The
Salisbury Review
The quarterly magazine of conservative thought

Winter 2012
Vol 31 No 2

£4.99

Contents

In future subscription payments by cheque should be sent by post to

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5 Turnpike Court, Woburn Sands, Bucks,
MK17 8UA

Changes of address or other enquiries should be sent to the same address or by phone to
01908 281601

Credit card payments by phone remain the same
0207 226 7791
or
01908 281601

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Until the seventies, if an Irish politician said something the Catholic bishops disapproved of he was destroyed in the pulpit. The church's hold on Irish politics, based on sexual guilt, was absolute. Until it was unmasked as a haven for paedophiles it was both the country's conscience and its second government. Now the BBC, the self appointed conscience of Britain's political left and likewise Britain's second government, has been brought down by the same scourge.

For decades the BBC has ruled public opinion in Britain. It trades not on sexual guilt but on the myth of absolute equality; of culture, origin, intelligence, sexuality, talent, anything where one individual has an advantage over another. According to the myth such differences do not exist unless society puts them there. They must therefore be eliminated.

Therein lies the power of absolutist doctrines. Their impossibility of achievement means that everybody is made to feel guilty, and it is on guilt that both the nineteen-seventies Irish Bishops and today's BBC apparatchiks have fed. It fills purses; the bishops through their collection plate, BBC celebrities from the compulsory licence fee that funds their astronomical, often 'tax-efficient' salaries.

By constantly censuring politicians' speech the BBC has ensured that in the pursuit of absolute equality millions of foreigners were allowed to settle here without the consent of the native population. Thanks to the BBC the idea has gained ground that even to question immigration is racist. Politicians who do so risk a Star Chamber enquiry on *Today* or *Newsnight*. As a result they are extremely wary of discussing it. The same goes for gay marriage, Sharia courts, opening the doors of our universities to the stupid over the clever, the payment of enormous sums in public benefit to the work-shy and a general clamp-down on free speech.

While there are many sins against equality, racism is the left's version of original sin. Large-scale immigration is seen not as a problem but a solution, a political medicine to cure inherent white racism. If certain rights such as freedom of speech, habeus corpus or privacy are lost, that must, like the side effects of a powerful medicine, be endured. It is why such a disproportionate number of BBC programmes are either on the subject of race, or include mention of some superior aspect of black over white culture. The Corporation is trying to redeem us.

But if equality is to be absolute it has to be universal. A tragic consequence of the Corporation's racial obsession has been its denial of the African holocaust. Millions of lives have been lost on that continent in the last five decades to civil war, starvation and genocide. But because the BBC could not possibly admit there were circumstances in which a black culture was inferior to a white one it has been forced to largely ignore them. Not to do so would undermine the case for absolute general equality. The result has been censorship. The corporation hesitates to report such tragedies, or if it has to only briefly, and will only dwell on them at length if whites can in some way be implicated. It is why the recent massacre at a South African mine, perpetrated by a black government, was quickly pushed off the headlines, in contrast to the huge and continuous coverage of the Sharpeville massacre, lasting years, when a white government was in power. This denial, repeated again and again in the last half century, has left blood on the corporation's hands.

Then came Savile. There is an irony in paedophiles being the cause of the fall of the BBC in England. But abusers know that organisations with a lot to hide will hide them. Added to this was the arrogance of absolute conviction. BBC executives, like Irish bishops considering their brimming collection plates, felt that as they were the sole repositories of truth they were obliged to carry on whatever scandals might be going in the organisation's murkier corridors and anyhow with business being so good, why pack up?

The BBC thinks it can survive Savile, but it is mortally wounded. It will limp along for a few years, but one scandal will uncover another and people will simply stop believing. Readers of this journal should rejoice. What the post-BBC world will be like we cannot tell, but it cannot be worse than we have endured: the destruction of the political order before our eyes.

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The Book of Jobs

Matthew Walther

Every current opinion poll suggests that the most important issue to American voters in the presidential election is jobs, or rather, the supposed dearth of jobs. Now setting aside the fact that I have never believed it a legitimate duty of government to secure employment for citizens, I take issue with my countrymen's jobs obsession on the grounds that I do not believe that it is difficult to secure gainful employment in this country – at least, not if one does not demand higher than median wages, health insurance, two weeks of paid vacation, and so on. Every café or diner, every petroleum station or convenience store that I enter seems to have in its window a sign advertising at least one full or part-time position. Outside these businesses I have occasionally found young people (that is, people my own age) waving signs emblazoned with the slogans of the Occupy Movement: 'THE 1 PER CENT SOLD OUR JOBS' read one of them which I saw a few months ago. I asked the young woman holding it whether she had noticed the sign behind her in the window of a diner, which announced that the owners were seeking to hire a waitress. The restaurant, I pointed out, does a roaring breakfast trade. Apparently this young Occupier thought my question impertinent, for she began to shout obscenities at me. I quietly said that I was sorry if I had offended her and walked into the diner. From the window I noticed her lighting a cigarette.

My encounter with this young woman serves as a kind of metonym for much of what I think is wrong with the United States. For one thing, she smoked, despite both her being (I must assume) unemployed and because these days a pack of cigarettes costs well over $7. Now I realise that cigarette prices are inflated due to unreasonably high levels of tax and (being a more than occasional smoker myself) sympathise with those who complain about having to pay such large sums in order to pursue a habit that American politicians seem to want to discourage but not have the courage to make illegal. I do not extend any sympathy towards those who continue to smoke even though they cannot afford to do so. Until fairly recently, I was an undergraduate: I have gone, more times than I should like to admit, without one or more meals or paid my rent a day late in order to ensure that I was 'in smokes'. Yet if I were without income of any kind, I do not doubt that I would give up smoking altogether, at least until my financial situation changed for the better.

Also evident in this brief exchange was the casual obscenity that is now so marked a characteristic of what H L Mencken once presumed to call 'the American language'. Presented with a fact that seemed to call into question the substance of her protest, my would-be waitress responded with, *inter alia*, two verbs in the imperative mood followed by a reflexive pronoun. Apparently asking me to perform a physically impossible act was easier than considering the possibility that she might have been wrong.

Far more disheartening, however, than the four letters in the second verb she used were the twenty-one letters (and one Arabic numeral) on the sign she was carrying. The sign was meant, I take it, to invoke one of the most common themes related to jobs buzzing around in the toxic ether of our national discourse: their supposed export. Left-wing commentators have repeatedly accused Mitt Romney of 'shipping jobs overseas' during his tenure at Bain Capital. Whenever I hear this phrase, I involuntarily summon forth an absurd mental image of Mr Romney packing up a 'job' (which for some reason always appears as a pink rubber disc) in one of those special square-shaped, plastic-lined yellow envelopes used to send vinyl records by post, laboriously copying out in his uneven calligraphy a Chinese postal address, stamping it, and shipping the now job-filled mailer off to East Asia.

The counterpart to the story of Mr Romney's heartless shipping away of jobs while at work in the private sector is, of course, that of President Obama's apparent eagerness to create them while he is President. It is, you see, the President's job, or at least that of his administration, to create jobs, much in the same way that it is Santa Claus's job to create toys for well-behaved children. Picture it: Mr Obama, bearded, red-suited, glancing down through spectacles at his interminable list: 'Ah, yes, one *pro bono* attorney spot for Lindsay, one marketing director of a new social networking startup posish for Heather. Two, no, strike that, three, yes, *three* brand new cosy public sector jobs for Dylan, Skylar, and Jaspal!'

One job for which I am sure that the young woman I encountered might qualify is the Episcopal priesthood. To say that the American branch of the Anglican Communion is facing a crisis would be a cruel understatement: hundreds of thousands of

Episcopalians have swam the Tiber or marched to Constantinople in the wake of the consecration of Gene Robinson, a divorced open homosexual, in 2009, and thousands more who chose to remain Episcopalians placed themselves voluntarily under the authority of Nigerian bishops. Three leading liberal Episcopal seminaries have closed in recent years due to a decline in vocations. What's that you say? You're not sure you believe that Jesus was really the Son of God? You are already ordained as a Zen Buddhist? Your background is mainly in oceanography? *Pas de problème*. Indeed you have a good chance of becoming the Church's presiding bishop.

Still, the life of a clergyman, or, I suppose I should say, *clergyperson*, is not for everyone. Calls for the federal government to create more jobs *ex nihilo* will probably not cease anytime soon. To those who advocate Keynesian public works spending on Rock and Roll Halls of Fame or bringing broadband internet to communities of two Social Security eligible persons per square mile, I would like to offer a counter-proposal: the erection of massive sandstone statues in rural areas of our western states. Imagine: the Great American Desert home to painstakingly done likenesses of, say, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Associate Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, and pop diva Lady Gaga, five hundred feet tall, impossible to miss for miles around. Rough beasts whose hour has come round at last indeed! At least archeologists in four or five thousand years might believe – mistakenly – that we were a very serious people.

Matthew Walther is an editorial intern at The American Spectator.

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Taking a Fatal Liberty

Guy Stagg

There were a lot of new tribes at the Conservative Party conference this year. Take the Free Enterprise Group, which campaigns for deregulation and lower taxes. Or Conservative Voice, which champions small government, individual aspiration, and re-shaping our relationship with Europe. Then there's the Cornerstone Group, promoting faith, flag and families. And there's the Bright Blue, Deep Blue and Blue Collar movements; not forgetting the 40 group, the 301 group, and, of course, the 2020 group. Indeed every Tory tribe was represented except one: the libertarian wing of the Conservative Party. But even though it's kept quiet, these days most Tories are closet libertarians too.

There is an official Libertarian Party in British politics. But all the ambitious ones are Tories. In a way the Conservative Party is where they belong. It has always been a grand coalition: Thatcherites and Wets; modernisers and traditionalists. The Right has been a home to classical liberalism for more than a century, giving it rocket boosters in the Eighties with neoliberalism. This turned Hayek and Friedman into the modern heavyweights of conservative thought, with Robert Nozick looming somewhere in the background. It's no surprise that the next generation want to take this a step further, confident that government can always be smaller and markets can always be freer.

Libertarians believe that political systems should exist to promote the freedom of the individual. They reject coercive government, arguing that power must instead be handed down to the people. Thus the state exists only to preserve national security and the rule of law. Naturally this encourages a strong undercurrent of anti-authoritarianism, and a rejection of most inherited forms of moral teaching. Beyond that, although diverse interpretations exist, the most popular strain of libertarianism is economically conservative and socially liberal. In other words, governments ought to tax less, regulate less, and have less say over how people live.

Tory MPs are often grateful for their more libertarian colleagues. They bring a bit of Fight Club to the party, quoting Nietzsche and reading works of political philosophy with 'Anarchy' in the title. David Willets, the Universities Minister, has pointed out how many young people come to conservatism via libertarian

thinkers. Meanwhile, the libertarians' uncompromising approach can wow in debate, and by pushing further and faster they can form a vanguard for conservative arguments, as they did when pumping-up the case for cuts before the general election. So it's little wonder how prominent libertarian conservatives have become, whether fearless MPs from the 2010 intake such as Dominic Raab, radical backbenchers such as Douglas Carswell, or supersonic columnists like Allister Heath.

Libertarian opinion-formers enjoy a strong following in the caffeinated worlds of political blogging and student activism, and impress on Radio 4 or Sky News when debating against a more conciliatory position. The argument for libertarianism is a seductive one as well. It is based on a re-imagining of the political spectrum, with a line drawn between absolute equality and absolute liberty. While the Left pushes towards the former, the Right reaches out for the latter. Freedom becomes the value that Conservatives prize most highly; indeed, freedom is the trump value, because it makes all other principles possible. In contrast, balancing liberty with looser ideas like fraternity, responsibility, or, God forbid, the Big Society, seems timid and compromising.

Dan Hannan, another impressive member of the party's libertarian wing, has argued that the difference between conservatives and libertarians is academic. Actually, it is fundamental. Conservatives believe that time teaches, and that society should value traditions and institutions because they preserve these lessons. If freedom is the ultimate aim, then those institutions and traditions must be cast off. To be free is to be forever beginning, to act without the weight of the past. Although Hayek argued that the rule of law and voluntary association should fill the space left by a retreating state – hence his high esteem among many on the Right – the anarchic tendency of libertarian politics makes such an ambition naïve. Libertarianism may be thrilling, but in the end it defeats the impulse to preserve.

The Republican Party increasingly proves this incompatibility. Candidates for the presidential election had to define themselves in relation to the Tea Party and Ayn Rand, and thus ideology began to push out pragmatism. (The failure of Romney may well intensify this process.) What's more, the relationship between ethics and economics has been corrupted on the American Right. As David Brooks has written of his own party: 'economic conservatives have taken control. Traditional conservatism has gone into eclipse.' The economic thinking that Brooks condemns is the idea that if a free market is the fairest way to distribute goods, then a totally free market is the embodiment of fairness. But markets are not a moral mechanism. Such an abdication of ethical responsibility is alarming.

America has a frontier tradition of resisting tax and government intervention, giving libertarianism a surer grounding in the political discourse. The danger in this country, for the Conservatives, comes from another direction. Prioritising individual liberty undermines the one-nation model of government. Libertarians imagine each of us as separate nations, and islands at that. But one nation, in the Tory sense, is the duty to preserve the unity of the country, and the coherence of society within it. This is the very role that Ed Miliband is attempting to claim for the next election. Jon Cruddas, the man in charge of Labour's policy review, has even admitted that Miliband's language was adopted to exploit David Cameron's willingness to appease the 'extremist' economic liberals within his party.

Labour has understood what Tories seem slow to admit: that libertarianism is a wrecking influence on the Conservative Party. There is a reason it has such a strong constituency among adolescents and academics. At best it is a dogmatic and heartless philosophy, appealing most to those in a limbo of arrested development, a never-never land untroubled by council budgets, community jobcentres and parish fêtes. Responsibility for those around us becomes lost to the cult of the self. At worst libertarianism gives ideological pretensions to base appetites, intellectually sanitising that which is selfish and amoral, and so letting middle-aged men dress their fondness for vice in the language of liberty.

David Cameron presented himself as an opponent of libertarianism in his 2008 conference speech. 'Freedom', he suggested, 'can too easily turn into the idea that we all have the right to do whatever we want, regardless of the effect on others. That is libertarian, not conservative – and it is certainly not me.' If the Conservatives want to govern for the entire nation, the Prime Minister must re-discover this identity. This means embracing the Aristotelian self: understanding people as social animals, defined by their public interactions. You can celebrate the individual, while recognising that alone we are incomplete.

But this is all quite abstract, mostly articulated in the cuddly, communitarian rhetoric that libertarians so effectively demolish in debate. To overcome that threat, politicians will need something a bit punchier. There are two opportunities here. The first is the appetite for moral language that has spread across the political spectrum. Take the Harvard philosopher Michael Sandel addressing the last Labour Party conference, or the adoption of measures of well-being by the Downing Street policy unit – freedom is increasingly an inadequate ethical model. The idea of the individual as the locus of all moral agency, an idea that became

popular under both Thatcher and Blair, has had its day. Libertarians hold on to this idea more strongly than anyone else, and it is a weakness rather than a strength. Secondly, politicians should not be ashamed to argue that the individual does not always know what's best. This sounds like the founding tenet of the nanny state, but it need not be. Parliament as much as the public sector is a recognition of this fact. The structural genius of Parliament is not just that it once limited the self-serving ambitions of the King, but that to this day it curtails the self-serving ambitions of its members, and even those of the myopic, me-centred electorate. Which is why Britain supports parliamentary sovereignty, not popular sovereignty.

The Conservative Party must realise the profoundly un-conservative consequences of pathological individualism and hysterical meritocracy. Otherwise libertarians will not simply take over the party, they will also take it apart. Tories need a theory of government and the state that balances the Left's faith that it can always be spread, and the libertarian faith that it can always be shrunk. They should put forward a robust vision of government as limited and yet valued. Libertarianism is fundamentalist – the public sector will never be small enough – and this ought to be countered with pragmatism: defining the role of the public sector, and then standing up for it. The state can smother society, but it can strengthen it too.

Guy Stagg works for the Daily Telegraph.

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Gross National Happiness

Jane Kelly

In the small dark temple, a large golden Buddha smiled enigmatically down. Around his feet were bottles of whisky, sweets and flowers, gifts to the monks who live there. Beside me pilgrims spun prayer wheels and threw hollow wooden dice at the statue's feet to read their luck. I stepped forward to the sound of bells, bowed low and a teenage monk whacked me over the head with an ivory phallus.

I stepped out into the sunlight reflecting that Bhutan was one of the oddest places I'd ever been. A giant cockroach with curling antennae began trudging up my arm. After an initial scream I put it carefully on to a fig tree. The monks around me, aged between eight and thirteen, shrank back but looked impressed.

'You are being visited by a friend who is dead,' their teacher told me gravely.

This strange, magical place was known for centuries as the mysterious mountain kingdom of Shangri-la. Its exoticism remains intact because Bhutan was sealed to outsiders until 1974. TV and the Internet arrived in 1999, but it still protects itself fiercely against the outside world.

Immigration is banned and locals are obliged to wear traditional dress, yet the country is modern in many ways; water is the main source of power, farming is organic, tobacco and plastic bags are illegal, and they are determined to get the greatest good for the greatest number.

On April 2nd Bhutan presented the UN with its proposal for Gross National Happiness (GNH) to replace the global obsession with economic growth. 'GNH is about everyone being happy,' said Rinchen, our guide, dressed in his traditional Gho, a short grey kimono, with the addition of trainers. 'Perhaps we are unique as a nation because we are not greedy. Having just enough for your needs and a good environment is all that's required.'

He was right, they are unique. That was obvious as soon as we drove through the 'dragon gate', from the hell that is west Bengal. If you can't get on one of the few flights to Paro, Bhutan's only airport, you have no choice but to drive from India. I haven't been to India for twenty years so landing in New Delhi I was surprised by the lushly carpeted Indira Gandhi airport. When I was last there you waited for your bags in something like a shed, the heat from the pavement blasting in while thin old men with long beards stood staring mournfully at the conveyor belt, waiting to claim their pitiful bed rolls or possessions tied up in blankets. Or perhaps just to stare longingly at other people's possessions.

All that has gone. Now everything is cool and efficient. Outside there is no sign of the bulky old Ambassador cars that used to help block the roads, even the tuk-tuk has gone, replaced by sleek new white 'Tata Indica' taxis. But as we pulled away toward our hotel, through a vast new concrete road network of bridges and dual carriageways, I saw whole families living under those bridges, and on the rubble-strewn concrete between roads. There were white-haired old

ladies sitting in dignified poses on piles of refuse, while tiny children with matted hair stood motionless on stick legs watching us zip by.

Those people have been thrown on a rubbish dump because of Caste – what else could be the explanation in a city which is so rich, in a country with a booming economy?

After hours battling in the dark fighting with Tata trucks for a share of the massive craters in the Indian roads, we slipped through the dragon gate into Bhutan, a much poorer country; yet suddenly everything seemed fresh, safe, clean and quiet! You hardly hear a car horn.

If India is young and vibrant, Bhutan is a place for the middle-aged and contemplative. I sat near the gate. watching women in long skirts called the kira, silently circling clockwise around a vast, endlessly turning prayer wheel. This quiet prayer and the houses all shaped like pagodas gave a strange feeling of removal to a remote world.

Not that Bhutan is without excitement. Bhutanese are quite keen on the carnal variety. On our second day we saw our first 'wall willie' on the side of a small house, which doubled as a wine lodge. Giant painted penises often appear on walls, some adorned with ribbons, others coiled by dragons; a few have eyes, most have alarmingly hairy testicles. The penile cult was started by Drukpa Kunley, 'Guru of 5,000 Women' and Bhutan's most popular saint, born in 1455. A Rasputin or Savile of his age, he travelled the country with the motto 'Happiness lies below the navel', bringing enlightenment to virgins with his 'magic thunderbolt'. It was a replica of his 'thunderbolt' that struck me on the head in the temple. It's believed to impart fertility and childless couples flock to the shrine. Paradoxically this magical real world is quite ready with modern solutions. There is free health-care for all and along the narrow winding roads graced with colourful prayer flags, pink rhododendrons, and prayer wheels, turned by waterfalls, we saw clinics advertising birth-control. Keeping the population small is seen as a key issue for maintaining the happiness and well-being of Shangri-la, and they aren't sentimental about it.

'We do not have any guilt about what we do', Rinchen told us. 'We do everything for the greatest good.' Along the road we encountered numerous checkpoints, where lines of tousle-haired Indians, known as 'southerners', were queuing hoping to enter paradise.

The original Bhutanese arrived mainly from Tibet in the 9th century. Their language is descended from old Tibetan, but when Tibetan refugees escaping Chinese oppression began to arrive in the 1950s, they were given a limited welcome and by 1958 immigration was banned. Since the immigration Act of 2007, safeguards for naturalisation and citizenship remain largely absent: applicants can be rejected for no reason at all.

