are proud and that definitely includes Boris, but its tell-tale characteristics are not unique to Boris. He is a classic modern Tory in that he's a profound believer in free markets and individual freedom.'

Tory broadcaster, Iain Dale, rejects the existence of anything we might call 'Borisism'. 'If there is such a thing,' he concedes, 'it's nothing to do with Conservatism – it is to do with his personality. If you walk down the street with Boris he is usually mobbed. He's not seen as a Conservative. Everyone knows him as Boris. He has out Ken-ed Ken.'

Norris agrees. 'What we've got in Boris is a very modern political figure,' he says. 'He's perhaps the first political figure who is famous as a celebrity rather than for their political achievements. 'Boris communicates in a way that very few other politicians do,' he says. 'A combination of sixth form and Oxford Union with a sense of near-car-crash, which is incredibly attractive to people, whether you agree with his politics or not.' Norris also acknowledges what he regards as genuine political achievements of Boris's term, such as his limiting council tax contributions to City Hall, and his campaign commitment to cut the boroughs' mayoral precept by one per cent next year. Norris also supports his stance over immigration and housing benefits – both of which he says play in London because of the international nature of business and the price of property. He says these aren't examples of Boris being left wing, they're Boris being mayor of London and fighting its corner.

'When Livingstone first stood there were many people on the Tory benches who said he would be a disaster,' recalls Norris. 'In the same way there were people who said, "Oh Boris he's a nice guy but he'll never be able to run anything." I would say that no independent observer could fail to recognise that Boris has outperformed almost everybody's expectations, including his own.'

Back in Battersea Park, having spent an hour in the freezing cold chatting to the crowd, Boris unlocks his bike from the railings (the mayor of Wandsworth's limousine replete with flag and shield is adjacent) and pedals away into the traffic. He leaves behind a gathering, clearly elated by the contact with genuine eccentric but loveable London celebrity. I ask a smartly dressed lady standing nearby who she is, assuming her to be one of those worthy council officials or 'friends of the Park'.

'I'm the local MP,' she says firmly. And as I watch her walk away, I reflect on the power of charm in political discourse.

Alec Marsh is a journalist.

Without Prejudice

Theodore Dalrymple

Elizabeth I once said that she did not want to make windows into men's souls; nowadays, she would be regarded as lacking in proper ambition. In our enlightened times, not only certain deeds, but certain thoughts, are to be expunged by the law. Outwardly correct behaviour is no longer enough; it must be accompanied by correct belief. For some this represents progress; for others regress and the threat of totalitarianism.

The Stephen Lawrence enquiry, for example, found that the police were institutionally racist, a claim that was irrefutable for the very worst of reasons: that no evidence could ever refute it. It was a reincarnation of Original Sin, but one that affected not the whole of Mankind, only certain designated (and hated) groups. Moreover, it was based upon a wholly false idea: that people with racist thoughts necessarily behaved in a harmfully racist way.

One of the problems with the attention given to the case of Stephen Lawrence, horrible as it was, is that is diverted attention from the fact that most of the violence to which young black men in London (and elsewhere) are subjected is committed by other young blacks, and not by racists at all

Stephen Lawrence, whose case has overturned the ancient legal principle of *autrefois acquit*, with the distinct and sinister prospect of a creeping, and eventually total, abolition of the prohibition of double jeopardy, was murdered by brutes with racist ideas. Their ideas, however, were not racist and nothing else; their whole outlook on life was brutish. They were, if you like, equal opportunity brutes.

Most people who harbour racist thoughts, or even who openly express them, do not act in the way that the killers of Stephen Lawrence acted. No sensible person would suspect Diane Abbott of being a vicious criminal, even potentially so, merely because she posted racist comments on Twitter. The communists killed scores of millions of people, but that does not make Eric Hobsbawm a murderer. The making of such distinctions is the distinguishing mark of a genuinely tolerant society.

Racism is like a necessary drug to anti-racists, whose view of the world has, paradoxically, and as a consequence, become as racialised as any racist's. Over and over again, they argue that the under- or over-representation of a racial group in some sphere of life, by comparison with their proportion in the general population, is the product of racial discrimination, as if racial discrimination were the only possible explanation of differences in outcome between groups. Of course, differences might conceivably arise from such discrimination, in whole or in part; but the difference is not in itself evidence of it.

The bad faith of professional anti-racists is proved by the selectivity of the evidence they use. Recently, there was much anti-racist fervour over a footballer called Suarez who, in the midst of a typically unedifying spat with a black footballer called Evra, whose behaviour in the matter was far from impeccable, employed racial abuse. We were asked to believe that racism is a terrible scourge in English football.

On one of the many days (6 January) on which this episode was reported in the *Times*, I counted the number of pictures of black and white footballers in the newspaper. There were twelve blacks and five whites. There is more than one possible explanation for this imbalance, but what seems to me unlikely is that blacks are not over-represented among professional footballers by comparison with their numbers in the general population. Since playing football at this level is virtually a guarantee of millionaire, if not multi-millionaire status, this is (superficially, at any rate) greatly advantageous to young black men. What seems to me very unlikely is that the over-representation of blacks is the result of pro-black racial bias.

One of the problems with the attention given to the case of Stephen Lawrence, horrible as it was, is that it diverted attention from the fact that most of the violence to which young black men in London (and elsewhere) are subjected is committed by other young blacks, and not by racists at all. Probably this is the consequence of the deeply dim and largely vicious popular culture which they espouse so avidly; but whatever the cause, the silence on the subject by comparison with the noise on that of Stephen Lawrence is surely significant. It is as if, during an epidemic of plague, doctors were to concentrate their attention on

myasthenia gravis: a real problem to those who suffer it, of course, but not the main public health problem of the moment.

There is evidence that prejudice is not all that it is cracked up to be. Unusually, and very interestingly, the *Guardian* published not long ago a breakdown of household wealth, not by class or region, but by religious affiliation. Jews were the richest religious group, and were followed by – Sikhs.

This finding utterly destroys the anti-racists' outlook, for the history of both groups is similar: on arrival they encountered considerable prejudice against them, but nevertheless flourished. The conditions that made this possible were because there was no legal impediment to their progress; the prejudice against them, while it existed, was not universal or overwhelming; and that they had the right attitudes to the family, educational and economic life. Apart from not actively standing in their way, and providing the rule of law, the state did nothing positive to help them *qua* communities.

If further evidence were needed (though it is not), professional football provides it. It is not very long ago that black footballers were very few, and crowds reacted to them with repellent insults. Though it would be an exaggeration to say that there are no such insults now, they are far fewer; and black players make up a large proportion of all players. Anti-racism played no part in these developments; anti-racists imposed no racial quotas (leaving out Indians, for example) on football clubs. Even if racially prejudiced, the management of clubs simply found that it was self-destructive to refuse to employ black players. The spontaneity of these developments is what the anti-racists hate and fear. Their ideology (the window on their souls) is the combination of mirror-image racism with the desire for bureaucratic power and control.

Theodore Dalrymple's latest book is Anything Goes *(Monday Books).*

Would Dave Sink the Belgrano?

Christie Davies

It is now thirty years since their calamitous defeat in the Falklands War in 1982 but the Argentinians are getting uppity again. It is not merely their usual verbal impudence or their wanting their athletes to wear badges with a map of the Falklands saying 'Islas Malvinas' to get them to run faster at the Olympic Games in London. The Argentine's naval forces have, in contravention of international law, been intercepting and boarding British licensed fishing boats in an attempt to intimidate them from fishing in the territorial waters of the Falklands islands, which the Argentinians still claim to own. This follows their earlier declaration that boats sailing to or from the British territories of the Falklands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands need special permission to pass through Argentinian waters. Likewise they have threatened to prevent planes crossing their territory when flying from Chile to the Falklands.

Now the Argentinians have persuaded their neighbours Uruguay and Brazil to bar even civilian Falklands vessels from using the ports in those countries, ports essential for trading given that they cannot use Argentinian ones. The Argentine policy is a continuation of war by other means. Things are back where they were in the years before the 1982 war and Chavez, the anti-Western President of Venezuela, has already said that if there were another Falklands war he would take part against Britain. Chavez has screamed: 'Queen of England, I'm talking to you. The time for empires is over, haven't you noticed? Return the Malvinas to the Argentine people.'

It would be a disaster if at this point a failure on our part to respond with sufficient vigour were to lead once again to war, as happened through Foreign Office appeasement in the 1970s. No doubt the Foreign Office will claim that Argentina has become a democracy and that concessions over sovereignty can now be safely made. But the nature of the government in Buenos Aires is irrelevant to our position. If in some uncharactistic beserker fit the government of democratic Norway were to demand the return of the Orkney and Shetland islands and then invade them (the islands and people were once Norwegian whereas Argentina has no such claim), we would feel obliged to throw the Norsemen out. At the time of the war in 1982 many of the leftists in the Labour party only supported Britain's task force because they saw it defeating fascism. It wasn't. We merely wanted to drive out a foreign invader; the subsequent regime change in Buenos Aires was not part of the plan. The Foreign Office had until then been happy to negotiate with a military regime which had its opponents tortured and made to disappear without trace. Even pregnant women were killed after giving birth and their newborn babies handed over to the

childless wives of colonels but the Foreign Office kept chatting to these thugs about possible joint sovereignty over the 'Malvinas'. The military regime was not fascist. It had come to power to 'restore order', *el Proceso de Reorganización Nacional*, after the left and right wings of the fascist Justicialist Party founded by Juan Domingo Perón began to fight violently among themselves. The present elected President of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, the widow of ex-President Néstor Kirchner, is another Justicialist in the Perón tradition. She is not a fascist but she is a wilful egalitarian and ultra-nationalist populist and has a slight whiff of Perón's first wife about her. Kirchner is currently seeking to abolish freedom of the press in Argentina and she could also mean trouble for us.

Why did we get into this mess in the first place? Why did we wait supinely for the sudden but inevitable invasion of 1982? The answer lies in the culture of the Foreign Office and in the limp-wristed flexibility of our diplomacy. Our negotiators are willing to be anything except obdurate. Where an opponent is ever hungry for more, concessions breed concessions and far from preventing conflict they make it more likely. This is what happened in the Falklands. The Argentinians had made hysterical demands long before the last military dictatorship came to power. There should have been a vigorous negative response. The Falkland Islands and South Georgia should have been made a full and integral part of the United Kingdom, a more distant Scilly Islands, to make it clear that they could not be invaded or indeed coveted. This should have been followed up by a vigorous programme of economic development and exploitation conducted not by civil servants but by British entrepreneurs though constrained by very strict local controls over immigration. Instead there were placating words. The Foreign Office deliberately and systematically appeased a serial aggressor with ambitions to expand. In 1976 the Argentinians built a military base on Thule Island in the South Sandwich Islands, a British territory associated with South Georgia. It had no purpose other than to reassert a claim to and to prepare for aggression against the Falklands and the attack on South Georgia was launched from this base. Britain protested but made no effort to remove them. If in 1978 we had stealthily moved substantial naval forces into the area and then forced the Argentines to surrender or be forcibly expelled, there would have been no Falklands War later.

Before the war Argentina had displayed an aggressive nationalism. She made several attempts in the 1970s to seize islands belonging to Chile, defying past treaties and the decisions of the agreed arbitrators and coming close to all-out war in 1978. This is the country with which our Foreign Office bureaucrats thought it possible to reach a fair and lasting agreement. I travelled in Patagonia in 1991 and by implicit mutual agreement did not discuss the Falklands war with the locals, nor did I comment on the monuments and posters proclaiming their sovereignty over the 'Malvinas'. Then two English-speaking Argentinians asked my opinion over yet another new dispute with Chile over some sliver of land along the border, triggered by the finding of some old map in the archives in Buenos Aires. I suggested that they should ask the people who lived there whether they wanted to be Chileans or Argentinians. At first this was seen to be a fair, sensible and disinterested solution and then someone said angrily, 'That's the trick you British used over the Malvinas'.

Falklands Cemetery

Perón had made aggressive territorial claims in the 1940s not just to the Falklands but also in the Antarctic continent and, contrary to international treaty, they are being covertly pursued today. The Argentinians, alone of all the nations that have scientific bases there, have encouraged women to give birth on their bases so as to establish a future claim to permanent occupation. They have kept buildings abandoned by their scientists fully maintained there, which under the Antarctic treaty they should have demolished. Argentina is seeking a penguin empire dominating the entire South Atlantic, which also explains why they desperately want South Georgia. They may have some kind of poor and invalid claim to the Falklands but they have none to South

Georgia, which is a thousand miles from the Falklands in the opposite direction from Argentina.

The Sir Humphries of the Foreign Office are supporters of Third-Worldism who take seriously the irrational and self-interested rhetoric about colonialism and imperialism that is spouted in the United Nations. Britain has eleven overseas territories, islands with small populations such as Bermuda, Pitcairn, St Helena and the peninsular of Gibraltar, none of which show any desire to become independent. It is not for their status to be debated and undermined by UN committees on decolonisation made up of states whose record on the autonomy of their own peripheral peoples is dubious and often oppressive. In the conclaves of the UN the Falkland Islanders are vulnerable to being defined as 'settlers', a group demonized in Third Worldist ideology. Had the Argentinians (and indeed the Gibraltar-hungry Spaniards) been any colour other than white, the Falklands would have been handed over in a servile manner in order that our dear Foreign Office should not appear to be 'colonialist' and could be well regarded in the 'court of world opinion'. The only territory the FO are keen to occupy is the immoral high ground and the ethos of Robin Cook has replaced that of Captain Cook. The Foreign Office underplays the value that these distant islands have as potential military bases for ourselves or our allies and for their territorial waters rich in sea creatures and below their seas plateaus rich in minerals. The Foreign Office would cheerfully hand them over to any rapacious power that sought them, either directly or by casting them adrift.

The Foreign Office seems to have been unaware of the degree to which the Argentinians were disliked by many South Americans for their boastful airs of superiority about the size of their country,

In the 1970s the Foreign Office wanted Britain to look good in Latin America. When war came, the Argentinians received very little help from Latin American countries (they received far more from Libya and Israel) and the Chileans actively helped the British forces. The Foreign Office seems to have been unaware of the degree to which the Argentinians were disliked by many South Americans for their boastful airs of superiority about the size of their country, its alleged economic prospects, its high-tech military equipment and the fact that their people are almost entirely of white European descent. They made sure of that in Patagonia in the 1870s by deliberately exterminating the entire indigenous population there, the genocide perpetrated by General Roca's army, to establish for the first time full control of that disputed territory. The Falklands were now three hundred miles away from the Argentine coast whereas Buenos Aires is nine hundred miles distant.

The Argentines went on pushing their absurd anti-colonial propaganda even when they occupied the Falkland Islands. A poster in English, now in the museum in Port Stanley, proclaims, below a large picture of the Virgin Mary: 'people of the Malvinas, you have been liberated from the illegal colonial government. Join us in giving thanks to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the success of operation rosary'. Had they not noticed the pride the islanders took in their war memorials from both World Wars? But then for them the Islanders were mere 'settlers' whom they contemptuously referred to as 'the Kelpers'. The Argentine journalist Nicole Kasanew wrote of them: 'The Kelpers are our arch-enemies. From the first moment I felt they were going to be fifth columnists ....They are basically shepherds; primitive in their way of life. In their character and appearance they are hybrids. Their attitude to Argentina is absolutely negative. The Kelpers like the English, respect nothing except force...' Here speaks the voice of the true Third World so beloved by our Foreign Office, the voice of those who would like to force us out of our island possessions from prejudice and spite using anti-colonial and anti-settler rhetoric.

Now in 2012, the Argentinians are once again agitating both in the UN and in Latin America to be given the Falklands and even South Georgia. For the time being Britain is standing firm. Prince William has been posted to the Falklands, which the Argentinians have termed a 'provocative act'; the Argentine President has denounced us as arrogant. That is exactly what we should have been in the 1970s – provocative and arrogant in defence of peace, a necessity that the paper-men of the Foreign Office could not see. It would be best to follow the advice of Lord West, the former First Sea Lord, and send a nuclear submarine to the South Atlantic now rather than risk a war later. Mr. Cameron has strongly rebuffed the Argentinians as he has the EU but how long will it be before he is betrayed?

Christie Davies has travelled extensively in Argentina and has recently visited the Falklands and South Georgia.

Reginald Maudling's Legacy

Henry Oliver

The Conservative Party is being affected by a malaise because we are not yet seeing the consequences, just the causes of them: anyone who thinks this is the full extent of the decline is wrong; this is the start of the swing of the pendulum, the lowest point is yet to come. All the policy is window-dressing, mere affectation. Malaise is primarily intellectual idleness; but it will become an infection. The malaise comes from the conservatism of Reginald Maudling, which Keith Joseph rightly said was not conservatism at all.

In 1943 Maudling wrote an article for the *Spectator*. He was 26, and this was a statement of his values from which he never departed. The thesis was that the political theme of the nineteenth century was the struggle against privilege (or vested interests) and the Liberals won the fight with their *laissez-faire* economic policies. But, in the twentieth century the decline of the Liberals was owing to the emerging problem of reconciling the victory of liberty with the desire for equality. There are two important things we learned about this, he says: political and economic liberty are co-dependent; but whilst in political terms liberty means equality, in economic terms the two are opposed. Maudling's solution is a statist one. His article is the essence of the post-war consensus: if we all subordinate our selfish desires to the common good, through the mechanism of the state, 'a satisfactory solution can be achieved'. In his *Memoirs* Maudling recalls throwing a copy of Adam Smith out of a ship's window. Perhaps if he had not done so, he would have learned the economic virtue of selfish behaviour.

Maudling's sentiment is affected by the Tories today. We are all, remember, in this together. This platitude of the Prime Minister's betrays more then he realises. It is a common cliché – all for one and one for all – that shows the triumph of sentiment over intellect in the modern party. It is all done in a bid to change the image of the party, to modernise it. Without more cuddly soft-centred policy announcements the Tories look nasty, and thus become unelectable, but it shows us that Cameron lacks an overarching set of beliefs. The Tories have been great when following doctrines: Pitt and Adam Smith, Peel and Tamworth, Salisbury the 'illiberal Tory', Thatcher and Hayek. And they have been weak when deviating from their beliefs – like Heath – or simply following vague sentiments of compromise – like Maudling.

Maudling's article talks about conceptions of liberty, but it is all bluster. His central tenet is compromise. And this means that rather than reconciling liberty and equality (in the Hegelian method of thesis, antithesis, synthesis) we have a sprawling, complex system of conflict. Call it what you will, when you try and take two opposing things, in economic terms they cannot be made to join. Economic liberty creates a rising tide, and all boats float higher; state intervention to create equality hampers that.

The government boasts of Britain's austerity, spending cuts, and fiscal responsibility, but they are encouraging the Euro zone to print money, offering government loans to small businesses, and now selling council houses to fund bad mortgages in a horrible parody of the American sub-prime crises that caused this problem. They go to war in Libya for democracy, but impose a three-line whip on an EU referendum at home. Cameron talks about immigration in Munich; Theresa May keeps the borders open. Osborne says we are making cuts; but Healey cut more in one year than Osborne will in three. They do not have principles but they react to events to get votes.

This is where the disease will set in. All the talk of stimulus in government spending to help the economy, encouraging the Euro bailouts, introducing women-friendly policies, and the Big Society are methods of getting elected. Avoiding conflict and pandering to popular opinion is the essence of Cameron's approach – look nice, talk about helping people, spend taxes. It's an extension of Blair's 'pretty ordinary sort of guy' pretence, but when it comes up against the EU it will expose a flaw in the party too deep to be healed with PR and cuddles.

The rebellion on the motion of eighty-one MPs was the biggest a Tory government has suffered on this topic; but as Frank Field sagely said in the debate, the imposition of a whip has hidden the true extent of the rebellious feeling within the Conservative party:

> When I first came here, if someone raised the issue of Europe regularly they were cast as being slightly bonkers or very bonkers. Now we see that the Conservative party has genuinely changed on the issue. Thanks to the Government's ham-fisted approach in imposing a three-line Whip, the country will not see how significant that change has been and how in tune the Conservative party now is with

both Conservative and Labour voters in the country.

The leadership will not see how far away it is from what voters think. Pundits endlessly repeat that only 3 per cent of people in polls think Europe is an important issue but they fail to see that Europe is increasingly being seen, as Field says, as a deceit. Heath told us it was a common market, Blair told us Lisbon wasn't a constitution. Cameron is telling us it's the wrong time ...

Just as collectivism was the malaise of the post-war Tories, Europe is that of the Cameroons and it's for votes. But the new MPs are the rebels, and the voters are increasingly savvy about the £9 billion cheque we are sending to Brussels every year. Cameron needs to take a stand: he can't talk about not sending more powers, and being tough on directives, and then when the times comes plead, 'events, events'.

As the pro-Euro, pro-EU camp are always telling us, Europe accounts for half our trade, but it only supports three million jobs, and there are 29 million people employed in the UK. We consistently run a trade deficit with Europe so if the Euro goes down, we will have a depression; but low interest rates are creating a bond bubble, and with taxes as far-reaching as they are we will not have growth either way.

If Lawson were in government there would be a radical plan; as it is we have a Heseltine, with a focus on appearance. This means doubling our contributions to the IMF; it means keeping the top rate of tax, whilst increasing 'stimulus' spending; it means rising energy prices from wind farms, and no progress on shale gas. As Murray Rothbard said, 'It is easy to be conspicuously "compassionate" if others are being forced to pay the cost.'

Cameron should not keep changing tack with the wind. Unless he sets a course he will be cut adrift – after Heath failed to tame the unions, the party took to Thatcher. When Chamberlain compromised us into the war, Churchill was the only leader anyone would work with. It is not too late to stop pandering for popularity, and to take a stand on Europe, and get out of the collectivist rut.

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Barbarians Bringing Tribute to the Emperor

Jonathan Story

The next few years are likely to witness strains in US-China relations, as Beijing moves away from former leader Deng Xiao Ping's advice, encapsulated in the phrase: 'Observe developments soberly, maintain our position, meet challenges calmly, hide our capacities and bide our time, remain free of ambition, never claim leadership'.

The main components of China's external relations were not thought up overnight, but elaborated according to circumstances over time. From 1949 on, Mao once in power determined that China would become a nuclear weapons power, and therefore on a footing of equality with a world of capitalist powers, whom Mao conceived as unremittingly belligerent.

Then in 1955, at the Bandung Conference, Zhou Enlai, Mao's right hand man, sought improved relations with Asian neighbours, subscribing to the 10-point 'declaration on promotion of world peace and cooperation' emphasizing state rights of self-defence, and abstention from intervention in the affairs of other states. The proceedings were somewhat marred when Zhou, before leaving, declared that all overseas Chinese owed primary loyalty to the homeland.

In 1972, Mao, realizing that China had become dangerously isolated during the years of the Cultural Revolution at home, and export of class war abroad, set the foundations for China's intimate embrace of the United States as the prime ally against the Soviet Union, major partner on the world stage, and later as the source of inspiration for the creation of a powerful continental-size domestic market.

Once ensconced in power as China's leader by the late 1970s, Deng decided on the Open Door policy to overcome China's extreme poverty, by importing technology from the world's lead industrial powers. Writing in the Nissan motor company's visitor book, he proposed that China 'learn from the great diligent, valiant and intelligent Japanese people'. Free trade zones were opened up with the clear intent of attracting overseas Chinese investors to co-operate in building

the Chinese economy as a pillar of the global system by the year 2020.

Then in the early 1990s, as Chinese-American relations cooled in response to the events of June 1989 in Tiananmen Square, tensions built up across the Taiwan Straits with frightened neighbours scurrying for protection into the protective embrace of the US. The lesson learnt in Beijing was that it would be cheaper and more effective to woo neighbouring states by diplomacy rather than frighten them by sabre-rattling, and blood curdling statements by irate PLA generals.

The direct result of this shift in policy style was the growing prominence in policy of the Foreign Ministry under the authority of the Central Foreign Affairs 'Leading Small Group', headed by a senior Politburo member, and since 1997 by Presidents Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao. The policy was balanced by two factors: one was to accentuate the policy of economic growth through deep re-structuring of the economy and entry to the WTO in 2002; and the other was to promote a vigorous modernization of China's armed forces, accompanied by double digit growth in military spending over the coming years, coupled with a focus of military effort on Taiwan, and on the seas around China's coasts.

The root of all China's external relations was, is and will remain economic growth. That is the priority and conditions everything else. China has overtaken Japan as the world's second largest national economy – the largest emporium remains Europe for the moment, wages are rising fast but productivity in manufacturing is rising even faster, so that gradual revaluations of the yuan yield both a cheapening of imports and a highly competitive export sector.

China has become a formidable mercantilist power, following the Asian pattern of trading out rather than importing in. The financial system is run by the Chinese Communist Party which can draw on a country-wide savings ratio of 54 per cent GDP, while investment rates are a formidable 48 per cent. China has three trillion dollars of foreign exchange reserves, enough to re-capitalise banks when their non-performing loans become too burdensome, and to buy access to food, raw materials and fossil fuels on the world market.

Meanwhile, the first decade of the 2000s found the US engaged in its 'war on terror'. President Hu Jintao was among the first to phone President Bush following the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington DC, thereby helping to cement US support for China's entry to the WTO. China also won State Department recognition of Uighuir freedom fighters in its westward Xingxiang province as terrorists. Not least, the US squandered political capital, money and blood in its military interventions in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

When US troops finally assassinated Osama bin Laden in his hideout in Abbotabad Pakistan, in May 2011, the Chinese Foreign Ministry welcomed the news. But the strains in the US-China relation were already well-developed: the burden of domestic complaints and foreign anxieties about China's increasingly assertive approach to international affairs were turning President Obama away from his initial policy of engagement with China, to disengagement from Europe and reduced focus on the Mid-East and Gulf to prior focus on Asia, and on China in particular.

China's rise lies at the heart of the Obama administration's reorientation of US foreign policy. The US is tiptoeing out of Europe, not too difficult a task in view of the comedy of summits by European leaders in their desperate attempt to salvage what remains of their prestige from the Euro disaster. But it may not be so easy to reduce US commitments in the Mid-East, the Gulf and Afghanistan. Growing tension with an Iran intent on acquiring a nuclear capability is prompting Saudi Arabia to shore up relations with Washington DC. Meanwhile the Israeli-Palestinian

'peace process' heads nowhere, and remains prey to the recurrent US electoral cycle.

Not least, the first ten years of the millenium have seen Asia emerge as by far the largest market for Gulf oil. The PLA is disturbed by the country's reliance on the region for an ever larger proportion of its energy requirements. Chinese diplomacy in the region seeks to keep a low profile and avoid unnecessary conflicts of interest with the US. But the fact is that as the yuan gradually moves to convertibility over the coming decade, it is in a powerful position to challenge the present hegemony of the dollar.

Most of America's policy initiatives in the Pacific can be construed in the light of the US exploiting concerns across the region at China's rise. Australia's invitation to rotate 2,500 US marines through Darwin on a yearly basis, and the recent opening of Myanmar to ASEAN and to the US, may both be accounted for in terms of the two countries' concern over Chinese influence.

A similar pattern is visible in North-East Asia. President Obama has proposed a free trade initiative across the Pacific – a measure which finds support among China's neighbours, interested in getting better access to China's markets, and concerned about the country's protectionist reflexes. These are particularly visible in Beijing's 'indigenous innovation' policy which prejudices foreign suppliers of technology. In addition, there are ever-louder complaints from US, and particularly from German, manufacturers, at deficient protection of intellectual property rights.

The root of all China's external relations was, is and will remain economic growth. That is the priority and conditions everything else. China has overtaken Japan as the world's second largest national economy

But the initiative which set the Chinese cat among the Asian pigeons was its rare earth policy. China controls 90 per cent of world rare earth production. Beijing has introduced export quotas and tariffs, thereby creating a wedge between the price of rare earths in the domestic market and abroad. Japanese companies, dependent on them for their operations, are moving into China, and creating anxieties at home that Japan's industrial base is being hollowed out.

Ten years ago, western companies typically headed for China with a view to exploiting cheap labour. They soon discovered that other costs raised the China price of learning how to do business there. Meanwhile, Chinese companies have begun to learn how to move up market, improving management, teaching skills to their workforce, deploying technologies more efficiently, and expanding abroad. Western companies in China find themselves under constant pressure in highly demanding and fast moving markets.

What has changed most of all, though, is the confidence of the Chinese leadership in its achievements, and in the pragmatic methods it has deployed to propel China's development. Most notably, the engineers in the Politburo did not listen to the siren voices of western economists, preaching about price adjustments in an institution-free world.

They have also observed, with some amazement, the propensity of western leaders for ideology in place of common sense: for the US, the tendency to preach a one-model for all of 'market-democracy'; in the EU, to stick Germany and France together in one currency, and then add in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Italy for good measure.

The new-found confidence is evident in the preparations for succession to the leadership. Xu Jinping is the man earmarked to succeed Hu Jintao as General Secretary. He is a 'princeling' – a member of China's communist aristocracy, so excellently networked into the CCP's traditional base. The senior ranks of the PLA hold about 150 princelings with rank of major-general or above.

What does this spell for the future? China's military build-up, predicated on a powerful and all-purpose production base, will continue. The armed forces in any case will be well represented in the Politburo, where the PLA has two seats. The Foreign Ministry has none. The hierarchy is stronger than ever in China. We must expect a more hierarchical vision of world politics to be the result.

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Quantum of Solace

Brian Ridley

William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, the founder of thermodynamics, remarked in 1900 that, apart from one or two problems, physics was over. If only people had listened to him, how blissful the world would be! No nuclear nonsense, no email, no CDs, no mobile phones, no laptops; but there still would be TV, thanks to the discovery by his namesake Sir J J Thomson of those blessed cathode rays; nothing is ever perfect. Instead what have we got? A physics so far from over it is barely out of nappies. Blame those who took Kelvin's problems seriously. Look where it has got us: something called quantum theory that nobody understands; something called general relativity that's converted gravity into space-time geometry that's supposed to tell us all about the universe, but doesn't; loads of fundamental particles that are supposed to be explained in terms of something called the standard model, but isn't without the Higgs boson. In short, physics has found itself in a mess.

Physics is supposed to be in the business of getting a fundamental understanding of the real world. How embarrassing then for quantum physics to be reduced to manipulating mathematics according to union rules. True, we know all about atoms, we invent transistors, lasers, and millimetre radiation that can see through clothes at airports, we even attempt to harness quantum incomprehensibility for computing; but in all this we act more like technicians than scientists. And, somehow, it works, though as far as those ever faster transistors are concerned, the sooner those technicians achieve the quantum limits to speed the more relieved we'll be at not having to update our computer every other week. What floors us is that the quantum world is full of probabilities but no facts – according to theory; so Einstein thought that quantum theory is obviously incomplete. Many agree, but try getting a grant to work on the foundations of quantum theory from a socially concerned Engineering and Physical Science Research Council. You have to argue that your idea will solve the National Debt and boost the GDP to unbelievable heights while assuring them that you are really a committee and not a person.

With the discovery of general relativity a whole new science was born – cosmology. We now know that the universe began in a Big Bang some 13.7 billion years ago and that its geometry is as Euclidean as a pancake. Since space is flat, general relativity tells us how dense it should be. And here we find ourselves in a different sort of mess, for there is far more matter in the universe than we can see, touch or feel. 96 per cent of the universe is unknown to physics. Lord Kelvin avert your eyes.

Worse, this matter has a gravitational influence but is invisible. Newton tells us that the speed at which a planet orbits the sun depends on the mass of the sun and how far away the planet is from it. The same is true of stars orbiting the centre of a galaxy. Physicists now realise there is an invisible something in space which is distorting the way stars move and amounts to about 26 per cent of the universe.

Adding up all the matter, visible and dark, suggests a total gravitational attraction that should slow down the rate of expansion of the universe. In fact, the opposite is occurring. This acceleration of the expansion simply should not be happening. Physics has invented a new form of matter-energy, operating on the largest scale far beyond individual galaxies, that accounts for the missing 70 per cent, but has the peculiar property of inducing an expansion. We now have dark energy along with dark matter, and if you don't like this you have to come up with a new theory of gravity to replace general relativity and, yes, even, Newtonian gravity. Not good.

Could it get worse? It does. The theory of general relativity is plagued with unavoidable singularities where space-time ceases to exist. Once a big star uses all its nuclear fuel it can collapse to a density that distorts space-time so much that light cannot escape, becoming a black hole. Like the Mouth of Hell, once anything falls into it, even light, there is no return. Everything is pulled towards the centre by stronger and stronger gravity, the end point being a singularity where time stops. Such singularities mark the limitations of applicability of general relativity and the biggest is the Big Bang singularity at the beginning of the expansion of the universe where the mass density was infinite. Each one entails the end of the possibility of physics, which is not to be borne. Like quantum theory, general relativity is incomplete.

A theory is needed is that unifies these two incomplete theories, a theory is known as quantum gravity, and we await its Einstein. Gravity is defined in *Tristram Shandy* as 'a mysterious carriage of the body to cover the defects of the mind'. Until such defects, if defects they are, of the physics of mind are cured, physics will remain a frightful mess. Meanwhile, those quantum technicians had better get on with the job of making the ultimate transistor, so that our grandchildren can inherit our ultimate computer.

Brian Ridley is a Fellow of the Royal Society.

Steamroller Justice

Jan Davies

It is often interesting to observe how different parts of the criminal justice system pull against each other. The Government, whether Labour or Conservative, wants to appear tough on crime so increases maximum sentences for offences, huffs and puffs about knives or guns for example, but then finds there are too many people in prison for the taxpayer's comfort so starts backtracking. Then the Home Secretary praises the imposition of 'community penalties' and talks about the need to save money by reducing the number of people in prison.

Similarly, there is the tension between the desire for speed in the court process and the delays caused by excessive paperwork and the granting of legal aid. When I started in practice, legal aid used to be granted by the magistrates', often in open court. I can remember one Stipendiary Magistrate (District Judge) who made a habit of saying at first hearings he would not grant legal aid 'at this stage', to which I would say 'Then, sir, I shall not be here at the next stage. Those who employ me will not send me here for nothing', to which he would usually growl 'Oh very well, it can go through the office' and a legal aid certificate would then arrive in the post. There was a means test, but it was a simple one. Then the means test was made more onerous with the requirement of producing thirteen weeks' wage slips for a person who was working. The type of people who go through the criminal courts, if they are working, often do not have the kind of employment which provides wage slips. They work cash in hand, probably evading tax – but I would prefer them to be doing that rather than burgling my house. More usually they are not working at all and are claiming benefit, though they may be unclear as to exactly which one.

Then the means test was scrapped. It had been too costly to administer, and where legal aid had been granted with the payment of contributions very often the defendant defaulted on payment. On the morning of a trial the court clerk would notice that no contributions had been paid, and it would be too late to take any action. After the case was over the defendant would go missing: the address the court had was often not where he was to be found anyway.

Now since October 2006 the means test has been reintroduced. It is even more bureaucratic than before, administered by the Legal Services Commission in a back office, far removed from the court room where a clerk is aware of the nature of the case, can see that the defendant is not the cleverest of men and that no one is ever going to be adventurous enough to offer him a job. Many of the people who appear in court are not only unemployed: they are unemployable. The office granting legal aid will often not even be in the same court building, and staff may even refuse to accept applications by fax. The moral seems to be: if you have a criminal case pending, make sure you are not doing an honest day's work, and especially do not be self-employed because if you are, your application has to go to a different office outside your area and getting a decision will take weeks – by which time the case may well be over. Make sure you tell lies about whether you are living with someone or not, as if you say you are, her income has to be given as well.

So while the court wants to process cases rapidly to make its through-put statistics look good, the Legal Services Commission insists on complex means forms and make endless enquiries about missing wage slips, bank statements and the assets of any 'partner'. One part of the criminal justice system wants speed, while another has delays built into it. The court wants defendants to enter pleas of guilty or not guilty without perusing the evidence against them in detail. The Legal Services Commission, however, through its auditing of solicitors' files, dictates that the solicitor should be considering everything thoroughly before giving any advice and making a case analysis.

Now Howard Riddle, a senior District Judge, has launched the initiative 'Stop Delaying Justice', introduced with effect from January this year. Magistrates everywhere are to be given training with a delegate pack to which Lord Justice Goldring, the Chairman of the Magistrates' Association, the Chairman of the National Bench Chairmen's Forum and the Chairman of the Justices Clerks' Society have also lent their names. The somewhat hysterical title is intended to convey a sense of urgency. The aim is that all contested trials in the magistrates' courts are 'case managed' at the first hearing and disposed of at the second hearing. Since this is the ambition of many courts even without this initiative, the expense of training and training packs seems hard to justify. The real aim is to hustle bewildered defendants into guilty pleas without the time for advice. The written material is supported by various videos showing horse-faced

magistrates' and sour-looking court clerks bullying defendants and defence solicitors.

I found the video showing a defence solicitor applying for a psychiatric report on his client particularly shocking. Magistrates' courts are not good at dealing with mentally disturbed defendants, and Crown prosecutors are rarely alert to the need to revisit the decision to prosecute once the extent of someone's mental disability becomes known. There is, unfortunately, no procedure in the magistrates' court to determine whether a defendant is fit to plead. However, if it appears to the court that a defendant is not mentally fit to deal with a trial, then it should hear the evidence against him of the *actus reus* of the offence (the facts giving rise to the charge) and then, if it finds that he committed the act complained of, can consider making a hospital order – for which it will need a report from two doctors. The clerk of the court in the video was correct in advising the magistrates' that there was no 'basis in law' for the defence request for a psychiatric report at a first hearing, but before the court can make a decision to hear the facts it should have some firm information about whether or not the defendant will be able to participate in any court hearing. In the video clip the magistrates' fob the defence off with an adjournment to a day when a psychiatric nurse is at court – and it will be surprising if such a person does not then advise the magistrates' that she has not herself any prior knowledge of the defendant and that it would be much more satisfactory if the psychiatrist with previous knowledge of his condition were to provide the court with information. But for the sake of hustling the case to a conclusion as soon as possible the defence request was refused.

The authors of this material, which is being distributed throughout the country, seem not to care about justice for individuals and only about saving money. They cite the case of R v Gleeson (2003) in which Lord Justice Auld said 'A criminal trial is not a game'. Yet they use in their material the speech of the Lord Chief Justice back in July '...We need referees who will go into the changing rooms beforehand, tell each side how the game will be played, warn the players who may go offside that they are being watched, and as for those who foul they will be sent off.'

We have for some time been sliding into an inquisitorial system in which no one believes in the presumption of innocence or the right of a defendant not to incriminate himself. Criminal Procedure Rules are determined by a committee sitting behind closed doors, safe from any scrutiny of Parliament. Politicians have abdicated their responsibility for what happens in trials, just as they have allowed the Sentencing Council to fix guidelines for sentencing with no parliamentary oversight. (The Judge sentencing in the case of the murderers of Stephen Lawrence was constrained by guidelines.) The 'Stop Delaying Justice' initiative, with its insistence on the defendant pleading at the first hearing, even when he has no legal aid and therefore no solicitor to advise him, and its insistence on detailed completion of case management forms setting out the nature of the defence. merely hastens an already existing slide into a 'guilty till proved innocent' attitude.

The requirement to produce a Defence Statement has been in existence for some time in the crown court. If the information provided is too detailed then the police will go back to their witnesses and coach them about questions they can expect. Rarely is there an intention to have ambushes on technical points – these occur almost always in road traffic cases – but sometimes to get at the truth there has to be an ambush, a question not wholly expected as to what could be seen for example from a particular vantage point. We have a number of safeguards for interviews in police stations with tape or DVD recordings. There are no such safeguards for police dealings with witnesses. Statements are usually written by police officers and vital details do sometimes get left out, often by accident; but nonetheless it happens.

The Criminal Procedure Rules seek to introduce a similar requirement to Defence Statements for magistrates' court cases, and this initiative goes one stage further by suggesting that the defendant should not be allowed, even when unrepresented, to advance a defence which he has not declared on his case management form. This is going to be interesting: is a defendant giving evidence from the witness box going to be told to be quiet? The authors of the initiative do not care that the defendant is at a disadvantage if unrepresented, merely observing that 'Unrepresented defendants are common in the magistrates' courts'.

The European Convention on Human Rights, Article 6, clearly states:

> Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
>
> ..... to have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence;
>
> to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require.

Whenever the Convention is mentioned in the magistrates' court, or even sometimes in the crown court, eyes glaze over, people repress sighs and wish it would all go away. But if this procedure is rigidly

adopted, it will soon be a serious challenge. I hope that lay magistrates, despite all the training and haranguing they will get from their clerks, will have the good sense not to compromise justice for speed. The Sentencing Guidelines Council some time ago issued a guideline that said that people failing to turn up for a court hearing should be imprisoned. Local courts took no notice, realizing as members of the Council did not that disorganized defendants who had forgotten a court date would not tamely surrender themselves to the police afterwards if they had the real risk of going to prison. Lay magistrates' have between them much accumulated wisdom and I trust that they will see through this initiative.

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The not so Sublime Porte

Bill Park

Turkey's foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu was only recently proclaiming a new foreign policy aimed at 'zero problems with the neighbours'. He still is. The policy was meant to correct Turkey's traditionally confrontational and militarised approach to foreign policy problems. It also happily coincided with the Justice and Development Party's (JDP) Islam-inspired government's wish to identify with the Islamic world, although the policy readjustment also extended to Russia, the Balkans, and beyond. Some saw a 'neo-Ottoman' bid to emerge as a major regional power again, reinforced by Turkey's burgeoning local trade. The Turkish economy, the world's seventeenth largest, and a G20 member, has lately posted some of the world's highest economic growth rates, sometimes topping those of China and India.

However, many of Turkey's relationships, with Muslim and non-Muslim neighbours , have failed to respond to Davutoglu's considerable efforts. In January Iraq's Shi'ite prime minister Nouri al-Maliki condemned Turkey's 'interference' in Iraq's affairs after the Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, had warned him against stoking sectarian divisions in the country. Erdogan's intervention was prompted by the serving of an arrest warrant on Iraq's Sunni deputy president, part of a wider fracturing of Shia-Sunni relations in the country. Baghdad also summoned the Turkish ambassador to express its displeasure at Erdogan's comments, and a rocket was fired at the Turkish embassy in the Iraqi capital.

The increasing boldness of Iraq's Shia leaders confirms increasing Iranian influence in the country, which trumps that of Turkey. In the Kurdish north, however, the opposite is true. Iraq is Turkey's fourth biggest trading partner, but 80 per cent of that trade is with the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). Although Turkey and Iran profess a shared commitment to a unified Iraq, its Shia-Sunni and Kurd-Arab tensions threaten to push Ankara and Tehran into opposing camps. These Iraqi complexities only add to the strains in Ankara's relationship with Tehran. Some of the Iranian government's more militant factions recently threatened to attack the radar installations that Turkey has agreed to host as part of NATO's ballistic missile defence, which most believe is aimed primarily at Tehran's missile threat. Tehran is also closely watching Ankara's response to US pressure to boycott Iranian oil. Compliance with Washington's request will be difficult, as Iran meets one third of Turkey's oil needs. Turkey's dependence on Iranian and Russian energy constrains its foreign policy options. Even so, Turkish officials are exploring alternative sources of supply.

Tehran's continued support for Syria's beleaguered government similarly threatens to prise Turkey and Iran apart. Amid reports that it has been in discussions with Washington over the establishment of a no-fly zone above Syria, Turkey has aligned its position with the Arab League's, which holds Damascus responsible for the bloodshed, calls on it to halt the repression and to introduce reforms. In calling for Bashir al-Assad to stand down, and in thinking aloud about the possibility of a UN-sponsored intervention, Ankara is in the vanguard of international opposition to the Syrian crackdown. Turkey also hosts the opposition Syrian National Council. The more the Syrian struggle can be represented as a Sunni revolt against an Alawite minority government, the more Turkey again finds itself taking the Sunni side. Given the Sunni roots of Turkey's JDP, and the sense of exclusion felt by Turkey's substantial Alevi population, regional sectarian tension could also have unsettling domestic repercussions in Turkey. Iraq's prime minister mischievously made that observation and Damascus has hinted darkly at a resurrection of its support for Turkey's troublesome Kurds.

Turkey's overtures towards Tehran are also being compromised by increasing US pressure around Iran's nuclear programme. Turkey's May 2010 attempt to

broker a nuclear deal with Iran momentarily put its relationship with Washington at risk. Ankara has not given up on Baghdad, but the recent spat also drew attention to the contradictions in Turkey's Iraq policy. In the war of words between Ankara and Baghdad, a senior Turkish official paid an unscheduled visit to Erbil, where the fugitive Sunni Iraqi deputy president has sought refuge. The Kurds are refusing to hand him over to Baghdad, which has further stoked Iraqi Arab resentment at Kurdish autonomy.

In one of the region's most profound paradoxes, Turkey has become the *de facto* protector of the Kurdistan Regional Government. In October 2009 Davutoglu visited Erbil, the KRG capital, for talks with its leadership. This signalled a dramatic shift in Ankara's approach to the semi-autonomous province, and offered an additional illustration of the 'zero problems' policy and even a Turkish consulate has been opened there. Hitherto Turkey had shunned the KRG, fearing its own Kurds might emulate its example of self-government. Ankara also suspected the KRG of helping to the Kurdish Workers Party, or PKK, and now realizes that the KRG's cooperation is vital in Ankara's campaign against the PKK. As well as the Turkish interest in the cross-border oil pipeline, it also has a stake in northern Iraq's gas fields. The Iraqi Kurds now reluctantly recognise that Ankara might be their only protector now that the US has withdrawn from Iraq. Soon Ankara's embrace of Iraq's Kurds could further imperil its relationship with Baghdad, and perhaps Tehran too. Turkey could do without the Tehran-Baghdad-Damascus triangle that might be looming.

Ankara's relationship started well when the JDP first came to power in 2002. Ankara's domestic reforms, and its support for the (failed, as a result of the Greek side's rejection) referendum on the reunification of Cyprus, brought about the opening of EU accession talks in 2005 but now Turkey is threatening to freeze its relations with Brussels when the EU presidency rotates to Cyprus this year. Ankara's stance on Cyprus dimmed its EU accession prospects some time ago, but its worsening democratic credentials, and doubts in some quarters that Turkey is a European country at all, have eroded them still further. France is Turkey's most difficult European partner, and their bilateral relationship dipped further in January when the French adopted a law making denial of the 1915 Armenian 'genocide' a crime. So Ankara is threatening to limit its economic, political and military dealings with France and Turkey's prime minister even mused that he might never again visit the country. None of this helps Turkey's reputation in Europe, nor does the continued failure to settle differences with Greece over the demarcation of the Aegean. The fanfare of the 'zero problems' approach has fallen flat.

An Armenian genocide bill is an annual event in Washington, and it might now stand a better chance because the pro-Israeli lobby is less likely to oppose it. This is one possible consequence of Turkey's soured relationship with Israel, which dates back to the Israeli attack on Gaza in late 2008. This destroyed Turkey's attempt at mediation between Israel and Syria, mediation being another manifestation of Turkey's smiling regional face – between Lebanese, Palestinian and Iraqi factions; between wary Balkan states; between Afghanistan and Pakistan; and between Iran and the international community. The deterioration in Turkish-Israeli relations deepened dramatically with the May 2010 Israeli commando attack on the *Mavi Marmara* aid ship intending to break Israel's blockade of Gaza, in which nine Turks were killed. Ankara now refuses to restore its ties with Israel until an apology is issued, compensation paid, and the Gaza blockade lifted. Turkey also finds itself in disagreement with both Israel and Cyprus over the demarcation of territorial waters in the eastern Mediterranean. This has come to a head as a result of a massive undersea gas field find. Unsurprisingly, Israel and Cyprus have recently opened talks aimed at closer military cooperation.

Why has the 'zero problems' approach been rewarded with multiple neighbourhood problems for Turkey? Turkey sought to befriend everyone, indiscriminately, but it is difficult to have 'zero problems with the neighbours' when the neighbours have so many problems with each other. Before he became foreign minister in May 2009, Davutoglu was Ankara's key figure during its 2008 shuttle diplomacy aimed at settling Israel's conflict with Hamas in Gaza and in its attempt to mediate between Israel and Syria. This was always a tightrope walk, and Turkey's efforts came to nought.

Russia's summer 2008 attack on Georgia showed the predicament, perhaps naivety, of Turkey's 'zero problems' approach. Turkey had been championing Georgia's western alignment, training its security forces, and had cooperated closely with Tbilisi on the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. However, in deference to Russian power and its own energy dependence on Moscow, Ankara now sat on its hands, offered little condemnation of Russian behaviour, and proposed the establishment of yet another pointless regional diplomatic forum. Tbilisi took note, and has since cooled considerably towards Ankara. October 2009 saw the signing of an accord aimed at normalising Turkey's hitherto frozen relationship with Armenia. Turkey had taken Azerbaijan's side in its dispute with Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave. The Turkish-Armenian

border was closed, while Turkey's rejection of the 1915 Armenian 'genocide' claim adds an ugly undertow to Turkey's relations with Yerevan. Political objections to the protocol in both Turkey and Armenia meant that the normalisation initiative came to nothing, and their bilateral relationship remains frozen. However, Azerbaijan drew lessons from the apparent readiness of its fellow Turkic Turkish 'big brother' to do a deal with the Armenian occupier, such that Baku began to stall on its energy talks with Turkey and has even turned back towards Moscow.