In the 1970s large numbers of Bhutan's Nepalese neighbours started arriving as Nepal began to collapse. By the 1980s they represented one third of the kingdom's population. Bhutan responded with a 'one nation, one people' policy that bolstered the indigenous majority, emphasised the need for a single language and encouraged the wearing of the national costume. Many Nepalese refugees ended as illegal immigrants in refugee camps where they remain to this day. Several thousands of them have recently emigrated to the US, Norway and the UK. Nepal has not taken any back. 'They know they never belonged to this country,' says Prime Minister DorjeeThinley. 'They are refugees not of Bhutan, but of the ecological degradation, political upheavals, economic deprivation and insecurity in Nepal.'

Bhutan does not admit any of those problems; instead it provides a unique solution to modern ills by fusing tradition and innovation: while it is a secular state, the biggest Buddha in the world shines down over Thimphu, the capital, which looks more like the set of a Gilbert & Sullivan opera than a modern city. Most buildings are pagodas built on high mud foundations, almost everyone is in national costume and trousers are banned in official buildings.

But it is a modern place; Tuesday is car free, except for tourist buses, there are no annoying traffic lights and if you want to smoke you have to do it secretly behind the bike pagoda.

The 'Tiger Pub' was a dark hole with a sign over the bar especially for English tourists, saying, 'No Credit'. We tried a rich and sweet Druk 1100 beer. Whisky, called after various kings, sells for between £5 and £15 a shot. Bhutan for all its gross national happiness sadly has no word for 'Cheers'.

The food for visitors is dull. In one of the best restaurants we received a disappointing selection of curried dishes and red rice. Visitors rarely get to try

suja, butter and salt tea, zaw, a kind of roasted rice, yak sausages or fat pork with turnip leaves. This may be due to a misunderstanding as the Bhutanese try to anticipate foreign taste. In the Phuntso Pelhri Hotel, meaning 'Place of great contentment,' breakfast consisted of dissatifying lumpy porridge, baked beans and cold chips. I wondered whether to tell them that chips are the one thing we in the West never, ever eat for breakfast. Not wanting to offend such well-intentioned people I restrained myself. It was a good job. Since then I have been told they do eat chips early in the morning.

The Tigers Nest is perhaps the apogee of Bhutan's attempts to integrate their culture with modern tourism. Bhutan's most famous monastery clings to a cliff face 900 metres above the Paro valley. According to legend, in the 8th century Guru Rinpoche flew to this site on the back of a tigress to destroy a local demon. He meditated there for three years, three months, three days and three hours, creating a *ney*, or holy place. A notice at the base tells locals to wear national dress only, and once you are on the ascent you are a pilgrim not just a tourist. The ascent takes at least two hours. I tried to climb the sandy path on the cliff edge in sandals because of the heat, but quickly realised I needed good boots, and a fitter body. I recovered at Uma Paro, Bhutan's only luxury hotel. Guests have included the King of Norway and Leonardo di Caprio.

'This is the place you need after a long, hot drive,' said Kara Fox, the manager. She showed me around a lavishly appointed gym.

'Not many guests use this', she said, 'they are already too exhausted'.

I soaked my aching muscles in a hot stone bath, lying in hot water laced with Himalayan salts, under a layer of nasturtiums and leaves. When I struck a gong a hot stone rolled down a chute, released from tongs held by someone behind a screen.

I lay there in the dark, sipping ginger tea, the lights of Paro city glittering below. I pondered the tension between the expectations of rich capitalists and authentic Bhutan culture. In their restaurant, Bukharu, named after a local wood-burning stove, we tried pumpkin tortellini and roasted seafood. We might have been back in London. Prawns are imported from Bangkok and beef comes from Australia. Those air miles didn't sound very sustainable. Will conservatism and tradition overcome modernity, or are the credit card and the tourist bus invincible? It will be some time before we know the outcome.

Jane Kelly worked for the Daily Mail *for 15 years as a leading celebrity interviewer. Among her subjects were; Hilary Clinton, Jack Nicholson, Michael Portillo, and Arthur Scargill.*

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A Passion for Bankruptcy

Christie Davies

Whenever politics is allowed to trump economics the result is calamitous. The present severe international economic crisis stems from two pieces of inept meddling with the market economy in the name of the pursuit of equality and peace. I refer to the American sub-prime mortgage scheme mandated by the US Congress; and the creation of the Euro. These are merely the worst and the most recent; Britain has a long history of similar idiocies.

Handing out mortgages to people with inadequate incomes and without assets was not a scheme thought up by American bankers and loan agencies but was forced on them by legislation. They were stuck with a mandated liability that they then wrapped up in a poison sandwich and sold on to foreigners whom they knew would be unaware of the insanity of America's 'progressive' law-makers. The American bankers' duplicity compounded the problem but the original poison was put there by politicians in the US Congress and it is they who poisoned the world economy. The motive for their villainy was the usual one – 'a passionate commitment to equality'. It had been alleged that the reason that fewer blacks and Hispanics than whites and Asians owned their own homes in America was racial discrimination by mortgage lenders. This was one more 'anti-racist' lie. If the allegation had been true, then the default rate for whites and Asians would have been higher than for blacks and Hispanics because the former would have been more likely to be granted mortgages when their economic circumstances did not justify it. In fact the default rate was very similar for all of these groups because the lenders were only concerned with the economic

circumstances of the borrower. Discrimination costs money and no financial institution wants to lose money. The reason blacks and Hispanics got fewer mortgages was because they earned less, saved less, had more insecure jobs and had no assets for collateral.

The private lenders were now instructed by the government to lend to people in these bad economic circumstances so that all could 'own' their own home, regardless of whether they could afford to. Home ownership had become a right, enforceable in the courts. A new breed of lawyers wheeled in the sky, including Barack Obama, who, acting on behalf of disgruntled black or Hispanic paupers whose mortgage applications had been declined, made a good living suing mortgage lenders who were reluctant to comply. It was the American dream turned nightmare. The homes that earlier generations of relatively poor people had worked hard and saved hard to acquire had become handouts for the indigent through forced loans.

Discrimination costs money and no financial institution wants to lose money. The reason blacks and Hispanics got fewer mortgages was because they earned less, saved less, had more insecure jobs and had no assets for collateral.

Behind all this lies the inane ideology of that darling of the 'liberal' intellectuals, John Rawls. For most of us justice means getting your just deserts but for Rawls it meant that no economic policy is just unless the poorest segment of society benefits from it. What this means in practice is that so long as this group ceases to be 'excluded', in this case from home-ownership, you can recklessly risk everybody else becoming much worse off. Even those who got the easy loans are now worse off, for their homes have either slumped in value or been repossessed. Everybody loses: that is what real equality means.

Equality is one of the two rhetorical trump cards played by progressives. The other is peace. Who could possibly be against it, even when its pursuit leads to conflict, dishonour and economic ruin?

At the core of the ideological justification for the manic drive for a United States of Europe is the claim that it will bring peace to a continent that suffered two devastating wars in the twentieth century, brought out by national rivalries. The corruptly self-interested European unifiers who peddle this nonsense probably do believe it. As usual such politicians are anachronistically seeking to remedy today a problem that has long disappeared.

The French fear of an over-mighty Germany and the German fears of their own aggressive past that drive Franco-German and thus EC policy are absurd. Power in Europe after 1945 shifted to the United States and the Soviet Union with their huge armed forces and nuclear weapons. France and Germany are petty players and a Germany rushing to close down its nuclear power stations will never again be able to threaten anyone militarily. The Germans can no longer rattle the sword, only the money-box.

The irrational French fear of Germany stems ultimately from their humiliating defeat in the war of 1870, declared by Napoleon III, a would-be Napoleon I, which led to the French losing Alsace-Lorraine and to the unification of Germany as a state that was bigger, economically more advanced and far more powerful than France. There was now no chance that a satisfied Germany would again invade France or seek French territory; but the French wanted to seize back Alsace-Lorraine and sought an alliance with Russia, which made World War I inevitable. After that war France again tried to contain Germany by creating new artificial states in Central Europe and the Balkans, cobbled together from disparate peoples that would form a 'little entente' following the lead of the France that had created them. In particular Yugoslavia, an unstable aggregate of mutually-hating groups, was cobbled together as an instrument of French foreign policy. Yugoslavia was a kind of mini-EU, an entity possessing sovereignty that lacked legitimacy or loyalty and which, like the EU, was doomed rancorously to fall apart.

The final act in this French farce was the inclusion of Italy and Spain in the Euro-zone in order to reduce the clout exercised by Germany. The German economists, bankers and civil servants could see quite clearly that creating a monetary union out of such utterly different economies would lead to disaster; the recent release of German government papers confirms this. But the German politicians wished to placate France after the re-unification of Germany had resurrected the old French fears of an over-mighty Germany; this led the rulers of Germany, against the advice of their own officials, to agree to include these large, weak and inflationary economies in the single currency zone. The decision has led to economic ruin and created new hostilities and tensions, yet the EU response has been to cling ever harder to the idea of monetary union and to

add to it European central control of banking and of fiscal policy. They have made an economic desert and they call it peace.

Peace in Europe depends entirely on NATO not on the EU. When fighting broke out in Yugoslavia the matter had to be settled by the US air force after French incompetence and Dutch cowardice had led to the massacre at Srebrenica in Bosnia. But because of the resentment by EU officials and French politicians of a NATO in which America is the biggest player, the myth still prevails that the EU on its own could maintain peace in Europe – if only there were closer unity. Monetary union and fiscal union are as much a means to this end as the attempt to create European armed forces, which is why they are being relentlessly pursued in the face of all the economic evidence.

We are in no position to sneer at their idiocies, for politics has often driven economics in Britain as well. The decision to enter the Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1990 was done in the interests of foreign policy – of being good Europeans – and against the better judgement of the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Norman Lamont. The currency speculators saw through this piece of foolishness and sold pounds at the artificially high exchange rate dictated by the ERM, knowing they could buy them back cheaply later. Britain threw six billion pounds into trying to prop up the pound within the ERM, much as the Eurozoners are doing now to keep the Mediterranean countries in the Euro. The attempt inevitably failed but at least it kept Britain out of the Euro, for which entering the ERM was a preparation.

We are in no position to sneer at their idiocies, for politics has often driven economics in Britain as well.... The post-war policies of equality, namely over-full employment and high state spending on welfare had by the 1960s made Britain utterly uncompetitive in world markets.

Britain had made a similar mistake before. The post-war policies of equality, namely over-full employment and high state spending on welfare, had by the 1960s made Britain utterly uncompetitive in world markets. We had to devalue, but Harold Wilson was afraid of losing face internationally as well as within Britain and blamed the 'Gnomes of Zurich' for the weakness of the pound. He borrowed and borrowed and poured money into propping up the pound and inevitably failed. He even tried to stop British citizens travelling abroad by imposing very heavy restrictions on how much money people leaving the country on vacation could take with them. Devaluation was forced upon him because in the end economic facts always defeat political wishes. Wilson then made his famous mendacious remark, 'The pound in your pocket has not been devalued'. But anyone who bought imported goods or travelled to another country now paid more – their pound had been devalued and their pocket was smaller. The underlying problem then, as with Mediterranean Europe today, was a lack of productivity and excessive government borrowing; inflation fuelled by equality. Devaluation was and is a temporary solution but nonetheless an essential one. Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal need it today but EU politics denies it to them.

The moment of truth for Britain was the principled resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer Peter Thorneycroft in 1958 and with him the rest of his Treasury team, Nigel Birch and Enoch Powell, all of whom could see that Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's wish for ever-increasing government expenditure and low interest rates was bound to lead to economic disaster. It did. Politics cannot defy economics. Macmillan's policy was driven by his memories of very high unemployment in his shipbuilding constituency of Stockton-on-Tees in the 1930s and by his Keynesian delusion that stoking up overall demand by running a deficit was the cure. The real problem was that the old heavy industries of the North were obsolete. The only solution to Stockton's economic woes would have been rapid and massive British rearmament, which was also the only way in which Hitler could have been deterred from going to war. Building warships, tanks and bombers does wonders for heavy industry, but the pacifist leadership of the Labour party and the Peace Pledge Union stood in the way. And, of course, in the absence of armaments appeasement is inevitable.

And so history repeats itself. No one wants war. No one wants high unemployment or poverty. But that does not alter the fact that the irrational pursuit of equality and 'peace' in the face of economic reality is the cause not only of the present crisis but also those of the past.

Christie Davies is a former Wrenbury Scholar in Political Economy at Cambridge University

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Eleven Plus – Holding Back the Tide

Myles Harris

I'm going to destroy every fucking grammar school in England.

Anthony Crosland (1918-1977) Labour cabinet minister, educated Highgate and Trinity College Oxford.

One early February morning in 1952 I joined a long line of children filing into St Tuck's state primary school. A notice in big black letters on the gates announced 'Grammar School – Selection Examination'. We were led into a classroom filled with row upon row of wooden desks, each with a number. There were two sorts of children, ones my mother called 'tykes', mainly from St Tuck's, and quiet, serious-looking children in uniform holding pencil cases. Unlike today when only the rich can afford to educate their children, they came mainly from tiny private schools whose fees were still within reach of parents of very modest means.

We passed St Tuck's every day. Although not big – after my school it seemed enormous – its most frightening characteristic was its air of anarchy. Having created the welfare state the authorities were starting to recognise the value of schools as holding pens for the working classes. Advanced ideas on discipline were starting to be deployed, which meant hardly any.

The 11-plus had been kept going to restock the professions, but it was only temporary. Once the country was sufficiently recovered from the war, a decent education would only be offered to the wealthy or well-connected. The Marxist millennium – large profits and immense influence for the rich, dross for the poor – can only be achieved if the working classes are kept firmly in their place.

When we were late for school, and passed St Tuck's walls just before nine, we could hear its howling mob being called into class. At St Tuck's the howling continued even when the children were in class. It only faded when you passed out of earshot. When you returned in the afternoon it was still going on.

'Do ye hear that?' my mother would ask.

I would nod miserably.

'If you don't work, that is where you will end up, a corner boy with lots of corner boy friends.'

St Tuck's was even more terrifying inside than from the street. Boys fought each other for desks, egged on by huge girls laughing and shouting encouragement. The children from private schools, clutching rulers and pencils, stood, still and terrified, watching.

A weak looking male teacher and a small mousey woman eventually got everybody seated. A tall St Tuck's boy with spots shouted at a friend sitting next to him.

'You goin' to that there grammar school in Brisel Jake?'

'Not if I blamed have aught to do with er.'

The room fell about laughing, but it was forced and frightened. I looked at Jake from under my hand. He was huge, with a wide, stupid face. It was dangerous even to think about him, let alone catch his eye. The weak man and the mousey woman came down the rows of desks with piles of papers on their arms, putting one on each desk. There were whistles and shrieks as the paper was read. Then a mumbling, frightened hush fell. Here was the power of the word.

Half a century later, the 11-plus swept away, the word no longer protects us from Jake. His shouting face now appears on every TV screen, his opinions pandered to as if they are foundations of wisdom, and there are always lawyers at his elbow to protect his rights. Universities providing remedial writing and arithmetic now offer Jake degrees so he need never feel discriminated against. Soon Jake will be given rights to Oxford and Cambridge.

There were questions on meaning: 'what is the opposite of synchronise?', on grammar: 'Fill in the relative pronoun in the following sentence: 'That is the coat ..... my brother took away', and a test of comprehension from 'Bleak House'. Then an essay. 'Describe an incident in your last holidays'. It added, 'You have two hours to complete all questions'.

I wrote about the night just before Christmas the previous year when our next-door neighbour jumped in front of the little train that went back and forth across the field in front of our house. He was a kind rather weepy old man who lived next door to us and took tablets for nerves. He trembled all the time and spent hours digging the same spot in his garden. He was a grey colour.

One night just after we ate, as my mother was settling in for an inquest on my homework, there was a knock on the door. Two of the local farmers were outside holding Tilly lamps. Behind the roar of pressure jets came the soft murmur of west country accents. Our trembling neighbour was missing. Could we telephone the doctor? My mother went to telephone, my father to fetch a lamp from the cider house. I ran outside into the lane. A line of lights was moving across the field.

Half an hour later the doctor's Riley drew up in our drive. He asked my mother if I could take him across the field to the railway. I went ahead of him, down the dark lane opposite our house. In the distance the lights, which had been spread out, all came together at one spot. The train had stopped at them. I knew this was something I must not see. If I did I would not sleep for months. I ran home.

Half an hour later the doctor came back. I expected him to look frightened, but instead he asked my mother what we were doing for Christmas and took a mince pie and a tiny glass of sherry. Later one of the village boys told me that our trembling neighbour had lain right across the line and the train had taken off his head and feet.

My pen laboriously scratched this story. I mentioned the mince pies because I thought it would make the examiner laugh. I did not write how impressed I was that the doctor could eat mince pies after seeing somebody in three bits. Doctors did not seem to be frightened of anything.

I looked up. Around me the working classes sighed and yawned. I did not want to ever see them again, especially Jake. If I failed this paper, I would be forever in his company. I narrowed my vision to a circle containing the exam paper, my ink bottle and my ruler.

The man and woman came down the row with the maths paper.

Mr Smith buys a coat for £2.12.6d, his tailor alters it and sends him a bill for 5/6d. Smith spends 2d on the bus fare. On the bus Smith meets his friend Brown. Brown pays him back the 3 shillings he owes him. He started out with £5.10.3d in his pocket, how much will he have left when he gets home?

Who was Smith? Why did Brown borrow three shillings? The instructions that came with each paper announced that all writing including rough work must be handed in to the examiners and that sheets of rough paper were provided. A blot appeared alongside the space where I must put the answer. I scribbled furiously on the rough paper, filling the sheet with more and more figures. Jake was now arguing with the pale-faced woman invigilator. He had been out to the toilet four times.

'But I 'ave a weak bladder miss .... my doctor says I must go whenever I like. No I forgot to bring my certificate'.

He sniggered loudly, looking around for support, but all heads were bent.

Suddenly he rose, said 'I blamed 'ad enough of this for a lark' and walked out.

He shouted for a while in the playground, his head occasionally appearing over the windowsill, then he vanished.

The results came out a month later. I had to re-sit part of the examination and have an interview.

I went back to my ink-stained books. A month later I re-sat the 11-plus. My parents drove to a comprehensive in a nearby seaside town. It was a place that always made me cheerful. It had a long sandy beach, with donkey rides and a bandstand where we made faces at boys we knew in the Salvation Army band to make them play wrong notes.

A maths paper was put in front of me. The pounds and pence fell into place like coins falling into the drawers of a till. I looked at the other children sitting around me. There were no violent, foul-mouthed bullies.

I was taken to a room where a woman in a green pill-box hat and a man with dandruff round his collar were sitting behind a desk. The man cleared his throat.

'Could you tell me, young man', he asked, 'what a factor is?'

For a moment I was paralysed. Then I heard my voice saying, 'A factor is a number that when multiplied with another produces a given number or expression.'

'Good', said the man.

The woman in the green hat looked up and said, 'tell me some books you have read'

I swallowed: '*Oliver Twist*, *Little Women*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Great Expectations*'.

'Tell us what you know about *Great Expectations*?'

It was Magwitch I remembered, the huge convict who made the little snob Pip ashamed of his brother-in-law, honest Joe Gargery. Somewhere outside the building I knew my mother was walking up and down. Her face began to blend with that of the disappointed face of Miss Havisham, and then with Grandma, my father's mother, combing her grey hair on a winter's afternoon in front of her bedroom mirror under the picture of grandfather in his First World War uniform. I went on talking. The woman in the green hat was smiling.

Two weeks later, a letter came with a Taunton postmark. I had passed.

Myles Harris is our Editor

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Gay Marriage – An Equality too Far

Patricia Morgan

During the Conservative conference the think-tank Policy Exchange, 'the intellectual boot camp of the Tory modernisers' stopped a fringe debate on same sex marriage at the last moment. Discussion, someone had decided, was not welcome and an embarrassed spokesman arrived for a depleted event. Modern political parties would love to exclude ordinary members from their gatherings and keep them for interest group lobbyists. They feel they should decide what is correct and the electorate must adapt its beliefs and values accordingly. In March 2011, Teresa May and the then Minister for Equalities, Lynne Featherstone, declared that after an 'engagement with stakeholders', ie gay pressure groups, there was 'a desire to move further forwards towards equal marriage' with consultation *not on if, but how,* same sex marriage would be implemented. Some gay Conservatives even objected to holding a consultation.