Turkey was not alone in failing to anticipate the 'Arab Spring', nor in the confusion of its response, for it has now lost Syria's friendship as well as Israel's. Ghaddafi, who in December 2010 awarded Erdogan a human rights award, is no more. The Egyptian electorate responded to Erdogan's advice that their country adopts a secular constitution along Turkish lines by voting almost 2-to-1 for Islamist parties which bear little resemblance to the tamer Turkish version. The 'Arab Spring' shows that its 'zero problems with the neighbours' policy involved a tight embrace of some very nasty regimes, and Turkey has now been obliged to desert them in favour of reform and democratisation – both ends can't always be played against the middle. Turkey is not like its Muslim neighbours for it is neither Arabic nor Persian, its society and economy are far more developed, it remains western aligned, and cannot escape its Ottoman imperial legacy. Arabs do not invariably welcome Turkish involvement in their affairs. Turkey is also predominantly Sunni, and this is coming to matter.

If Turkey wants to soothe its neighbours, it cannot afford to take sides in its tussles, whether they be diplomatic or domestic. To mediate, or to minimise damaging fallout, Ankara needs to keep its distance and recognise its dependence – including that on the EU for half its trade and most of its inward investment. Turkey has shaped its region less than it has found itself at the mercy of its turmoil. Turkey is more an echo chamber than an effective regional actor.

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The Founder of Conservative Central Office

Jonathan M Paquette

In the Twentieth century, the Conservative and Unionist Party was an umbrella organization embracing different classes and viewpoints. Rather than narrowly dogmatic, the One Nation vision proved adaptable and broadly appealing to those weary of Labour's socialist dialectics. Creating this Conservative broad appeal came about through the untiring efforts of loyal parliamentarians and party organizers like Sir John Eldon Gorst. Unfairly neglected by historians, Gorst proved instrumental in implementing Disraeli's romantic vision of a unifying party. As a colleague of Lord Randolph Churchill and Drummond-Wolff in the Fourth Party, Gorst regularly agitated for social reforms which advanced the ideals of Tory Democracy. From his early beginnings as an overseas lay missionary to his positions as Solicitor-General and Board of Education Vice-President, his Tory worldview and social conscience were regularly displayed. Above all, Gorst's patriotism and concern for ordinary people informed his achievements and shaped Conservative victories for decades after his death, transforming millions of newly-enfranchised voters into party loyalists. In an era of coalition governments and fracturing multiculturalism, it is worth reflecting on his successful articulation of popular Conservatism.

As the son of a successful Preston solicitor, his family provided him with ready access to books which furthered his abilities. Unlike the Eton and Harrow-educated grandees whom Disraeli preferentially promoted to Cabinet positions, Gorst possessed no titles or landed estates. He went to Preston Grammar School and won a place at St John's College, Cambridge, gaining a Fellowship there. As President of the Union at Cambridge, he expressed his emerging political views: he supported a motion to allow the admission of Jews into Parliament and, while a staunch supporter of the Established Church opposed to both Nonconformist and Puseyite practices, Gorst insisted on fair treatment for all the Queen's subjects. In 1858 he travelled throughout Europe before living in Dresden for several months to learn German where he acquired a respect for Teutonic efficiency and

orderliness. Afterwards, he took a teaching position at Rossall School in Fleetwood until he left for New Zealand in 1859 to work as a lay missionary.

Being an energetic young man, this antipodal colony gave him an opportunity to see the Empire and make his mark on the frontier. Quickly acquainted with the Maoris, Gorst developed an effective rapprochement with tribal chiefs and soon became a trusted schoolmaster and religious instructor. Because New Zealand was such an isolated imperial outpost, the colonial officials soon began including him their decisions. Gorst helped to develop Auckland's educational system. When the bloody Invasion of Waitango erupted in 1863, Gorst became distraught as war broke out between the British and Maoris. Believing armed struggle unnecessary, he strongly disagreed with the Governor-General's policy of armed conflict against formerly trusted tribal chiefs. He decided to leave New Zealand and departed with his young bride for London. He had spent four years in New Zealand and grew to maturity in the adventure of a growing British colony at the end of the world.

Gorst then was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in preparation for a political career, and also published his New Zealand memoirs, *The Maori King: The Story of Our Quarrel with the Natives of New Zealand* in 1864. His youthful exploits left Gorst with an interest in Britain's overseas territories and the welfare of both its colonists and native peoples. He therefore sympathized with Disraeli's staunch defence of the Empire. He won a by-election for Cambridge Borough in 1867, and while in the Commons, vigorously opposed the Second Reform Act of 1867 because he feared that a sudden flood of ill-educated and misinformed voters would wreck the country. Once the Act was passed, Gorst soon realized that the Conservative Party had to win over these new voters.

After the Conservative defeat in 1868, Disraeli recognized Gorst's organizational talents and made him head of the new Conservative Central Office. Hitherto, the party conducted business exclusively at the Carlton Club while local party organizations were sparse in the rest of the country. Gorst opened the new offices at 53 Parliament Street, Westminster. This new position established him as a party loyalist. County landowners largely controlled rural constituencies and Liberals and Radicals dominated large boroughs. Gorst decided to create party committees in every town and city throughout Great Britain. He researched local political affairs by travelling to many constituencies and picking key ward managers to run party operations. He also developed Conservative Central Office into a centre for political information and distribution of literature. Indispensable for a sophisticated political machine, this system proved to be highly effective for subsequent election campaigns. Gorst also built up Conservative working men's associations and persuaded Disraeli to visit Lancashire in 1872 to meet their newly enfranchised voters. The visit was successful and Disraeli gave a memorable speech to a Conservative meeting at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. Speaking for over three hours, he defended the Party as the natural home for both workers and property owners. Sarah Bradford's biography of Disraeli describes Gorst as the brilliant impresario behind this event. Later, Disraeli gave a similar speech at the Crystal Palace in which he championed the rise of the Conservatives as a truly national party for all social classes. Promising to introduce new social and welfare legislation in Parliament, Disraeli rode this tide of sentiment into a resounding general election victory in 1874. Gorst subsequently won a by-election and became the member for Chatham.

Aware of his own provincial middle-class origins, he sought to cultivate relationships with MPs and parliamentary candidates who agreed with his own ideas. His alliance with Lord Randolph Churchill, Henry Drummond-Wolff and Arthur Balfour grew into the famous 'Fourth Party' in Parliament. Serving as Solicitor-General and later called to the Privy Council in 1890, he earned the respect of Lord Salisbury for his abilities but was never appointed to the Cabinet, which was stacked with Tory grandees and landed peers. Lord Salisbury distrusted democratic reforms and wished to maintain national equilibrium against any disruptive social transformation. However he did appoint him Vice-President of the Board of Education in 1884. This was an excellent decision which exploited Gorst's own interests. He immediately began to implement reforms aimed at improving the schooling and health of Great Britain's children. Stressing the expansion of both primary and trade schools, Gorst wished to create a literate and productive British citizenry that could compete with Germany. Serving for seven years, he left a strong legacy of educational reform that continued well into the twentieth century.

Gorst's own successes as Education Minister led him to question certain practices within the Conservative Party. The Fourth Party's eclipse and the sliding disintegration of Randolph Churchill's political career meant he lacked prominent allies. Passionately believing in Free Trade, he opposed Joseph Chamberlain's protectionism and lost his seat in the 1905 general election. Frustrated with the slow pace of change in the country, he became fascinated with the 'New Liberalism' of L T Hobhouse and T H Green in the 1890s. After much self-analysis, he decided to break with the party to which he had always belonged. Resigning his Primrose League membership in 1905, he said the League no longer represented Disraeli's ideals. He contested Preston as a Liberal but lost against the Unionist candidate.

Gorst's political career was not entirely successful but it would be incorrect to regard it as a failure. A unique man in an era of great political change, he possessed an independence of mind which proved to hampered as well as helped his activities. He was certainly one of the ablest coordinators of Conservative Party election strategies. Founding Conservative Central Office, he shaped the Party's organization in patterns that still continue today. He effectively transformed the Conservatives into a modern mass political movement with associations throughout the country. Fervently believing in Disraelian One Nation Conservatism, the practical expression of these principles eventually led him into inevitable conflict with Lord Salisbury. Although a successful Education Minister, the earnest Preston lawyer lacked the sophistication and talent for intricate statecraft possessed by the Third Marquis. Coming from a very different background, Gorst's energy and middle-class worldview clashed with Lord Salisbury's High Toryism and distrust of popular sovereignty. In Gorst's career, the fault lines of future dissensions within the Conservative Party are visible to the perceptive observer. He effectively expressed a popular Conservatism easily embraced by all British people. Yet Conservatism is composed of reaction as well as sentiment and Gorst's failure to interpret this proved to be the flaw in an otherwise glittering career.

Throughout its history, the Conservative Party has grappled with opposing viewpoints expressed by country house and cottage. Its electoral successes arise from its ability to understand the totality of British society and successfully set out appropriate courses for the nation. The Party functions most effectively when it recognizes that internal disagreements are a natural function of its essential constitution. Capable men such as Sir John Gorst occasionally rise to prominence while hereditary grandees also have leading roles. A Victorian bourgeois gentlemen and a member of a breed only half-remembered, Gorst deserves commemoration and respect for his significant achievements and character.

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Hungary: Revolving Door Politics

Mark Griffith

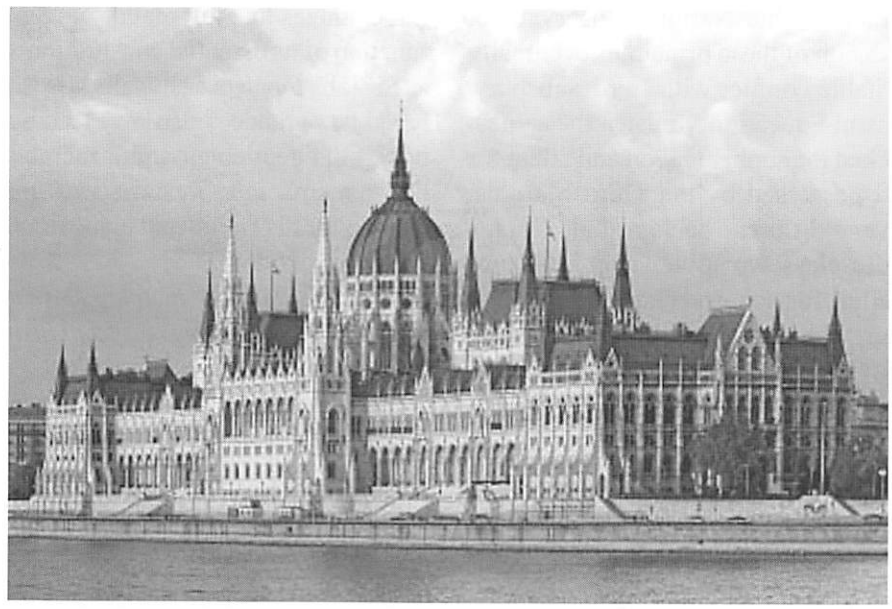
A number of commentators have started musing in the last 15 years that right and left might be losing their meaning in the politics of many countries. Tony Blair had success posing as a soft-spoken compassionate liberal who just happened to be removing more of Britain's civil liberties than any government in a century, but liberals often end up bossing people about. More substantially, New Labour also repackaged itself as prudent custodian of British business, getting many voters to congratulate Labour, not the preceding 18 years of Conservatives, as the source of the long secular boom from the early nineties to the early noughties.

Looking further afield though, there is something in this idea that the left-right spectrum might be breaking down. Republican presidents in the US seem consistently to increase national debt far more than Democratic presidents, for example, as far back as Reagan. Hungary's right-of-centre governments now playing chicken with increasingly tetchy EU negotiators, is an especially intriguing case. When I try to explain Hungarian politics to visitors, confusion quickly sets in. The ex-communist Socialists (now called the MSZP, pronounced MSP in English) spent 14 years in long-term alliance with a small party, the Free Democrats, dedicated to free-market liberalism, from 1994 to 2008; there are laissez faire economists in both the socialist MSZP and its coalition partners, the Free Democrats, who amazingly only broke ranks with the Socialists four years ago. In the 1960s and 70s, it was Hungary's state communists who began quietly experimenting with free-market reforms while staying publicly loyal to Moscow. That same party is now the MSZP.

Hungary's conservative parties, meanwhile, want to restrict foreign businesses and maintain a large welfare state. Perhaps they are paternalistic High Tories? Maybe but it gets odder. The conservative-ish government currently in power with an unprecedented 2/3 majority, Fidesz started out as a party that was both free-market liberal and socially liberal in the early 1990s. The Fi bit in the name actually stands for 'young' – these were the 'young democrats' – and the party formed out of a group of student friends (once described in *The Economist* as 'cheerful English-speaking liberals') who made a rule that no-one could

hold a party position after the age of 35. This idea will be familiar to anyone who has ever fallen asleep on the sofa and woken up to discover they are watching 'Logan's Run' on television. Although in that film 21 was the age at which folk were magicked away supposedly in rapture from the white underground city (actually to die), the eerie 1960s idea that the old are not to be trusted was strong in 1990s Hungary too.

Excitedly described by many Hungarians in 1990-1991 as the new hope, a party of educated youngsters not tied to the past, Fidesz suddenly underwent a transformation a couple of years later, still in the early 1990s. Viktor Orban, by then leader, fell out with his friends, and took full control of the party. All his college chums left and the pro-Fidesz magazine *Magyar Narancs* became an anti-Fidesz paper – not because the magazine changed position, but because the party had. *Magyar Narancs* incidentally means Hungarian Orange – and the magazine's name refers to a celebrated scene in a blackly comic cult movie mocking communism made in 1969, at first banned, but screened abroad. This film was then allowed to be screened at home, and remarkably sent to Cannes with official consent in 1981 from the Hungarian communist government famously more moderate than any other in the Warsaw Pact.



Orban at this point in the early 1990s was doing something really quite extraordinary which marked him out as a true political carnivore, seeing things with a clarity none of his co-founders had. Fidesz was settling down to be a likeable, earnest sort of party which could muster just over ten per cent of votes, with a lot of support in Budapest, the only really large city. Only Orban came to realise they would never take majority power as the party they were and power was what mattered to him.

With breathtaking, almost admirable, cynicism, he ditched the retire-at-35 rule just as he was reaching 30, and moved the whole party across the political spectrum. From being a sort of Hampsteadish chatterati party of young urban do-gooders, it became a party of doggedly resentful old villagers.

Orban had done his electoral arithmetic and realised that Hungary is still a very rural country – 60 per cent of Hungarians live in villages and small towns. The countryside has a lot of perhaps understandably bitter elderly people. Politics in the countryside has a totally different character to politics in Budapest – the only part of the country most foreigners ever see. Out in the countryside, communists are hated, but free-market competition isn't liked either. Most of all, the World-War-One-concluding Treaty of Trianon in 1920 that cut Hungary down to a third of its former size is still deeply hated and regarded as recent news.

What isn't remembered is that the 'Greater Hungary' was a very artificial point to set the borders, and those borders were largely a trick by the Austrians in 1867 to make sure the Hungarians bit off more than they could chew and could never rise up against them again. The trick worked beautifully, and Hungary has ever since been mourning the loss of many territories which it could never have conceivably 'held' without being in a joint country with Austrian military power for those four decades. There were ancient Hungarian-speaking communities scattered all across the Greater Hungary, but in some districts they had been 20 per cent or 30 per cent of the population for centuries, not majorities. Greater Hungary was never a majority-Hungarian-speaking blob of contiguous territory. The Austrians used classic divide-and-rule tactics when they converted the Austrian Habsburg empire into 'Austro-Hungary' in 1867. They got the Hungarians to do their ruling for them in many regions where Hungarian overlords became as loathed as Austrians had been – try speaking Hungarian in rural Slovakia to get a flavour of this for yourself.

But in the sticks is where the votes are, and Orban realised it. The votes are not in telling provincial Hungarians that Hungary's 1867-to-1918 borders were never real. There are precious few rural votes in telling them they might have been able to keep two-thirds of the larger Hungary but never the whole of what Austrian power had conquered or inherited

and Hungarians could never have retaken alone. Nor are there many votes in telling Hungarian villagers that Jews and Gypsies are probably not actively participating in a global conspiracy to take away yet more bits of their great nation.

Another peculiarity of this country is that 'goulash communism' – Hungarian communists' tolerance for small business in the 1970s and 1980s – produced a generation of middle-class entrepreneurs who are nostalgic about communism. In 1969 you could make a satirical film critical of state socialism using state-socialist funding in state-run studios, even if it was initially banned from release; that should tell you that Hungary was not quite like the rest of Moscow-controlled Eastern Europe. As part of COMECON, Hungary's market was protected from better-organised foreign competition, so many Hungarians were running their own profitable businesses out of a poorly-supervised office in a state ministry or enterprise. Their phoning and faxing costs were covered by their sleepy state employer, and they drew a small salary for just a few hours of nominal work a week. That salary supplemented income from their small firm, nestled snugly like a benign bacterium inside the warm cosy gut of the socialist state apparatus. Communism in Czechoslovakia and Poland was harsher with its opponents right up to 1990; so there is no nostalgia there. Business owners in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Poland, knows full well they are only free to build their own lives as they wish because of the downfall of the Soviet Bloc.

Not so Hungary. Older Hungarians *with their own businesses* will ruefully tell you that the old days weren't so bad; they didn't have to work as hard as today, and they don't like having to compete against foreign firms.

As a result, you have one of the most strangely polarised countries in Europe.

It is odd to learn just how many socialist voters are corporate managers or bankers who see the MSZP as the modern, forward-looking party – Blair's dream come true. Meanwhile, small business owners want their governments to protect them worldwide, but in their Hungarian version you have conservatives who blaze with indignant wrath at the communist period when in patriotic mood but in the next breath demand the kind of subsidies and controls that only an intrusive state with central planners can provide. Since both Fidesz and the socialist MSZP appear to have trousered state funds and tolerated corruption during turns in office, there now seems little to choose between them as moral alternatives. Yet the righteous rage of each group burns no less hotly on the topic of the other side's tax looting.

In recent weeks when Orban's party rushed through major changes to the country's constitution using their current two-thirds majority in Parliament, a crowd estimated at 30,000 gathered at the Opera House to express their shame at his leadership of their country. EU officials and many other people have noted that changes to the constitution look likely to embed Fidesz in power long-term, making them hard to get out of government. For example there are changes to constituency boundary setting, appointment of judges, and oversight of the press. Orban has said communism must be rooted out by decades of correction, stating he would like to beat the record for staying in office of the semi-Francoist Hungarian ruler Admiral Horthy – who controlled Hungary from 1920 into the middle of World War Two. Given that remark, the suggestion that Orban wants to make sure Fidesz cannot lose another election sounds plausible. Lest Brussels get too excited about those 30,000 demonstrators, a more recent march supposedly rallied 100,000 people, many from the countryside of course, in *support* of Orban and what he is doing. Rather in the way that whether someone collaborated with the Nazis or was in the wartime Resistance – or both – hovered over French public life for another forty years, the ambiguous relationship of most Hungarians to their own peculiar form of moderate communism from the 60s to the 90s will be fuelling poisonous quarrels for decades to come. Orban will almost certainly have to back down to the EU on some of his entrenchment project, but he can frame it as a foreign conspiracy. Furthermore, if EU disapproval really pushed the country into default, Hungary's collapse would take Austria's banks down with it. Austrian banks unwisely lent a lot of Swiss-Franc and euro-denominated mortgages to Hungarian homebuyers that could never be repaid if Hungary's currency dropped sharply in value. Brussels cannot afford to have Austria in trouble, so both sides are bluffing angrily and will probably come to an uneasy compromise as Hungary's Fidesz nestles into long-term power.

Mark Griffith is publishing editor of Collateral Damage, *a paperback collection of 27 authors' articles on the global economic crisis.*

Guilty White Fellows

Geoffrey Partington

When Japan brought World War II to Australia's doorstep, all Australians agreed about their traditions and why they were worth maintaining. From unpromising origins as convict settlements on a huge land mass in which virtually no advances had been made over many millennia in ways of life, post-1788 Australia had become a prosperous civil society with one of the highest living standards in the world. Together with New Zealand, Australia had become a pioneer of democratic rights, for women as well as men, and of trade unionism. Physical pioneers who had explored and mapped the great Australian continent were regarded as true heroes. Seventy years on, Australian children are taught in the nation's schools a very different story of their national past: one of racism and even genocide.

In Australia in 1788 permanent dwellings, agriculture and horticulture were all unknown. The gap between the Aborigines and the British in ideas, technology and way of life was vastly greater than, say, four hundred years earlier. Nothing had changed in Aboriginal life, but Britain, with much of Western Europe and some of their overseas colonies, had been transformed by religious, scientific and industrial revolutions.

Despite, or because of, the vast differences between colonists and colonized, some Aboriginal groups proved eager to leave their traditional areas for access to the wonders introduced by the newcomers. Professor W E H Stanner wrote that the reported arrival of Europeans 'was sufficient to unsettle aborigines still long distances away' and, that 'for every aborigine who, so to speak, had Europeans thrust upon him, at least one other had sought them out'. Stanner judged that Aborigines' 'appetites for tobacco and to a lesser extent for tea became so intense that neither man nor woman could bear to be without'.

In 1962 the very first paragraph of the first volume of Manning Clark's *A History of Australia* stated without any protest:

> Civilization did not begin in Australia until the last quarter of the eighteenth century... The early inhabitants of the continent created cultures but not civilizations.

This concept of developmental stages of human progress had prevailed from the Enlightenment through to Marxists such as the Australian anthropologist Gordon Childe. Frederick Engels followed the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan in dividing the human past into 'three main epochs, savagery, barbarism and civilisation' and in dividing savagery into a 'lower', 'middle' and 'upper' stage. Engels believed that the Australian anthropologist Lorimer Fison had found 'the lowest stage of development among the Australian Negroes of Mount Gambier in South Australia'. Now Australian children are told that no society, except perhaps their own, can be inferior to any other.

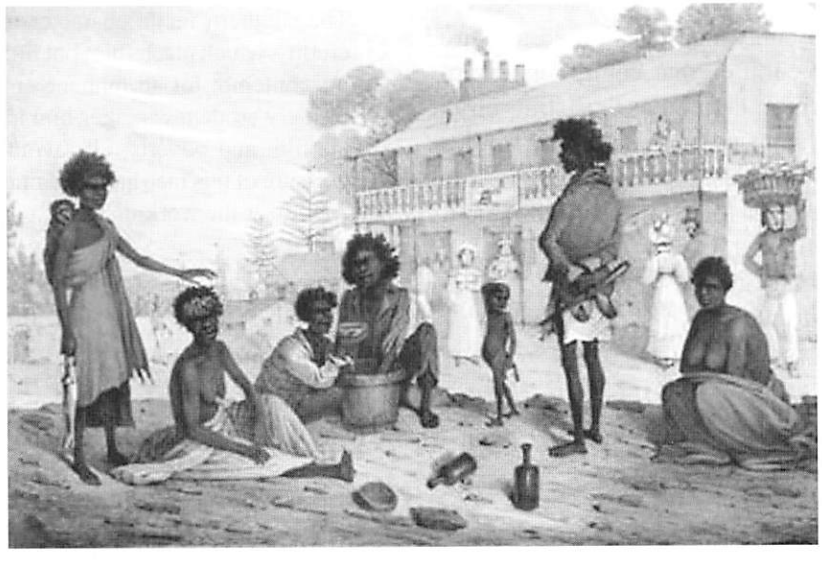
Some British officials hoped to share modernity with the Aborigines. After all, until the late seventeenth century many people in Britain and its American colonies still believed in witchcraft and burned supposed witches. Other ancient superstitions were also still rife: if the British could change, why not the Australian Aborigines? Optimism was also aroused by the facility many Aborigines showed in acquiring English. Governor Macquarie believed that, if 'cultivated and encouraged', Aborigines would quit their 'Wild wandering and Unsettled Habits'. However, early optimism faded rapidly. Matthew Moorhouse, Protector of Aborigines in South Australia in the 1840s, gave up hope of educating young Aborigines after seventeen years in the post, because they were threatened by elders with death by sorcery if they adopted white ways, which few wished to do anyway. He was told, 'I was stealing their children by taking them away to live in huts, and work, and "read in books" like white fellows'.

Before the 1970s almost every Australian historian acknowledged how difficult it had been for the colonial, and then the Australian, authorities to devise successful Aboriginal policies. Since the 1970s many historians have simply condemned whatever policy was adopted: attempts to share modernity are condemned as cultural genocide, but failure to share modernity attacked as unfair discrimination; the sale of alcohol to Aborigines is denounced as highly destructive, but refusal to sell alcohol as gross racism.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the number of 'full-blood' Aborigines was falling alarmingly. Aborigines' proven vulnerability to introduced diseases, such as measles and smallpox,

together with the demoralizing effects of irresistible external power, made it seem almost certain that traditional beliefs and customs would soon be gone for ever, even though there would be physical survival, largely through Aboriginal women and non-Aboriginal males. However, Australian governments were solicitous in their efforts to ensure the survival of Aboriginal peoples across Australia. They were the reverse of genocidal in intent.