Same sex marriage involves an upheaval for society, with moral and legal implications far wider than the opinions of 'stakeholders'. No proposals for it appeared in any manifesto before the 2010 general election. Only afterwards did all three main party leaders declare their support. Nor is it a response to popular demand. At plus or minus one per cent of the population and 0.2 per cent of households, society is not faced with legions of excluded homosexuals demanding to be married. Any change to one of society's oldest institutions should not be dictated by political expediency. The Policy Exchange document, commissioned from a trainee lawyer and a *Guardian* writer, is thin on argument: It suggests that marriage does not make men responsible fathers; it is for couples to make of fatherhood what they will. No reason then for it to be permanent, exclusive – let alone limited to two or three or more people, than ordinary friendships or a swingers' party. Yet, Policy Exchange writers assure us, homosexuals will be the saving of marriage.

With opponents of gay marriage lacking the resources of public bodies or gay rights organisations with their multi-million government handouts, this is a serious threat to freedom of speech and democracy. With no opposition from parliament, and with professions, universities, media, social and political elites rushing to fall in line, a wholesale intellectual and political taboo exists against any expression of opinion unsympathetic to or critical of the demands of the 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community'. How easily it trips off the tongue!

While heterosexual union remains the only form of marriage recognised throughout the world, supporting it invites censure. A World Congress of Families event in early 2012 'Making the

case for marriage for the good of society' was concerned with the effects of family breakdown on children and society. It was closed by the Law Society, and banned from other venues – as 'contrary to our diversity policy'. How does a body which regulates solicitors forbid discussion about something recognised in law? A debate on assisted dying was hosted in the previous month, although this is illegal. Gay activists who wish to hold discussions are free to do so.

Any opposition is met with accusations of 'hate-speech' or 'hate-think'. People have become not only afraid of voicing, but unsure of their right to think certain thoughts. According to Nick Clegg they can only be 'bigots' or, to Stephen Fry 'screeching extremists'. This is to use the same kinds of negative stereotyping gays find so appalling when applied to them. Critics of same sex marriage do not indulge in crude name calling, but are branded mentally ill. It is the modern version of casting the evil eye, where the bewitched does not even have to know it has happened.

The marriage debate we should be having is how we can regenerate a unique institution of irreplaceable social value.

A housing manager was downgraded and had his salary slashed by £14,000. He was encouraged by a lesbian colleague to post a comment on his personal Facebook page, outside of work time, criticising plans for ceremonies in churches as 'An equality too far.' His employers were worried they might lose their gay rights charter award. Not only was he condemned for criticising legislation that has not yet been enacted and which even some politicians (disingenuously) deny will happen, but the person who suffered 'offence' had not seen it. A couple displaying a leaflet stating that marriage means 'one man, one woman' on their car, returned to the parking lot to find police accusing them of 'hate crime'. The British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) called critics of gay adoption 'retarded homophobes' in its 'Pink Guide to Adoption for Lesbians and Gay Men' and on the Be My Parent website. BAAF is the central organisation for adoption and fostering in the UK, to which all adoption agencies belong and from which they receive training and support.

As the bullying and hunting down of dissenters intensifies, the mob feels it is entitled to take matters into its own hands. Homes are besieged and fouled. Death threats are readily offered not only to MPs and bishops, but even to prominent gays such as Rupert Everett who claimed that 'two gay Dads' were not his idea of a family. Being gay and dismissing all marriage as 'rubbish' did not save him. In the US citizens who voice support for or donate to pro-marriage campaigns are exposed and efforts made to ruin their lives.

Questioning being sent on gay propaganda courses or forced to 'celebrate' gay history month results in 're-education' if not dismissal from public employment. The Red Guards in China or Pol Pot's cadres in Cambodia were also dedicated to rooting out unacceptable thoughts, suggestions or expressions. A recent Ofsted report commended schools teaching lesbian, gay and bisexual issues using resources and models supplied by Stonewall. With lessons, books, and topics applauding sexual diversity, there is acclaim for pupils labelling themselves 'gay' and 'lesbian'. A pupil 'from a heterosexual Christian family' asked how a boy who told the class he was born from frozen sperm to two lesbian 'mums' could be without a father. The teacher 'abandoned the lesson and created an alternative one about different families' and then interrogated the 'parents and carers at the end of the day'.

Hailed as a 'world first' on June 18th 2012, the Quebec Department of Justice launched its 'Register of Homophobic Acts' on which the names of those anonymously accused of 'any negative word or act towards a homosexual or homosexuality in general' will be registered. In British Colombia, a programme uses phone APPs to enable children to register the names of the 'guilty' anonymously. This is how the Soviets persuaded children to betray their parents.

The marriage debate we *should* be having is how we can regenerate a unique institution of irreplaceable social value. Cast as deserving neither support nor protection, marriage has long been treated with disdain if not considerable hostility, as something to destroy (Labour and Liberal Democrat) or sideline (Tory) and to generally discriminate against. Yet marriage remains supreme when it comes to child welfare and development, it enhances social bonds, promotes fairness, strengthens communities and encourages responsible citizenship. Stable families depend upon this essential institution, society depends upon stable families. The alternative is a social wilderness where the weakest go to the wall.

Patricia Morgan is a writer on social policy.

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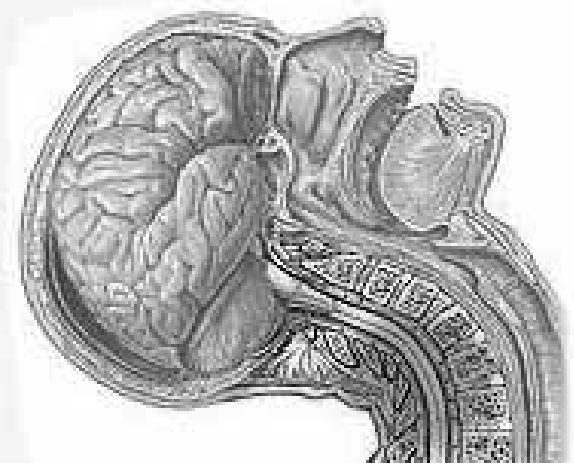
Miss Whiplash and the Claim Farmers

Theodore Dalrymple

One hesitates to bite the hand that has fed one: first it appears ungrateful, and ingratitude is a vice if not a sin; and second, one never knows when one might need the hand to feed one again. However, my devotion to truth and duty to my country compel me to speak out against the inexorable growth of the tort system in which I have occasionally acted, at some financial profit to myself, as an expert witness.

Since negligence, malice and culpable stupidity are permanent possibilities in the great repertoire of human conduct, it is only right that the possibility of compensation should exist where they do harm. Indeed, I have acted in cases – and will now act *only* in cases – in which financial compensation was not merely unequivocally just but very likely to produce some amelioration, if not to remove entirely, the harm done to the plaintiff (now, perhaps in unconscious tribute to the increasing dishonesty of the system, called the claimant) by a wrongful act or omission. But such cases are very few; it is far more common for litigation itself to do more harm than good, and often very much more harm – except, of course, to the lawyers involved.



The corruption that our tort system both encourages and depends upon is not only that of liars, swindlers and blackmailers, though there are plenty of those about, but of a much more insidious kind, both intellectual and moral, in which clever, honest and conscientious men can apply their often very great intelligence to the unintended task of corrupting society and even human character.

In our system, no compensation is due unless two conditions are met: first that there was an act or omission that was either negligent or malicious, and second that some actual harm resulted from it. This might seem reasonable, but it clearly supplies both lawyers and claimants with a strong motive to find fault where none exists, and to make up alleged harms to exaggerate them greatly, since compensation awarded is proportional to loss. The loss of a day's work is hardly worth worrying over, but the supposed ruination of a life or career is worth a fortune.

Indeed, the tort system is responsible for the creation of whole categories of illness and disability, for example – and most notoriously, though there are many others – whiplash injury after car accidents. Anyone who doubts this should read a brilliant book by the psychiatrist Andrew Malleson, titled *Whiplash and Other Useful Illnesses*, which deserves the widest possible circulation but has not received it, perhaps because, unlike whiplash, it is not useful for certain ends I could name.

Persistent 'whiplash' symptoms simply do not occur in countries whose jurisdictions do not recognise them as actionable. However, once an essentially fraudulent condition is accepted by our courts, it is impossible to get the recognition withdrawn on the grounds that it was mistaken to recognise it in the first place, and so the original fraud becomes enshrined in tablets of stone, and is repeated over and over again. It may even be that victims of car accidents really do start to suffer prolonged symptoms where the tort system rewards them for suffering them, for the human mind is capable of producing a great deal; but in such cases the harm (in the form of symptoms) is done not so much by the accident as by the tort system. It is the judges and the lawyers who ought to be sued.

Nor do courts take a common-sense view of such matters. I once had a case in which a man, a former torturer in a vile foreign dictatorship, who had subsequently himself been horribly tortured, claimed that what had truly ruined his life was an accident in which the back of his car was struck at five miles per hour by another car at a roundabout. This struck me

as preposterous. The courts, however, believed, or affected to believe, on the supposed facts of the case, that the claimant was so mentally traumatised by this accident that he would never work again.

The sources of dishonesty in the tort system are legion. Let us leave aside the question of the numbers of lawyers who have been trained and who must now be employed somehow (under- or unemployed lawyers being a dangerous fraternity); and also Mrs Thatcher's stupid and disastrous decision to let lawyers advertise, such that, for example, buses in Liverpool now bear incitements to Liverpudlians to sue for *compo*, or that the televisions in the out-patient department in the hospital in which I worked relayed the charming little jingle, 'Remember, where there's blame, there's a claim!' There are plenty of other sources of dishonesty.

Claimants have nothing personally to lose (except their time and mental equilibrium, which hardly count with them) either by suing in the first place or by grossly and dishonestly inflating their claims. This is against natural justice because an unjustified claim almost always causes the defendant a great deal of distress and usually expense. No person, be he ever so poor, should have nothing to lose by making a false or unjustified claim; he should be obliged by the possibility of having something to lose to weigh up the consequences of losing.

For every case of justice done, there are a hundred cases of injustice done. It encourages people to lie, exaggerate and resort to legal blackmail. It creates many more victims than it compensates

Indeed courts seem to draw no inferences about the honesty of the claimant even when they accept that the claim is so disproportionate to the injury that the only possible explanation of the disproportion is dishonesty. Thus perjury is not merely the exception in civil cases, it is almost (not quite) the rule. Often very little effort goes into proving the dishonesty of claimants: the National Health Service, for example, against which claims are increasing at a rate that, if they reflected economic growth in the country as a whole, would soon make us by far the richest people in the world, never resorts to private detectives who would be able to prove very quickly that many alleged injuries were not so serious in their consequences as is claimed. The reluctance to employ such methods amounts, in reality, to malversation of funds, by means of which lawyers are enriched at the expense of taxpayers and others.

The corruptions of our tort system are both subtle and legion. I was once involved in a case in which it was conclusively proved that the supposed consequences of an injury to a claimant resulted not from the injury itself, but because he, the claimant, looked on the internet to see what the possible consequences of the injury itself might be, and thereafter suffered, or claimed to have suffered, them. (He also claimed, as many people do, that his career had been just about to take off before the injury, and now never would, thus inflating his claim hugely, like the currency of Weimar Germany.)

When I heard in court that the claimant's symptoms arose from looking at the internet, I thought, 'Aha! End of case!' But not a bit of it. Rather it was held that, had the man not suffered the injury, he would not have looked up the possible symptoms on the internet, and therefore the symptoms that he suffered, though psychological in origin, were caused by the original injury. The court might as well have put up in neon lights an advertising slogan: 'Come unto me, all ye who are thirsting and willing to commit fraud, and ye shall be rewarded.'

In another case, a man claimed that an injury left him unable to concentrate, and a psychologist testified that tests demonstrated that this was so and that therefore he would never work again. The man gave evidence in the witness box – examination-in-chief and cross-examination – for a day and a half, without the slightest loss of concentration, having mastered the papers of his own case that were several volumes long. The court believed the psychologist rather than the evidence of its own eyes and ears, and it is difficult to explain this other than by a corporate desire to keep the whole corrupt system going.

Various legal doctrines encourage litigation to the advantage of lawyers and the disadvantage of everyone else. In civil law as it is at present constituted, you must take people as you find them, and not as it is reasonable to expect them to be. Thus if you are injured in such a way that would cause an ordinary person no harm, but you happen to be a confirmed neurotic for whom a slight accident is a calamity indistinguishable from the end of the world, you are recompensed as such. There are no prizes for guessing what influence this doctrine exerts upon human character.

The economic advantages to both sides in litigation to settling out of court amount to a blackmailers' charter. Very large numbers of cases of dubious merit (to put it temperately) are kept going by lawyers both because they know they are paid in proportion to the amount of 'work' that they do, and because as the expenses rise so the risk run by the defendants also rises, and therefore the benefits of settling, even though no injury has really been done and no harm suffered. There is no point in running a 10 per cent risk of facing a £1 million bill, if you can settle for £10,000. As for the taxpayer, or the payer of insurance premiums, he is left to pick up

most of the tab.

The tort system undoubtedly brings compensation to some people who equally undoubtedly deserve it. This is only just. And no doubt it reduces the prevalence of real and severe negligence on the part of employers, authorities etc., by inducing in them a fear of litigation.

For every case of justice done, there are a hundred cases of injustice done. The system encourages people to lie, exaggerate and resort to legal blackmail. It creates many more victims than it compensates, and turns more defendants into victims than it turns victims into recompensed citizens. The human mind being a subtle instrument, it produces psychological fragility in those who are not inclined by nature to lie or exaggerate, by encouragement of the subconscious mechanisms of grievance. It thus undermines the character of a whole people. It imposes huge burdens on society by ridiculous legal defensiveness, it inhibits originality and proper risk-taking, and raises the costs of almost everything. It is ever trying to increase its scope and in search of new fields to conquer (it has recently become possible to sue experts who testify in litigation, thus creating the possibility of an infinite regress of litigation). It employs the time of thousands of highly intelligent people, who without it might employ, or have to employ, their intelligence constructively rather than destructively. It is a form of outdoor relief for brilliant genteel drones.

The first thing we'll do, then, we'll sue all the lawyers.

Theodore Dalrymple's latest books are The Pleasures of Thinking*, Gibson Square, and* Farewell Fear*, New English Review Books.*

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'Corrective' Rape, Aids and Murder in South Africa

Richard Newell

Once upon a time, South Africa had a public health service which was as good (medically at least – remember that the very first heart transplant was done in Cape Town) as any other national publicly-funded set-up in the world. For those in formal employment a medical insurance system was in place: the employer and employee would share the cost of premiums (which were tax-deductible) and the employee and his dependent family would have access to private health care. In general, private practice delivered medical care which was as good as any in the world. There were also several missionary medical establishments which were publicly supported, for both primary and hospital care.

The same systems continue today, but there have been changes. Public hospitals have all but collapsed under the weight of mismanagement, administrative inertia and theft of one kind or another. 'Cadres', ie ANC loyalists and veterans of the 'struggle' were parachuted into management positions without experience or any kind of relevant qualification. Many top academics have left the public service, the profession or the country and this naturally has had an impact on the quality of undergraduate and specialist teaching as well as on patient care. Admission to medical school is slanted towards black students (fair enough), but entrance standards have had to be reduced while special first-year programmes for science, literacy and numeracy have had to be introduced to help adjust to the demands of western academic training. It is understood but not usually admitted that exit standards have also slipped among those whose school education has been poor. Furthermore, nursing standards have declined in the public sector, which has had a knock-on effect for the private sector too. Newly qualified doctors have to do a two year stint of compulsory community service – an excellent idea, spoiled by their having to work in hospitals some of which are underequipped and staffed by doctors who themselves are barely in a position to offer teaching or guidance.

That, in brief, is the background against which the medical problems which beset us are played out.

Of these, probably the best-known outside South Africa is HIV/AIDS. We are not special as African countries go, but have the dubious distinction of being the last to acknowledge the problem as our former President, Thabo Mbeki, was a world-famous denialist. (He was not alone in that: it took me a whole year of fighting the system to get approval for the first HIV clinic in Natal in the bad old days of apartheid

because the white hospital administrator would not accept the existence of the problem, even among white homosexual men!) Our statistics vary according to whether they come from the government, the Medical Research Council or industry and insurance companies. So the numbers which follow should not be taken too literally. Some 30 per cent of women attending antenatal classes are HIV-positive, while the country as a whole has 18-20 per cent positive (out of a population of 51 million, that is a lot of people). Some 2 million children have no parents owing to AIDS. The proportion of women sufferers to men is about 1.5 to 1. And it is a disease overwhelmingly of black heterosexuals, with concentration in urban areas and along highways, much as it is in the rest of Africa. Matters have improved over the last few years, in that there is now a programme by the government to issue free anti-retroviral drugs to those who are HIV-positive, but only when their cell-count is falling – in other words, when they are near the stage of having AIDS: this is not ideal but certainly better than nothing. Mother-to-foetus transmission has also been greatly reduced by the availability of medicines. This is all to the good. But medical wards in public hospitals are full of patients with AIDS-related disorders almost to the exclusion of 'normal' medical conditions.

Hand in hand with HIV is tuberculosis. This serious infection was in decline before the '90s, but the increasing numbers of immunologically compromised people has allowed it to flourish once more. The major difficulty is that, because of erratic compliance with medication, there has emerged resistance of the bacterium to standard therapies. We now have three kinds of TB: normal TB, multi-drug and extensively drug-resistant (MDR-TB and XDR-TB respectively). These are causing increasing public health concern, both here and internationally.

Malaria which is a major problem for some African countries is much less so in South Africa, being confined to the Kruger Park region of lowveldt and northern KwaZulu Natal. Infant mortality has increased somewhat over the last few years but is not yet so bad that we lead the field.

A second major scourge is violence. We have (again approximate statistics) some 18000 deaths a year on the roads (compare this with 2000 in Britain), of which a third will be pedestrians and a third will be alcohol or other drug-related. Many are due to poorly maintained vehicles (and roads), and there are many drivers without driving licenses, but mostly they are due to lunatic driving habits. We also have some 5000 gunshot deaths annually, 3000 lethal stabbings, 2000 blunt instrument killings, 600 successful poisonings and 400 deaths using our bare hands. Interpersonal differences tend to be settled permanently, particularly among black people: alcohol and drug abuse, plus AIDS-dementia do not help matters. These death figures are of course appalling but they obscure the huge numbers who are in road accidents, are shot at, stabbed and otherwise assaulted but manage to survive to and out of hospital.

Lastly let me mention rape. We are said to have the worst rape figures in the world, which may or may not be true. But in a recent survey here 25 per cent of men admitted having had non-consensual sex and 33 per cent of women claimed to have been raped. These are both probably hugely under-reported because it is customary for a woman in the underprivileged community to be obliged to 'comfort' a man on demand, where the penalty for non-compliance is a beating. There is very poor forensic, police and social support for rape victims with almost no specially trained police or social workers, and insignificant numbers of prosecutions, let alone convictions. 'Corrective rape' is another horror: homosexuality is declared by the older leaders to be un-African (see also the recent politics of Uganda and Zimbabwe), so men consider it to be a duty to show that a lesbian only needs to experience the joys of sex with a real man to be converted, and a gang-rape is therefore even more effective. One of the most distressing aspects of sexual abuse is where children are raped, even as young as 9 months of age. The major reason for this is the myth that says that having sex with a virgin will cure AIDS. How this originated is unknown, but it beggars belief that anybody, even with no education at all, would be so gullible as to believe it and then be so evil as to act on it.

You may be wondering where these depressing stories are leading. HIV may be a medical disease in patient and therapeutic terms, but it is in reality a socio-political problem where the emphasis must be on education to prevent its acquisition and spread. Previous plagues in history have been simpler with a more obvious cause and effect: you did something and within a few days you got sick. HIV differs because it is linked to sex which may be the only fun the poor have access to, stays silent for several years during which you can spread the love and the virus because you are well and in any case you have other concerns, then you become sick and die. In the early days of HIV in South Africa it was almost impossible to sell the message of safe sex to the general population: firstly, it was the white man's disease (intravenous drug abuse and homosexual men), and anyway condom use was just the white man trying to stop black people from reproducing, and besides 'I may be dead next week or come home to find my hut burned down and my wife and children dead, so why should

I worry about something which I may not catch and, even if I do, won't kill me for many years...?' At least some understanding is emerging and there are many brave people with AIDS who travel around admitting their condition and giving advice and support. International agencies such as USAID are helping to fund advertisements and clinics aimed at HIV also. Violence is another cultural matter that should be addressed by the political classes. And there will for a very long time be physical difficulties for the rural and remote poor in reaching basic health care: preventative care can be taken to them more easily than treatment for acute illness.

Our constitution guarantees all the freedoms that are enshrined in the Western developed world, but until our leaders subscribe to them beyond lip-service we have no prospect of advancing. Our current President has several wives, has been arraigned for rape (he won, almost certainly fairly) of a woman known to have HIV – to which his response when questioned about it was 'I took a shower afterwards', has numerous irregular children and is known to be liberal with his sexual favours. Is this droit de seigneur? Perhaps he misread his Marx and substituted fornication for religion as his opiate. The Age of Enlightenment is 250 years old in the West. Let us hope that education here will bring it to our population in less time than that.