Four different accusations of genocide are currently made. The first relates to frontier warfare and alleged *massacres* of blacks by whites. The leading figure here has been Professor Henry Reynolds, whose estimate for the whole continent was between 2,000 and 2,500 deaths caused by Aborigines, as against some 20,000 Aboriginal deaths directly through white or black trooper violence. Reynolds' figures are disputed, but even if accurate are relatively small when compared with invasions we know of during the last five thousand years or so. Those Aboriginal losses did not prevent subsequent population expansion. Professor Lyndall Ryan alleged in 1981 that the Aboriginal Tasmanians were the 'victims of "a conscious policy of genocide".' After numerous living Tasmanians claimed they were Aborigines, the British were accused instead of pretending to have eliminated them so that there would be no land claims possible under native title.



A second charge of genocide is that the Aboriginal 'Protectors' appointed by several Australian states tried to eliminate 'blackness', or 'to breed the colour out', by preventing part-Aborigines from marriage or sexual relationships with full-Aborigines and by inducing them to marry non-Aborigines instead. This, of course, was the very opposite of Hitler's aim of preventing all mixed marriages. In any case the power of Protectors to control sexual intercourse was very limited and rarely actually applied. In fact the number of persons identified as Aborigines more than doubled during the period of alleged genocide. A very different situation from that of the Jews in Europe.

A third basis for allegations of genocide is the loss of traditional lands by many Aborigines. Policies adopted by Australian governments during the 1950s and 1960s are now widely described as 'cultural genocide'. Their aim was to provide part-Aboriginal children, whose parents agreed or whose families were highly violent or neglectful, with an education as similar as possible to that of other Australian children. The 'assimilationist' process produced many able Aboriginal leaders, but many of even the most obvious beneficiaries describe themselves as victims, stolen children and part of a Lost Generation. One result is that it has become politically very difficult to remove Aboriginal children from even the most wretched circumstances.

Professors Ann Curthoys and John Docker condemned Australian child removal practices as within the definition of genocide used in the 1948 UN Genocide Convention. The main source for stolen children claims is the 1997 *Bringing Them Home* Report. However, most of the testimony it received was given under anonymity and without cross-examination. The first two cases brought before the courts, the ones thought most likely to succeed, were rejected, because the children's mothers consented to their children being taken away to foster homes and schooling.

There were two main sentiments behind the 1900 Federation of Britain's Australian colonies. One was fear of the growing power of Germany and Japan in the Pacific; the other determination to end mass non-white immigration, particularly from China. The main dispute has been about whether the motives behind the Policy were mainly racist or mainly concerned with fear of threats to living standards. Before the 1970s most Australian historians, particularly those of the 'Old Left', held that fears of large-scale non-white immigration had been justified and that low wage rates and poor conditions of work acceptable to some Chinese, Indian and Melanesian immigrant workers would have undermined working class standards. For example, Vance Palmer believed that the anti-Chinese violence of shearers and miners arose from 'fear of being forced down to the economic level of the Chinese'. Kylie Tennant argued that the White Australia Policy was 'not a racial or national

discrimination, but an economic necessity' and its aim was 'to maintain the standard of living and the degree of civilization existing in Australia'.

Today, many Australian academics condemn the colonists as racists and denounce past restrictions on immigration as an affront to human rights. The 'Old Left' saw white workers as primarily workers, but many of their successors think of them as essentially white. Outback workers, once described by Henry Lawson as planters of the 'Green Tree New', have been branded as dispossessors of the Aborigines and enemies of international solidarity.

This mode of thought was stimulated by South African Pierre van den Berghe and by George Fredrickson. Van den Berghe coined the term 'Herrenvolk (Master race) Democracies' to describe societies such as Australia. George Frederickson differentiated between xenophobia: virtually universal but limited to hatred of alien beliefs and cultures that could conceivably be changed; and racism, defined as 'insisting on the indelible and inheritable nature of victim peoples.' This new curse of racism supposedly had its roots in the eighteenth century interaction of Christianity and the Enlightenment: whereas, hitherto, inequality had been taken for granted, subsequently states that gave formal recognition to equality before the law had to justify actual inequality of treatment achieved by branding 'subordinate' groups as not fully human. Thus, an age formerly celebrated for its greater liberality than earlier times, culminating in the British abolition of the slave trade and then slavery itself, was branded as the epitome of vile racism.

Many of the Australian historians who made accusations of genocide and racism were Marxists of some sort, but they omitted to note that Marx and Engels held very similar opinions on race to those of Francis Galton and Herbert Spencer

Fuelled by these exciting theories Curthoys and Docker alleged that Australia, with New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, the United States and Canada were 'Herrenvolk colonies', which pioneered a trail for the Nazis in Germany by 'displacement of indigenous populations and their replacement by incoming peoples held to be racially superior'. They described England as the most 'overtly genocidal' of the European colonial powers, and its 'settler-colonies' as 'not only potentially but inherently genocidal'.

Generally omitted, too, in Australian history courses are racial conflicts within Australia between non-Europeans. Professor Henry Reynolds claimed that 'places like Cairns and Broome and Darwin were remarkably peaceful', even though the 1920 race riots in Broome, 'incontestably the worst in Australian history', were fought by Japanese against Timorese and Koepangers, whilst white Australians tried to restore peace.

Many of the Australian historians who made accusations of genocide and racism were Marxists of some sort, but they omitted to note that Marx and Engels held very similar opinions on race to those of Francis Galton and Herbert Spencer, as the following statements demonstrate:

> The plentiful meat and milk diet among the Aryans and Semites, and particularly the beneficial effects of these foods on the development of children, may, perhaps, explain the superior development of the two races.'
>
> We regard economic conditions as that which ultimately determines historical development. But race is itself an economic factor.
>
> The southern facile character of the Irishman, his crudity, which places him but little above the savage, his contempt for all humane enjoyments, in which his very crudeness makes him incapable of sharing, his filth and poverty, all favour drunkenness...the pressure of this race has done much to depress wages and lower the working class...

The Congregationalist minister the Reverend J West was an active and eloquent defender in the 1860s of the Chinese against racial abuse, as was another of his cloth, James Jefferis, in South Australia and Victoria at the end of the century. Jefferis believed Chinese and other Asian people could be assimilated into Anglo-Australia, once its foundations were firmly laid and provided they tried to adopt British ways of life. Jefferis, who attracted large congregations and influenced Protestant opinion throughout south-eastern Australia, seems to have been proved right during the last quarter-century.

Australia's past policies in respect of Indigenous Australians and of Immigration are open to fair criticism, but it is totally unjust to categorize them as genocidal in any sense. An unfortunate effect of continuous calumnies of Australia is that fewer students read history, once they have a chance to drop it. Yet, despite the hate-speech of teachers, lecturers and professors, most young Australians still chant, 'Come on Aussie, Come on!' And more and more people risk great dangers to be able to live in reviled Australia.

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Hamlet Today - the Purge of Fortinbras

Ralph Berry

> My eye fell on the word 'Fortinbras' in the programme, which so amazed me that I hardly knew what I saw for the next ten minutes.

That was Shaw on Forbes-Robertson's *Hamlet*, in 1897. An experienced Victorian playgoer would never have seen Hamlet's great role model. A century on, after decades of acknowledgment, Fortinbras has now been reduced to a walk-on part. In Gregory Doran's 2008 production for the RSC, Fortinbras did indeed appear on the programme. He spoke not a word, and simply emerged to take over the State. He was merely an algebraic symbol for the succession, no more.

Fortinbras highlights the director's shaping of the text. There are two great overlapping scenarios. One is political: the arms race and impending war, difficult negotiations with hostile neighbours, a threatened coup, problems of the succession. The other is domestic, the private and psychological situation of Hamlet. The political dimension of the play has largely been abandoned in recent years. There used to be a well-proven model on display, the East European. *Hamlet* was always, in the East, code for the struggle between the individual dissenter and the apparat of State power. Grigori Kozintsev kept Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in his 1964 film (to my mind, the finest *Hamlet* on record). They were the agents of surveillance, the Renaissance KGB. A notable *Hamlet* was staged by Siegfried Hochst in 1989, at a moment when just about everybody was trying to escape from the DDR. When Laertes was given permission to return to France, he was given a green travel document that looked suspiciously like the passports issued by West Germany. The audience howled with delight. The East European model of *Hamlet* served its time well, and ended with the Romanian National Theatre's *Hamlet* that came to London in 1990.

Whatever may be said in favour of the fall of the Berlin Wall, it was a disaster for *Hamlet*. The game was up for Western as well as East European *Hamlet*s. It cannot seriously be maintained that Western society is oppressive. As for 'Denmark's a prison,' untold numbers are clamouring to be let in. The entire social problem coded as 'Denmark' has shrunk, and now remains as a cypher for the difficulties Hamlet faces in reconciling himself to society. The world of Hamlet has contracted to the domestic and private.

That was the path taken by Peter Brook's *Hamlet*, which transferred from Paris to London in 2001. It was presented as a 'core' Hamlet – a misleading term, for there is no 'core' to the play. There is only the 'director's cut', meaning the opposite to the film sense, in which the director keeps all he can. On the stage, the director will cut everything that gets in his way, and will aim at a running time of three hours. Fortinbras disappeared, together with the entire political dimension. Everything was focused on one lonely, anguished figure. A consequence of the 'domestic' *Hamlet* is that Gertrude and Claudius have emerged nowadays as highly sympathetic figures. In this family drama, they are simply a middle-aged couple *en secondes noces*, trying to make a go of their new marriage. Claudius is doing his best to run the country and draw Hamlet into the new system. Gertrude is fully supportive of her husband in trying to make the arrangements work. And much help they get from Hamlet, a misfit and gifted troublemaker. To understand this version of the drama, all you need is two words, neither of which is in the text but whose import is everywhere: *stepson*, *stepfather*.

Brook's approach to the text focused John Caird's production for the National Theatre (2000), a *Hamlet* which travelled to Kronborg Palace, Helsingor. Simon Russell Beale's Hamlet was an intellectual and a peacenik; fortunately for him, he did not have to think about Fortinbras, who had vanished into the Helsingor night. This was a conscious decision, taken early in the rehearsal process. 'I admit that getting rid of all of one character and his story (in our case Fortinbras) is dodgy...' (*Players of Shakespeare 5*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p 153). Beale casts aside this doubt on the next page: 'Having decided that we did not want the Fortinbras sub-plot...' and goes on to register a loss: 'if we had kept the great soliloquy "How all occasions do inform against me"' (IV. iv.33-66), our last sight of him would have been as a man with a new sense of purpose:

O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
(IV.iv.65-6)'

After this nonchalant dismissal of Fortinbras, Hamlet's capacity to act in the Fortinbras mode was coincidentally in doubt. As the *Daily Telegraph* reviewer remarked with suave accuracy, 'He speaks "O that this too too solid flesh would melt" with rare authority'. Russell Beale was indeed fat and scant of breath, and in his lengthy *Players of Shakespeare 5* account of the part he passes over the fencing match in silence. When this Hamlet defeated the trim, athletic Laertes of Nathaniel Parker I wanted to call out 'Fixed!' The production ended with Italian choral music (cue for 'Pity') and 'And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.' Was it for this that Shaw suffered?

The same perception of the playable text held into the *Hamlet* which came to the Kronborg courtyard in 2001. Bill Alexander directed Richard McCabe in the Birmingham Repertory Theatre's production. Room was found for Reynaldo – usually an early victim in the cutting room – but not for Fortinbras. This was not a *Hamlet* whose private anguish could be assuaged or resolved via the Fortinbras role-model, and though McCabe looked like a man who could handle his rapier – not always true of Hamlets – it seemed logical to delete Fortinbras from his mental screen. Some of Fortinbras's lines were retained by Alexander for the clear-up operation, placed in the mouth of Horatio. 'L'intendance suivra,' as the French military say. These lines extended marginally the essential close at 'And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.' Nowadays one might as well wait for Godot as for Fortinbras.

This tendency is strengthened by the weakening, over the years, of the 'full-text' doctrine. The RSC in its early and most famous years was strongly in favour of substantially uncut texts. As recently as 1993 Adrian Noble directed Kenneth Branagh in a *Hamlet* for the RSC that conflated the Second Quarto and the Folio. Branagh, when the time came for him to film his own *Hamlet* (1996) stuck to a full text taking four hours. This led to 'How all occasions do inform against me' as a pre-intermission aria, with the camera pulling back from the hero, centrally placed against a snowy plain. A martial soundtrack (Paddy Doyle) signified Hamlet's resolution to keep Fortinbras as a role model. Since then a reaction against the full text and Fortinbras has been marked.

And so to the productions of 2008-9. It helps to have a largely modern *mise-en-scene*. The programme cover of the latest RSC *Hamlet* was straight out of Caspar David Friedrich, a solitary, black-coated individual against a background of rocks and swirling mists. This hint of German Romanticism continued into the costume style, which leaned on Nordic court uniforms and evening dress. Into this drama David Tennant's Hamlet fitted exactly. He was mercurial, highly strung, *nerveux*, magnetic. Granville Barker's advice 'Be swift' was taken to heart. This Hamlet was conscious of betrayal not oppression (and thus, a Hamlet for today). Patrick Stewart's rather sympathetic Claudius was a master of inflection, as in the slight, amused pause in 'For your intent/In going back to school in – *Wittenberg*...' ('Where's that? Is it a great university, like Hull?'). He came over as a highly competent executive, and in the play scene contemptuously rejected Hamlet's attempt at fazing him. Bespectacled, bald, his grey side hair close-cropped, in one scene with sleeves rolled up he was eerily reminiscent of Olivier's Nazi dentist in *Marathon Man*. Penny Downie's Gertrude was a society hostess whose 'picture' of Hamlet Senior, and of Claudius, came from a celebrity magazine. She moved from mild social drinking to the real thing, and it was unclear at the end whether she committed suicide or merely needed another drink. Olivier Ford Davies scooped up trick after trick as Polonius. This amiable old buffer kept losing the thread of his discourse, and was obviously not taken too seriously by Claudius. He died of Hamlet's revolver. As for

Ophelia (Mariah Gale), I did not feel that she loomed too large in Hamlet's life. Perhaps his affections did not that way tend.

Doran kept all the soliloquies. Tennant pitched 'To be or not to be' between suicide and intellectual inquiry, and turned to direct it to the great dark mirror backing the stage. 'How all occasions do inform against me' was retained, together with the dialogue with the Norwegian Captain. It was not clear why the Norwegian Army needed permission to march across the Polish Corridor, since they came via helicopters. The RSC loves to have actors swarming down ropes. Hamlet's shipboard adventures, and the entire story with the pirates, disappeared. Hamlet merely turned up in gear that suggested a fell-walking episode or a fishing vacation. But he commanded the audience, and the hush for 'The readiness is all' was total.

The fencing match was its usual abbreviation. I have not seen a decent match since Richard Eyre staged it at the National for Daniel Day-Lewis (1989). But the outcome was not so outrageously rigged as Simon Russell Beale's. When Hamlet placed the unbuttoned foil against Claudius, Stewart let him thrust home. It was all over, and Stewart knew it. Actors are fond of suicide. This was Hamlet's triumph, and the full house rose to it. Tiers of lozenges, as in *Shakespeare in Love*, ovated the actors. But the English Ambassador and the post-Hamlet arrangements had no place here. As in so many Victorian productions, the play ended on 'The rest is silence.' That went for Fortinbras too.

And then came Michael Grandage's *Hamlet*, with Jude Law in the lead, in the final production of his Donmar West End season. This followed the current trend of marginalizing Fortinbras, and the political – and ethical – dimension he stands for. Hamlet might be 'likely to have proved most royal,' but that is purely a recognition of the vulnerable, sweet prince that Law presented, not of a ruler in the making. And he had no Fortinbras to compete with. Reviewer after reviewer was struck by the absence of any social or political context. Costumes offered only a nondescript quasi-modernity. The best *Hamlets* bring together the political, philosophical and domestic themes, and this was not the case here. Even twenty years ago, the 'post-Falklands' *Hamlet* Richard Eyre directed at the National Theatre gave full weight to Fortinbras and the bleak, wind-swept territory that he sought to conquer. Malcolm Muggeridge, in a notable letter to *The Times* (3 June 1982), pointed to the contemporary resonance of the Norwegian Captain's 'We go to gain a little patch of ground/That hath in it no profit but the name.' No such resonance is permitted in today's *Hamlet*, perhaps because it brings with it an echo of Margaret Thatcher and victorious war.

We now have a redacted version of *Hamlet*. Directors have blacked out Fortinbras from the playing text, with all that he implies for the values of masculinity, personal risk, honour. The three-hours' traffic of our stage points to easy and accelerating cuts, and Fortinbras is a prime target. Only Rufus Sewell, in Kenneth Branagh's uncut film of *Hamlet*, has made a mark in the part of recent years. So the Dane has to get by without his Norwegian role model. Someone of great power has fallen out of Hamlet's universe. It is possible that Hamlet may be missing him.

Ralph Berry spent most of his teaching career in Canada. He has written extensively on Shakespeare.

"No, you can't have any more - not until you get your body mass index down to a reasonable level."

Conservative Classic – 46

G K Chesterton's *Orthodoxy*

Daryl McCann

G K Chesterton begins *Orthodoxy* (1908) with a parable about an English yachtsman who sets sail and discovers a new island in the South Seas. Anxiously (but manfully) he strides ashore, armed to the teeth, and adopts sign language as his means of communication with the natives. In the far-off distance he spies a barbaric temple. Courageously he marches towards it with the intent of planting a British flag upon the edifice: but it is not an unfamiliar shrine he discovers there. To his surprise and confusion the barbaric temple turns out to be the Brighton Pavilion. Does our yachtsman feel foolish? Most certainly he does, and Chesterton should know because he confesses that he was that yachtsman, only the truth he stumbled upon was not the Brighton Pavilion but Christianity.

More than a century after the publication of *Orthodoxy,* Chesterton's tale has lost none of its sting. The progressive liberals of the Edwardian era appear to have been at war with Christian orthodoxy – here loosely defined as adherence to the Apostles' Creed – no less than today's PC brigade. Additionally, contemporary defenders of Christianity often share with Chesterton a similar history of once having been on the other side of the barricades. They, too, lived their formative years striving hard to find unique and original truths in order to be 'ten minutes in advance' of the latest intellectual fashion, and so also stand to be punished in 'the fittest and funniest way'. The mishap of Chesterton's yachtsman is, for many of us today, a record of our own misadventures. The yachtsman's discovery is not untrue, because the Brighton Pavilion remains the Brighton Pavilion, whichever way you look at it. Nevertheless, just when the yachtsman – and by extension Chesterton and all who stumble upon their spiritual inheritance later in life – fancies he stands alone in his discovery, the realisation hints that he is 'in the ridiculous position of being backed up by all of Christendom'.

Chesterton had a famous penchant for subverting popular sayings and proverbs. 'Travel narrows the mind' remains a personal favourite, but the list is impossibly long and over the years not a few critics have considered Chesterton's wit and levity to be detrimental to his polemical *gravitas.* Clive James is not alone in arguing that Chesterton's 'vice was wilful paradox'. We can easily imagine Chesterton on television lobbing back droll one-liners to celebrity atheist Christopher Hitchens: 'If there were no God, there would be no atheists.' Certainly there are lines in *Orthodoxy* that some might deem more clever than serious, but Chesterton was a profound thinker, an aspect of the man that really comes into its own in chapter six of *Orthodoxy,* titled, appropriately enough, 'The Paradox of Christianity'.

Chesterton lists the charges made against Christianity by its detractors and finds them, ultimately, inconsistent. Christianity was a nightmare in the opinion of one and a fool's paradise according to someone else; too optimistic for some, and morbidly pessimistic for others; too meek and too violent; too austere and too full of pomp; and so on *ad infinitum*: 'Christianity could not at once be the black mask on a white world, and also the white mask on a black world.' Chesterton's epiphany is that at its core Christianity represents a paradox – a paradox, however, that makes a unifying sense of life's eternal contradictions. The secret of orthodox or conventional Christianity, contends Chesterton, is that it is simultaneously worldly and unworldly. While Paganism or Stoicism seeks to balance oppositional human emotions – for instance, modesty and pride – by amalgamating these qualities and thus diluting or moderating their full force, Christianity allows each full reign. People with a Christian faith believe they have a personal relationship with the Creator of all things, and yet know that they themselves, however successful in human terms, are the creators of very little, let alone their own salvation. Mastering the paradox of mortal existence, argues Chesterton, explains 'the thrilling romance' of both the history and the spirit of orthodox Christianity.

One of the truly startling things about reading *Orthodoxy* in 2011 is encountering the same arguments against Christianity that we bump into today (witness Dawkins, Dennet, and Harris), only marginally reconfigured and restated in a slightly new context. Chesterton, if he were alive, would find it just as easy to demolish their assertions as he did those of his own 'agnostic' contemporaries. Thus, he noted that so-called free thinkers in the Edwardian era were not free thinkers at all, and that their starting point – 'the dogma of materialism' – was always their finishing point.

Chesterton would not be surprised to hear that social justice advocates such as John Dominic Crossman and the Jesus Seminar 'discovered' in their search for the historical Jesus that the Second Person of the Trinity was an all-too-human social justice advocate. Their worldview, in short, happens to be a closed system, and so the non-divinity of Jesus was decided before their investigation commenced.

When Chesterton penned *Orthodoxy*, Christianity's claims to universality had already been under assault for more than a hundred years. In the big picture, so the argument went, was not Christianity just a Euro-centric rendering of a human impulse that in other parts of the world had resulted in Hinduism, Islam and Buddhism? Chesterton will have none of it and time has proved him right. Ask the brave Christians in Iran, who daily risk everything to live out their faith, if religions are transposable. *Orthodoxy* also berates the claims of secularists who explain Christianity's ascendancy with arguments of great cultural and social ignorance. On the contrary, argues Chesterton, Christianity 'arose in Mediterranean civilisation in the full summer of the Roman Empire'. When Constantine 'nailed the cross to the mast' the civilised world was 'swarming with sceptics, and pantheism was as plain as the sun'. Moreover, Christianity does not belong to the dark ages, but 'was the one path across the dark ages that was not dark'. There are many moments in *Orthodoxy* that are no less illuminating and persuasive than David Bentley Hart's masterly *Atheist Delusions* (2009), and one can almost forget Chesterton was working over a hundred years ago at great speed and while producing much other distinguished writing.

'Wilful paradox' might have been Chesterton's flaw but it was also, fittingly, his strength. If the allegorical yachtsman's – and Chesterton's – blunder represents a mistake, it is a most enviable mistake. 'What could be more delightful than to have in the same few minutes all the fascinating terrors of going abroad combined with all the humane security of coming home again?' The yachtsman, along with Chesterton and everybody else who experiences a mid-life discovery of Christianity, can enjoy going away and coming home, *and* can enjoy them at the very same time. How agreeable to brace oneself for the most terrible possibilities imaginable and then realise with a jolt that one is home. It is a fiasco, as Chesterton says, but at least it is a 'happy fiasco'.

Reputations – 35

Charles Dickens 1812-2012

Francis Hallinan

Charles Dickens had a doctor's eye. To the lay reader Scrooge is just a mean old man refusing to pay for his fire, 'The cold within him froze his old features and stiffened his gait'. But to a modern doctor an unbending countenance and a shuffling walk suggests Parkinson's disease. The actual Scrooge – Dickens always seemed to have somebody in mind when he drew a character – could well have had a variant of Parkinson's called Lewy body dementia whose victims see visual hallucinations of friends and enemies, alive or dead, in the corners of darkened rooms.

Most of us will recall the fat boy in the *Pickwick Papers* who was always falling asleep. An illness is named after him called Pickwick Syndrome or obesity hypoventilation. Sufferers are extremely fat people who fail to breathe rapidly or deeply enough. This results in high levels of carbon dioxide in their blood and low levels of oxygen. Such patients tend to sleep until the level of carbon dioxide jerks their respiratory centre into action and they wake. At night they may stop breathing for short periods, and in the end their hearts may give out under the strain. The nervous thin of modern times are much exercised by sleep apnoea and queue for devices to stop themselves snoring. Perversely the slothful fat continue eating their way toward the grave.

Although there is a wealth of physical pathology in Dickens' novels he is at his best when employing the clinician's eye to examine eccentrics or the mad. He often portrays his characters through the eyes of a child. To a child adults are large and frightening things, often seeming to spring from nowhere. A child concentrates therefore only on what it can see.

Pip is caught by Magwich:

> A fearful man, all in coarse gray, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared, and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

Such a description, stripped of its literary genius, could easily feature in a set of modern psychiatric case notes. The mad or the dispossessed always appear suddenly out

of the blue. They are as they are and nothing explains or alters them. It is Dickens' genius that he gives such characters an odd but compelling mechanical aspect, as if they were dolls dancing to some secret tune. He was close to the truth. Whether born in the 19th or 20th century we all dance to our genes.

Dickens' most interesting case, and one that demonstrates his genius for seeing below the surface of things, was Dora Spenlow, David Copperfield's bride. We have no means of knowing if the real Dora existed or had anything wrong with her but a strong case can be made for a composite of the 'capricious and silly' Maria Beadnell who toyed with his affections but married the owner of a saw mill, and his sister-in-law Mary Hogarth with whom he was much infatuated who died suddenly aged 17 from a heart condition. This combination of a shallow personality and sudden death may have been suffered by somebody else he heard spoken of and he fleshed out the details from his own experiences. The symptoms are sufficiently striking to warrant notice and Dickens was an acute observer. Copperfield meets Dora at a suburban house party.

> I don't remember who was there, except Dora. I have not the least idea what we had for dinner, besides Dora. My impression is, that I dined off Dora, entirely, and sent away half-a-dozen plates untouched. I sat next to her. I talked to her. She had the most delightful little voice, the gayest little laugh, the pleasantest and most fascinating little ways, that ever led a lost youth into hopeless slavery...

This comic but delightful description gives way in the 21st century to the cold language of the neuroradiologist.

> Researchers are using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to watch people's brains when they look at a photograph of their object of affection.The scans showed increased blood flow in areas of the brain with high concentrations of receptors for dopamine – associated with states of euphoria, craving and addiction. (Similar to that for cocaine)
>
> *How Love Works*, Lee Ann Obringer 2011

But this is Dickens and we are not dealing with any ordinary love affair. There is something sinister about Dora. It is as if she were a toy. She weaves childish lover's sayings around Copperfield's heart but cannot manage his household accounts.

> ... After severely comparing one with another, and making entries on the tablets, and blotting them out, and counting all the fingers of her left hand over and over again, backwards and forwards, (Dora) would be so vexed and discouraged, and would look so unhappy, that it gave me pain to see her bright face clouded - and for me! - and I would go softly to her, and say:'What's the matter, Dora?'Dora would look up hopelessly, and reply, 'They won't come right. They make my head ache so. And they won't do anything I want!'

Science has been slow in catching up on Dickens' Dora. It was not until 1961 that geneticists described Williams Syndrome, or the 'Cocktail Party Personality' disorder. Occurring in about 1 in 20,000 of the population they show a split between surprising literary and expressive abilities and an inability to count or estimate space or volume. The 25 genes responsible for the latter are missing. Despite this victims have, 'an unusual command of language, a friendly and loquacious personality'. They also have elfin features. 'Williams' cases use para-linguistic affective devices such as 'Oh my poooor little wabbit' to great effect and are better dramatic story tellers than normal children of a much higher mental age. Dora's speech is larded with such devices.

> Researchers at the Salk laboratories at La Jolla describe a sufferer who was, 'a young woman, (who) shows great facility with language, being able even to weave vivid stories of imaginary events and to compose lyrics to a love song. However, she fails all Piagetian seriation and conservation tasks, has academic skills comparable to those of a first-grader, and requires a babysitter for supervision. This unusual dissociation of language from other cognitive function forms the basis for this series of studies.

Williams syndrome cases have characteristic features. A long filtrum, the distance between the upper lip and the nose, a depressed nasal bridge, puffy eyes, pointed teeth, star patterned irises, and a prominent lower lip. Appearances can vary and some Williams sufferers have an attractive appearance. A contemporary portrait of Mary Hogarth does not fit, but oddly, an artist's impression of Dora this century, the artist knowing nothing of the Williams' conundrum, does.

There remains one extraordinary coincidence. It is widely held that Dora died of TB. Copperfield carries her upstairs each night '...sometimes, when I took her up, and felt that she was lighter in my arms, a dead blank feeling came upon me.' Williams sufferers have serious problems with their lungs, great vessels of the heart and calcium metabolism plus genetic abnormalities which account for their elfin appearance. 'what a little hand it was to hold, and what a tiny wedding-ring it was to see!' Dora could have died of an heart attack, which even in Victorian times was a rarity among young middle class women. It was the fate of Mary Scott Hogarth who died suddenly aged seventeen of 'heart failure' on returning from the theatre one evening.

If Dora existed and is as he described her, then Dickens was one hundred and fifty years ahead of science. Genius, a sense of the underlying pattern of things, is always ahead of its time, and will always defy description.

I am indebted to *Williams Syndrome: An Unusual Neuropsychological Profile.* Ursula Bellugi, Paul P Wang, The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, CA 92037, http://crl.ucsd.edu/courses/commdis/pdf/Bellugi-et-al.pdf. Readers might like to read this excellent account.

ETERNAL LIFE

In thirteen years as a City priest, and my church but 200 yards from the Bank of England, I have enjoyed conversations with many City professionals. Jack, one of my churchwardens, had a fifty-year career as a banker and, over a few glasses, he would entertain me with tales of the old days. How they all came in mid-morning on the train from the leafy suburbs, drank tea (not coffee!), exchanged greetings and gossip, glanced at the mail and then set off to do the real business of the day over a long lunch. Those were the days when My Word is My Bond was the cardinal rule, if not the only rule, governing dealings in the City. But, after the Big Bang and now, plunged into a deep and prolonged downturn, do traditional rules of thumb like that have any more than nostalgic or sentimental value?

We must look at the various alternatives. To claim that one's word was one's bond was to invite trust and, if everyone played according to that simple rule, then the course of business life ran smoothly. For most of the time it did run smoothly. Of course, there were exceptions – the occasional bad apples – but there were time-honoured ways of dealing with these: polite ostracism and, as the very last resort, the judgement of the law. But in our computerised, globalised and instantaneous financial culture such traditional methods are not so readily available.

So, faced with loud cries for the cleansing of our business stables, for much greater transparency and for a check on the wilder speculations and extravagant financial rewards which are seen by many to be exorbitant and unfair, how are we to proceed? Sensible restraint there must be, but the consequence of tying the tourniquet too tightly is that you fatally cut off the blood supply.

The Occupy enthusiasts encamped by St Paul's, and indeed socialists everywhere, prescribe strict regulation. But there is a host of difficulties in this remedy, quite apart from the one already alluded to: that over-regulation suffocates the life out of business. And, since it is business which raises national income, the ironic question arises as to how anyone – even the regulators – will be paid if business is diminished or destroyed?

Much of the expressed socialistic distaste for 'capitalism' is its alleged immorality. Very well, but what guarantees have we that any band of regulators will possess superior morality? It is the old question Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? Who will guard the guardians? History provides some grim answers to this ancient and perennial question. For the usual unfortunate experience of centralised bureaucratic control is that it leads to coercion and oppression and even to purges, pogroms and the gulag. Nobody, not even a socialist pure as the driven snow, has the right automatically to assume the high moral ground.

As to the alleged faults and deficits of 'capitalism,' we must question whether there is much actual capitalism left in the British economy. The proportion of GDP spent on the public sector is about 50 per cent. In 'communist' China it is only 17 per cent. Even in the Soviet Union at its zenith, state spending never got so high as 70 per cent. We are taxed on our income, and if we earn a little more, we are taxed at 50 per cent. Then nearly everything we buy incurs VAT at 20 per cent. We are urged to save in order to keep taxes down – but then we are taxed on our interest. If we deal in shares, we are taxed on our dividends. Add road tax and the punishingly high levels of fuel tax. There is a plethora of business taxes, including Corporation Tax. And when we die we are taxed again on what we leave. I can't find the right word to describe an economic system which operates like this but, whatever the correct word is, it certainly isn't 'capitalism.' In fact there has been very little capitalism in Britain at least since the days of the Wilson-Callaghan governments and probably not for a hundred years.

I have been reading Ken Costa's lively suggestions for, as he puts it, 'reconnecting the financial with the ethical'. He is qualified to speak about both God and Mammon for he is a Christian who has been a banker for thirty years. To his credit Costa is not looking for further oppressive regulation. He wants to arrange 'an interactive dialogue that will aim to bridge the differences between protesters and the City'. You might as well try to revive the old recipe for extracting moonbeams out of cucumbers.

Costa says, 'We need to start with big ideas.' If these suggestions of his are to be anything more than yet another everlasting talking-shop in sociologese and management-speak – with perhaps just a whiff of the excitable brand of modern Anglicanism – we must be very clear as to what the big idea really is.

We have seen too many instances these last few decades in which leading clergymen, having divested

themselves of the handicaps of having to believe in the miracles of the Gospels, the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection, abandoned the Authorised Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, find they have nothing better to do than involve themselves in the adolescent politics of the soft left, the social gospel and all the fatuous 'interfaces' and pretend 'debates' which go with it.

I speak only as a parish priest, but I would say that the best, because unique, contribution that the Established Church can make is to return to its traditional vocation to preach, teach and inculcate personal morality.

Peter Mullen was Rector of St Michael's Cornhill until January this year

Roy Kerridge

A wild haired soot-blackened Irishman once accosted me with a drunken rant, in the course of which he told that he worked as a bank clerk.

'Oh really? Which bank is that, then?' I asked in polite surprise. At once he began to rave and swear, accusing me of mocking him.

'How the ------ could I be a ---------- ing bank clerk when I'm sleeping rough in my mate's scrap metal yard?'

'Well you said you were a bank clerk'.

'Are you such a fool as to believe everything you hear'?

'So you're not a bank clerk?

'And why shouldn't I be a bank clerk? Just because I'm an Irishman?

Let me tell you, Ireland's such a rich country now that everything in the shops is too expensive!'

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Talking of scrap metal yards, I once met the muscular owner of one.

'It's a family business,' he told me. 'We're a large family. All our daughters marry at sixteen'

It turned out that they had to, as the patriarch would choose husbands for them from the sons of his drinking cronies. That is the way of the Gypsy; for arranged marriages are by no means the prerogative of Indians and Arabs. Among the Jews of pre-war Poland, a matchmaker would help parents to arrange their children's marriages.

My apostate-Jewish grandfather Adolf paid the dowries of all his sisters once they had been match-made. It amounted to the Polish equivalent of five hundred pounds per sister. There were five sisters, so an old-fashioned school text book sum could be composed here. Adolf's Danish wife Magda grew furious when she learned of this 'waste of money'.

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Liars, such as my Irish acquaintance, often mean to tell the truth yet let their imagination run away with them. A former neighbour, Rory, a tubby bespectacled young man of Guyanan origin, was a story teller of this kind. Once he began to tell me about his Comprehensive schooldays at Brondesbury (now mercifully a private school for Moslems). After a while he grew excited and his narrative lost all sense.

'At our school, one of the boys was an Arab millionaire.'

'Really?' I asked. 'How old was he?'

'Eleven. Anyway, he would go to casinos and gamble away thousands of pounds. Once he took some of us boys with him. And we won thousands! We all went to Paris, where we won even more money! Then we brought back one of the Folie Bergere girls and hid her in our school....'

With a jerk, he stopped himself and seemed to be thinking. 'Wait a minute, did that really happen?

In a moment he was off on another tack.

'Racism now, that's terrible! There are all these people of inferior races who think they're su-perior!'

ARTS AND BOOKS

A Plea for Realism

Robert Crowcroft

Conservatism, Kieron O'Hara, Reaktion, 2011, £19.95.

This is a strikingly up-to-the-minute book on conservative philosophy. While many observers perceive conservatism as being somewhat adrift in a society marked by liberal gestures, the erosion of boundaries, and the disintegration of traditional mores among the Facebook generation, Kieron O'Hara argues that in fact conservatism remains 'uniquely valuable' in a 'whizz-bang world'. It is so useful, he contends, precisely because it encourages us to think seriously about how to respond to the myriad challenges facing contemporary civilization – rather than doing what governments have tended to do and go 'full steam ahead into the fog'.

If it does anything, this book makes a powerful plea for realism from conservatives. This has – unfortunately – frequently been missing from recent generations of conservatives, overly concerned with doctrinaire slogans. The Conservative party spent far too long talking to itself rather than the public, and in the United States the Republican party seemed set on throwing away the chance to unseat Obama by carrying out ideological 'purity tests' (what a frightening concept) on presidential candidates. In contrast, O'Hara's approach is neo-Burkean in a lot of respects, demanding that conservatives reconcile themselves to the world as it is, not as they might wish it to be. That is, after all, what conservatives so delight in telling liberals when highlighting the gaping holes in leftist doctrine. But, over recent decades, conservatives have also failed this crucial test. Too many conservatives still do not recognise that the world has moved on since the 1980s – and thus display little of the flexibility shown by their heroine, Margaret Thatcher. When looked at from this perspective, David Cameron and the rest of the 'modernizers' – whatever their many errors – should at least be credited with an unwillingness to bask in nostalgia, and the courage to try to come to grips with the real world.

What O'Hara seeks to do is to bridge the gaps between philosophy, ideology and political practice. He does this by rescuing conservatism as a way of thinking – an intellectual apparatus, if you like – and applying it to contemporary challenges. He ranges across rapid technology-driven change, environmental issues, the financial crisis, localism, and the fragility of society. He makes a strong case for evidence-based policy and caution in legislation, and while this is hardly novel stuff from a conservative perspective what is useful is how he links it into a well-rounded and enjoyable articulation of a conservative thought-world. Given how hopeless much contemporary conservative policy material is (the rubbish churned out by think-tanks, for example), this is an important task.

O'Hara is also interesting in his attitude to the urgent task of reforming the British state, referring us to the law of unintended consequences. All policies generate unintended consequences. The author points out that deregulation of the City in the 1980s and 1990s led to dramatic growth and profits. But the unintended social and economic effects were legion: property prices boomed, pricing productive workers out of city centres with terrible social costs; the economy became unbalanced and too dependent on the financial sector; in the drive for profits, banks adopted instruments that we now know were simply too complex to understand; and debt-fuelled consumption was a disastrous social model. To point this out is not to suggest that City deregulation was a negative, but that an honest philosophy has to take things in the round and acknowledge facts rather than put on doctrinaire blinkers. There may not be an 'answer'. But to recognise that is at least a starting-point.

Therefore what is most challenging about the book is the argument that if contemporary conservatives are to be true to the principle of looking before they leap, then they need to apply this when grappling with today's problems. So (to take one example), rather than smashing the welfare state (which most conservatives desire), a spirit of genuine 'conservatism' requires proceeding slowly and incrementally when dealing with welfare, the NHS and other public services. Legislators must work to try and ensure that specific policy changes do not end up doing more harm than good when implemented. This entails gradual movement and pilot schemes. Just hoping for the best, as New Labour did, is not good enough; we cannot afford to keep getting things wrong. Though Cameron and company are often criticised for not moving fast

enough, it may be that they are doing *precisely* what conservatism requires – society has grown accustomed to having a huge central state, and overnight change is simply impossible, so the only responsible course of action is to go slowly. O'Hara is a staunch advocate of what he terms 'public reason' as a necessary anchor for conservatism: that one needs to locate one's rationale for action in positions that are widely shared among the public in order to enjoy legitimacy. Indeed, the current socio-economic crisis is so severe that it is difficult to imagine a solution that does not command broad agreement. Moreover, when politics is connected to 'public reason' in this way, governments will tend to be moderate and humane.

This book makes an important contribution to the debate over contemporary conservatism. O'Hara is surely correct that a doctrine will only find purchase if it operates within the limits set by society. Now, this may lead to accommodation with liberal society in a manner similar to the strategy of the Cameroons. If this is truly the only way of connecting with contemporary Britain (if it is how the people *want* society to be, however regrettable that is), then it may be that the Cameroons are the true 'conservatives', after all. A sobering thought.

The Taciturn Clam

Alistair Cooke

Attlee's War: World War II and the Making of a Labour Leader, Robert Crowcroft, I B Taurus & Co Ltd, 2011, £25

Throughout the 1930s the whole of Whitehall, and most of Westminster, were in awe of a very great man, Neville Chamberlain. He was unrivalled in the despatch of public business. He was unrivalled too in his command of policy in its many diverse areas. One star-struck MP went into raptures about 'his amazing efficiency and complete mastery over subjects which to me are boring *à mourir*. What mattered above all to Chamberlain was the domestic battle that he pursued remorselessly to establish a welfare state based on Tory principles (summarised in a recent slim volume of mine, *Tory Policy-Making*).

Even during the tempestuous events abroad in the late 1930s he continued to work tenaciously on the decisive next stage of his grand vision for a better Britain. A draft manifesto for an election planned for 1940 set out radical proposals: they included action to bring the whole population within the national health services he had already established, a wider and more generous pensions system developing a Chamberlainite achievement of 1925, the introduction of family allowances, and the intensification of his massive slum clearance programme. Under Chamberlain more new houses were built every year than under post-war Conservative governments with their 300,000 annual target. It all added up to a welfare programme that provided for a properly funded, two-way partnership between the individual and the state , unencumbered by the plethora of benefits that were to drag Britain down in the post-war world. Whether he was in Birmingham or Downing Street, Neville Chamberlain always balanced the books.

The Labour Party would have been utterly humiliated in Chamberlain's general election that never was. Hitler saved socialism in Britain. It not only survived; for the first time in its history it entered a period of steady political success. Chamberlain's totally unexpected departure from Churchill's new war-time coalition in October 1940 (when the cancer that was to kill him the following month was diagnosed) allowed Labour to enter, and swiftly to dominate, the domestic political kingdom where the great man had ruled for so long. Chamberlain's shrewdest, and most unscrupulous, political associate, Sir Joseph Ball, who had overseen the detailed welfare research work for him, wrote gloomily to his master in his last weeks predicting this dramatic turn of events. His worst forebodings were swiftly realised.

Robert Crowcroft's important new book tells the story that turned Joseph Ball's prescient pessimism into political reality, and set the scene for a profligate and irresponsible welfare state after 1945. Few political conquests have been accomplished as easily as Labour's. No minority Party has ever used participation in a coalition government to advance its interests so effectively as Labour after 1940, providing an object lesson that Mr Clegg would do well to ponder. Despite their massive parliamentary majority, without Chamberlain's dynamic leadership the Conservatives languished in pitiful confusion, as Crowcroft convincingly shows. The vision of a Tory welfare state – affordable, yet comprehensive – vanished.

Churchill was Conservative by convenience, not conviction – and never felt the slightest affection for the Party, whose leadership he assumed with the utmost reluctance on Chamberlain's resignation in October 1940 in the face of vehement opposition from his wife. As long as he was able to run the war without political interference, he did not much care who ran Britain itself, as long as it was well run. Within two years highly talented Labour ministers had been appointed to fill most of the principal posts responsible for domestic policy, leaving finance as the only really big prize in Tory hands. The Chairman of the 1922 Committee, the

voice of Tory backbenchers, moaned that they 'did not feel that there was anyone inside the Cabinet who stood for the Conservative point of view at all'.

Crowcroft weaves the sorry tale of Tory decline under Churchill deftly into his account of Labour's remarkable, unforeseen triumph. In the history of the world of high politics, which is Crowcroft's exclusive preoccupation, the fortunes of one political party or set of leaders must never be considered in isolation: they must always be studied in relation to their opponents. That is the first rule of the genre as laid down by its master, Maurice Cowling, whose spirit hovers benignly over this book, written by the chief moving force behind the formidable study of Cowlingite thought published two years ago (my review of it appeared in *The Salisbury Review*, Winter 2010).

High (and low) politics fell under Labour's sway as it took control of almost all the commanding heights of the state in the first years of the war, and then extended them massively. The vast amount of evidence amassed by Crowcroft must surely silence those historians of the period who have asserted that Labour had a rather poor war and only became the greatest political force in the land with its landslide election victory in 1945. But Crowcroft does himself no favours by endlessly drawing attention to his own wisdom. He constantly interrupts his excellent expositions of events, and interpretations of their significance, to wag a finger at other experts in Labour history or tell us how original his own insights are. This kind of tiresome point-scoring should be banned even from a PhD thesis which is where this book began. Historians of the right should treat their opponents with lofty disdain after the manner of Cowling himself.

Crowcroft's overriding aim in this book is to transform the reputation of Clement Attlee. That 'much maligned and misunderstood man', hitherto widely regarded as possessing modest political talent, is depicted here as the grand master of war-time high politics who brought about Labour's ascendancy. The new political landscape was created as a result of 'a series of high stakes, tactically complex conflicts between Attlee and those who wished to change Labour's course, challenge his strategy of alliance with the Conservatives, or remove him altogether'. According to Crowcroft, at every stage Attlee demonstrated political skills of the highest order, exhibiting in particular that single-minded ruthlessness without which success in high politics is rarely achieved. He had no hesitation in authorising fierce public attacks on his Conservative coalition partners when he deemed them to be in his own, and Labour's, best interests.

In at least one major respect Britain was ill-served: in adopting the Beveridge Report in full, Attlee saddled the country with a fateful document that, in Crowcroft's words, did 'not so much offer a blueprint for a Utopia as engage in a series of wild gestures of the kind usually seen in radical students' unions'. Beveridge, a man who was 'after all largely a failure as a civil servant' was elevated to the status of lay saint and allowed no one to forget it. Everything would have been utterly different if Neville Chamberlain had still been alive.

After attributing unbroken success to Attlee's cunning, sure-footed machinations, Crowcroft concludes that 'in a real sense, he was an English Stalin'. If that is true, the taciturn Clam (as George VI called him), really does need to be seen in a fundamentally different light. It is appropriate that this provocative book should end on such a controversial note.

High Table Scraps

John Jolliffe

My Dear Hugh: Letters from Richard Cobb to Hugh Trevor Roper and others, ed Tim Heald, Frances Lincoln, 2011, £20

Perceptive, prejudiced and refreshingly outspoken, Richard Cobb operated at several key points in the academic world, intervening in the usual intrigues, feuds and campaigns for important posts, without apparently ever seeking one for himself until the day he woke up to find himself Regius Professor of History at Oxford. But his unique claim to fame lies in his encyclopaedic knowledge of modern French history, with special reference to the many gruesome deaths at the time of the Revolution but extending to all kinds of literary and philosophical aspects of the subject. At one point he reflects that 'Calvin seems quite as unpleasant as Robespierre and far more dangerous, because Robespierre fortunately did not last and Calvin did'. To have been taught by a man who could say things like that on the spur of the moment must have been an exhilarating and inspiring experience; witness many of his pupils who achieved great things. He wrote a dozen books (unhelpfully not listed here), two of them actually in French, and a description of him as *bilingue* (bilingual) probably gave him more pleasure than anything except the award of the Légion d'Honneur.

This is not the place to dwell on his published work, but his letters are a real treat. After a spell teaching at the University College of Wales at Aberystwyth, with long periods of research in Paris, and teaching briefly in Turin and in India, he fetched up at Balliol in 1967. Of one pedantic and pretentious pupil he

wrote 'I do *hope* he doesn't get a first'. (He did.) His relationship with Balliol could be described as love-hate, but if not hatred then strong disapproval is much in evidence in the letters. '*Some* of it I like very much ... but the PPE Fellows I do not enjoy ... far too much talk about "Balliol leading the way" ... these people take themselves so *seriously* and most of them *revere* ambition, which I find distasteful ... the worst thing about the place is that they HATE PLEASURE ... Another displeasing thing is the love of money: we accepted money from *Maxwell*. I think we would have taken it from Rachman. The place is quite shameless.' And as regards administration 'What is so particularly awful about Balliol is that no sooner have we rejected, after agonising soul-searching, some impudent and ridiculous demand than it turns up once more on the agenda under some other head.' All this is of course interspersed with rewarding comments about Mallarmé and many other less well-known figures.

Another side to his character is his fascination with details that others might well overlook. After breaking some ribs and puncturing a lung ('a punishment for my intemperate ways') he spent a fortnight in the Royal Free Hospital, 'intensely *interesting* and much more hierarchical than the Army. I doubt if Nicolas I radiated quite the POWER one feels here ... I have been inspected by Monty in 1944 but this is far more impressive: sheer, utter POWER as the Registrar, his Deputy, fifteen or so students and the nurses process round the ward ... And it is quite wonderful the *trouble* they all take when one is really in pain or in danger.' A refreshing contrast to Balliol?

On election as Regius Professor he moved to Worcester College. 'Why do Left Fascists hate Right Fascists when they have so much in common?' Of a self-righteous philosopher there, Michael Hinton, he wrote 'I had a terrible row with him by rejoicing at the overthrow of the frightful Allende. He is certainly the College Resident Bleeder. He bleeds all the time and has a Maoist wife though a bit younger than the Chairman.' Later, after leaving earlier left-wing enthusiasms behind him he wrote 'I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing more entirely evil, hopeless and wearisome than Communism in any of its forms.'

To their innocent surprise, the Cobbs were invited to the banquet at Buckingham Palace for the visit of Giscard D'Estaing. He observed, in fascination, Harold Wilson, 'quite *grotesque*, a gnome with the large head of an ageing and wicked child, wearing his Garter (so one of the ladies-in-waiting said) on the wrong thigh. ... Mrs Thatcher appeared to be entirely constructed of some vaporous cardboard substance in electric blue. ... Mountbatten looked absolutely *splendid*.' Saint-Simon would certainly not have been so revealing; perhaps not even Pepys so vivid, though like Cobb he might have mentioned that his white tie had fallen off into the royal soup.