Richard Newell is a retired physician.

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Uncorking the Djinn

Brian Wimborne

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines religion as a particular system of faith and worship, and politics as the science and art of government. Although the two are not mutually exclusive, and historically have often gone hand-in-hand, it is not unreasonable in this post-Enlightenment age to question whether Islam is more a political ideology than a system of faith and worship.

Traditionally, Islam has been lumped together with Judaism and Christianity as one of the world's three great monotheistic faiths and has enjoyed equal status with them. The foundation common to all three religions is their belief in the God of the Jews. The question, therefore, may appear pointless; it seems that Islam is essentially a religion. However, monotheism may not be enough to tip the balance in favour of religion over politics, no matter how strongly held a faith might be. If the major thrust of a religion is to achieve political power by any means, secularism displaces the sacred.

Present day western societies treat religion with kid gloves, fearing that any criticism of a specific belief or religious practice displays unacceptable religious intolerance. This follows logically from the Enlightenment principle that in a rational, liberal society people should be free to believe whatever they wish or to believe in nothing at all. After centuries of religious conflict and intolerance in Europe, this was a major step forward for humanity.

Freedom to pursue one's own religious persuasion, however, could only have come about in a society where church and state were separate entities. Before the Enlightenment the Christian church dominated politics in most European countries and, by extension, the thoughts and lives of most of their citizens. Persecution of non-believers and laws against blasphemy were widespread in western society until comparatively recently. They continue to prevail in Moslem countries where Koranic laws are enforced and religious leaders make all major political decisions.

Another commonly held view in the west is that religions are, by their very nature, benevolent and peaceful institutions. One does not need to be a student of history, however, to know that religions have not always conformed to this view. Even the Enlightenment did not put an end to religious intolerance in Europe, as witnessed by the behaviour of some religious institutions that supported the Nazis. Nevertheless, it can be shown that in recent years most western religious institutions have made genuine attempts to be models of moral rectitude based on Judeo-Christian core values of charity, love and

compassion. To these we may add tolerance of other religious faiths.

The weak spot in the argument for blanket tolerance of all religions is that it may allow a corrosive, totalitarian political ideology to hide behind a religious facade where it enjoys inviolability to any criticism, no matter how justified that may be. Thus a political movement masquerading as religion would be able to propound views and practices hostile to free, democratic societies. In fact this has already happened in many western countries where, under the aegis of religious freedom, it has been possible for Islam to work for the overthrow of democratic systems of government.

In a classic example of the victim bearing responsibility for a crime committed against him, the west's response to the malfeasance of Islam has been one of appeasement, self-abasement and the toleration of intolerance. Aiding this process of national shame has been the imported ideology of multiculturalism, which has successfully conflated race, religion and culture. Utilising the language of political correctness, which bears all the hallmarks of Soviet style re-education, multiculturalism has ensured that criticism of cultural or religious practices, no matter how demeaning, inhumane or cruel they may be, is to be categorised as racism, even though they have nothing to do with race.

Multiculturalism, as well as eating away at indigenous customs and traditions, encourages cultural imperialism by supporting the entrenchment of imported alien beliefs and practices, especially those of Islam. By this means it seeks to destroy any sense of national identity and in so doing hopes to inflict major wounds on the nation state from which it may never recover. In short, multiculturalism is planned ghettoism. The British philosopher Roger Scruton in his book *The West and the Rest* goes so far as to describe it as a form of apartheid.

While multiculturalism might cast itself as an innocent form of *xenophilia*, it has been enthusiastically embraced by the left, and the Greens in particular; this suggests it is more likely to be a manifestation of *oikophobia*: 'the repudiation of inheritance and home.' In addition to introducing the pernicious idea of cultural relativism, multiculturalism has also provided the left with a tool by which it can attack the nation state for having rejected totalitarian socialism. The totalitarian nature of both Marxism and Islam is not lost on the left which consistently supports the aims of Moslem extremism.

Despite being classified as one of the three great monotheistic religions, Islam falls into a vastly different category from Judaism and Christianity in that it not only opposes the separation of church and state but its holy text, the Koran, is clear in its castigation of all non-believers. Thus the Koran opposes friendship with Jews and Christians (V 51) and any non-believers (IV 144, III 28) or the parents and siblings of non-believers (IX 23). As well as forcing non-believers to pay a special tax, the Koran calls for terror to be cast in their hearts, for their necks to be smitten and their fingertips to be cut (VIII 12). Were a practising Moslem to advocate the Judeo-Christian messages of love, charity and religious tolerance, he would be judged an apostate by his co-religionists, since extending such virtues to non-Moslems is foreign to Islam.

The Koran, like the Bible, had numerous authors and is full of contradictions. This makes interpretation difficult; in effect, the Koran appears to be all things to all people. Islamic scholars solve the dilemma of contradictory texts with the rule of abrogation. According to this rule, where verses contradict each other, the latter-dated text abrogates the earlier one. In this regard it is ominous that the only peaceful texts in the Koran date from an early period, prior to Mohammed's flight to Medina, while those verses advocating violence and war came later.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali, writer of the film *Submission* criticising Islam's treatment of women, whose producer Theo Van Gogh was murdered by an Islamic fanatic who herself was forced into hiding by death threats by Islamists, wrote, 'When he came to Medina the Prophet had a revelation

of jihad. After that, it became an obligation for Muslims to convert others, and to establish an Islamic state, by the sword if necessary.' The critic Patrick Sookhdeo, also a target of Islamist death threats, confirms the bloody message of Islam in an article in the *Spectator*: 'So the mantra "Islam is peace" is almost 1400 years out of date. It was only for about thirteen years that Islam was peace and nothing but peace. From 622 onwards it became increasingly aggressive…'.

According to Ibn Warraq (founder of the *Institute for the Secularisation of Islamic Society*) in his *Statement on the World Trade Center Atrocity*, the Islamic 'world is divided into two spheres, *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb*. The latter, the Land of Warfare, is a country belonging to infidels. The *Dar al-Harb* becomes the *Dar al-Islam*, the Land of Islam, upon the promulgation of the edicts of Islam.' The pursuit of *Dar al-Islam* has resulted in the 'totalitarian nature of Islam', which is 'nowhere more apparent than in the concept of *Jihad,* the Holy War, whose ultimate aim is to conquer the entire world and submit it to the one true faith, to the law of Allah'.

In comparing Islamic fundamentalism with other fundamentalist movements, Ibn Warraq says that unlike these, 'Islamic fundamentalism has global aspirations: the submission of the entire world to the all-embracing Shari'a Islamic Law, a fascist system of diktats designed to control every aspect of all individuals.' In *The West and the Rest* Roger Scruton writes, 'Like the Communist Party in its Leninist construction, Islam aims to control the state without being a subject of the state.'

An argument constantly put forward by apologists for Islam is that we should not confuse moderate Moslems with Islamic fundamentalists. Yet since 9/11, the vast majority of Moslems have failed to condemn acts of terrorism committed in their name. What is one to make of this? Writing in the *London Free Press* (26 July, 2005), Salim Mansur said, 'The truth is there does not exist an identifiable body of Muslims, substantive in number or an outright majority, who could be described as 'moderate' by their repudiation of Muslim extremists' and 'violence has been an integral part of Muslim history.' He argues that since the Arab-Moslem world has had little experience of democracy, 'moderation' remains practically non-existent.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali would agree. Writing in the *Spectator* she says, 'I find the word 'moderate' very misleading. I don't believe there is such a thing as 'moderate Islam'…The Koran is quite clear that it should control every area of life'. This view is supported by Ibn Warraq who points out that 'Islam itself is not moderate' and that Moslem fundamentalists have a better understanding of the true message of the Koran than the so-called moderates.

Perhaps the only solution is for Moslems who do not support the activities of Islamic fundamentalists to stop pretending that violence has not been an integral part of their religion, almost since the day it was founded, and to speak out against it. As Patrick Sookhdeo writes, 'They must with honesty recognise the violence that has existed in their history in the same way that Christians have had to do…'

This has yet to happen and the west must face the possibility that it never will. On the contrary, many western countries already have in their midst a formidable fifth column of so-called *moderate* Moslems who will support the overthrow of elected governments, the dismantling of the rule of law and the curtailment of personal liberty, in line with the aims of Jihadists.

As Salim Mansur concludes, 'Consequently, what might pass for 'moderate' Muslims, the large number of Muslims unaccounted for as to what they think, in practical terms constitute a forest within which extremists are incubated, nurtured, given ideological and material support, and to which they return for sanctuary.'

And so we come back to the original question: Is Islam primarily a religion or a political ideology? The answer seems abundantly clear.

In the light of the war being waged against western countries by Islamists intent on replacing the democratic secular state with an Islamic theocratic dictatorship, and the tacit support this receives from *moderate* Moslems, any claim that Islam is first and foremost a religion is completely wrong. In reality it is a political ideology that, if implemented on a large scale, would plunge humanity into a new dark age. Since Moslems everywhere seem unlikely and unwilling to cleanse their Augean stables of their fascist political content, this leaves western society with a serious problem, one that goes to the heart of its very existence. To borrow a phrase from Lenin, 'What is to be done?' Upon this question hangs the fate of civilisation.

Brian Wimborne is a retired Neuroscientist, now employed as Research Director for the Australian Dictionary of Biography.

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Seeing the History Lessons

Merrie Cave

Life has to be lived forwards but can only be understood backwards. On my first visit to Paris in 1950 I wondered why people were so discourteous. It can't have been just the war. On returning to school I learnt about the Commune, and the bitter Civil War following the Franco-Prussian War when the Seine flowed red with blood. The army who put the revolt down came from the provinces which have always been prejudiced against the capital. Later I was amazed to overhear a conversation between a concierge and a policeman who was making enquiries about some tenants in the building. This incident illustrated the very different modes of political authority to the English; indeed the French state could not have survived through the many often violent changes of the 19th and 20th centuries without a powerful civil service keeping a strong executive control. Hausmann's rebuilding of Paris, impressive though it is, aimed at stopping further revolts by destroying the city's narrow streets and hideaways.

St Matthews Church, Windsor, NSW

Travelling in Italy cemented the lesson that the Risorgimento was certainly not a story about patriotism and freedom but more about a Piedmontese conquest of the South. Many Piedmontese politicians had never visited the South and regretted unification when they did. Even today, travelling from the north to the south, Sicily is like a foreign country. I found people in the prosperous industrial north unhelpful about the economic problems of the south: 'Arabs and barbarians'. The south, apart from a few advocates of a united Italy, had never asked to be absorbed by the north and politicians paid no attention to the different economic conditions there. Here were lessons for the architects of the EU if they had heeded them.

The Portuguese admire the English and you are made very welcome in a country where strong links were forged with Britain under The Treaty of Windsor (1386). Even in the nineteen eighties, little old ladies in Oporto were lighting candles to British soldiers killed in the Peninsular War. It was easy to see why Britain was keen to influence the country: three very wide estuaries, particularly that of the Tagus, were useful for our navy, while red pillar boxes were a reminder of home for the British who had organised the postal services and vital for our port wine trade. As in Spain the north is very different from the south which still shows the effects of the Moorish occupation. In Andalucia after the reconquest a few Moorish families were allowed to stay on to teach the new population the techniques of hill terrace farming and irrigation. In Portugal the Revolution of 1974 and the rapid modernisation of the country assisted by EU funds produced some casualties for parts of the country as it moved from the eighteenth century to the twentieth in two decades. The young with some education and money often despise their elders, many of whom are illiterate. This partly explains the high suicide rate among retired agricultural workers in the Alentejo region. I asked my hostess why, during the coup against Gorbachev in 1991, there was a demonstration declaring the Communist Party as the party of the future: 'They don't know where Czechoslovakia or Russia is; all they know is that they were once hungry'.

The British heritage has persisted in America. You feel at home in the land of Albion's seed with its Victorian manners and modes of address, like the hospitality a legacy from the pioneering days, particularly in the South. Different regions in the US still bear traces of their original immigrants' features and habits. In the Appalachian Mountains forms of speech were quite different from those on the Eastern seaboard until the twentieth century. Distinctive building styles corresponded to the immigrants' origins. Massachusetts adopted fashions from Eastern England while the southern highlands (back country) built log cabins like the ones in the North Britain and Ireland they left behind. Backcountry dress still survives in the stage costumes worn by country and western

singers but it originally came from North Britain. In Pennsylvania German rhythms of speech persist from 19th century immigrations while the extraordinary Amish community have kept their strange religion and way of life intact.

In Australia hard work and enterprise transformed a dump for convicts into a prosperous, liberal democracy. Governor Macquarie had a wonderful vision of Australia's future when it had outgrown its origins and many convicts played important roles in building a free society. Francis Greenway was convicted of fraud and sent to New South Wales. Macquarie commissioned his masterpiece, St Matthews Church, Windsor, the first colonial church, whose design looks back to the English Renaissance. Later Governor Phillip ordered 400 acres on the outskirts of the settlement at Sydney Cove to be set aside for the exclusive use of the Church of England. Speculators soon bought land within range of the town and developed fine suburbs many of which, like the italianate Cliff Terrace in Glebe, can still be seen. Unfortunately some of the fine Victorian buildings in the centre of Sydney have been demolished.

Is it an accident that democracy and the rule of law, albeit in a chaotic form, have lasted in India? Could it be because the British were there far longer than in their African colonies? There was a respect and even nostalgia for the Raj – clubs in Bombay and Calcutta are similar to those in Pall Mall right down to the notice boards. The standard of written and spoken English, particularly in newspapers, is often much higher than in the UK. The British love of gardens and uniforms has stuck and many Botanical Gardens still thrive, particularly in South India. The best one is in Kandy (Sri Lanka). The curator of the Botanical Gardens in Darjeeling was pleased to meet my husband, a descendant of a distinguished plant hunter who was a former curator. I doubt whether his equivalent in a provincial town in Britain would have been as friendly.

Some of our most interesting excursions have been to Eastern Europe. Here are distinctive cultures from whom we have been cut off for years. The stationmasters of Transylvania wear military uniforms which are a leftover from the Habsburgs. This is a region that has had 'too much history for it own consumption'. Following the collapse of the Roman Empire it became subject to Byzantine, Ottoman and Habsburg occupation and has never been able to form homogenous national states. After 1918 Hungarians were no longer the dominant group in the region and suffered under Ceaucescu's rule. Transylvanian Germans (Saxons) were less unpopular although most of them emigrated back to Germany in the nineties. There are beautiful Saxon towns like Brasov and Sibiu whose cemeteries are full of handsome granite memorials to Fritzes and Johannas. Communism had the strange effect of preserving ways of life which have long disappeared in Western Europe. Glimpses of the Middle Ages can still be seen cheek by jowl with the twenty-first century: the cutting of hay with scythes, single cows being taken home to bed and animals tethered by the side of the street. This pre-industrialized agricultural economy is fast disappearing. The younger generation have no intention of continuing to work farms their parents often had to take second jobs to keep going.

Wallachia, to the south, is much more like the rest of the Balkans. Bucharest was once a pleasant *fin de siecle* imitation of Paris with its own little Arc de Triomphe, and French was the second language of the educated classes. On our first visit the place looked wrecked; Ceaucescu, a vulgar Balkan gangster, understood the uses of demolition and rebuilding as a form of totalitarian control. On his orders swathes of Bucharest's Haussmann-style streets were mown down to make way for his palace 'The Wedding Cake', the third biggest building in the world, which also contains the world's biggest carpet and chandelier. Romanians went without heat, light and running water to ensure its construction.

Centuries of despotism and misgovernment have forced people in Eastern Europe and Russia to take refuge in their families and private lives. Many of the people we met in Perm had relatives who were shot in the worst years. However Stalin did not succeed in wiping out the intelligentsia who still possess a high culture and retain a spirituality which makes contacts and friendships with the people there an enriching experience. Their humour and high seriousness are very attractive even if their generous hospitality is often embarrassing. Imagine visiting a university professor with an international reputation, the entrance to whose flat looks like a drug dealer's den in the West. Yet as in Eastern Europe their tiny flats are immaculate. Some of them have managed to keep a few treasures from the past, such as glass and silver. These traits are even more striking in Russia, a country of such vast space it resembles another planet. It is possible to travel hundreds of miles without seeing any settlements or cultivated land. Yet in the big cities nobody has enough room. Some of the villages near the railway lines seem barely to have altered since Tsarist times, and those close to the track would be better off than those further away. Of course since we were there Russia has returned to its traditional despotic habits under Putin. It can only be a guess whether free speech and freedom will return.

Merrie Cave was a history teacher.

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Conservative Classic — 49

The True Believer, Eric Hoffer

Anthony Daniels

It is not usual for dockers to write books of political philosophy, let alone ones that remain in print sixty years after they were first published; but that is what Eric Hoffer, known in America as 'the Longshoreman Philosopher,' did. At the age of 49, in 1951, having worked in the docks of New York since 1942, he published *The True Believer*, a study of a political or social fanatic and the mass movement he creates, leads and exploits.

As can easily be surmised, Hoffer was an unusual man. Born to Alsatian parents who had emigrated to New York, he was bilingual in English and German. When he was five his mother fell down the stairs with him in her arms, and two years later he went nearly blind, supposedly from the delayed effects of the fall, until he was fifteen, when he recovered his sight. I cannot think of a purely physiological explanation for this blindness of eight years and so it seems likely that there must have been some psychological problem or conflict in his life to account for it. If so, it eventually gave Hoffer much insight into the minds of men.

Once he recovered his sight, he was an avid, indeed a voracious, reader, but instead of pursuing further education and academic qualifications, he spent many years knocking about California among the underclass, a kind of intellectual Jack London, though he came to very different political conclusions from those of London. From his contact with those at the lower end of the American social scale Hoffer derived a great but unsentimental respect for them and their potentialities and their latent talent. He became a docker during the war in order to help America's war effort, and remained one until 1965. No doubt this helps to explain his somewhat romantic overestimate of manual labour as being 'the world's work,' in contrast to other forms of labour: but he derived no socialistic conclusions from this view, precisely because he valued people as individuals rather than as bearers of virtue because of their membership of any particular category of the human race.

The True Believer is a short and aphoristic book, whose crystalline style shows that Hoffer had learned the lessons of his very wide reading. If you open it at any page, you will find impressive and succinct formulations. I have just tried the experiment and opened the book to page 108 (in the first British edition of 1952), the first sentence of which is 'Hatred is the most accessible and comprehensive of all unifying agents.' Hoffer continues:

> *It [hatred] pulls and whirls the individual away from his own self, makes him oblivious of his weal and future, frees him from jealousies and self-seeking. He becomes an anonymous particle quivering with a craving to fuse and coalesce with his like into one flaming mass. Heine suggests that what Christian love cannot do is effected by a common hatred.*

In other words, hatred is the strongest of political emotions, with the corollary that the desire to do harm to others (usually with the justification that they are themselves the evil-doers who are ruining our lives) is much stronger than the desire to do good to or for anyone.

This does not have to be true of every last human being for it to be highly significant; and how many of us, if we looked honestly and sincerely into our own hearts, would find absolutely no trace of its truth? That is why no demonstration that taxation of the prosperous will not of itself benefit the less well-off will ever eliminate the impulse to tax them: for the rich are hated much more than the poor are loved.

Hoffer makes the personal political, but certainly not in the manner or spirit of the 1960s: more in the manner and spirit of La Rochefoucauld, who uttered inconvenient and uncomfortable truths, more or less eternal, about human psychology. And if it is true that hatred is the strongest political emotion, the easiest to arouse, the longest lasting, the most gratifying and the most effective in leading to real, and usually very destructive, political activity, then it is incumbent on us all to control ourselves, to recognise what Doctor Johnson called, with his great and incisive acuity, 'the movements of our own minds'. The first stage in this difficult task of self-control is the recognition of its necessity, for without such a recognition the effort – which can never be a hundred per cent successful – will not be made.

Hoffer, unsurprisingly, was reflecting upon recent history, with its two political movements that had taken advantage of, promoted and exploited widespread resentment, namely Nazism and Communism. But he did not confine himself to excoriating the two modern totalitarian regimes; what now seems presciently,

he referred to the potential of Islam for channelling resentment.

One *ad hominem* argument might easily be used against someone who propounded this view: it's all right for you to speak, but you, as a privileged person, have nothing to be resentful about. But this could hardly be said in Hoffer's case; he had, after all, spent many years among the underclass, studying them closely and sharing their lives. Indeed, Hoffer would probably be able to turn the argument against the person who used it, who was likely to have a much less intimate acquaintance with the lower depths than Hoffer. Besides, resentment is such a permanent temptation to human beings that there is no condition of human existence that completely, by itself, prevents its possibility. Therein lies its deep significance, which Hoffer eloquently dissected.

Hoffer did not take the view, beloved of belligerent neo-conservatives, that the whole of humanity is constantly thirsting for freedom, even if it arrives only at the end of the explosion of a bomb, as if the desire were part of human nature, hard-wired (as we now inelegantly say) into the human brain. It is precisely because immersing oneself in a great mass of other people in a movement, supposedly with some utopian purpose, relieves one of the anxieties and burden of personal responsibility, that such movements are often attractive, especially in times of dislocation and uncertainty. Freedom is not an easy option, and unhappiness may be its consequence.

Hoffer is not so foolish or simplistic as to suppose that no indignation, anger or dissatisfaction with the nature of political arrangements as they presently are can never be reasonable or justified. He makes a distinction between those movements that have a specific and limited end and those that have a quasi-religious goal whose real end is the eternal and unlimited power of the charismatic leader and his henchmen. He is not a quietist or immobilist who suggests an inner emigration to the world or garden of the pure self, or that nothing can ever be better than it is. There is a difference between wishing to rid oneself of a specific evil or obstacle, and straining after a kind of total liberation from all of life's little difficulties. Once Indian independence was achieved, for example, the notion of salvation through vegetarianism, home spinning and sexual abstinence was swiftly abandoned, if anyone had ever really believed in it. The movement was to get rid of the British, not to create heaven on earth. Fortunately for both sides, the British were not so dead set on staying that they were prepared to wade through infinite quantities of blood to do so.

Nor does Hoffer see the desire to conserve as confined to the privileged alone, or the desire for revolutionary change as confined to the impoverished, the despised, the people of low status. He says:

> *As for the hopeful [of radical change]: it does not seem to make any difference who it is that is seized with a wild hope – whether it be an enthusiastic intellectual, a land-hungry farmer, a get-rich-quick speculator, a sober merchant or industrialist, a plain working-man or noble lord – they all proceed recklessly with the present, wreck it if necessary, and create a new world.*

If it is true that both improvement upon and wrecking of the present are possible, we should be cautious and modest in our aims, and aware of our own motives. There is no doctrine that will infallibly tell us how we should act or what we should do. Judgment, not syllogistic reasoning from indubitable first premises, will always be necessary. Not for nothing was Montaigne Hoffer's favourite author.

The political problem for dispositional conservatives such as Hoffer is that their doctrine, if that is quite the word for it, is negative rather than positive. It is difficult to win elections, especially in times of sound-bites, by reference to the existential limitations of human existence, the need to enjoy what we already have, or the proposition that all or most of our troubles arise from our inability to sit still in a room (Hoffer, not coincidentally, quotes Pascal). But unless we take the very dismal view that books make absolutely no difference in the world – a thing that no writer can truly believe, whatever he says – dispositional conservatives can serve to propagate the disposition. There is no better book for doing so than Hoffer's minatory *The True Believer.*

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Erratum

The addition of 'Henry 1V' after 'Bolingbroke' (*SR* Autumn 2012 p.50) was an erroneous insertion. The author referred not to Henry of Bolingbroke, Plantaganet King of England (d 1413) but to Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, the 18th century Tory who wrote *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism: on the idea of a Patriot King* (1783).

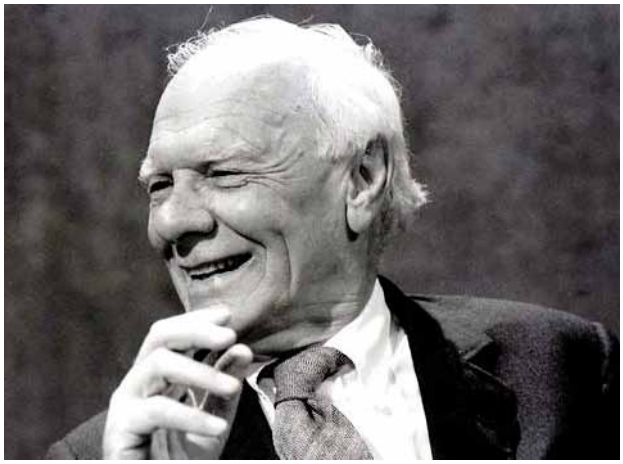
We apologise for this mistake

Reputations — 38

Malcolm Muggeridge

Helen Szamuely

There was a time when Malcolm Muggeridge seemed to be everywhere, pronouncing on many of the most important matters, political, social and spiritual (or pontificating about subjects he knew nothing about, as some would have it). He was, as many noted, a natural performer on TV, whether in Jonathan Miller's slightly ludicrous version of 'Alice in Wonderland' or as the man who would put his fingertips together and ask solemnly 'Why?'. At the same time he was also the greatest opponent of the medium, showering anathema on it and seeing it as almost an emanation of the devil.



He would have liked to have been another St Augustine – the man who sinned much in his youth (and, to be fair, his middle age) but who, in reality, was looking for God all the time and eventually found him. He compared himself to Tolstoy though humbly acknowledging his inferiority to the great master and seeker after truth. To anyone who knew Muggeridge in real life or only through his writings and broadcasting, that humility, expressed in the first volume of his autobiography, *The Green Stick*, seemed, not insincere exactly but tinged with malicious humour. One could almost see the glint in those preternaturally bright eyes as the words were written down.

The basic facts of his life are fairly well known, though much of what is well known is not entirely correct. Born into a left-wing family he grew up admiring his father, an idealistic and hard-working Labour politician, first local councillor then MP and a founding member of the Fabian Society. The family was based in South London, that epitome of the sort of petty bourgeois existence that Muggeridge always seemed to despise, both in his anarchic and in his later religious days. Though he started in the lower echelons of the Labour movement he advanced by the usual English method: marriage. His wife was the beautiful Kitty Pakenham, niece to the great gurus of Fabianism and Socialism, Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Some people consider that this made Muggeridge into the heir apparent to that position but, at best, he was a Prince Hal without the latter's devious political mind.

The marriage was a stormy affair, with many separations and infidelities on both sides, particularly on his. Its eventide, the serene couple, both converted to Roman Catholicism, both vegetarians and eschewing drink, steadily facing the world and the hereafter, made a lovely picture but also drove many of those who had known the Muggeridges previously either to frenzy or to hysterical laughter.

Muggeridge tried various careers in various parts of the world, always restlessly seeking something else, something that had more meaning and more reality; but it was almost inevitable that he would become a journalist and an author. He was a natural communicator. In 1932 he and his wife went to the Soviet Union to see the great experiment, so admired by his own family and the Fabians in general. By this time he had been working at the *Manchester Guardian* and had a special feeling for Edward Taylor (Ted) Scott, C P Scott's son, who had survived in his father's shadow for many years. He took over as editor in 1929 and became joint owner of the newspaper in 1932 on his father's death. Within four months he, too, was dead in a sailing accident. The essential tragedy of Ted's life affected Muggeridge and he poured his feelings into a highly libellous novel, *Picture Palace*. In later years he was to describe that as his most scandalous piece of writing. In fact, the *Guardian* managed to prevent the book's publication, which did not happen until many decades later.

In the Soviet Union Muggeridge had his first awakening, this time from an admiration of Communism. Appalled by what he saw even in Moscow, shocked by the blatant censorship and by the lies other Western journalists were peddling, he

began to write very different accounts, though he never knew whether the *Guardian* published them or not. At least once he sent an officially worded story, adding the instruction: 'Suggest telling marines'. He visited the famine-stricken areas devastated by collectivisation and though it was impossible to send too many authentic accounts out he managed to write it all down and put it into various articles later, his novel *Winter in Moscow* and into the relevant chapters of his autobiography.

Muggeridge's subsequent career was chequered. During the war he served in Intelligence and described his supposedly futile and ridiculous efforts in highly entertaining terms, although during an African posting he became so despairing of the purpose of his life he attempted suicide. Subsequent information would indicate that his work was a little more valuable than he made out. In his own estimation his greatest achievement of the period was managing to save P G Wodehouse from the venom directed at him by the egregious Claud Cockburn, encouraged by Duff Cooper, because of Wodehouse's broadcasts from Nazi internment camps.

After the war he worked for various newspapers and magazines, becoming the editor of *Punch* for several years. It is widely thought that 'Books' Bagshaw, the entertaining, many-sided journalist with his exhaustive knowledge of political movements in Anthony Powell's *Dance to the Music of Time* is based at least partly on Muggeridge.

Muggeridge's stint at *Punch* came to an end when he attacked the British monarchy in an article in the USA. It was not done at the time so Muggeridge, naturally, did it. Nowadays he would be defending the monarchy against the constant sniping and attacks by such organizations as the BBC. In the years post-*Punch* he came into his own: as a widely published author of articles, essays and books, all in an inimitable style that has mostly stood the test of time, as an early TV star, the presiding divinity over the new satirical movement, particularly of *Private Eye*, whose denizens dubbed him St Mugg later on, he seemed to be everywhere. If he was not questioning the idiocies of the sixties he was taking part in Mary Whitehouse's anti-pornography campaign; if he was not writing (somewhat tritely) about religion he was railing against modernity in general. The man whose first words to my father when we arrived in England were: 'I welcome you in the name of all true anarchists' was responsible for the myth of Mother Theresa, a dubious recipient of the accolade he and his followers bestowed on her.

It is pointless to ask which one was St Mugg, the angry anarchist or the serene sage, the sinner and adulterer or the Savonarola-like prophet, the seeker for truth or the demolisher of every shibboleth. He was all of them, at different times and at the same time. But did he leave a lasting legacy? Mugg would have loved an article about him to end with a question.

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That Manuscript in the Attic

Fifty years ago publishing a book was like film acting. It was chicken and egg. Nobody would hire you unless you were a star. Big names brought big box office, small names nothing. The same applies to book publishing today. Unless you are famous or an established author almost nobody is interested.

This leaves electronic publishing. The market for this has, like a muddy pool, not settled. Everybody is writing a novel, an infinite regress of old uncles have written their memoirs, and any number of us have had a go at biography or history. There is one huge problem, a famine of readers. With an infinitude of titles to choose from people have little time for anything new.

Nevertheless, if you think you have hidden in your attic a literary gem; an eyewitness account by a private at the Battle of Gettysberg, the diary of a dead relative who was the first marine to set foot in the Hirohito's Palace at the end of World War II, or something by your grandfather who was Field Marshall Montgomery's driver, or you have written a novel which your worst enemy, not knowing it was you who wrote it, has gushed over, it might be worth publishing.

The *Salisbury Review* has the technical means to do this. Electronic publishing is very competitive, and unlike vanity publishers, if we think what you send us is unattractive, we will tell you, so your time, and ours, is not wasted.

If you would like to know more, please contact the Managing Editor.

Roy Kerridge

Ages ago when it was announced on television that England was to host the Olympics, two female Labour MP's in the studio grew so excited that they fell to the ground shaking and shrieking as if they were at a Revival meeting. This gave me a sense of Olympic foreboding from the start.

The opening ceremony, again as seen on the devil's box, left me shaken to the core. Prince Phillip and the Queen, scarcely recovered from the Jubilee, were subjected not only to deafening rock music but to a humiliating helicopter stunt. Our ashen-faced monarch was forced (by whom?) to act a part in a mock James Bond film. Even though a double was used in the parachuting scene, the whole episode clearly angered the Queen, judging by her thunderous expression. A tableau took place showing Merry England destroyed by the inventors and entrepreneurs of the Industrial Revolution. Suddenly Industrial Hell was invaded by hordes of liberating angels in the form of yet more idiot rock singers. The Beatles came and all was light. The Queen may be tough enough to endure a Rock Jubilee and a Rock Olympics, but what other country would treat their monarch so? When a granny on a council estate is tormented by yobs, the Press disapproves. I don't think a single journalist lifted a finger to type a word of sympathy for the tormented Royal Family. It was like something out of Fraser's *Golden Bough*, a ceremony where an ageing monarch is tortured if not killed. Strangely enough, the Queen's true taste in music was revealed in the press at the time. She likes the witty brittle songs of Cole Porter, songs usually performed with piano alone.

Somehow Rock music has become a power in the land, yet another rebel turned mad dictator. The Queen must tremble and obey, grateful only for the concession of earplugs. As for the rest of the Olympics, it was a bit annoying to find sport at the beginning of each newspaper as well as at the end, but if people wish to run, hop and fall over, it's up to them. I emerged from the whole ordeal dazed and deeply ashamed of being British. Now I feel like a person with no recognisable country, an immigrant from nowhere. No doubt this feeling will wear off in time, but a visit to Devonshire did not help me. Instead of the warm-hearted country accented people I remembered, most Devonians under fifty now sport tattoos, Mohican hairstyles and more Staffordshire bull terriers than can be found in London or indeed in Staffordshire. A little search revealed much of True Devon in backwaters here and there, so perhaps all is not lost.

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The eleven-plus fever that blighted my childhood has now been replaced by A level mania, the mad desire not for a grammar school place but for 'uni'. Few parents imagine that their offspring will learn anything at university – anything academic that is. Anxious mothers expect that their son or daughter will return as half of a couple. A partner found at university is almost certain to be middle class, perhaps upper middle class. Now that royalty go to 'uni' like everyone else, there are huge opportunities for brazen gold diggers.

The medieval idea of a university as a community of scholars struggles on, now sabotaged by the abolition of separate women's colleges and the make-believe that young men and women can be thrown together and remain unscathed.

François Rabelais, who died in 1553, is the pioneer of the modern idea of a university as a paradise of earthly delights combined with a matchmaking service. In his satirical *Life of Gargantua*, the giant establishes the Abbey of Theleme, a place where high-born young men and women spend several years together in delightful surroundings.

'Into this religious order should be admitted no women that were not fair, well featured and of a sweet disposition; nor men that were not comely, personable and well conditioned…. When the time came that any man of the said abbey…. Had a mind to go out of it, he carried along with him one of the ladies, namely her whom he had before that chosen for his mistress, and they were married together' (translated from the French by Sir Thomas Urquart). Over the doorway of this abbey, precursor of the modern university, were engraved these words, often wrongly attributed to the black magician Aleister Crowley: DO WHAT THOU WILT.

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ETERNAL LIFE

I'm wondering whether to follow the example of Tim Tebow the American footballer whose practice of falling into extravagant postures of prayer on the field is bringing such splendid results for his side. Such muscular demonstrations of piety are really not part of our national temperament and it has been said that the traditional opinion of the Englishman is that there is no God but it is wise to pray to him from time to time.

The national religious temperament has shown signs of radical change over the last thirty years. This change dates from the emergence and rapid growth of the charismatic movement in the English churches – the happy clappies. In the 1980s I was a country parson in Yorkshire, living not far from one of the most prominent charismatic churches in York. One morning I gave a lift to one of these extroverted devotees and she surprised me by suggesting we should pray for a parking space. I harboured doubts about the propriety of this at the time, and I still do. Is it permissible to attempt to divert the mind of God from his regular job of keeping the celestial spheres in orderly motion by asking him to attend to my local travel arrangements?

In the country parish I was always asked to pray for fair weather for the garden party, but I am more perturbed by the request from a chap who phones me about twice in the year and asks me to pray for him. Fair enough. Priests are expected to pray for their people. But this man always demands that I beseech the Almighty to send him some money. Might as well ask God to give him the lottery numbers.

Chesterton tells a lovely tale about his grandfather, of whom he had fond recollections which contained thrilling spiritual insights. He writes:

> *People were criticising the General Thanksgiving in the Prayer Book, and remarking that a good many people have very little reason to be thankful for their creation. And the old man, who was then so old that he hardly ever spoke at all, said suddenly out of his silence, 'I should thank God for my creation even if I knew I was a lost soul'.*

There are problems with public prayer. One of my pet liturgical hates – and I am trying to cut down on the number of these – is to attend a church service at which the start of The Intercessions is a sort of grand tour of the world's trouble spots. The impression is that the person praying has just come hot foot from listening to *The Today Programme*. The trouble with this approach is that it excludes by its very attempt to be specific. I mean, if he prays for Egypt, then why leave out Libya, or Jordan or Canada?

Besides, there is usually a left wing bias to these supplications and the intercessor is likely to pray for '...those who are fighting for freedom and justice.' Yes, but whose version of freedom and justice?

The best intercessory prayer by a long chalk is *The Litany* in *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662). We should have it more often. It avoids being invidious because it leaves nobody out.

> *That it may please thee to defend and provide for the fatherless children and widows and all that are desolate or oppressed. That it may please thee to have mercy upon all men...*

That even includes car park attendants.

Most people think that prayer is asking God to do things for them. To make them healthy and happy and, if possible, prosperous. But really prayer is mainly concerned with praising God, with adoration: 'Glory be to God on high...' for without that you can't have the next line, the thing we all crave, 'peace on earth, goodwill towards men...'

And, after praise, must come thanksgiving.

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No Alternative

Robert Crowcroft

Making Thatcher's Britain, Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (eds), Cambridge University Press, 2012, £19.99.

The Iron Lady is never going to be anything less than controversial. My undergraduate students love talking about her. Witnessing them fall out over the Thatcher governments is endlessly amusing. One student complained that I had failed to restrain another student from making a strident defence of private property. When I said that it wasn't my job, the student was indignant. To Margaret Thatcher's acolytes, she was the woman who saved Britain – if only temporarily – and demonstrated what can be accomplished when seemingly intractable problems are tackled with sufficient willpower and gusto. To her detractors, Thatcher was the Darth Vader of Western politics, determined to take a light sabre to trade unions and other totems of socialism.

These characterisations, fun as they are, are polemical. In the twenty-first century, distance from the Thatcher era is allowing historians to make a serious contribution to our understanding of what happened. The possibilities were made clear by Ewen Green's excellent book *Thatcher*, John Campbell's powerful two-volume biography of Mrs T, and Geoff Fry's biting *The Politics of the Thatcher Revolution*. Now Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders, two Oxford academics, have produced a highly stimulating collection of essays that endeavour to treat Thatcher, and Thatcherism, seriously as topics for historical analysis.

The results are outstanding, and certain to stimulate a new generation of scholars (and some older ones too) to work on the period. Though this is an academic book, non-academics should not hesitate to read it and it will engage the mind of the interested general reader. Moreover the gobbledygook that mars much contemporary academic writing in the humanities – conversion of prose into an intimidating fog, a conversion that usually coincides with weak ideas or stating the blindingly obvious – is wholly absent as the contributors stick to the English language. In addition, this is proper political history without any of the 'cultural studies' gibberish which has infected that discipline (and may yet kill it).

The themes covered range widely. There are fourteen essays in all, extending from economics to morality, Enoch Powell to foreign policy. The best is probably Robert Saunder's piece on Thatcher's use – and construction – of several popular myths about the seventies, turning them into the basis of a hegemonic political project and shaping public debate about the seventies for evermore. Promising to solve problems of 'crisis' and 'decline' allowed Thatcher to give the Conservative party a sense of mission. This had the dual benefit of imposing her own authority on the party and communicating to the public that she was a conviction politician. And in her attempts to simplify Britain's post-war problems rhetorically and package them in such a way as to have maximum popular appeal, the essay shows how Thatcher was a politician down to her fingertips. This meant that Thatcherism could never be refuted by trade statistics or recession, for it turned on a diagnosis of the seventies and common sense language like 'sound money' and 'freedom'. Far from being a zealot, Thatcher was simply more resourceful than the enemies who thought her a fanatic – and cleverer than the admirers who romanticised her.

In another superb essay, Camilla Schofield of the University of East Anglia (home to a number of excellent historians of modern Britain) draws out the similarities and differences between Thatcher and Powell. Powell certainly laid down some of the doctrinal and rhetorical foundations of Thatcherism, but the two were engaged in different struggles. Thatcher imagined herself as part of a wider war – at home and abroad – against socialism, while Powell was driven by his fears for national independence and sovereignty. Powell had a sensitive appreciation of the fragility of society, and saw populist patriotism as a device to help unify a divided country. He was also imbued with an Oakeshottian suspicion of rationalism and its capacity to remake people, and came to believe that Thatcher shared the left-wing assumption that the soul itself could be remade by government policy.

Elsewhere, Ben Jackson shows how the argument for neo-liberal economics was made through think-tanks, intellectuals, the business community, and the media. Jim Tomlinson demonstrates the way in which Thatcher enabled the Conservative party to finally develop a coherent narrative about inflation, its causes, and how to defeat it. Emphasising the effects of inflation became a powerful weapon. Matthew

Grimley's essay builds on Shirley Robin Letwin's *The Anatomy of Thatcherism* and interrogates Thatcher as a moral figure reacting against permissiveness. Andrew Gamble shows exactly why Thatcher was so much more attracted to the United States than to Europe. And David Howell offers a perceptive essay on the miners who defied Arthur Scargill and remained at work, but is a tad sentimental in imagining that Yorkshire miners who travelled to Nottinghamshire to picket were seeking 'solidarity'; being from a Yorkshire mining town myself, I can say truthfully say that they went looking for a brawl.