The only failure in the book is in the editing. The linking packages are full of half-truths, of points missed and irrelevant asides. And the Cast of Characters at the end is at least as bad. A list of these shortcomings would be almost as long as the cast itself. To give one example from many, one trembles to think what Cobb would have made of the idea that Talleyrand, who was chronically lame, could conceivably have 'slid down the banisters at the Travellers' Club'. The reality is that a handrail was *fitted* to the banisters to enable Talleyrand to haul himself up to the first floor. Of the many misprints the most entertaining is the reference to Ming Baudouin of the Belgians. What makes these mistakes worse is that Cobb's life style was often so chaotic that a full-scale biography could hardly be written; so a genuine, properly edited 'Life and Letters' is what was really needed. A great opportunity missed; nevertheless a great deal better than nothing. Cobb's most endearing comment, while awaiting what might have been a life-threatening operation, was this: 'I have been doing some pretty hard thinking, and it seemed the only thing that really mattered was to have a happy home and family, though of course I do enjoy writing. The trouble is that I am not at all a belonger, and all those others including the vain, self-persecuted and rather unpleasant, are.' Altogether, in spite of occasional *longueurs*, and attention to some matters which by now have lost most of their interest (and which could and should have been editorially pruned) this is a rich feast for anyone who appreciates academic life with all its great virtues and great absurdities.

A Big Noise on the Western Front

M R D Foot

The Chief: Douglas Haig and the British Army, Gary Sheffield, Aurum, 2011, £25.

Professor Sheffield has written an important new life of Haig, which places him in his context in history instead of treating him as a figure in current affairs, judged by the standards of today. This is a substantial revision, for Haig is nowadays portrayed as a sort of monster, dwelling in châteaux far behind the battle, 'speeding glum heroes up the Line to death' in Sassoon's venomous but ill-judged phrase, comfortable

and self-centred while his men endured mud, blood, lice and sudden ends.

One of the many counts now urged against Haig is that he was stupid: as indeed Milner called him in the spring of 1918. Sheffield shows that before the war he had done a great deal to get the army ready for it, at the elbow of the highly intelligent Haldane, then Secretary of State for War; who was notorious for not suffering fools gladly. Similarly, in a much more godless age, it is now held against Haig that he had a young Scottish minister at his General Headquarters, to whose sermons he paid keen attention. Those who maintain this forget that Haig and most of his European contemporaries (on both sides) were believing Christians, attentive to God's word. These are examples of Sheffield's methods of argument, in a clearly written and well-thought-through biography.

Douglas Haig came from the Lowland gentry – he became the twenty-ninth Haig of Bemersyde; the family distilled whisky, and were comfortably off. His father drank too much. He was a younger son, sent to Oxford as a matter of course, who went on from there to Sandhurst, whence he passed out high, into the cavalry. He has, again, been much derided for his faith in the cavalry, after Maxim's gun had transformed its role in battle, but Sheffield is able to show uses for cavalry even on the western front during the great war of 1914-18, and on the Palestine and eastern fronts it was then still often useful. Haig was advanced enough to conceive of all-arms combat, now a familiar concept, in which horsed cavalry could then still play a significant part. He was also, contrary to current belief, a warm advocate both of air power and of the tank.

He had had the usual life of a peacetime cavalry officer in the nineties, broken by active service under Kitchener in the Sudan campaign that culminated at Omdurman, passed the staff college, and was visibly one of the army's brightest stars in the run-up to war against the Kaiser's Germany. Like Kitchener, he foresaw that the war was going to be a long one. He began it commanding a corps under Sir John French (who does not come well out of this book), whom he succeeded as commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France, which he saw through to victory three years later. He was in charge meanwhile of several ghastly battles, in which the nation incurred worse casualties than it had ever met since the Black Death.

After the war he devoted himself to making sure his veterans, especially the disabled, were looked after, and accepted an earldom, but played no part in politics. He died in 1928, aged sixty-six. In his day, Haig was revered; crowds were denser at his funeral than at Princess Diana's. How has he come to be so detested? Largely, because of those casualties; and because the prime minister who was more responsible than he was for most of them, David Lloyd George, put the blame on Haig lest it should be placed on himself. Lloyd George's six volumes of memoirs (1933-6) are crammed with invective against Haig – for whom he could find no replacement. Liddell Hart the military commentator also turned against Haig, and much influenced military historians; and the war poets, Sassoon, Blunden, Sorley, Owen, Rosenberg, Graves – none of them had much to say in favour of the high command, and caught the eye and ear of generations of schoolteachers.

The scholarly balance is now swinging the other way: Haig's reputation is rising again. Sheffield concludes that he was one of the nation's most significant commanders 'and one of the most successful'. His final campaign in Flanders in August-November 1918 was indeed a famous victory, and deserves recall. Sheffield does not pretend he was faultless, but shows also where he shone.

The distinguished historian MRD Foot died on February 18th. We remember with gratitude and affection his brilliant and learned contributions to the *Salisbury Review*.

Brandy Nan

Nigel Jones

Queen Anne: the Politics of Passion, Anne Somerset, Harper Press, 2012, £25.00

The phrase 'Queen Anne's dead' used to be shorthand for a piece of old and stale news fed to an indifferent hearer. It reflected our general indifference towards poor, dumpy Anne, the last of the Stuart monarchs, with her 17 pregnancies, dead babies, wretched health, and tedious boudoir politics. No longer. For upwards of thirty years, historians and biographers have been revisiting and revising their disdainful views of Anne and her short but eventful reign (1702-14), and have concluded, in the words of her major academic biographer, Edward Gregg, that the Queen was a monument of 'Steely integrity and inflexible stubbornness' who was no powerless cypher, but played a central directing role in her tumultuous times.

Now, in a massive but extremely readable new life,

Anne Somerset has set the seal on that revision and presented Anne, not as a dreary drab and her reign as an insignificant interval between the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the long stability of Georgian rule, but as the key player in a dramatically exciting era. Anne juggled with such towering figures as the Marlboroughs, (John and Sarah Churchill); Jonathan Swift, Daniel efoe, Robert Harley, earl of Oxford, and Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke. Brief in duration though it was, Anne's reign encompassed such decisive and far-reaching events as Marlborough's great victories which stopped the expansionism of Louis XIV's autocratic France in its tracks; the Treaty uniting England and Scotland in a single state; surely her most impressive achievement. Without it the British Empire might not have taken off. And the division of English politics into the party system of Whigs and Tories that would endure for the rest of the 18th century.

Somerset's work is, however, a complete biography, not just a history of Anne's reign, and the most significant event in Anne's life occurred before she ascended the throne when she deserted her father, James II, in supporting the invasion of England by the mainly Dutch army of her brother-in-law, William of Orange. Anne's motives were mixed. She was and remained a fervent Anglican in an era when the Church of England was the major force in England's national life, rather than the national joke it has become today. As such she viewed the certainty of her country's forcible re-conversion to authoritarian Catholicism under her fanatical father with utter horror. That horror became complete panic when James's young second wife, Mary of Modena, gave birth of a healthy baby boy who would automatically leapfrog over Anne and William's wife, her elder sister Mary, in the succession stakes to become the Catholic heir to the throne. The future of Anne's beloved Anglicanism now seemed under dire threat.

So dismayed was Anne by the birth of her half-brother that she affected to believe absurd rumours that the child was a changeling, smuggled into the Queen's bed, possibly in a warming pan – and repeated such stories in her letters to her sister in Holland, thus feeding the climate in which William, invited by leading Whig and Tory lords, made his fateful decision to invade and depose his uncle and father-in-law. Anne squared her Christian conscience about giving credit to such porkies by deliberately absenting herself from the Queen's confinement – escaping to Bath to take the waters for her own indifferent health so she could not be in the small crowd who actually witnessed the birth. It is clear, however, that Anne realised that her own chance of succeeding William and becoming Queen would be enhanced by her father's deposition and exile; particularly as her sister Mary, married to the possibly homosexual William, seemed unlikely to bear children. Personal ambition, therefore, conveniently allied to religious conviction, also played its part in Anne's decision to desert James.

Anne Somerset makes much of the drama of that desertion, describing how Anne sneaked down a shabby backstairs in Whitehall palace at dead of night – making a housewifely mental note to have it repainted when she returned, and how his daughter's defection proved the last straw for James – prompting him to flee to France, never to return. Somerset and other recent writers on this episode, such as Maureen Waller in *Ungrateful Daughters* have been notably censorious in condemning Anne's action for 'depriving her newborn half-brother of his birthright'. This overlooks the crucial role played by religion in 17th century England – so difficult to imagine in our secular age. For Anne and her sister Mary, virtually separated from their parents and brought up as Protestants at the insistence of their uncle, shrewd old Charles II, to counter their parents' open and hugely unpopular Catholicism, preserving their Protestant heritage far outweighed being dutiful daughters. The fact that their desertion would make them both Queens of England was merely the cherry on a cake already cooked.

But Anne, it is true, was never very good at family loyalty. She spent her father's reign plotting with her sister Mary against him and her stepmother Mary of Modena; and she spent her sister Mary's joint tenure on the throne with William plotting against them with her new best friend, Sarah Churchill, whom she would make the Duchess of Marlborough. A great hater, Anne despised William, whom she dubbed 'Caliban' or 'the Dutch abortive' and was indiscreet about who knew it – causing a fatal, and final, break with her sister, Queen Mary. Anne's passionate friendship with Sarah was the crucial relationship of her life – far surpassing her blissfully happy marriage with the amiable but vacuous Prince George of Denmark, the author of her unhappy 17 pregnancies. So key were Anne's ties with Sarah that Somerset wonders whether it was a Lesbian affair. However, she acquits both Anne and the hot-bloodedly heterosexual Sarah of any Sapphic tinge, observing that such close bonds without a physical dimension between upper-class ladies were the norm for the time . There is no doubt, however, that Anne's passion for Sarah was real and durable, leading her early on to defy her father's orders to break off the relationship, and later directly shaping the politics of her reign.

The hectoring, domineering Sarah, along with her political ally Sidney Godolphin, Anne's chief minister, effectively ran the home front while her husband, the Duke of Marlborough, was abroad

trouncing the French on the battlefield. It was when Anne's long-tried patience with Sarah's sharp, indeed lacerating tongue, finally wore thin, coinciding with rising popular discontent at the cost of the war both in blood and in treasure, that the petty, squabble-and-make-up playground politics of the Queen's boudoir blurred into the wider politics of Whigs versus Tories at large. Godolphin's coalition of moderate Tories backed by Whigs was ousted by a more solidly Tory administration led by Oxford and the Jacobite-sympathising Bolingbroke intent on getting rid of Marlborough and ending the war. At the same time, Sarah – or Mrs Freeman – as Anne (Mrs Morley) called her in their private code, was displaced by a new, and more flattering female favourite in the Queen's affections, the soothingly Tory Abigail Hill, or 'Mrs Masham' as she was known to her Royal mistress. To Sarah's fury, Abigail was an impoverished country cousin who owed her insinuation into Anne's good graces entirely to the Duchess's condescending patronage.

The Marlboroughs duly fell and retired to their pile at Blenheim Palace, and the Treaty of Utrecht ended the war in 1713. But Anne was worn out bearing dead and dying children – her only surviving son, the Duke of Gloucester, his head swollen with hydrocephalus, died at 11 of smallpox. (Somerset plausibly attributes the demise of Anne's progeny to an inherited genetic condition known as 'sticky blood' and Anne's own ill health to 'lupus'). The Jacobites, still loyal to their kings over the water, gathered their forces for a coup organised by Bolingbroke, the new regime's Tory hard man. Bolingbroke ousted his rival Oxford and was about to complete his coup to prevent George of Hanover from inheriting the crown when the Queen died just a shade too soon. 'My Lord of Oxford was removed on Tuesday, the Queen died on Sunday' Bolingbroke wrote dolefully to Swift as his coup plans collapsed. 'What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us'.

Anne Somerset has written a masterly biography that, long though it is, enthralls on every page. Perhaps I could have done with rather less of Anne's purple prose as she laid out her heart to Sarah – (sadly, the Duchess's side of the correspondence does not survive and we have to rely on her unreliable memoirs for her side of the tempestuous royal relationship) – and rather more of the intrigue surrounding the birth of Britain's system of party political government. Overall, however, this is a fine portrait of Anne and her age, a crucial era in the molding of Britain, and Anne, for all her faults, emerges as our second most important and influential Queen – ahead of Victoria, and only just behind Elizabeth I.

Fossilised Ancestors

Celia Haddon

Survivors, Richard Fortey, Harper Press, hdbk, £25.

On a remote Western Australian beach can be found a shoreline of grey mounds, called stromolites. At a distance they look rather like lumpy pouffes, brown layered mounds with slimy tops. The slime is the growing edge, made up of cynobacteria, living single-cell creatures, that give off bubbles of oxygen.

These are survivors from the Palaeoproterozoic period – 3,500 million years ago. Richard Fortey, the author of *Survivors*, had first seen stromolites as fossils in some Arctic rocks when he was an undergraduate. Now for the first time, he visited their surviving living descendants, the tiny creatures still slowly building up their unglamorous mounds and still fizzing oxygen into the earth's atmosphere.

The living fossil that most of us have heard of is the coelocanth, a fish with stumpy leg-like fins. Its life history dates back to the Cretaceous age, a mere 145 million years ago, and it is a newcomer compared to the stromolites. This ancient fish could only exist in the sea, because the earth's atmosphere had filled up with oxygen some 3355 million years earlier . It was those little stromolite bubbles which did it. They oxygenated our earth transforming it into a habitable place for far more complicated and more glamorous forms of life.

'Time havens' is what Richard Fortey, a paleontologist, calls the places where these ancient life forms still hang on. One time haven is the hidden valley in Australia where the *Wollemia* pine was discovered in 1994. It is a survivor from 90 million years ago, the time of the dinosaurs, and has been dated by the existence of its pollen in fossil form. Indeed, the pollen fossils were known before the living tree itself was discovered.

Survivors is a time travel book, but it is travelling backwards not forwards, and so far back that a million or so years flash by in a paragraph or two. Fossils are the way a species can be linked to the past and given a date. The book starts with the horseshoe crab, *Limulus polyphemus,* which isn't a crab but an arthropod, a round tank-like creature with a hard shell and a rigid tail at the back.

These strange creatures have blue blood – literally. Oxygen in their body is carried not by red iron-based haemoglobin but by blue copper-based haemocyanin, which clots quickly to defend itself from infection. Scientists have now managed to extract the active principle and it is used in human medicine. In order to protect the crab population, there is a 'bleed and

release' programme with the crabs becoming blood donors.

Fortey went to see the mating and egg laying frenzy of hundreds of horseshoe crabs as they swarm ashore in Delaware Bay, New Jersey overnight to leave their eggs in the sand. He also visited the quarry, across the Atlantic in Germany, where a fossil much like today's crab was found in the limestone. The horseshoe crab's ancestors, very similar to today's species, were probably trundling around the seashore some 450 million years ago.

He, himself, is a trilobite man, having studied these extinct sea animals for 30 years at the Natural History Museum. Trilobites, like the horseshoe crabs, wear their skeletons on the outside like a crustacean. They have a tank-like head shield and a three-lobed body. They are contemporary with the horseshoe crabs, which resemble them. There's even a fossil showing scores of extinct trilobites gathering together *en masse*, possibly involved in the same mass mating ritual as today's horseshoe crabs.

'Like a horseshoe crab, a trilobite would surely have contemplated me through compound eyes set within its head-shield: its eyes are preserved in detail as fossils,' writes Fortey, adding: 'So a visit to Delaware is to me rather like a visit to the holy city of Rome to a Catholic.'

His devotion to trilobites is matched by the enthusiasm of other one-animal researchers like Peggy Rismiller, who runs an Australian sanctuary for the echnida or spiny anteater, a warm blooded creature that lays eggs like a reptile but lactates like a mammal. 'I have noticed before how researcher develop a proprietary affection for their animals they know about', he comments.

Rismiller likes to shock people with photos of the four openings found on the echnida's very odd penis. The creature's other strange anatomical features include ear slits instead of ears, spines that are made of, and shed like, hair, and shoulders that look reptilian. In the winter mating season a female echidna is followed by a trail three or four hopeful males. Baby echnidas are known as puggles, and emerge so tiny they weigh only 0.3 grams. This is a wonderful book for weird detail!

Echnidas and their relatives, the duck-billed platypus, go back at least 20 million years. They can be dated that far back by a fossil of a giant platypus. Another fossil, the subject of controversy, may take them back a further 80 million years, making them contemporaries of the dinosaurs. They are thus living links between egg-laying reptiles and young-bearing mammals, with ancestry that may stretch even further back, about 200 million years.

Why do some animals thrive and continue relatively unchanged for hundreds of millions of years, while their contemporaries die out? Some creatures like the mud-living *Lingua anatina,* a creature with two shells or valves, from which a long pedicle emerges to stick to the sediment bottom, live on because their habitat remains unaltered. Throughout ice ages and volcanic eruptions, mud is a constant. As Fortey says: 'Stick-in-the-muds last longest.' Time havens, like the hidden Australian valley that preserved just a few Wollemia pine, may also act as refuges. And perhaps long-lived animals may be able to live out a crisis, though the fate of the woolly Mammoth shows that longevity alone is not always a recipe for survival.

Richard Fortey is an accomplished writer, having won several awards for his books. This is a joyful, witty and learned book. Useful and meaningful photographs help the text even if they are collected together rather than placed throughout the book. Fortey has also had the good sense to give his readers a glossary to help with scientific terms, though to my mind it is still not sufficiently extensive. I had to pause to google a few words as I read. It was worth the effort. I so enjoyed *Survivors* that as soon as I had finished it, I immediately ordered his earlier book. It's about trilobite fossils – what else?

Not Many Dead

Penelope Tremayne

Losing Small Wars, Frank Ledwidge, Yale, 2011, hb £20, pbk £10.

This is in many ways a remarkable book. The range of the author's experience alone would mark it out: he has seen active service in the Balkans, in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere; then, still in Afghanistan, in the setting up and operating of the UN's Justice Development programme: a task that no doubt fell to him at least partly from his previous nine years' practice as a barrister in Liverpool.

Ledwidge is strongly critical, but not of the fighting men. Instead he identifies what he has seen as a blank wall of misunderstanding between politicians and the military. It was not so in, say, the Falklands, to the surprise of many, especially those on the Left; but that was thirty years ago. It was not so in Northern Ireland, whatever lessons from there went unlearned. In other places and campaigns there have been clearly stated objectives, but 'that kind of vision was seriously lacking in the first decade of the 21st century'. And he quotes Colonel Tim Collins: 'Part of the problem was obsequious officers telling ministers what they wanted to hear'.

That generals in a new war always begin by fighting the last one is among the oldest of clichés; the question examined here is 'can they get it right quickly when the vital moment arrives?' Despite their good start the British failed in Basra; by 2004 law and order were disintegrating, servicemen hardly ever left their bases, their efforts were reduced to little more than keeping in communication with each other and access open to the airport. Almost no reconstruction was achieved, and local groups murdered each other continuously and freely, the British apparently turning a blind eye to the process. There was little they could do, for they had not even understood the differences between Sunni and Shi'a, militia and police, religious armed groups and lay ones.

Why did things go wrong? Answers to that question led straight to the basic one: What are we fighting for? In the Dhofar War (Oman 1969-75) the C-in-C's brief was 'To secure Dhofar for civil development': a masterly condensation. Ledwidge commends this campaign for its effectiveness.

Both Iraq and Afghanistan had atrocious regimes; but as the intervening forces have had neither clear legitimacy nor means to install better ones (as Mr Karzai for example is no doubt aware) they can only knock heads together and go away again: a pointless procedure unless a competent government is in place and strong enough to keep control. The incoming military were not to blame for the resultant mess; responsibility lies at the doors of unfit ministers who acted under the spell of that archbishop of the bogus, Tony Blair playing his super-Thatcher part, a war leader. Ledwidge does little or no name-calling but he very clearly outlines the course of events. After some straightforward identification of problems he also offers one or two suggestions for improvements, as all determined critics should. The most striking of these is for the reduction by a staggering amount in the number of senior officers (colonels upwards to the top) in all three services. To help us to clear our minds he supplies comparative figures and related force sizes for other countries, including America and Israel. The difference between these and Britain's is extraordinary. I hope that certain changes are already under way.

Losing Small Wars is written simply and forcibly, without any touch of the condescension which so many modern critics affect. More than any other book I have read for a long time, it reminds me of that classic from between the wars, Julien Benda's *Trahison des Clercs*. It sounds an alarm call of the same kind and, like Benda's, not before it is due. Its author has both fought and worked for many years, in many roles, and probably will now find himself under fire from objectors claiming he is alarmist or plain wrong or even disloyal. I think the book is constructive and that he may well be doing his country a service.

Lawyers' Feast

Mark Watterson

Bloody Sunday: Truth, Lies and the Saville Inquiry, Douglas Murray, Biteback, 2011, £18.99

On the afternoon of 30 Jan 1972, following the re-routing of a civil rights march, armed troops from the 1st Battalion of the Parachute Regiment were ordered into the Bogside area of Derry to arrest rioters. In the space of the next ten minutes twenty-one of the soldiers opened fire, leaving thirteen civilians dead and fourteen wounded, one of whom would die later. Some thirty years later the events of these few minutes would become the focus of the longest and most costly inquiry in legal history.

The immediate aftermath of Bloody Sunday saw almost universal condemnation of the army, and an already tense situation in Northern Ireland worsen. In the House of Commons the Home Secretary Reginald Maudling was physically assaulted by Bernadette Devlin. A month later the IRA bombed the Officers' Mess at the Parachute Regiment's Aldershot headquarters, killing six civilian staff and the regiment's Catholic chaplain.

The Widgery Inquiry set up by Edward Heath exonerated the army. Admitting their firing had 'bordered on the reckless', it claimed the troops had been fired upon first and that some of their victims had been armed. No soldiers were disciplined. The Inquiry's findings were rejected by the victim's families and the republican community, confirming their suspicions of an army and government cover-up.

There things might have festered, until in 1998, prompted by the revelations of an army whistleblower, advances in forensic technology and a desire to move forward the Peace Process, Tony Blair announced the setting up of a new Inquiry under Lord Saville, 'not to accuse', but to establish the truth about what had happened twenty-six years earlier.

The Saville Inquiry was given a wide remit, including the power to call witnesses. Eventually some 2,500 submitted statements, encouraged by the assurance that no evidence given would be used against them in later criminal proceedings. The Inquiry sat first in Derry to hear civilian witnesses, moved to Central Hall Westminster to ensure the safety of the soldiers and other sensitive witnesses and then returned to Derry to hear from the IRA. Most in the last two categories were

granted anonymity and are identified only by cyphers.

Douglas Murray tells the story through its main participants, from those in high position to ordinary people caught up in events, and always with an eye to the absurdities and contradictions inherent in such human drama: the claim that transvestites steal vital documents on the Paris Metro; the QC for the soldiers dashing forward to administer first aid to an IRA man.

Few of the army witnesses featured impress. Those who opened fired claimed to have shot at armed adversaries, yet none of those killed had weapons, with the exception of one victim with nail bombs in his pockets who was hit by a stray bullet. Soldier H, bumbling and awkward in the witness box, but 'almost certainly a killer', is the key to much of what happened on the day, having fired the most rounds, yet his fantastical account, as the author admits, would in any other circumstances be comical:

> Q: Nineteen bullets fired at the same window, at a 50 yard range, would shatter it, would they not?
>
> A: I do not know, sir.
>
> Q: Are you seriously inviting the Tribunal to accept, as a realistic possibility, that nineteen bullets fired at that window would not cause it to shatter?
>
> A: I am stating what I know, sir.

Like a number of the other troops Soldier H has his own version of events and sticks to it. Such testimonies inevitably lead to questions about the nature of memory itself, how it can be corrupted and perverted, embellished and contaminated. Invented stories become real ones, which are stuck to even when shown to be ridiculous and contradictory.

There are glimpses into the world of cloak and dagger operations when members of the Security Services are called before the Inquiry, screened from the public as well as anonymous. The identity of one agent of British Intelligence, codename Infliction, is deemed to be at such risk he is not even allowed to give evidence. A 'deep and significant' informer close to the IRA leadership, something of a bombshell is dropped with the suggestion, plausibly argued, that Infliction may be none other than Martin McGuinness!

The Prime Minister at the time of Bloody Sunday, Edward Heath, appears before Lord Saville offering neither apologies nor admissions of error and clearly determined to defend his reputation. His abrasive clashes with the lawyers get ample coverage and bear out the observation that:

By the time (Heath) came to testify to Lord Saville he had a reputation as one of the most bitter and curmudgeonly men in Britain. When he appeared at the Saville Inquiry in January 2003 it soon became clear he was not as pleasant as he was reputed to be.

No more forthcoming in the witness box, indeed initially reluctant to appear at all, is the Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland. Photographed at the scene on the day, in 1972 Martin McGuinness was a twenty-one-year-old on the run from the security forces. Facing the Tribunal on home turf in Derry, McGuinness is a cagey witness yet relishes the chance to play to a gallery packed with supporters, and at the least provocation to launch into speeches condemning the iniquities of the British.

It soon becomes apparent, despite denials to the contrary, that a 'conspiracy of fear' surrounds McGuinness and anything touching on the IRA, inhibiting witnesses from coming forward. Yet cracks do appear, most significantly regarding the shots fired at the army, making it impossible to maintain the republican myth of Bloody Sunday as a simple case of unprovoked cold-blooded murder. Evidence from civilian witnesses, and members of the IRA, confirm that the army did not enter an unarmed arena. Whether McGuinness himself was armed remains remains impossible to prove.

The verdict however, was never in doubt. As Murray states, 'The Saville Inquiry would not have been ordered if there was any likelihood that a second British judge would come to the same findings as Lord Widgery. The point of the second inquiry was to get a different answer'.

In June 2010 David Cameron admitted in the House of Commons that what had happened on Bloody Sunday was 'both unjustified and unjustifiable', and that members of the armed forces 'had acted wrongly', for which he was deeply sorry.

The actions of some of the soldiers are strongly and justifiably condemned. At the same time it will be difficult for many readers to divorce the events of Bloody Sunday from IRA activities both before and after that date, and not to echo the sentiments expressed by the troops' commander, 'What about Bloody Omagh, what about Bloody Warrenpoint, Enniskillen, Hyde Park, Bloody Aldershot and Brighton?' It is not impossible some of the soldiers could face further legal action; under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement every IRA killer is currently free.

To distill the essence of the Saville Inquiry, its twelve years of deliberations and final report of ten volumes, into such a lucid and illuminating account, and at the same time to make it read like a thriller, is a very impressive achievement.

Tartan Everywhere

James Docherty

To the Ends of the Earth, Scotland's Global Diaspora, 1750-2010, Tom Devine, Allen Lane, 2011, £25

In the last 200 years the population of Scotland has grown from one to five million, but between 1825 and 1936 2.3 million of its inhabitants left for 'the ends of the earth'. No other nation in proportion to its size, has experienced emigration on such a scale. Professor Devine examines the reasons for this, and its effects on the countries the emigrants settled in and the one they left. As an academic in Scotland with an Irish Catholic background, Tom Devine has a certain detachment from some of the familiar pieties of Scottish history. He eschews the 'Burns Supper' view of history and deprecates the populist work of John Prebble and Nigel Tranter. He is scathing about the growth of 'Braveheartierie' in the United States.

The common belief that people were forced to leave Scotland by cruel landlords and by the prospect of starvation is largely false. There were, of course, the Highland Clearances but for many a new life in Canada must have been more attractive than scraping a bare subsistence in the crofting counties. Scottish emigrants were not the 'tired, the huddled masses' of the poem. Most were skilled or semi-skilled and many were white-collar workers. After the Union of 1707 Scotland prospered from the trade in sugar, tobacco and cotton. Wealth from this source helped to finance the development of heavy industry – coal, iron and shipbuilding in the 19th century. That industrial revolution gave employment to many but the rate of emigration actually increased. Why?

Devine believes that much of the emigration was aspirational, the urge to 'get on' in life. An important factor may have been the standard of education. Before the Education Act of 1872, the countries with the highest levels of school attendance in the world were Prussia (where schooling was compulsory) and Scotland. Running the plantations in the West Indies and North America had required a supply of young men who could write, keep accounts and supervise the work of the slaves. Lady Nugent, arriving in Jamaica in 1801, found that almost all the agents, attorneys, merchants, shopholders were from Scotland, and the pattern on the other islands was much the same. Many in Scotland think of the slave trade as an affair of English ports such as Bristol and Liverpool. It is true that few slave ships came to Scottish ports but the author points out that many Scots were involved, directly or indirectly, in the trade. Some of the main slave merchants in London, Bristol and Liverpool were Scottish and thousands of respectable Scots folk invested their savings in these enterprises. At the same time, pillars of the Scottish enlightenment were inveighing against this great evil and, just across the Border, Wordsworth was sweetening his tea with honey to avoid buying sugar.

Emigration from Scotland was not confined to crofters, artisans and clerks; the gentry were also involved. Younger sons of gentlemen in England might hope to marry money but heiresses were scarce in Scotland. The needy sons of lairds found careers in the East India Company and as officers in the Army throughout the expanding empire. Sir Walter Scott said 'India is the corn-chest for Scotland where we poor gentry must send our younger sons'. Victorian Scotland was a rich country. The wealth derived from industry had to be put to work and money was invested in the development of North America and Australia. After the great fire that destroyed Chicago in 1871, the Mayor, the Governor of Illinois and the Senator came to Edinburgh to raise the money for rebuilding their city. Scottish capital and Scottish emigrants were having an influence everywhere, from sheep farms in New Zealand to the icy realms of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose employees nearly all came from the Orkneys.

But what of the land they left? On the last page Devine says cautiously, 'the impact of long term and large scale emigration on Scotland itself is a crucial subject that has attracted little academic attention'. Perhaps it would be dangerous to delve into this subject in an era of political correctness, but in the 1930's the writer and poet Edwin Muir was only one of those who were concerned about the effects of continuing emigration. He said, 'Scotland is gradually being emptied of its population, its spirit, its wealth, industry, art, intellect and innate character. If a country exports its most enterprising spirits and best minds year after year for fifty or a hundred or two hundred years, some result must inevitably follow'. Readers will be struck by the contrast between the account of the energetic characters of the past two centuries and the image of modern Scotland. The roll call of names is impressive: Hume, Adam Smith, Watt, Scott, Burns, Livingstone, Carnegie, Stevenson, Jardine, Matheson..... Today's Scotland gets a bad press. Its vital statistics are depressing: declining industry, too many people dependent on the state, bad diet and poor health. The figures for cocaine drug addiction and teenage pregnancy are among the worst in Europe.

The first Minister of Scotland, turning history on its head, believes that undoing the Union will unleash Scotland's latent resources of industry and enterprise. It may be that an incipient James Watt is waiting in the back streets of Greenock, a mute inglorious Adam Smith in Kirkcaldy; but, after reading Devine, this unit of the Diaspora can't help feeling that ' The Flowers of the Forest are a wede awa'.

Terminator 3

Frank Ellis

Modern Warfare, Intelligence and Deterrence: The Technology that is Transforming them, Benjamin Sutherland, ed, published by The Economist in association with Profile Books Ltd, London, 2011, £15

Modern Warfare is a collection of articles which were first published in *The Economist*. The articles, lots of them, written in the short, telegraphic format favoured by *The Economist* are allocated to five sections: land and sea; air and space; the computer factor; intelligence and spycraft; and the road ahead. Revealed in these short essays are the remarkable effects of the digitization of data on the planning for, and conduct of, war. In a brief historical note it is pointed out that the revolutionary changes wrought by IT played a major role in helping to end the Cold War. Soviet leaders, and not just Gorbachev, eventually realised that IT conferred enormous advantages on Western and NATO armies and that the armies of the Warsaw Pact were lagging behind. The consequences of what this would mean in any conflict between NATO and the Warsaw Pact were brilliantly analysed in General Sir John Hackett's *The Third World War* (1978). Hackett clearly identified Western superiority in IT as a factor in checking Soviet ambitions. The first and overwhelming demonstration of this superiority occurred not on the plains of north Germany but in the first Gulf War of 1991.

One of the big fears for naval planners is the emergence of powerful missiles designed to sink very large warships, especially aircraft carriers. Some of the better known are Exocet (French), Harpoon (American) and RBS-15 (Swedish). However, the one that worries NATO is the Russian anti-ship missile, with the codename Sizzler. This missile can carry a warhead of up to 450 kgs over a range of 300 km. In the final approaches to the target the missile accelerates to three times the speed of sound. The threat to the West posed by these missiles arises from the fact that less sophisticated versions are known to be held by several states including Iran. Infantry warfare is also changing rapidly. Smart camouflage clothing is being developed that adapts to different types of terrain and body armour is becoming lighter. Reconnaissance, that staple of the infantryman over the centuries is also likely to change. An American company has developed a small robot that is powered by biomass which the robot gathers itself. The value of this system lies in its ability to keep itself in the field for long periods and to penetrate remote terrain. There are plenty of civilian applications as well: in forestry and agriculture.

Some of the most revolutionary and widely publicised changes in the conduct of war are taking place in the air, specifically with the use of pilotless drones to conduct reconnaissance and to attack targets with very high levels of precision. Having witnessed such an attack in Iraq, I can confirm the accuracy of drones as weapon and reconnaissance platforms. In one attack Iraqi insurgents had been identified on a roof which they had been using as a position from which to launch mortar strikes. Having carried out their attacks, they strip the mortar down and load the equipment into a white transit van. The surveillance drone tracks the vehicle as it heads through busy streets. An initial request to attack the target is denied for fear of inflicting collateral damage. Permission is finally granted to destroy the insurgent vehicle when it stops in a quiet back street. This is just one example of what can be achieved. Drones will be able to stay aloft for much longer, see more, gather more data and when necessary kill more. The next stage will be anti-drone drones whose primary function is to destroy other drones. The advent of drones may well mark the beginning of a process in which manned aircraft are eventually rendered redundant.

The advantages of computer-driven weapon systems and IT outlined in *Modern Warfare* do not all accrue to powerful states. Small states and terrorist groups which cannot get their hands on some of the more expensive and complicated items can buy or develop some of the smaller drones and weapon systems, missiles that can pose enormous problems for major powers. For example, cyber attacks designed to incapacitate a country's infrastructure are the pre-eminent example of asymmetrical warfare that is readily available to small states or even individuals. Modern post-industrial states are extremely vulnerable. What happened in Estonia in 2007 may well be the first time one state attacked the information infrastructure of another state. A denial-of-service attack was inflicted by a deliberate and sustained overloading of government, media and banking web servers. The most likely suspect is Russia, though whether these attacks were state sanctioned and prosecuted by state agencies or by groups of non-affiliated individuals angered by the decision to move

a Soviet war memorial is not known. However, the efficacy of such cyber attacks was clearly demonstrated.

We can take it for granted that there is no such thing as privacy in cyberspace. Do major software providers offer free updates out of the goodness of their hearts or do they have other motives, such as harvesting personal data about the sites you visit? Companies offering anti-virus security offer the perfect cover for spying agencies such the NSA and GCHQ/MI5 to monitor private communications (and even make some money). Another spin-off currently in the headlines is the interception of mobile phone calls. If journalists have been able to spy on the public with such ease for so long what is GCHQ/MI5 doing with, one assumes, its far more sophisticated equipment? An especially nasty side to such activity is that hacker/computer-infiltrators, government or stateless, are able not only to spy on your Internet access but also to insert material on your computer's hard drive which could lead to criminal sanctions for innocent people. It is only a matter of time before this happens.

One of the most remarkable developments covered in this collection concerns software developed by the Dupuy Institute in the US. The software – The Tactical Numerical Deterministic Model (TNDM) – predicted that Allied casualties in the first Gulf War would be way below those predicted by the Pentagon. The software was right. In the peace mission in Bosnia the software predicted that there was a 50 per cent chance that no more than 17 peacekeepers would be killed in the first year (6 died). TNDM is available for purchase and the most recent price tag is $93,000.

Much of the technological innovation described in *Modern Warfare* has been driven by the need to combat various counter-insurgencies, such as the Intifada, the rise of Al-Qaeda (and imitators), the one in Iraq and currently Afghanistan. This technology not only enhances the flexible response options of major powers and groups of powers but because it is precisely targeted and is designed frequently to monitor and to kill with minimal collateral damage it is technology that can easily be deployed against the civilian populations of the countries that develop it. Small drones that can spy on the Taliban can easily be used to spy on domestic populations in the USA and UK. The dazzling array of drones, blimps, smart munitions, robots and communications technology does make a huge contribution to defeating enemies potential and real. However, technological innovation in the realm of surveillance in all its forms is moving at such a speed that laws needed to protect citizens are lagging behind. When governments have the technology that makes it possible for them to bypass laws, they will flout laws: and they are doing it now.

Royal Durbar

Jane Kelly

A Glimpse of Empire, Jessica Douglas-Home, Michael Russell, 2011, £17

It looks like something from a Speilberg fantasy film; a preposterous golden dome, forty foot high, hovering over a canopy of scarlet velvet fringed with gold. Surrounding it, thousands of troops and marching bands in brilliantly coloured uniforms, beyond them 100,000 spectators including 60,000 Indians sparkling in turbans of green, blue and white. Strangest of all, at the centre of this mile wide amphitheatre sit two glum-looking people dressed for an English coronation, apart from a new foot-high royal crown, emblazoned with 170 diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires. At noon on December 12th 1911, George V, who had been crowned a year earlier in Westminster Abbey, performed the scene again before his Indian subjects, and enthroned himself as Emperor of India. He also took the opportunity to move the capital from Calcutta to Delhi.

On the mile long route to this royal spectacle the King had not cut such an impressive figure. Unlike the Durbar of 1903 when the Viceroy Lord Curzon had ridden in full regalia on an elephant, George, the Emperor of the world, had preferred to travel on a small horse. He'd been eclipsed by Queen Mary, travelling in an open landau adorned by a huge golden fan and gold umbrella. Many Indians thought their King had remained safely in England and sent his wife instead. Among the loyal crowd watching this extraordinary show of imperial grandeur was Lilah Wingfield, 23, the author's grandmother, a beautiful Anglo-Irish aristocrat on the run from the restricted life mapped out for her in England.

Her normal life was rigidly laid out between a grand London house, Holkham Hall in Norfolk with her mother Julia Coke, and Powerscourt Castle in Ireland with her father, Lord Powerscourt. At the royal Durbar, she found herself living with 250,000 others in a tented city. Erected by the British in three months on barren marsh land, it was equipped with its own railway, electricity, postal system, and farms. Lilah lived in part of the encampment of the 10th Hussars, but just beyond she could explore the richly embroidered tents belonging to some of the richest men on earth, India's chiefs, Nawabs and Maharajas. They had names that our grandparents probably knew well; the Nizam of Hyderabad who owned 83,000 miles of India. He had

a seraglio full of tiger skins and prominently displayed portraits of the king and queen. The Gaekwar of Baroda who owned five territories between Bombay and Rajasthan displayed a portrait of Queen Victoria set in diamonds. Lilah saw him decked in pale blue silk and stunning jewels. She was surprised to see men such as the Maharaja of Jaipur sporting a necklace of three tiers of rubies 'the size of pigeon eggs.'

She caught a glimpse of the ruler of Patiala, famous for a necklace insured for ten million pounds. She was not told about his custom of appearing before his subjects once a year displaying a glorious erection, his member festooned with pearls, as he represented the sacred phallic form of the God Shiva; at least that was his story.

In another tent she met the Maharajah of Nawanagar, 'Ranji' as he had been known at Cambridge, where he had become the world's finest batsman. She was also able to find the less ubiquitous Begum of Bhopal, India's only female ruler, in pale blue burka circled with jewels, looking out through tiny slits. When they met her again on the day of the Durbar, the Begum was clad from head to foot in gold, 'like a yellow chrysalis.'

Lilah's private diary, turned into this book, illustrated with black and white snaps from Lilah's photo albums, takes the reader right into the hijinks, gossip and tensions that lasted for that strange and magical week of the Durbar.

'I was overwhelmed by a sense of remove and exhilaration and complete oblivion of everything at home in England' she wrote. For Lilah, the Durbar was more than just a 'glimpse of empire'. She'd fought her mother to go to India, desperate for at least one adventure in her life. The book is equally interesting about her repressed, regimented childhood in Ireland, ruled by nannies and Victorian aunts, seeing her parents for one hour a day. Her mother later abandoned her children altogether as she loathed Ireland.

Getting to India, then travelling on to Egypt was Lilah's bid for freedom. She could hardly have picked a more interesting time to do it. After the Durbar she took the chance to travel extensively in India and Egypt. After a few weeks away she could hardly bring herself to think about Britain.

'It all seems so very far away now,' she wrote. 'I seem to have lost interest in the news from home. I am entirely engrossed in the life out here. It is rather awful that I have become so wedded to India.' But three months after the Durbar, believing she must ultimately play the game, she returned to the grey fog of London, her disapproving mother, and marriage to a Conservative MP.

The book is full of rich detail taken from Lilah's writing and the author's research, from the description of the Royal Pavilion, designed by the Lahore Art School, to knowing that the toffs' blankets were provided by Jaeger, to people in the Durbar crowd, such as a humble Tibetan who had walked for four months to get there, then after seeing the King, went home again the same night. This is a fascinating glimpse of Britain at the apogee of empire, somewhat desperate to please its Indian subjects who were even then moving towards independence. One year after the Durbar, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy who had organised it, was badly hurt by an assassin's bomb. Three years later the world was plunged into war. Both the ships which carried Lilah on her journey were sunk. Thirty years later the Raj was over, the Rajput chiefs lingering in the memory only as names on popular restaurants.

This book vividly recreates that lost world but it was only written by pure chance. Lilah's diary was found in a second-hand book shop in Norfolk, by someone who realised that it was valuable and handed it to Lilah's cousin, the local land-owner, the Earl of Leicester. He gave the book to Jessica Douglas-Home who married it up with her grandmother's photograph albums, to extremely good effect.

Russian Herosim

A W Purdue

Leningrad. Tragedy of a City under Siege 1941-44, Anna Reid, Bloomsbury, 2011, £25

When Anna Reid told people that she was working on a book about the siege of Leningrad, many thought she was referring to Stalingrad. Why is it that a siege which lasted 872 days, during which some 750,000 civilians died of starvation, has never received the attention that has been given to the battles for Stalingrad or Moscow? There have been far fewer studies of the struggle for Leningrad than of the battle for Stalingrad, and in the general consciousness of the history of the war, the siege of the first city that the *Wehrmacht* failed to take, remains, in 'lost in the gloomy vastness of the Eastern Front'.

One reason for this neglect of the protracted siege is that there was no great attack on Leningrad and no spectacular battle, though military historians have been aware of the strategic importance of the city. What took place was a blockade which imprisoned Leningrad's civilians with meagre food supplies. By 15 September 1941, German forces assisted by the Finnish army – for Barbarossa had encouraged Finland to avenge its defeat of 1940 – had completed the encirclement of

the city and Stalin and his generals steeled themselves for an imminent assault. Hitler had, however, other plans. Far from taking the city with ground forces, he had decided to isolate it and starve its population, not into submission, but to death, and his directive to Army Group North of 25 September made his aims clear:

> The *Führer* is determined to erase the city of Petersburg from the face of the earth.

Leningrad was not just a military target, though its annihilation would help a German invasion that was beginning to lose its impetus; its proposed fate was part of Hitler's vast colonial project which combined the genocide of Slavs as well as Jews with a resettlement of 10 million Germans in the East.

Little was known about Leningrad's long agony at the time. Despite its deadly determination to implement Hitler's satanic plans, the Nazi leadership, with a residual respect for the force of the conventional morality it despised, did not broadcast either its intention to destroy entire races, or the scheme that was to be enacted in Leningrad; neither did the Soviet Union wish to publicise its failure to either relieve a major population centre or manage to feed its people. Soviet news broadcasts, 'admitted "hardship" and "shortage" but never starvation', while British and American media, 'parroted the Soviet News bureaux'. As the siege became settled the newspapers and radio broadcasts of the Western Allies gave the impression that by the spring of 1942, conditions had improved and the worst was over. This was far from the truth for in the first months of 1942 deaths had risen to 100,000 a month. Barbarossa may have ground to a halt and the *Wehrmacht* been experiencing unaccustomed reverses, but in Leningrad much less food was available and the death toll was rising.

The populations of besieged cities, bereft of adequate supplies of normal food, have over the centuries exhibited a remarkable if grisly capacity to adapt and survive. In Paris in 1870, rats, cats and dogs were eaten, but in Leningrad people began to eat each other; corpses disappeared from hospitals and cannibalism became a motive for murder.

Reid draws upon dozens of individual case studies from diaries and Soviet records that have become available since the demise of the Soviet Union. They graphically describe how responsibility rests firmly, not just with Germany's Nazi leadership, but also with the *Wehrmacht* which implemented Hitler's orders. Reid is careful not to argue that the mass starvation was as much the fault of Stalin as of Hitler but she concludes that 'under a different sort of government the siege's civilian (and military) death tolls might have been far lower', and a government which cared for the welfare of its citizens could have evacuated most of them before the town was isolated. The reaction of the Communist elite and the army command, whose members did not share the privations of ordinary citizens, to the German encirclement was to exact obedience from the population by terror and fear. The city's defence was at first under the incompetent leadership of Voroshilov, who wasted soldiers' lives in purposeless attacks and then of General Zhukov. Reid is kinder to the man who later became Russia's great war hero – calling his organisation of Leningrad's defence, 'brilliant' – than is Max Hastings, who in his recent, *All Hell Let Loose,* argues that Zhukov's prestige as, in Stalin's eyes, saviour of the city, was rooted 'in failure to understand that it had not been seriously assaulted'. Certainly Zhukov exhibited no greater care for the civilians of Leningrad than his predecessor, but his brutal command of the defence impressed Russia's dictator.

Stalin cared little for the old imperial capital and his opinion of Leningrad was the mirror image of Hitler's, the latter seeing St Petersburg as the city from which Asiatic poison was carried into Europe, while Stalin hated the town as a centre of alien Western influence. Stalin, however, was a greater realist than Hitler and Reid finds no evidence that he had allowed any animosity towards Leningrad to influence his plans for its defence. He just treated its inhabitants as callously as he treated the citizens of the whole Soviet Union. Leningrad's war differed only in the size of the death toll and the extent of starvation from that of the Soviet population, which suffered under the same oppressive regime; 'far from standing apart from the ordinary Soviet experience, it concentrated it in miniature'. Indeed Leningrad's party boss, Andrei Zhdanov was himself a miniature version of his master, Stalin.

Russia's allies did not see it in this way, as they were purblind to the faults of the government, which turned the tide of war against Germany, nor did many of the inhabitants of Leningrad/St Petersburg. The war became, despite the horrors of the Soviet Regime, the 'Great Patriotic War', as Russians identified with the motherland in the face of the German invasion, and, even after the details of the callous nature of those in charge of Leningrad's defence has become known, many survivors are able to adjust their memories to a heroised version of the siege. Reid concludes that: 'Paradoxically, public discussion of the blockade is likely to become franker once the last *blokadniki* have passed away'.

FILM

The Iron Lady

Merrie Cave

Directed by Phyllida Lloyd

The Iron Lady was one of the best films I have seen recently and it should appeal to all shades of political opinion. Meryl Streep's performance was truly mesmerising, for at times Margaret Thatcher seemed to be on a newsreel live in front of me; Streep also caught her heroic spirit. The script was sharp and witty and used many of her own words. I went to see it in Islington, her enemies' spiritual home, not that she ever paid attention to them as she was always gloriously convinced that she was in the right. I expected the Islington audience to show some signs of mild misbehaviour, but once the film began, the crunching of popcorn ceased and Mrs T/Meryl Streep received their rapt attention.

There hasn't been such controversy over a film since *Downfall* showed the last days of Hitler. There were protests outside cinemas in the north and a call for a blanket ban on the film in Scotland. Norman Tebbit said it was a gift to the Left but Charles Moore, firmly on the right, liked it. Max Pemberton in the *Telegraph*, called it despicable, because of the depiction of a frail old lady with dementia. In truth this film should not have been made before her death; there are some scenes, where she hazily remembers her past and sometimes thinks Denis is still alive, which seem exaggerated and a distraction from the main narrative about a unique woman's rise to power. But the dementia is a powerful motif in a film which is mainly about decline and loss. The flashbacks usually work well, giving structure and black humour, which make the film much more than just a straight narrative or a pompous Hollywood bio-pic.

There is no dumbing down here. The writer and director have the confidence to expect that the audience will understand the history of the last fifty years. So the reasons for the Falklands war were not explained, nor those for the Poll Tax riots. Viewers were expected to enjoy identifying politicians of the past like Airey Neave, Norman Tebbitt and Keith Joseph who set up the Centre for Policy studies, a necessary alternative to the unadventurous Central Office.

With a comic touch the film shows how Maggie was remade to change her from suburban housewife into a consummate politician; the hats had to go, the shrill voice modulated by coaching, but the pearls, given her by Denis, remained firmly in place. Denis was wrongly portrayed as a lightweight while in reality he had a razor-sharp intelligence. Their relationship was touching and he believed in women in politics, unlike his fellow members on the Dartford selection board. Airey Neave told her it was not impossible for her to win the leadership: 'If you want to change the party, lead it' – so she proceeded to win the leadership and went on to win three general elections.

We are given a cunning exposition of Margaret Thatcher's behaviour once she had topped the greasy pole, her strengths and weaknesses. The Falklands of course established her leadership and confounded her opponents in the Conservative party.

She often muttered that men lack guts and explained to Francis Pym who was scared of going to war with Argentina that he, coming from a landed background, had never had to struggle for anything while she fought battles every day. One of 'the bastards', as Denis called them, had even called her 'a common little woman from the suburbs'. As the Task force set sail for the south Atlantic, another exclaimed that 'now they could get rid of her'. After her triumph, it was she who got rid of some of them.

It was a pity that we did not see more of the grocer's shop in Grantham and her influential father, Alderman Roberts. As one who comes from a non-conformist background, I admire the values he gave her: brains before birth and character over cash, work before fun. Such homes lack enjoyment and suffer from an irritating moral earnestness but they often ensured that their products were members of the useful awkward squad. Scratch such a person's ancestry and you will often find a nonconformist or a recusant Catholic.