There are many other good essays here as well as useful guides to further reading, a timeline of Thatcher's career, and detailed statistical tables on elections, voting patterns, and various economic indicators. I would have liked to see a piece questioning whether Thatcher actually remade the social contract (to be sure, individualism rather than collectivism was emphasised, but what the state does for the citizen was perhaps not radically altered). It would also have been helpful to have a piece on unemployment, one of the most resonant images of the eighties (the failure of so many people to be mobile in search of work means that a chunk of the unemployment was voluntary, and thus proof of Thatcher's arguments about proletarian dependency). But these are minor quibbles. The book is stimulating throughout.

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A Modern Moby Dick

Celia Haddon

Death at SeaWorld, Shamu and the Dark Side of Killer Whales in Captivity, David Kirby, St Martin's Press, 2012, £18.99.

Killer whales, the popular name for *Orcinus orca*, are huge black and white sea mammals. Strictly speaking orcas aren't whales at all: they belong to the dolphin family. They live in a closely related family groups or pods, in which four generations can be found swimming together. Unusually for a social species, male orcas are Mummy's boys. They stay with their mothers for years and years rather than leaving the family pod.

They are also highly intelligent. Killer whales show signs of altruism towards friends and family, staying with and defending injured pod members. They are able to recognise themselves in mirrors, one of the scientists' tests for intelligence. Only apes, elephants and possibly some birds have this capacity, which suggests a self-awareness not found in human children under the age of two.

Some killer whales, known as resident orcas, feed only on fish: others, known as transient orcas, feed on seals, sea lions and even smaller whales. These will throw their prey into the air, slapping it with their tails, or landing upon it with their bodies. What wild orcas do not do, unlike some sharks, is eat humans. There is no record of a fatal attack on a human by an orca living in the wild.

Yet in February 2010, Tilikum, the largest of the orcas kept in the SeaWorld marine park in Florida, turned on his trainer, Dawn Brancheau, grabbed her, pulled her under the water, rammed her with his body, grabbed her again when she broke free, and swam round the pool with her dying body in his mouth. The entertainment, during which the orca had performed tricks for fish, had ended in tragedy.

Death at SeaWorld tells the story of what led up to this unnatural attack, by tracking the lives of individual humans, both those researching the lives of wild orcas and those who were orca trainers. At times this method is hard going, but overall the gradual accumulation of detail in the narrative is convincing. The tale starts years before the death of Dawn Brancheau and slowly outlines for the reader what the implications of keeping these animals captive are.

Even in the best of marine parks, orcas swim in tiny shallow concrete pools in chemically treated water: they are forced into contact with unrelated fellow orcas that may bully them: and their only recreation is circus tricks. Captive orcas get sunburnt because they cannot dive deep enough to keep out of the sun. The attack on Dawn Brancheau suggests that these conditions may have driven Tilikum mad.

Once killer whales and dolphins were merely a source of blubber and meat (they are still eaten in Japan). Now in most countries they are wildlife icons. Their growing popularity however comes at a price for individuals of the species. Wild orcas swim a hundred miles a day through a water volume of 170,000 million litres. A typical orca pool contains 25.4 million litres of water – a volume seven thousand times smaller. No wonder captive orcas die earlier than wild ones.

David Kirby also tracks the lives of the individual whales, including, of course, Tilikum, the orca that turned on his trainer. Tilikum was captured at the age of two, taken from his mother, and was the only one of three baby orcas to survive the trauma of capture. Several of his pod were surrounded by nets, while he was hauled up from the water in a canvas sling, placed in a large foam-lined tub, and put into a small tank. Later, as an adolescent, he was bullied by two much larger females.

Tilikum had form, even before the latest death. A few years back, he and the two other females who lived with him had pulled a female trainer underwater, dragged her about and finally drowned her. After that he and the females had been shipped out of his original 'home' at Sealand, a marine park in Canada, to SeaWorld in California. Eight years later, it happened again. A man who had sneaked into the park overnight, possibly to 'swim with orcas,' was found dead in Tilikum's pool.

It seems obvious, as David Kirby tells it, that this particular whale was dangerous. If male orcas in the wild learn to be less aggressive by spending the years with their mothers, then Tilikum had not received the necessary anti-aggression education. Among social animals (including humans), the correct socialisation of the young is a vital part of learning how to live and relate to others. Like a dog bred in an abusive puppy farm or a feral child of using addicts, Tilikum grew up aggressive.

Despite his record, the trainers at SeaWorld had regular unprotected contact (the zoo word for no barriers) with him. When Dawn Brancheau was attacked, she was lying in the shallow edge of the pool close to the animal that was to kill her. The park was fined for safety violations, which, rather disappointingly, is where this book ends. Tilikum was taken out of the shows and various safety measures like guard rails and safety nets are now in place to protect the trainers.

In fiction, Tilikum would have been rescued from captivity and rehabilitated to a proper life in the wild. This wasn't going to happen, not least because releasing an orca into the wild is not straightforward. When Keiko, the orca star of a movie, *Free Willy*, was found ulcerated and starving in a tiny tank in Mexico City, millions of dollars were spent on rescuing, rehabilitating and eventually freeing him into the ocean. As this book describes, all this effort came to nothing. Keiko, who had been captured as a baby, didn't know how to survive in the wild.

So the future looks bad for Tilikum. He is back in the performance pool, valued for his size and for his ability to sire baby orcas (a fair proportion of which die at birth). Thousands still come to see the SeaWorld performing killer whales, just as thousands visit dolphinariums round the world or even take sick or troubled children for healing by swimming with dolphins that are themselves probably even more sick and troubled than the children. None of these enthusiasts for dolphin and orca know much about the welfare of the animals they 'love'.

SeaWorld comes off badly in this book and their reputation is not helped by the discovery only this October of a severe jaw injury in Nakai, one of Tilikum's sons. The wound, whether from bullying by other orcas, from the tiny size of the pool or from some kind of accident, was so severe that his jawbone was visible. *Death at SeaWorld* is written with the hope of persuading the reader that orcas are not a suitable species for captivity. It seems so obvious, yet people continue to pay good money to gawp at the unfortunate captives.

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Rivers of Blood

Julia Stapleton

Enoch at 100: A Re-evaluation of the Life, Politics and Philosophy of Enoch Powell, Lord Howard of Rising (ed), London, Biteback Publishing Ltd, 2012, £25.00.

Enoch Powell, who died in 1997, was perhaps the most controversial politician of the twentieth century, a figure who sought to lift what he regarded as the veil of deception that shrouded many areas of public policy. As this excellent volume of essays celebrating the centenary of his birth shows, his commitment to truth stemmed from his conception of the British people and the parliament that represented their interests as the first call on his loyalties. Unlike many politicians of his own and subsequent generations, he refused to write his memoirs or keep a diary. Nor did he ever attempt to draw his wide-ranging political beliefs into a coherent philosophy, as Philip Norton observes in a biographical note to the work. Instead of a carefully constructed persona, he focused instead on developing a voice that commanded wide public attention. His models were the statesmen and orators of classical antiquity, reflecting the formative role of classics in shaping his mind and thought. In keeping with this background, he left behind a mass of speeches as penetrating as they were prophetic. They provide the main material of analysis throughout the book and individual speeches are reproduced in full at the end of most chapters.

The editor has assembled a distinguished cast of politicians, journalists and writers to consider Powell's contribution to the politics of the second half of the twentieth century and his contemporary relevance. The book is enhanced by their anecdotes about Powell; Iain Duncan Smith's account of his platform presence is particularly memorable. Powell's contribution to classical scholarship provides the focus of a chapter by Margaret Mountford. The book also includes an interview

with his widow, Pamela Powell, the first time she has discussed publicly her husband's political career and their marriage of forty-six years, as well as some of the moving poems he wrote for her on their wedding anniversaries. The other chapters cover his wide range of interests and concerns. What stands out most from the book is the deep sense of patriotism that animated Powell. It was the force behind his vehement opposition to the European Union which Nicholas True discusses in much interesting depth; also his powerful intervention in the House of Commons debate in 1959 condemning the atrocities in the Hola Camp in Kenya, in Frank Field's view the most outstanding of all his speeches. The same patriotic motivation was apparent in his argument for a defence policy that focused on Britain's immediate, European environment rather than military engagement in far-flung parts of the world; this is ably outlined by Andrew Alexander. His patriotism underlay the economic liberalism with which he challenged the post-war consensus and the scourge of inflation to which it had led, as Simon Heffer makes clear. It was also expressed in his staunch commitment to maintaining the Union with Northern Ireland, becoming an Ulster Unionist MP in 1974 after he broke with the Conservative Party over its refusal to hold a referendum on Europe. As Alistair Cooke points out, his support for Airey Neave in pressing for the full incorporation of the province into the United Kingdom parliament underlined his belief in the indivisibility of the nation. Andrew Roberts remarks that Powell's rhetoric was at its most Churchillian when he addressed the dual threat to the British nation-state of the EEC, on the one hand, and the precarious position of Ulster, on the other.

Inevitably, the book prompts the question of the relationship between patriotism, nationalism and racism in Powell's thought. Cooke well brings out Powell's emphasis on the basis of nationhood in subjective identity rather than objective factors such as race, language or geography. For Powell, allegiance to the nation at this fundamental psychological level was the essence of patriotism. It was heavily dependent on invocations of the spirit of the nation as manifested in history, something in which Powell excelled, as Roger Scruton emphasises in his chapter on the language of nationhood in Powell's speeches. At the same time, allegiance to the nation *state* was bound up inextricably with issues of citizenship. As Powell tried to warn the Conservative Party at the time, the Bill that became the British Nationality Act of 1948 divorced nationality from allegiance in a vain attempt on the part of the Labour Government to shore up the Commonwealth. His most notorious speech – the 'rivers of blood' speech of 1968 – was framed primarily in terms of the conflict between different races and cultures that immigration from the New Commonwealth, especially, would engender; however, its backdrop was the surrender of the right of the British government to determine who could enjoy the status of British citizenship and on what terms. This was lost in the furore that followed the speech although it is emphasised by Andrew Roberts in his essay on the importance of the nation state to Powell. While Powell rarely returned to the 1948 Act, it featured in his *vale* delivered to the Salisbury Group at Hatfield House in 1987 – also reprinted in the book. Even otherwise sympathetic contributors to this volume such as Frank Field find it hard to forgive Powell for framing the problem of mass immigration primarily in terms of racial hostility. In the most critical chapter of the book, Tom Bower takes Powell to task for allowing his 'genuine discovery' about the conservative estimate of the net increase in immigration by the Registrar General of births to become obscured by his conception not only of first but second generation immigrants as 'aliens'. On the other hand, the journalist Anne Robinson defends Powell as articulating the concerns of ordinary people such as her family in Liverpool.

Nevertheless, the book succeeds well in moving debate about Powell's legacy beyond his views on immigration. It points to Powell's continuing relevance across a wide area of current political debate, including human rights law (True), military intervention in distant parts of the globe (Alexander), constitutional reform (Michael Forsyth), and even climate change (Richard Ritchie). Powell's innermost political conviction was the importance of the Disraelian belief in 'trusting the people'. In a review of Lord Blake's biography of Disraeli in 1966, he argued that the Conservative Party had never been so successful politically as when it had followed this dictum, and had always failed when it had become the tool of an oligarchy instead. Yet it was not only the Conservative Party that had betrayed the people; the people had betrayed themselves following a massive loss of national self-confidence in the aftermath of Suez. This was the painful subject of Powell's *vale*, delivered with sadness and incredulity although not bitterness, even in the wake of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. *Enoch at 100* brings back the freshness of his vision; and, despite all, his optimism. In a speech in Portugal in 1990 he emphasised that nations *do* return to type, in Britain's case one committed to parliamentary self-government.

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The Inventor of the Dinner Party

Jane Kelly

A History Of Food In 100 Recipes, William Sitwell, Harper Collins, 2012, £20.

After consuming this fat book, the reader will be able to regale dinner guests with details of the slow evolution of the fool into the trifle, comment on the uptake of the fork, and describe the world-changing discovery of the apple-pie. They will also be able to answer niggling questions such as, what was it like to dine with the Vikings or Richard II, and what exactly was pottage?

This is a first book by Sitwell, the editor of *Waitrose Kitchen* magazine, great nephew of the great Edith, and a keen cider maker. From his extensive research, including Icelandic chronicles and the Bayeux Tapestry, he has provided 100 chapters, each containing a good yarn and a usually delicious recipe, although he admits they are not all 'easily cookable'. This is history at its best because Sitwell likes to write about individual people, kings, queens, social reformers, cooks and crooks, along the way telling us the history of our dinner

He begins with ancient Egypt, quoting a recipe for bread from the 4,000 year old wall of Senet's tomb in Luxor. The walls of the burial chamber show hunting, shooting and fishing, and bread making. Senet was the wife of a noble and must have been pretty good in the kitchen as there are no other tombs for women in that era. The images of bread were meant to assist her in the next life, but being a good cook never did a woman any harm, in any age. Apparently the Egyptians later developed the rudiments of cooking, but the people of Babylon followed it up, making 300 different types of bread and an amazing variety of soups. They also used fresh herbs and spices such as coriander and cumin, which foodies in the west have only just rediscovered.

He tells us about 'Tiger nut sweets' from Biblical times, a combination of honey, nuts and almonds, which we still enjoy, and fish baked in fig leaves, which sounds delicious to the modern ear. The Sicilian writer Archestratus, who wrote it down in the 4th century BC, said, 'You couldn't spoil it if you wanted to.' From Cato the Elder, Sitwell passes on advice on the tricky business of salting a ham. It's all very clear and vividly brings to mind the ancient kitchen, where meat was preserved by smearing with olive oil and vinegar. From the Middle Ages, as well as the rather dismal pottage, a cabbage stew cooked in the pot, we get the delicious sounding Rummaniyya, meatballs in pomegranate sauce, from an Egyptian cookery book dated 1250.

The cult of the chef really began in 1545 with the publication of *A Proper New Booke on Cokery* and men began to put their names to recipes, such as the Pear of Pies (pear tart), created by Taillevent, chef to Charles V of France. Celebrity seems to have followed the development of the nation state in Europe and the individualism which came with the Renaissance. In the worship of Man rather than God we have the origin of the Hairy Bikers, Jamie Oliver, Hugh Fearnley-Whatsit and all those newly famous chefs involved in the Great British Bake Off.

Taillevent wrote the first cookery book, *Le Viandier*, which sold almost as well as Jamie, fourteen editions in three hundred years. A few years later the English caught on when Richard of Bordeaux came to the throne and became the first galloping gourmet. Before he was deposed so cruelly by the boorish Bolingbroke, a pie and chips man if ever there was one, Richard had invented the dinner party, usually for quite a few friends, with 300 chefs cooking fourteen oxen, 140 pigs and 210 geese. He also beat Mrs. Beeton's famous score by using 11,000 eggs at a sitting.

With the Renaissance people became more uppity generally. They 'got ideas,' and noticed that only the rich had access to meat. This brings us to vegetarianism, the impulse for which, Sitwell shows, goes back to Erasmus, ably supported by his friend StThomas More. He points out that More's *Utopia* was a veggie world. His contemporary, the French essayist Michel de Montaigne, he with his famous cat, was horrified by hunting.

He reveals in some detail the cruelty involved in cooking, especially by the Romans and later the French. Some of this evidence comes down to us thanks to one William Kitchiner, a social reformer who in his *Cook's Oracle* of 1817, which sold 15,000 copies, aimed to improve the diet of the poor and railed against cruelty to animals.

There is an amusing print of Dr Kitchiner, standing by his telescope with what looks like a tiger standing behind him. Sitwell describes the *foie gras* process and happily comes out against it. It's always nice to feel that the author of a book giving some quite emotive information is really a good egg.

He naturally takes account of American influence, giving chapters to the omnipresent cup cake and strawberry shortcake. It now seems strange but independent frontiers-women were as busy baking as hard as we were, until they discovered feminism in the late 1950s and started getting their cakes out of a packet.

This is not just a riveting book for history lovers. Sitwell pertinently describes the evolution of the long British love affair with the cookery book, which never stops.

Cookery writing in the 19th century was of course far removed from the world of celebrity chefs and TV tie-ins, although Isabella Beeton, the mother of all jam roly-polys, did manage to create quite a lot of comment and scandal before she died of syphilis at the age of twenty-eight. Her *Book of Household Management* is still the most famous cookery book in English and much scrutinised, if not really used, to this day. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, edited by her husband, appealed to the new urban middle-classes.

Those same city types are still buying books about cooking even if they have no time to do it themselves. £87m was spent on food titles last year. Thanks to the unexpected popularity of The Great British Bakeoff on BBC2, in the first half of this year 26 baking books have sold more than 5,000 copies each. Being both escapist and practical, cookery books, smeared pages and all, have withstood the recession, e books and Kindle.

This big, plump tome of 342 pages would make a good stocking filler, although strangely the author doesn't mention the British Christmas, apart from a short chapter on our beloved Brussels sprouts.

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Clever, Rich and Hated

Brian Ridley

The New Few, Ferdinand Mount, Simon & Schuster, 2012, £18.99.
Coming Apart: the State of White America, 1960-2010, Charles Murray, Crown Forum, 2012, $27.

Charles Murray has been the left's *bête noir* ever since he co-authored *The Bell Curve* with Richard J Herrnstein in 1944. *The Bell Curve* charted the IQ of various elements of the American population emphasising the increasing value of brainpower in the marketplace. Definitely not comfortable to those of an egalitarian persuasion. In his new book *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960-2010*, he points to the rise of a new brain-powered upper class and its segregation from mainstream America. In Ferdinand Mount's book *The New Few or A Very British Oligarchy*, a new element of society is identified that superficially bears comparison with Murray's new upper class, which makes it worth while to treat the claims of both books together.

The US has always claimed to be classless, and apart from a few old families in New England this was largely true, so a more divided society is more traumatic there than in the UK where society has always been class-ridden – private versus state education, rugby versus soccer. Nevertheless a 'new few', distinct from the middle and working classes and our underclass, has appeared. According to Mount it constitutes an oligarchy whose members behave somewhat like Nietzsche's blond beasts, ruthlessly exploiting their power, sharing a new corporative morality, and, worryingly, cut off from the rest of society.

The subtitle of Murray's book is important. Most modern discussions of the problems of American society have focused on race. Murray focuses on a problem that has nothing to do with race. 1960-2010 saw revolutionary changes in sexual mores, popular culture and technology. Increasingly, there was the need for more mind workers – managers, executives, engineers, scientists, lawyers, professors, journalists. More bright kids went to elite colleges and universities. The segregation of people into a cognitive elite and the rest, mirrored in Britain by Michael Young's *The Rise of the Meritocracy* in 1958, began.

Murray's new upper class comprises the most successful five percent of adults aged over 25, in top positions in management, the professions and the media which affect the culture, economy and politics of the nation. Murray claims that his new upper class is different from the old upper class because its members have something in common beyond simple success. They are graduates from top universities with shared backgrounds, tastes, preferences and culture. In that they are unlike the merely rich and powerful who used to be called The Establishment.

> *Back in the days when Harvard men and Wellesley women were more likely to be rich rather than smart, this meant that money was more likely to marry money. In an era when they are both in the top centiles of the IQ distribution, it means that very smart is more likely to marry very smart.*

By 1990 they were flourishing. In mainstream schools the two thirds of mothers in their twenties were overweight, in elite private schools mothers were in their thirties or forties and were mostly thin.

> *The members of the new upper class are healthy in other ways. They know their cholesterol count and the percentage of bodily fat. They monitor their diets, eating lots of whole grains, green vegetables, and olive oil, while limiting their intake of red meat, processed food, and butter… A Big Mac … is an occasional guilty pleasure, but hardly anyone in the new upper class approaches the about-once-a-week average of the rest of the population.*

The culture cuts across ideological lines. Elite

liberals are more green than elite conservatives, are less likely to serve red meat at a dinner party, and their children have a vanishingly small risk of being spanked. All very recognisable here in the UK. But what concerns conservative Murray, with his ideal of American self-reliance, is a general tendency towards left-liberal views and a drift towards the European Welfare State.

Exacerbating this cultural divide is the residential divide. America has always had its elite neighbourhoods: Upper East Side in New York, Beacon Hill in Boston, the North Shore in Chicago. These, like Silicon Valley, inevitably attracted the new upper class. Between 1960 and 2000, the number of residents in these elite neighbourhoods with college degrees doubled along with median incomes. Such cultural and residential segregation makes it difficult to know how everybody else lives, which as a power wielder makes the new class vulnerable to error.

Once, Murray writes with an almost audible sigh, all Americans were industrious, honest and churchgoing, virtues increasingly rare among the lower classes. However, they still survive in middle America and remain strong among the new upper class. But while the middle class might envy the wealth and the freedom of members of the new upper class to work from home, they are unlikely to envy their working hours. People with brains like their brains to be occupied, and there is little incentive for entertainment. Work is more of a pleasure than a duty, but the country's ubiquitous work ethic still holds sway. No division there, nor in the recognition, shared with middle America, that the demands of citizenship must be paramount in the Republic.

That recognition is not shared by the underclass, whose young males have never known a father, and live in homes where no one has worked. The egalitarian idea that every person without exception has the ability to be a good citizen has been irrevocably undermined by the miserable rehabilitation successes of young criminals. Unless the right nurture is there at an early age, criminality appears to be irreversible. However America, unlike Britain, is rich enough to keep more of the underclass in custody and off the streets.

Mount wonders if the situation is comparable to Russia, where the collapse of the Soviet Empire allowed predators to grab the country's resources of oil, gas and minerals, and become fabulously rich and powerful. Is something similar happening here in the UK? Bankers, executives and managers in all sorts of institutions, including the BBC, universities and quangos, have been paying themselves huge salaries and awarding themselves large bonuses for years, magnifying inequality. The banker J P Morgan once asserted that no one at the top of a company should earn more than twenty times those at the bottom. Today the ratio can be measured in hundreds.

For financial dummies like myself the best thing about Mount's book is his clear account of how this has come about. An investor buys shares in a company, thereby owning part of the company with the right to monitor its performance. His power is real when the shareholding is confined to a small number of investors but becomes diluted as the company expands along with the shareholding. Shareholding is risky, so investors spread the risk by investing in a number of companies, using unit trusts and their managers to look after their investments. Directors found they could get on running such businesses without interference from the shareholders. As big corporations grew bigger and more powerful, their managers, more particularly their finance managers, saw no reason why their salaries should not go up accordingly. Managers of smaller companies had every incentive to initiate take-overs to make the company bigger or invent new financial instruments to give them the excuse for inflated salaries. Ill-judged schemes led to the crash of 2008. Once those grossly inflated salaries became a political issue there were moves towards setting up remuneration committees to monitor pay rises, but the inevitable membership of such committees could not fail to be themselves part of the problem. Nevertheless, Mount is optimistic that the tide has turned, though not very obviously. He advocates a two-tier board structure for companies along the lines used successfully for years by the Dutch giant telecommunications company Philips, one board being purely supervisory over the executive board.

Charles Murray is an academic and his book is full of graphs and tables of relevant data, backed up by addenda. Mount's is not but while being anecdotal and somewhat repetitious, it does name names. Murray's account of his new upper class is persuasive, Mount's theory of an oligarchy is not. Fat-cat managers there certainly are, but they have yet to throw up a Putin with a cynical disregard for our long-established democracy.

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Falling for Paddy

Penelope Tremayne

Patrick Leigh Fermor: An Adventure, Artemis Cooper, John Murray, 2012, £25.

One of the many distinguishing things about Paddy, as Artemis Cooper sensibly calls him throughout, was his timelessness. He did not belong to his own generation or any other, and she is skilful in showing this in her

portrait of him and the segment of society in which he flourished: a highly intelligent one, highly educated, disillusioned and aware not only that European life since the 1920s had changed radically and irreversibly, but that the roots of the change were in themselves. Much has been written about earlier groups – like the Bloomsberries, navel gazers by comparison, anxiously trying to shape life to their templates. Paddy and his friends were looking outwards, not inwards, seeing as much of the old as they could before it vanished for ever, but taking whatever offered in the new, in which present or future he seems never to have lost faith.

The first hundred pages or so of the book summarise Paddy's own recollections of his walk across Europe in 1934-5. This is obviously less colourful than the original; and, in what I think must have been a resolve not to sound too uncritical of an escapade, Cooper has told the story in a slightly disapproving tone which is unfair both to him and to her. For readers who do not already know the tale such an introduction was necessary; it was the preliminary to his four-year-long Romanian sojourn, an idyll which ended only with the outbreak of World War II. He returned to England at once and enlisted with the Irish Guards. Whatever may be the army's talent for cramming round pegs into square holes, all should be forgiven them for fitting him into the only just formed SOE for which he was ideally suited. At this stage of the narrative, the authorial governess-like voice disappears for good and we are carried swiftly through the first two years of the war: including the extraction of the British Expeditionary Force through Crete to Cairo, and then of course a handful of them back to Crete, the guerrilla campaign that followed and the much and justly celebrated kidnapping of General Kreipe. All this is excellently told, with the detail and the relevant well-produced maps that it deserves.

Paddy found the two years after the end of the war unsatisfying, and they brought him no nearer to any means of earning a living. He was clearly not suited to the disciplines of army life in peacetime, and still less to teaching or office routines. The British Council in Athens employed him for a time, mainly for lecturing, but found him rather more than they could handle. He also tried to turn his recollections of the Long Walk into book form, but could not. However, publications such as *Horizon*, the *London Magazine*, the *Cornhill Magazine*, *Encounter* and others commissioned work from him. This may or may not have kept the wolf from the door, but certainly established him as a seriously good writer. Then his luck turned: a Greek friend, a photographer with a contract for a camera's eye book on the Caribbean islands invited him to come too and write captions and descriptive notes to go with the photographs. This resulted in a fascinating expedition, followed by Paddy's first book, *The Traveller's Tree*. It was an immediate success and backed by John Murray. His life from then on was devoted to writing, travelling, and the cultivation of his galaxy of friends.

Cooper has faithfully narrated the course of an exotic, erratic and absorbing life. She says very little about the character behind the adventurer but gives us glimpses here and there, discreetly, allowing us to form our own opinions if we wish. The courage, friendliness, the instinct to see no evil and to blame no one for anything show clearly. This is the more valuable because critics have been inclined to present him only as a good time luxury lover who lived on a talent for enjoyment, his own and other people's. She also tells that, for all their quaintness and colour and the trailing tatters of history that cling round the Caribbean, he was not captivated by the islands, their ethos or their atmosphere, recognising the lives led there as horrible. One comment that she gives surprised me: 'Both he and Vanessa [his sister] had absorbed their mother's bitterness' towards their father. I doubt that Paddy was capable of bitterness. She refers several times to his susceptibility to the Black Dog: the sudden descents into pits of acute depression, though without exploring it further. Of course she mentions his visits to monasteries, but without going into what motivated them or what influences they may have had on him. He reckoned himself to be a Catholic, however far from being a practising one. However recklessly or fecklessly he chose to live, the concepts of repentance and forgiveness seem to have been embedded in him; an idea worth exploring in so mercurial a nature.

Here was a life lived to the full and richly worth the re-telling. A phrase one tends to read or hear repeated about it is that 'everyone fell in love with Paddy'. Cooper neither dismisses nor elaborates on this; perhaps with the natural reticence of a life-long friend. In some ways the much briefer view of his long-term companion and eventual wife Joan, one of the most self-effacing and self-contained figures you could find anywhere, is clearer than the one she gives of him. What she does tell of him allows us to understand – and it is surely the key to his life – is that it was Paddy himself who fell in love with nearly everyone, and with nearly all of life; and that is why most people were drawn to him.

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A Master Builder
John Jolliffe

James Wyatt, John Martin Robinson, Yale University Press, 2012, £50.

By displacing Robert Adam, Wyatt became the architect most in demand by the great house builders of the late eighteenth century, from the royal family downwards. He was also astonishingly prolific. Wynnstay and 20 St James's Square, both for Sir Watkin Williams Wynn; Heveningham, Heaton Hall, Crichel, Dodington, Goodwood are among his best known successes in England, together with Leinster House, Castle Coole and Curraghmore in Ireland, where his genius has only been recognised in the twentieth century, thanks to the erratic but indispensable crusade conducted by the Irish Georgian Society. This is not to mention numerous alterations elsewhere, (including work in cathedrals, widely considered to be anything but improvements) and a huge range of admirable designs for furniture of many kinds, including a couple of splendid organ cases, as well as silver and stonework, in which he worked with Mrs Coade using her great formula for artificial stone.

These successes arose originally from Wyatt's early background, and this book is admirably strong on the social and economic history of the period, as well as the aesthetic. He owed a flying start to the financial success of his father's firm of builders near Lichfield, which drew him in his teens into the Birmingham-centred circle of the Lunar Society; Matthew Boulton, Erasmus Darwin, Joseph Priestley, James Watt and Josiah Wedgwood all came into his life at an impressionable age. It was a world of inventive vigour, expanding prosperity, enterprise, and (for a minority) the new opportunities created by the dynamic general culture of the Industrial Revolution. His father's money would enable him to study for four years in Rome where he came under the influence of Piranesi and marvelled at the Pantheon, as well as measuring the dome of St Peter's, before going on to another two years study in Venice. Before coming home he also acquired three paintings by Rosalba Carriera, and three more by Canaletto. This experience would lead to the sheer variety of what came to be the sources for his designs.

He enjoyed great luck through his father's prosperity, and also because the fashion for Adam was waning. Wyatt's brother Sam was the carpenter and manager of Adam's work at Kedleston, and James inherited his brother's skilled team of workers when he achieved his big breakthrough with the London Pantheon. After a last triumph at Home House in Portman Square, (for some years the home of the Courtauld Institute), Adam got no further work in England and returned, defeated, to his native Scotland.

Wyatt was to develop severe faults as well as dazzling gifts. His intense flashes of energy and imagination were outstanding, but were matched by chronic unpunctuality, and an inability to work at projects consistently, though he did not share Adam's vanity and jealousy, or his condescension to his inferiors. At the height of their rivalry a savage but not entirely unfair squib was published by Wyatt's admirers, mocking Adam for decking Architecture with the flutter of a courtesan no better than models for the twelfth night decorations of a Pastry-Cook. George III, who took a serious interest in design, was more restrained: too much neatness and prettiness.

But the tide had turned. The antiquarian Duke of Northumberland removed Adam's elegant redecoration at Alnwick Castle in his determination to re-mediaevalise it in the wake of Sir Walter Scott, as at Windsor, Arundel and Belvoir. Such was Wyatt's success that he was the first architect to become President of the Royal Academy. Chambers was twenty-five years older than Wyatt, and Adam twenty-one, and Wyatt swept all before him but he was always trying to do too much. One of his clients, Lord Ducie, commented that 'if he does not present himself soon I very much doubt if he will gain admittance, as I cannot think his abilities will sufficiently atone for his impertinence'. This shows that architects at the time were treated rather as the butcher or baker. He would have fallen sooner but for his good manners and easy-going charm to set against his disorganised habits. When he carried out his great work at Wilton House, after his initial fanfare he only visited it once in four years.

This became worse after his appointment as Surveyor of the Works, involving large projects at Kew, Windsor, Buckingham Palace and the Palace of Westminster, but like many who have worked for the Royal Family, he discovered that much more prestige than money is the outcome. So much so that on his death his financial incompetence left him owing the Treasury £3,000, met by the sale of his personal estate, leaving his family with nothing. Perhaps he found it a relief to forget his financial confusion and go on indulging in his still undimmed powers of architectural design, deploying not only his basic neo-classical strength, but all possible architectural styles.

No one seriously interested in English architecture can do without this book. It has been compiled, with meticulous scholarship, in a way that some of the

author's earlier potboilers did not aspire to be, though his biography of Cardinal Consalvi, who played such an important part in Catholic Emancipation in England, was crucial. It seems impossible that *James Wyatt* will ever be superseded. The subject is magnificently brought further to life by the illustrations, and the whole production confirms the well-known fact that for works of this kind Yale University Press puts virtually all English publishers to shame.

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Stalin's Steel Fist

Nigel Jones

Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe 1944-56, Anne Applebaum, Allen Lane/ Penguin, 2012, £25.00.

More than two decades after the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe there are still far too many people in the western world – the sort whom Lenin, no less, dubbed 'useful idiots' – willing to make excuses for the brutal totalitarian system that held one half of our continent in stagnant subjugation for half a century. But Anne Applebaum is certainly not one of them.

A multi-lingual scholar (LSE & Oxford) and journalist (*The Economist*, *Washington Post, Boston Globe* and *Independent* and married to Poland's current Foreign Minister) – she combines scrupulous academic research with readable investigative and interview journalism. Her first major book, *A History of Stalin's Gulag*, won rave reviews and this one, a study of the relatively neglected story of the stranglehold Communism threw across half Europe in the wake of WWII, has the same qualities of arresting detail combined with cold facts and figures.

Applebaum concentrates on the six central European countries occupied by the Red Army after it fought back Hitler's invading armies in 1945: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria and East Germany. The three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are outside her remit as they were actually absorbed into the Soviet Union; as are the Balkan countries of Yugoslavia and Albania, which charted an independent course outside Moscow's control.

She begins her book with a stark description of the devastation caused in eastern Europe by the war, emphasising that it was not just the physical destruction – the cities bombed and ravaged – but the moral degradation of a whole society, brutalised by daily mass violence, starvation and suffering. The death of one form of totalitarianism, Hitler's Nazism, did not mean a return to peace and democracy; instead it made the whole of eastern Europe easy pickings for the Communist commissars who rolled in in the wake of the Red Army's tank tracks.

Applebaum emphasises the responsibility of the West who abandoned eastern Europe to its fate. The people of the continent were war weary, and even had western statesmen wished to resist Stalin's takeover, their people – nurtured on wartime propaganda images of a kindly, smiling Uncle Joe Stalin – would not have stood for it. The process of the takeover was similar in all the countries of the Soviet-occupied bloc. Loyal Moscow-trained Communists, often returning from Russia where they been exiled during the war, came back to take key posts, and although the Communists never won a free election, they wormed their way into the important positions of power thanks to their Soviet protectors.

The Communist methods ranged from extreme and open violence – murders, abductions, torture, arrest and exile to the Gulag – to bribery, indoctrination, chicanery and pressure exerted via the awarding or denial of jobs, housing, prizes and similar perks. Once in power, the Communists set up the familiar apparatus of totalitarian control: all organisations, including innocuous charities, were run by the party and/or state, potential centres of opposition such as the Catholic Church were neutralised with the arrest of recalcitrant priests and the takeover of Church youth groups.

Applebaum devotes chapters to each area of society infiltrated and finally dominated by the Communists – rival political parties which were abolished or absorbed; the media; education (to indoctrinate the young); and private companies (nationalised). When the commanding heights of the countries had been seized, the Communists turned on their enemies, external and internal. In the early years of the Cold War, spy mania was rampant, and in a series of show trials leading and loyal Communists – Rajk in Hungary; Slansky in Czechoslovakia – found themselves subjected to show trials followed by execution.

These events were inspired by Stalin's great purges of the 1930s, and before his death in 1953 the old monster became infected with the same anti-semitic delirium that had afflicted Hitler. (Many of the show trial victims were Jewish). What is quite remarkable is the loyalty of senior Communists to their chosen ideology even after it had inflicted monstrous cruelties on them: Klement Gottwald in Czechoslovakia; Wladislaw Gomulka in Poland and Janos Kadar in Hungary were all imprisoned and tortured (Kadar reputedly having his testicles crushed as part of his torture) – yet they went on to become Moscow-faithful leaders of their respective countries after the regimes 'liberalised'.

Applebaum's history covers only the first decade of Communist rule. She ends with the unsuccessful revolts of an unarmed people in East Berlin in 1953, and more bloodily in Hungary's capital Budapest in 1956. Once again, the West sat on its hands during these tragic events, as the seeds of resistance were crushed by Soviet tanks. For all its lip service to 'freedom' the West did not risk taking the world over the brink of nuclear war to liberate eastern Europe.

Anne Applebaum has written a fine and searing history, and demonstrates how the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Although Hitler is often held up as the supreme icon of evil, this book shows exactly why Stalin and his cohorts deserve a place alongside him in the pantheon of terror and mass murder.

As I was reading this book, the venerable Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm died aged 95. The gushing tributes paid by all too many members of Britain's historical community to this repulsive old Communist and unrepentent apologist for the regimes Applebaum skewers, shows that in some quarters that should know better, the lessons she brilliantly hammers home in this book have still not been learned.

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Built on Sand

Martin Dewhirst

Russian Politics: The Paradox of a Weak State, Marie Mendras, Hurst & Company, 2012, £25.00.

Society in Russia has nearly always been politically weak and the Russian state, except for periods during Hot Wars, has been and now is relatively strong, at least in the sense that the rulers have nearly always been able to get away with almost anything they take it into their heads to do. Marie Mendras challenges this view and, although she concentrates on the current regime fronted by Putin, she shows its underlying fragility or brittleness, making one think about many earlier periods of Russian history, when so much – too much – depended on the man, or occasionally the woman (the German Catherine the Great, for instance) at the top.

Mendras quite rightly points out that the word for 'state' in Russian – *gosudarstvo* – has connotations, *personal* connotations, that are very different from the terms used by the English and French to denote their states. The *gosudarstvo* is the domain, an appendage, of the *gosudar'*, the sovereign ruler, so the traditional Russian personality cult of the strong, even ruthless, leader is ingrained in the typical Russian mentality. Of course people's psychology changes much more slowly than the economic reality around them. Whoever the *gosudar'* is, support, however grudging, is needed to ensure the security, integrity and, ideally, the expansion ('Big is Beautiful') of the ruler's *gosudarstvo*. Thus the ruler's conviction that 'I *am* the state' relates to Russia much more than to pre-revolutionary France.

This personalisation of the state, currently requiring endless and increasingly farcical attempts to glorify Putin as the (supposedly) strong leader of twenty-first-century Russia, is heading for trouble, in Mendras's opinion, because the state is even less based on strong, independent *institutions* than was the case even in the 1990s. For all his faults and mistakes, Yeltsin did tolerate a parliament (*Duma*) that really was a place for debates, unlike the present parliament and various other official and semi-official bodies that have minimal influence on decisions taken in camera by Putin and his closest associates. The author points out that, at the very least, the situation has not improved since the very imperfect 1990s: 'Neither the State Duma nor the Federation Council was asked to approve the resorts to military force in 1994, 1999 and 2008'. Moreover, the very fact that Medvedev recently represented the Russian state for four years demonstrated 'that the state is weak compared to the powerful system that Putin controls'.

The trend away from open government in Russia is made clear in Chapter 5, where Mendras writes that the most striking feature of the 'systematic hollowing out of the institutions of state and society is that it now took place openly, in broad daylight, with no pretence of keeping up appearances'. Thus what Russia is now experiencing is not so much 'state capitalism' as 'clan capitalism' with the dictatorship of law (not the rule of law), insecure property rights, fraudulent elections, a revanchist foreign policy and a more widespread feeling of fear.

'The groups in power have moved closer to the Soviet-era definition of *nomenklatura*, where an individual derives his authority, and his income, from his relationship to the hierarchy and the "dominant party".' This 'neo-Soviet *nomenklatura*', sometimes referred to as the 'Russian elite', is not a meritocracy but a mediocracy, based on the mediocrity of most high-level political officials. The nineteenth-century writer and official Saltykov-Shchedrin is quoted in the chapter on 'The Power of Bureaucracies': 'For even if the old way of life vanished, there were some signs that in dying, it poisoned the new with its venom, and that despite the apparent change in social relations, their essence remained intact'.

The author's basic thesis is: 'The paradox of Russian politics is that of a strong power based on a weak state' The reader might ask, therefore, how much longer this weak state, a strong (in some respects) nuclear power, can last. Just after reading this book I happened to spot

an article by a fine Russian journalist and an interview with a notorious Kremlin spin-doctor, recently fallen into disfavour. Maxim Trudolyubov writes that 'Putin is implacably opposed to institutional development, which presupposes courts independent of the state, citizens' rights, property rights and other autonomous institutions. While he is in power, none of this will be allowed, because the existence of such independent institutions, which cannot be controlled by a telephone call, contradicts his worldview'. Gleb Pavlovsky's interview is entitled 'Putin's State is Hanging by a Thread'. It needs only a few things to go wrong, he says, and the system could come crashing down. Whether this happens in the near, or only in the distant, future, one must hope that Russians and the West are better prepared for it than they were for the implosion of the USSR in 1991.

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An Anglican Solzhenitsyn

Andrew Wilton

The Face of God, Roger Scruton, The Gifford Lectures, 2010, Continuum, 2012, £18.99.

The Gifford Lectures, which Roger Scruton gave at the University of St Andrews in 2010, were endowed by Lord Gifford to 'promote and diffuse … the knowledge of God', as he tells us at the outset. Scruton is therefore authorised to present an explicitly Christian message that sits naturally with his world-view. He begins by setting himself up in opposition to the atheist formulations of such people as Richard Dawkins that are ubiquitous. Without arguing from 'intelligent design' so ridiculed by the Darwinists, he makes the reasonable point that since we can see that the universe is governed by intelligible laws, we are entitled to enquire why that should be so: 'If all is contingent, why is it not also random?'. We are capable of asking for explanations, and that capacity is itself a demonstration that the world is capable of supplying them: 'If it were not so, we could not know that it were not so.'