Her downfall was shown on screen as the result of her intransigence and poor man-management in cabinet. Alfred Sherman, one of her most able advisers and speech writers, thought she could have won a fourth term if she had not neglected her power base in the Conservative party. I don't think this would have happened; her time as a dominant world leader had given her opponents time to regroup and she had caught a little hubris, with which all successful leaders become infected sooner or later. The end of the Iron Lady,

admired abroad particularly by the US and the Soviet Union, brought an ideological vacuum which still remains to be filled. The Conservative party suffered a nervous breakdown by their failure to come to terms with the Thatcher legacy. By turning their backs on her, politicians like Cameron cut themselves off from their past, favouring managerial politics instead of her conviction politics which had served the country so well; as she remarked in the film, 'politics used to be about doing something, now it's about being someone'.

Her 'assassination' was treated very sympathetically with Denis persuading her to give up and not to fight on. A good test of a somebody is how they treat underlings and show kindness to them. She always remembered birthdays and asked after families; this trait was shown well in the send off – by the Downing Street staff. The film reminded me of the wonderful romance of her life which we hope will be remembered by future generations. Here was a woman from the provincial lower-middle class, without connections rising as an outsider to lead the Conservative party which had personified social class and male dominance, and yet retaining her feminine humanity. It was also a Greek tragedy, for her time in office came too late; it was an interlude and now we are back where she started. Perhaps those who wish to dance with joy on her grave will think better of it after seeing this film. We will not see a leader like her again.

Mr Valiant for Truth

Ray Honeyford
1934 - 2012

Readers of this *Review* will be sad to learn of the death of Ray Honeyford whose articles, appearing in the first year of the *Review*'s publication, had so many far-reaching consequences for everyone involved. Ray Honeyford was an upright, conscientious secondary-school teacher, who believed it to be his duty to prepare children for responsible life in society, and who was confronted with the question how to do this, when the children are the offspring of Muslim peasants from Pakistan, and the society is that of England. Honeyford's articles honestly conveyed the problem, together with his proposed solution, which was to integrate the children into the surrounding secular culture, while protecting them from the punishments administered in their pre-school classes in the local madrassah, and opposing their parents' plans to take them away whenever it suited them to Pakistan. He saw no sense in the doctrine of multiculturalism, and believed that the future of our country depends upon our ability to integrate its recently arrived minorities, through a shared curriculum in the schools, and a secular rule of law that could protect women and girls from the kind of abuse to which he was a distressed witness.

Everything Ray Honeyford said is now the official doctrine of our major political parties: too late, of course, to achieve the results that he hoped for, but nevertheless not too late to point out that those who persecuted him and who surrounded his school with their inane chants of 'Ray-cist' have never suffered, as he suffered, for their part in the conflict. Ray was eventually forced to take early retirement from his job, and the teaching profession lost one of its most humane and public-spirited representatives. This was one example of a prolonged Stalinist purge by the educational establishment, designed to remove all signs of patriotism from our schools and to erase the memory of England from the cultural record. Readers will be grateful for the life of this exemplary, heroic and profoundly gentle man, who was prepared to pay the price of truthfulness at a time of lies.

Roger Scruton

Art Theft

Andrew Wilton

Art Theft and the Case of the Stolen Turners, Sandy Nairne, Reaktion Books Ltd, 2011, £20

On Friday 29 July 1994 I was down in the country, recovering from a minor operation. A colleague at the Tate Gallery, where I was Keeper of the British Collection (works of art from 1500 to the early 20th century), telephoned to let me know that two very important late paintings by J M W Turner had been stolen from an exhibition in Frankfurt-am-Main.

The exhibition was Goethe and the Visual Arts, and Turner's pair of pictures, *Shade and Darkness* and *Light and Colour*, painted in 1843, made explicit reference to Goethe's theories of colour in relation to the emotions. The organising institution was the Schirn Kunsthalle, a place without its own collection that showed temporary loan exhibitions. Shortly before the Tate sent them off to Germany, due checks having been carried out as to the security and conditions of the Schirn, I had raised their insurance valuations to £12 million apiece.

The Schirn staff were, of course, devastated and greatly embarrassed. The theft appeared to have been an inside job: someone either on or connected with the staff had allowed two men to remain in the building after closing time. They had removed the Turners, along with a small work by Caspar David Friedrich, and driven them away in a van that had been noted by a passer-by. Although the men were relatively small-time Frankfurt thieves, the pictures then disappeared without trace.

The Tate placed the operation to recover the pictures in the hands of its new Director of Public Programmes, Sandy Nairne, formerly at the Arts Council and the ICA. He had known the Tate's Director, Nicholas Serota, as a colleague for many years, and was one of a number of new staff employed by Serota to take over what had formerly been curatorial responsibilities: 'in charge of all the exhibitions and programmes', as Nairne puts it. Thus, he would devise loan exhibitions to regional centres which the curators would then be asked to organise and catalogue, without having been consulted as to their practicability.

So, now, Nairne took over the campaign to recover the Turners with virtually no reference to the Turner curators. In an early phase, a sting was arranged by which a Nigerian impostor claiming to be in possession of the pictures was to meet 'me' (actually an undercover police officer named Peter, whom I never spoke to) for a handover. He was duly arrested. Thereafter I was informed of no developments, barring the odd infrequent and minimal 'update'.

Secrecy and circumspection were, of course, of the greatest importance. The value of the two pictures in the criminal underworld, Nairne explains, would be calculated at 10 per cent of their insured value. He worked in conjunction with the Director and a small subcommittee of the Trustees, making use of the specialist knowledge of senior paintings conservators, Alexander Dunluce and, later, Roy Perry. This team liaised with the Metropolitan Police and their maverick Polish undercover investigator Jurek Rocozsynski (known as Rocky), and, to begin with, loss adjusters and insurers who initially offered a $250,000 reward for 'information leading to the recovery of the paintings'. After a few years of fruitless endeavour, the insurers relinquished their title to the works, which in 1998 the Tate, with advice from the Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson, bought back from them for £8 million. 'This arrangement,' Nairne tells us, 'was approved by the Treasury, the Charity Commission and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and', he adds, 'a sum of £7 million' was 'used for the purchase of the Tate store in Southwark.' When he wrote about the case in an autobiography, *The Unconventional Minister*, Robinson said the money went to the new Tate Modern gallery at Bankside; a statement that Nairne contradicts. But he goes on to say that the original £24 million insurance money had grown with interest to £26 million, and that this money, 'badly needed' by the Tate, would be 'freed up' by the gallery's purchase of title to the Turners.

There ensued a nail-biting story of clandestine meetings, collaboration with a Frankfurt lawyer, Edgar Liebrucks, who undertook to treat with the gang in possession of the pictures, and of course with the German police and legal authorities. 'Whatever you say about Liebrucks,' Rocky opined, 'he is a superb lawyer.' Liebrucks demanded money to enable him to negotiate with the crooks. For a fee of '10 per cent' – ie 10 per cent of the total value of the pictures, to be 'allowed as a payment for information' – he was to offer 'an ice-breaker' of DM 1,000,000. In a judgement of the Chancery Division dated 28 April 2000, the

Honourable Mr Justice Ferris ordered 'the payment out of the funds of the Turner Bequest .... of ... DM 10,000,000 [equivalent to £3,000,000] inclusive of the DM 1,000,000 paid under the order of the Charity Commission dated 31 January 2000, to the persons holding the paintings in exchange for their return'.

The Tate held long and anxious debates with the Charity Commission and other bodies in England to ascertain that this procedure was legal, and managed to get official approval for it. By this time Rocky was no longer with the Met, but being paid independently 'on a percentage basis' as an intermediary. The mechanisms of the banks themselves, both in England and Germany, proved unreliable under the pressure of these transfers of funds, and there were delays for which, Nairne tells us, he tended to get the blame. The 'ice-breaker', we are assured, was simply to pay Liebrucks for his trouble in conducting negotiations with the criminals. This seems to contradict the terms of the Chancery Division order just cited.

At odd moments the press got hold of fragments of the story and splashed them in ways that demanded damage limitation measures. Nairne's part in the whole saga was indeed heroic, though he recounts the details with a kind of breathless objectivity. He had to make a long sequence of hard decisions, sometimes at speed, and there were moments when his remarkably steady nerve was tried to the utmost. He and his colleagues at one point surmised that Liebrucks had possession of at least one of the pictures and was suppressing this information. The Balkan crooks who were dictating terms were hardened pros, and there was always the danger of actual violence. This side of things was of course emphasized when a television programme, *Underworld Art Deal*, was made of the story in 2005, with Nairne doing all the explaining.

After many sordid – or, perhaps, thrilling – episodes the pictures were recovered: first one, *Shade and Darkness*, in July 2000, the other a couple of years later: it was handed over on 16 December 2002. At this point Liebrucks received DM 5 million that had been agreed by a legal contract. My colleagues in the curatorial department were not informed of these developments until the recovery of both pictures was announced to the press on 20 December 2002. (Interestingly, the transcript of the press release in Nairne's book gives the date as 2000.) Although I feel that to have kept the curators most concerned in complete ignorance for the duration of the campaign was both unprofessional and discourteous (not to say insulting, as it implied that we were not trusted to keep the secret), I am glad that I was not called upon to make the crucial decision, that a huge sum of money should be handed over by a national institution, whether to a gang of thieves or to an intermediary negotiating with them, with no clarification as to whether any part of that sum was actually designated 'reward'.

The Tate's response to press questioning was to state that the overall cost was 'just over three and a half million pounds'; that 'the investigation has been supervised throughout by the Metropolitan Police and the German authorities'; that no ransom or reward had been paid; and that 'the money was related to the Turner Bequest until the paintings were recovered.' It added that 'it was never Tate's intention to fund its capital projects with this money...'; but in the end the rest of the money would be used 'as a capital sum for the benefit of Tate's collections'.

Although the question seems to have been settled at this point, the second half of Nairne's book is a lengthy discussion of the ethics of it all. By way of illustration (or perhaps distraction) he includes a survey of the principal art thefts of the twentieth century, starting with the *Mona Lisa*, taken from the Louvre in 1911, and going on to Dr Rose Dugdale's massive theft, for the benefit of the IRA, from the Beit Collection at Russborough in 1974, the multiple theft in 1990 of Vermeer, Rembrandt and other masters, not yet recovered, from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, the taking of Munch's *The Scream* from the Oslo National Gallery in 1994 and the theft of Leonardo's *Madonna of the Yarnwinder* from Drumlanrig Castle in 2003 – this last safely returned and seen in the Leonardo exhibition in London this winter. There are common features to all these thefts, but each is nevertheless unique in its combination of circumstances and motives. The Tate's use of tortuous reasoning to justify the payment of large sums of cash for the return of the Turners has indeed been unique, and it is fairly clear from Nairne's extended arguments that he still feels uneasy about it.

That deal has been done, and we can at least be grateful for the presence again in London of two supremely important pictures by Turner. The question that rumbles on, however, concerns the uses to which the Tate has put the extraordinary windfall that came its way as a by-product (of my revaluation, I might modestly point out). As Nairne admits more than once, the Tate's overriding concern throughout was the establishment of 'Tate Modern' in the disused power station at Bankside, and as soon as a sizeable sum became available it was spent on buying and converting the building in Bermondsey that became the Gallery's new store. This was not announced publicly at the time.

What was made public was the plan to allocate the £15-odd million that ended up in the Tate's pocket at the end of the day. There had been ongoing debate as to the ownership of this huge sum, and after further

discussions with the public bodies responsible for these decisions, as Nairne reports, 'the Charity Commission decided in 2007 that the Tate could use the remaining insurance monies for purposes related to the Collection as a whole, rather than exclusively to the Turner Bequest.' There was still, surely, a presumption that a sizeable proportion of the money ought to go to the Turner collections, the Clore Gallery in which they were housed and displayed, and the staff who ran it, formulated exhibition programmes and produced catalogues for them? All this constituted a formidable chunk of the Tate's responsibility to the public.

I was one of several 'Turner specialists' summoned by the Director to hear the good news of the agreement to this funding. We were told that £1 million would be allocated to completing the catalogue of the Turner Bequest's works on paper – though not in book form, only electronically. I asked whether a further, say, £5 million might be ring-fenced for the purposes I have just outlined. No more has been heard on that subject, but a large new building is to be erected beside the already enormous 'Tate Modern' power station at Bankside, and no doubt large sums will be needed for that. Meanwhile the body of curators of Turner, as well as of Constable, Hogarth and the rest of the early masters, is being severely curtailed.

Nairne, who makes no bones of having wanted the Directorship of Tate Modern, and was well qualified for the post, didn't get it, and has been, since November 2000, Director of the National Portrait Gallery. One can't help feeling that after his noble work on behalf of the Tate, and taking the brunt of the attack in the television film, he rather deserved that reward.

Andrew Wilton is Honorary Curator of Prints and drawings at the Royal Academy.

Something to get Cross Over

Gerald Place

What future for serious music? How do we encourage new audiences and how do we persuade a new generation to appreciate a piece of music that lasts longer than three minutes or has anything but the most basic harmonic language?

Certainly serious music has always been the preserve of the older generation. The once-thriving network of chamber music societies who presented a subscription series of recitals is moribund; and those I have performed for recently had few audience members under sixty. The same is true of the average choral society. So have things changed? In many fields people just do not seem to be growing up any more, and this is especially true of music. (If TV soaps now seem to be 'continuing drama', what do you call a cycle of Shakespeare history plays?)

The lines between popular culture and high art have been blurred, and in many respects this is very healthy, but the net result is that popular culture is now accepted as of equal validity. Once those who espoused rock music as teenagers tired of it and looked for something with a little more depth. Now they continue as rockers to the grave, ratified by the huge amounts of space devoted to rock and pop in serious newspapers. Now if you see the word 'music, unqualified, it means some kind of pop; otherwise the uneasy adjective 'classical' has to be added. The BBC website has a whole section devoted to music: but you have to go to the Arts section to find 'Classical Music'.

I should be looking for answers not just complaining, but I can't help thinking of the Victorian philanthropists (and many generations of wealthy patrons before) who saw espousing the arts of all kinds (and funding them) as an entrée into a world of sophistication enjoyed previously only by the upper classes. Money doesn't buy you taste, but in those days money bought them opportunities to support and mix with those who could develop their artistic palates because they had aspirations.

Various attempts in 2011 to bridge the gap between these musical worlds, though laudable at first sight, seemed to have achieved very little. We have had the *Classic Brit Awards*, *The Nation's Desert Island Discs*, *Pop Star to Opera Star*, and most recently Radio Three's *Light Music Weekend*. So little confidence does the record industry have in the draw of serious music that they changed the name from *Classical Brits* to *Classic Brits* and made the central item a turn by the cast of *Les Miserables*. The award for Artists of the Decade went to the group *Il Divo*, *Classical Artists of the Decade*. All these claim to make serious music more accessible and bring us to the dreaded word 'crossover'. Does anybody actually cross over, or do they just get mired in some industry-generated pseudo-classical music?

I took part in a radio discussion a couple of years ago, and was roundly informed by an industry supremo that it was the crossover projects that funded more serious music and I should shut up and be grateful. We then considered two nominees for the best vocal recording category. One was an album of popular songs and arias with orchestra by Andrea Bocelli, the other a recital of Bellini and Rossini with piano by Luciano Pavarotti. The presenter boldly asserted that there was no contest: the Bocelli disc had an orchestra so must be preferable. Pavarotti displayed an impeccable sense of style and lyrical vocal quality in unusual but winning repertoire. However he was by then yesterday's man and not aggressively marketed; 'Classical Music' is, of course, anything with an orchestra.

So much of what is marketed as 'serious music-lite' is of relatively poor quality. Why should those whose tastes quite legitimately do not extend much beyond 'these you have quite liked' be fobbed off with sub-standard music-making? The Radio Three light music weekend was on the whole a delight, and it was fun to hear *Devil's Gallop* and *Coronation Scot* again (both cracking radio drama themes in their day). Many pieces were in shiny new recordings by such outfits as Ronald Corp's New London Orchestra, and were clearly prepared and recorded with as much love as a Mozart Symphony, but many of the performances sounded tired and under-rehearsed.

The ITV Sunday night phenomenon *Pop Star to Opera Star* has now had its second run. So little confidence had ITV in the draw of any kind of opera in the first season that the distinguished tenor Rolando Villazon, who clearly knows his business, had to be balanced by Meatloaf, who clearly didn't. In this series one singer made a hugely creditable stab at one of the Queen of the Night's arias from *The Magic Flute,* top Fs and all, but was voted off by the public, presumably because she was too much like the real thing and such talent had to be slapped down.

I listened to Radio Four and *The Nation's Desert Island Discs* and wondered how serious music would fare. There were six classical discs out of the eight and the remaining two tracks by Queen and Pink Floyd. The most popular choice was *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughan Williams (presumably influenced by the Classic FM play-list) and Beethoven was the only non-Brit. But this is the choice of the Radio Four listenership, probably the same people, in age, who turn out to most concerts. At least with one exception the performances were of the highest calibre.

How do we counter the way marketing is cheapening the middle ground? If you can manage *Il Divo*, how about a real operatic ensemble (*Figaro, Rigoletto?*). If you can cope with Katherine Jenkins then how about Sarah Connolly (and in the right key). As for *The Three Tenors*, Rossini wrote a fabulous trio for tenors in *Armida*, but did we hear it? No, merely arranged pot-boilers. Andrea Bocelli is only 'The Fourth Tenor' because the marketing men say so (ask a tenor!). André Rieu's pick-up band is selling tens of thousands of CDs of repertoire the Vienna Phil have been playing so much better for decades. At least the worst excesses are exposed from time to time: a recent *X-Factor* competitor was revealed as playing along to a commercially released CD, which only came to light when the string quartet in question recognised their own performance!

Of course performers should make music accessible but we don't have to resort to that current leveller, 'inclusion'. Valiant efforts have been made down the years (remember *André Previn's Music Night* on BBC2; more recently, Lesley Garrett fronted her own programme; Sutherland introduced a children's opera programme in the 70's. The period instrument Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, despite their frightening name, have been packing younger audiences into late night concerts at the South Bank, leavening the fare with chat and drinks in the auditorium, and perhaps this is the way forward, but many also found the presentation patronising.

Big screens have been used in concerts: an innovation which allows the audience to see soloists in close-up (both vocal and instrumental) and perhaps more importantly the conductor's face, normally invisible in the conventional concert-hall. This is the influence of television but none the worse for that. BBC 4 has brought us excellent documentaries by Simon Russell-Beale and the recently knighted Anthony Pappano. Big screens have also brought opera to large open spaces, notably Trafalgar Square and Canary Wharf in London and these have certainly brought new audiences to opera. Cinema screenings of operas from the Metropolitan Opera have been getting remarkably good attendances, and are clearly an excellent use for the often deafening hi-fi sound systems installed these days

So in 2012 all is not lost. We have the cultural Olympics and a classically-trained animateur, Gareth Malone, got to number one in the pop charts with a choir of military wives over Christmas. Such briefer pieces will always have an audience, especially with the ever-shortening attention span of the population, but however hard we try we can't make the *Jupiter Symphony* last only two-and-a-half minutes. Classical music just isn't like a pop single and never will be.

Gerald Place is a singer and director of The Gesualdo Consort

IN SHORT

Too Nice To Be Tories? Anthony Scholefield and Gerald Frost, Social Affairs Unit, 2011, £10

When Theresa May, at the Conservative Party Conference in 2002, comprehensively destroyed the image of the institution she was supposed to be representing, a trapdoor to obscurity did not open up beneath her. Instead, it was the first step on a journey, which this book expertly charts, which has exalted her to a Cabinet made up of those walking oxymorons, the modernising conservatives, headed by a Prime Minister who increasingly appears to be relying on Nick Clegg to rescue him from having to be conservative.

For those puzzled as to why we have a government so apt to overturn its own policies, from relatively trivial matters like school sport and forests to the vital reform needed by the NHS, at the faintest suggestion of opposition, Scholefield and Frost have compelling answers. They show how David Cameron and his team decided that the future of the party lay in the pursuit of the centre ground in the mistaken belief that it was 'nice' and therefore popular – a common quest for the mainstream political parties, increasingly encouraged to think that way by the BBC, which celebrates diversity in everything but opinion and uses the phrase 'insufficiently centrist' as synonymous with lunatic fringe. They relied on a brace of opinion polls, here shown to be flawed, which claimed that the traditional Conservative brand was toxic.

Cameron 'projected the views of a relatively small metropolitan group on to the electorate as a whole' and the traditional supporters of his party were treated as being of no account, catastrophically as it turned out for his hopes of gaining an overall majority. For while all three major parties clung together on a middle ground the size of a postage stamp, the ignored were not content to assume, to paraphrase the old 70s T-shirt slogan, that 'Whoever You Vote For, The Liberals Always Get In'. Instead they found they had other options, principally UKIP.

So, while Cameron and May's greatest achievement may prove to have been the reintroduction of Heathite managerialism in all its grey glory, others may step forward to make a more robust case for the policies on Europe, the NHS and immigration needed by all, rich and poor. And what, if political debate must be conducted in nursery language, is 'nasty' about that?

Brian Eastty

Stephen Dykes Bower, Anthony Symondson, RIBA Publishing, 2011, £20

When I was assistant curate at Oldham Parish Church in 1973, I was taken by its celebrated vicar James Bentley to see Dykes Bower's restoration and adornment of St Paul's, Salford. This is a work of quite astonishing beauty and, following our visit, we speedily commissioned the architect to re-order and re-decorate St Mary's, Oldham.

Dykes Bower was for twenty-two years surveyor of the fabric at Westminster Abbey, restorer of St Vedast's, in the City of London and renovator of the high altar at St Paul's cathedral. Dykes Bower was a sort of one man St Pancras station, flamboyant, exquisitely Gothic with extraordinary flair and dash. The good Lancashire burghers on St Mary's parochial church council were doubtful about the enterprise and some thought we were getting a bit above ourselves in hiring such a distinguished craftsman. But Bentley's vision prevailed and the transformation of our church's dowdy interior was nothing less than spectacular.

The history of church architecture in the 20th century has not, on the whole, been very encouraging. The drab hand of modernism, intellectualism and the construction of what I believe they call 'spaces' owes more to ideological prejudice and the devil than to spiritual inspiration. A symptom of our contemporary degeneration, not just in architecture but in all artistic creation and even in decoration, is that it must reject beauty. To praise something as gorgeous today is to employ an expletive.

And they put upon him a gorgeous robe. And yet, paradoxically, we imbibe any amount of kitsch. It seems that we have a disjunction of judgment, for while popular art – that oxymoron – may be as crude, blatant and phantasmagorically banal as you can think, yet 'serious' art must be severe and unadorned. It has always been a battle between the Roundheads and the Cavaliers.

Most modern artists are without talent. This is not a view based on ideological prejudice but on the simple observation that these allegedly creative people are not craftsmen. When it comes to it, they can't do it. Like Damian Hirst and his rank of Mephistophelian creeps, copyists and renegades, they hire apprentices to do their practical work for them. And it remains dirty work, nonetheless.

Dykes Bower stands for something above all this.

He stands for the embarrassing notion, perhaps apprehension: beauty. 'O gold interior, how long I have begotten thee'.

There is no worship without worth. And nothing worth without work. Let's sack the fashionable frauds and get back to the craftsmen.

Peter Mullen

The Secret Life of Bletchley Park, Sinclair McKay, Aurum Press, 2010, £20 hb, £8.99 pb

Britain has long had a secret service, and this was formally organised before 1914, sending out agents and intercepting messages by post, phone, cable or radio. In 1916 my grandfather, who was in the Post Office and used Morse to send telegrams, was called up and sent to the Western Front, to listen to the planes of the German air force. Each side knew that the other would be listening, so messages were coded, and sections set up to decode the intercepts. After 1918 such work was much reduced, and attention concentrated on the Soviets until Nazi plans became obvious.

By 1938 it was clear that a much larger decoding section was needed, and that it should not remain in London, so the head of MI6 arranged to buy Bletchley Park, a large country house that was empty. The Poles knew that Germany threatened them, and were trying to break German codes. They obtained an early version of the Enigma coding machine, so when Germany and the Soviets both invaded, the Poles shared their information with Britain and France. The Enigma had three or more rotors, each with 26 positions. As each letter of a message was typed, the rotors were moved round. There were therefore millions of combinations. Possible combinations were tested automatically, with electromechanical devices (bombes) and later with the first computers, developed by Turing and others with radio valves as switches.

Together with technical approaches, thousands of staff had to be found while keeping the recruitment process secret. Many were selected during the normal call-up to the services, but people were needed who had particular skills or were very clever. The few known to me included future professors of Greek and philosophy, and a vice-chancellor. They were usually found by personal recommendation, often from university tutors, and those who were selected were sworn to secrecy for many years.

Sinclair McKay's book describes the work at Bletchley, but gives more space to the personal lives and leisure of those who worked there. They worked hard, mostly on shifts, but found time for an extensive social and cultural life. Most staff were forbidden to discuss their work with anyone outside their own hut or section. World War II seemed long enough, but would probably have been two years longer without Bletchley Park.

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