In Genesis it is God who announces himself to Moses from the burning bush with the bald identification 'I am that I am'. Scruton interprets this primal encounter as a template for predicating all consciousness as a dialogue between an accountable 'I' and a necessary interlocutor, 'you'. A third term, the question, 'why?', arises from the meaningful interdependence of these two pronouns conceived as responsible entities. From this relationship proceed all those relations that constitute the foundations of community in mutual respect and accountability: the social world as we experience it. He conceives the participants as both responsible and compassionate, embodying the dimension of love that is built into our nature as integral to a reciprocal relationship with God: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind … and thy neighbour as thyself.'

While God is himself the ultimate 'I', so are we individually only comprehensible to ourselves as 'I'; and our perception of the way things actually are entails a dynamic that is both physical and moral. Scruton argues that this dynamic can be seen in terms of the Hegelian dialectic*, and built into it are both compassion and judgement. Morality cannot be arbitrarily separated out from our understanding of how the world functions. The 'I' must be located in a specific place, and must be recognised by specific features. He attaches much weight to the physical manifestations of these qualities: the 'I' is present for each of us in the form of a face – our own face, which is reflected in, and reciprocated by, the face of our interlocutor. The 'Face' of his title is the physical front, the façade, the 'interface' that every 'I' presents to every 'You'; its precise character and the way it is constructed give the conditions that govern our lives. It is used to express the closest of our relationships – in kissing, for instance; while the obscuring of the face, as is often required of Muslim women, is a potent symbolic withdrawing from life, a reservation of the 'I' for contexts outside society.

Worse than this sort of obliteration, the face can be violated by acts of aggression. Scruton reserves some of his most heated arguments for the commodification of sex, which has led to the denial of the individual identity as present in, and symbolised by, the face, and the pursuit of sexual gratification in terms only of 'body parts', rather than of the whole person as integrated in a complete physical as well as psychological entity. He extends the idea to geography and topography: the 'face of the earth' is, like the human face, something iconic that as human beings we instinctively revere and invest with sacred significance: religious shrines are universally identified with particular places, which possess historical and numinous meaning for particular societies. And just as the face can be 'raped' by obliteration under a formulaic covering, or by the crude assertion of sexual lust over individual feeling, so the land can be – and now frequently is – rendered sterile and ugly by exploitative commercial building, characterised by blank glass façades that present us with a 'blind' front; or by the all-too-prevalent plastering of urban surfaces with huge, meaningless images of people shorn of their individual personality, which serve only the needs of advertisers and persuaders.

In this world of distorted values and perverted humanity, the face of God assumes supreme significance

as inviolable and transcendent. Here Scruton delivers himself of what is effectively a sermon, which will no doubt have fitted neatly into the context of his lectures, and which, indeed, becomes a moving, if occasionally abstruse, meditation on divinity and humanity. He describes the 'existential loneliness' that all human beings must feel, and which can only be resolved by the reciprocal giving of the self, subject to subject – a relationship best embodied, he maintains, in the Christian idea of God's adoption of humanity and voluntary experience of suffering for humanity's sake. Here he introduces a favourite topic, analysing the agnostic Wagner's treatment of the loves of the gods in *The Ring*, and in particular the longing for justification and redemption experienced by the great Wotan himself, burdened with his sense of sin as symbolised by his theft of the Nibelung's gold. God's relationship with humanity can only be understood as a reciprocal interchange of love and forgiveness. 'The endless striving to unite the self who judges with the other who is judged *is* the religious way of life', he says.

He makes it clear that this conclusion has a pressing validity for him personally, and his book is intended to present the philosophical case as forcibly as possible. Yet he does not deny that the current condition of humankind, or at any rate our benighted sector of humankind, is little short of calamitous. Much of the book rehearses arguments that he has developed elsewhere, addressing favourite objects of his anger and disgust, emotions that all thinking people will surely share, whatever their religious disposition. There must, he suggests, be a return to a more thoughtful and inward construction of what life means; the alternative is too appalling to contemplate.

* The objects of philosophy, it is true, are upon the whole the same as those of religion. In both the object is Truth, in that supreme sense in which God and God only is theTruth. Both in like manner go on to treat of the finite worlds of Nature the human Mind, with their relation to each other and to their truth in God: *Hegel for Beginners,* by Lloyd Spencer and Andrzej Krauze, Published by Icon Books (Ed).

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Fortress Europe

Jonathan Story

Europe: The Shattering of Illusions, Václav Klaus, trans by Ondrej Hejma, Bloomsbury, 2012, £16.99.

Wolfgang Schäuble, Germany's Finance Minister, recently proposed giving the EU monetary affairs commissioner powers to veto Eurozone deficits and debts. The idea was not warmly received, but as Chancellor Merkel observed, Germany 'will continue to push for it'. And for good measure she added, 'I am astonished that, no sooner does someone make a progressive proposal ... the cry immediately comes that this won't work, Germany is isolated, we can't do it.'

It has long been Germany's diplomatic habit to advance bold ideas for Europe's future, in the reasonable expectation that they would be turned down. The device enables Germany to don a European halo, while distracting attention from the baser pursuit of national interests. In this case, Merkel once again rejected the pooling of countries' debts, an idea favoured by Club Med countries, and also by France, admittedly less noisily, *prestige oblige*.

The tone of Klaus' book is set in the introduction by Christopher Booker, who recalls the visit in December 1988 of a group of European parliamentarians, led by Hans-Gert Pöttering, to Hradcany Castle, the seat of the Czech President. Klaus was given the full treatment: there was no EU flag over the presidential palace; he had to back EU climate change policies, because they were right and good; and he had insulted the Irish by expressing sympathy for the No vote to the Lisbon Treaty.

Hans-Gert Pöttering rounded off the proceedings by saying he wanted to leave 'on good terms', but that he found it unacceptable that he and his colleagues were compared to the Soviet Union. Whereupon Klaus said he had not mentioned the Soviet Union, but that he had stated that he had not experienced such a style of debate since the Velvet Revolution in 1989, when the communist party-state collapsed. Klaus is clearly a square peg in an EU hole, and his book makes quite clear why. As Booker points out, the confrontation between Klaus and the MEPs illustrates the EU élites' inability to accept that anyone can hold different views to their own.

This raises a number of questions: what is Klaus' conception of the proper sphere of politics; what are his economics; how does he consider that the European mosaic of peoples and states should work, to ensure peace and prosperity; and most importantly, what is the criticism that he raises against the present direction of the EU, and what alternatives does he propose?

The proper sphere of politics for Klaus is provided best by limited government within the boundaries of the nation state. The survival of the nation state is the condition for the survival of a liberal and democratic society, and the state budget is the axis of its governance. Nation states are the core of Europe and the guarantee of its good future.

Klaus is a fan of Hayek, the liberal Austrian economist, who argued in magisterial style against the pretensions of socialists to know as much or more than the de-centralized information mechanism linking customers and suppliers through the price mechanism of the market. Wider markets are beneficial to all, with important provisos, and

in a Klausian world, governments are strongly advised to run balanced budgets. Although budgetary policy is not the heart of his thesis here, Klaus lays much of the blame for the democracies' fiscal incontinence at the feet of Lord Keynes.

It follows from these premises that his preferred way to manage the European mosaic is for nation states to foster democracy and liberalism at home, and to co-operate abroad wherever it is desirable to promote mutual benefit. His vision for the mosaic is an Organization of European States, with a light bureaucracy manned with a telephone to ring around and set the next agenda. This alternative to the present EU – he writes poignantly as a Czech who must be more than aware of Chamberlain's betrayal of Czechoslovakia at Munich in 1938 – was doomed in 1973 as soon as Edward Heath ditched EFTA, the European Free Trade Area, for membership in the European Community.

The EU, Klaus argues, is now on the path to become the Union of European Post-Democratic Republics (UEPDR). The defining moment when the EU élites shed any pretension of considering co-operative arrangements between nation states came when they opted for monetary union. The chief ideologue, Klaus considers, is Jacques Delors, who presided in the mid-1980s over the launch of the 'internal market' programme, based then on the principle of mutual recognition, but with a clear intent to move to monetary union.

As Nigel Lawson has written, monetary union is the most irresponsible initiative in the post-war world. The initial 11 members, since expanded to 17, share none of the characteristics required of an optimal currency area. They are not homogeneous, having distinct languages, histories and state traditions. Prices and wages are definitely not flexible either way across the single currency. Most importantly, products were free to move across frontiers freely, as initially did financial flows. But there is next to no trans-national labour movement. Not least, there is no fiscal union.

As Klaus rightly points out, those present at the creation of the Euro knew that it was an incomplete construction. Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission, told the *FT* in an interview in December 2001, that it had not been possible to reach agreement on everything. There would be an inevitable crisis, which would provide the next opportunity for a great leap forward towards European unity.

To the Prodis of the EU, nation states are the relic of Europe's sinister past and have to be subsumed in a more enlightened post-national entity. One Europe would supersede the region's inherited '*Kleinstaaterei*' – the phrase comes from Germany's experience after the Thirty Year war. And just as unification in 1870 placed Germany on a footing of equality with the great powers of the time, so only a united Europe can stand up to competition from the world powers of the 21st century.

The EU is attractive, Klaus considers, because it is a gravy train. As more powers accrue to the EU institutions through the rolling process of summits and treaties, the political and financial beneficiaries become ever more deeply entrenched, and ever more interested in drawing further powers to the centre. As Klaus points out, the EU as presently constituted is a Franco-German creation, deeply anti-liberal and definitely post-democratic, with a strong inbuilt drive to harmonize, standardize, and mastermind markets.

The word he uses to describe this process is *Gleichschaltung*, the method whereby Hitler centralized powers in Berlin and smashed the independence of the German states. Being President of his country, Hitler gets only one mention, but there can be little doubt that Klaus considers the EU in the light of the World War. As he points out, German imperialism crushed those who opposed it; the EU method is just not to listen to alternatives.

In short, Klaus considers the EU is sailing its member states into very dangerous seas. He agrees with an American interlocutor in New York who suggests that the progenitor of the EU's extreme secularism is Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Although he does not say it here, what he is stating is that Jacobinism has received a new lease of life at a European level, just as it began to fade in its homeland of France.

The next step, Klaus indicates, on the forward march of 'europeism' – the phrase he uses to describe the EU ideology – is to centralize control of budgets. Such a step would hollow out the powers of the states, and lay the foundations for a European Political Union. The alternative, he suggests, is for a one-time transfer of funds from northern Europe to the south.

There is a snowball's chance in hell for that to happen. Ms Merkel knows that. She also knows that asking the states to submit their budgets to centralized control and oversight can only be achieved by fudge.

My bet is that France will agree to fudge in the hope of steering some of the funds its way. But Germany is not in the mood to play at partners with unequals any more. Merkel is saying 'on my terms only'. That, or the implication is: we, Germany, go it alone, or with the Dutch, Austrians and Finns.

Arguably, that would be the best thing to happen to the interdependent European economies. A Germany-centred Euro would revalue sharply, and competitiveness would return to Club Med countries and France.

But that won't happen either. France's pride is at stake. Germany is getting used to saying Nein. And

the UEPDR is unpopular.

One would assume that now is the time for alternatives. But Klaus is pessimistic. The EU élites don't listen, opposition to the *Europeists* is weak. As Ms Merkel observes, 'our' ideas are 'progressive'. Who can possibly say nay to progress?

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Sent to lie abroad

A W Purdue

The Last American Diplomat: John D Negroponte and the Changing Face of American Diplomacy, George W Liebmann, I B Tauris, 2012, £59.50.

The purpose of diplomacy is to further a nation's interests, but is this best done by politicians and their appointees or by professional diplomats? George W Liebmann has no doubt that career diplomats have a wisdom and skill which their often ideologically-driven political masters seldom allow them. In the *Last American Diplomat* Liebmann focuses on the career of John D Negroponte, the type of professional diplomat he admires.

John D Negroponte was the ultimate insider; immensely influential, self-effacing and little known to the public. He served his country for nearly fifty years from his first appointment as a junior visa officer in Hong Kong in 1961, through his role as an advisor in Vietnam, till his last appointments as Director of National Intelligence and Deputy Secretary of State to George W Bush. He was, successively ambassador to Honduras, Mexico, the Philippines and Iraq and was the US Permanent Representative to the UN in the crucial period before the invasion of Iraq. He was thus involved in American diplomacy from the Cold War period until what seemed the high tide of American power, when the USA was, after the implosion of the Soviet Union, the one super-power. Throughout his career he struggled against two strands in US foreign policy: the *hubris* that came from an overestimation of the degree to which any great power, even a super-power, could shape the world to its liking; and the naive belief that liberal democracy was the dream of all peoples.

A recital of national poetry by the Dutch Ambassadress
Cartoon by Nicolas Bentley from 'Stiff upper Lip' Lawrence Durrell

His career began when America's global power was increasing and faced with many of the problems of the power it displaced, the British Empire: how to utilise military power without overstretching it; when to compromise, when to be bold; when to act unilaterally; when to co-ordinate with allies or work through surrogates. The British Empire had, however, been in its latter days a conservative, satisfied and passive power, concerned to conserve its strength and contain its enemies, whereas, the USA was infused with a missionary and reformist zeal and the concept of American exceptionalism. Often out of sympathy with the ideology-driven approach of successive American governments, Negroponte was an admirer of America's greatest twentieth-century diplomat, George Kennan, and favoured containing hostile powers and eroding their strength with the aid of allies and proxies, and, although not against unilateral action, viewed it as a last resort. He was profoundly sceptical of the Kennedy New Frontier view that 'The US is the locomotive at the head of mankind and the rest of the world is the caboose'. No defeatist, his view from Vietnam to the Iraq War was that America should use its own military forces sparingly and strengthen and support its allies, a policy he pursued with success in untidy battles against Marxists in 1980s Central America, where he was not too squeamish about his allies and incurred much criticism from American liberals in the process.

George W Liebmann has written an original, important book, not just about the career of one able diplomat, but about America's foreign policy. He calls Negroponte the 'Last American Diplomat'. We must hope he is wrong. The United States, its allies and the world, are badly in need of the traditional diplomatic skills of men who realise the need for pragmatism and skill in the pursuit of national interests.

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Batman: The Dark Knight Rises
Director Christopher Nolan
Robert Crowcroft

The Dark Knight Rises, the magnificent finale to British director Christopher Nolan's trilogy of Batman films, closes a sophisticated three-part meditation on the nature of justice. Watching the film, I was struck that its ethos is unmistakeably right-wing. This is astonishing in a modern Hollywood blockbuster. That Nolan's series consistently offers ideas alongside its sheer entertainment value is equally surprising; although we are presently experiencing a golden age of high-quality television series – especially American imports like *The Sopranos* and *The Wire*.

This final film in the trilogy centres on the decision of billionaire Bruce Wayne (brilliantly played by the British actor Christian Bale) to resume his double life as Batman, eight years after he retired from beating villains to a pulp. The fictional city in which Wayne lives, Gotham, is threatened by the plan of a frightening villain, Bane (played by yet another Brit, Tom Hardy) to set off a nuclear weapon and annihilate millions. *The Dark Knight Rises* is the sequel to Nolan's first Batman film, *Batman Begins*, and despite running for almost three hours is stunning. Coming out of retirement, Batman is physically past his prime and is triumphant in a brutal confrontation with Bane (no computer generated effects here; this is the best old-fashioned fist fight on screen since Sean Connery and Robert Shaw went toe-to-toe in *From Russia with Love*). The villain breaks Batman's back and imprisons him in a third-world dungeon for months on end, while turning himself into a virtual warlord of Gotham.

The scope of Nolan's vision in depicting the fall of the city is staggering, and it is here that I was most taken with the sheer variety and power of populist right-wing imagery in the film. Bane blows up the bridges that connect Gotham to the American mainland, a shattering symbolic blow to civilisation. The federal government, terrified of provoking a nuclear terrorist attack, promptly abandons the people of Gotham to their fate. This powerful metaphor for state failure is reinforced by the creation of an alternative authority: the despotism of Bane. Bane frees criminals from jail and turns them into a police force; while the real police, thousands of them (used in the film to represent the common man), are imprisoned in the city's sewers. He and his minions establish show trials of the wealthy and influential citizens of Gotham – hanging the guilty from the ruined bridges – and patrol the streets in armoured vehicles. With civilisation wrecked and madmen running the show, it all echoes 1789 or 1917.

I won't spoil the ending, but Batman eventually escapes from captivity and returns to make an all-out assault on Bane before the nuclear bomb destroys the city. Civilisation and justice fight back. Freeing the imprisoned police, Batman leads the citizens of Gotham to try to retake their society. The shot of hundreds of unarmed police officers charging a crowd of heavily armed maniacs is seared into my mind, a cinematic metaphor for the collapse of the social contract and the ordinary citizen being compelled to take matters into his own hands.

As a cipher for justice, Batman is thus the 'Dark Knight'. What does it say about contemporary Western society and our faith in the social contract that our most popular imaginary superhero is a terrifying vigilante who dispenses the justice that the proper authorities are too feckless to deliver? Millions of people clearly feel an instinctive sympathy for this notion.

The film brought back memories. When I was 12 or 13 years old, I was obsessed with Batman and an avid collector of the comic books. The Batman who is published monthly by DC Comics is a very long way indeed from the camp comedy character of Adam West's 1960s TV series. Rather, the comics are dark; Batman is a terrifying figure; Bruce Wayne himself is a deeply troubled soul, and the theatrical villains that plague Gotham are only theatrical because they are drawn to a man who dresses as a bat. Batman stands for justice in its purest form. Nolan's highly realist films are the first attempt to bring the spirit of the comic books to the silver screen.

The Batman character is not only an icon of popular culture; he is, by his very nature, a *right-wing* icon. In proceeding from the assumption that the state is pretty much useless, and adopting a robust view of law and order, the character is a natural conservative. Frank Miller, the 1980s comic book writer who made the series markedly grittier, is himself a staunch right-winger. Miller's influence is clear on both the comic book Batman and Nolan's cinematic incarnation. Bruce Wayne became Batman because, as a boy, he witnessed his parents murdered by a mugger. Yet his life as Batman is not a campaign for vengeance, simply for justice. And, crucially, this is justice as ordinary people understand it, not as liberal elites do. Stories in the comic books often feature a notorious villain – say the Joker – being considered for parole by well-meaning but naïve psychiatrists who insist that he has been rehabilitated and is fit to return to society. Of course the audience (even 12 year old boys) know this is nonsense, and subconsciously feel contempt for the very notion that the state should consider releasing such people. On the next page, the villain will typically murder the same shrink who defended them (as we knew he would) before going off on the rampage.

Batman represents the audience in this story – the audience who saw this coming, and who now rely on an ordinary citizen dressed in a terrifying outfit to dispense the justice that the state failed to deliver. Batman's efforts to track and locate the murderous psychopaths are sometimes interspersed with scenes depicting psychiatrists still whining that the criminal is the real victim here, or is simply misunderstood, a product of social prejudices, and so on. The naivety of the establishment is always extraordinary. The audience recognises this for the moral relativism that it is, and trusts in Batman to put a stop to it.

As a cipher for justice, Batman is thus the 'Dark Knight'. What does it say about contemporary Western society and our faith in the social contract that our most popular imaginary superhero is a terrifying vigilante who dispenses the justice that the proper authorities are too feckless to deliver? Millions of people clearly feel an instinctive sympathy for this notion. Batman doesn't try to 'understand' criminals, or run therapy sessions. He deals with villains by being more frightening than they are, beating them senseless, and putting them behind bars.

In Nolan's first film in the series, 2005's *Batman Begins*, Bruce Wayne is confronted with the power of organised crime and corruption in Gotham and decides to become a vigilante to fight it. The film centres on his navigating the difficult course between the sordid self-aggrandisement of revenge and the restoration of balance that is true justice. In 2008's *The Dark Knight*, Batman finds himself in conflict with Heath Ledger's Joker (perhaps the most powerful portrayal of a nutcase ever filmed), a terrorist who wants nothing more than to wreak havoc. The second film dealt with weighty issues of torture, surveillance, and whether we – as a society – can remain just while facing down evil. It concluded that we have the common sense to find the right answers, and that we won't turn into our enemies (despite liberal hysteria to the contrary).

The final chapter in the trilogy is similarly reassuring. From the outset, the Batman character is trying to make himself redundant by inspiring the people to take responsibility for building a better society. He wants to see a world where there will be no need for a Batman. The climax of this spectacular film left me thinking 'if only…'

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Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival

Robert Hugill

In 2011, Hatfield House reached its 400th anniversary, and as part of the celebrations there were a series of musical events including the Sixteen, conductor Harry Christophers, singing a motet by James MacMillan specially commissioned by Lord and Lady Salisbury. This gave rise to the idea of a music festival based at Hatfield, which would tap into the wealth of musical talent resident in Hertfordshire. The result was this year's Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival, which ran from 20 September to 23 September and was intended to be the first of an annual series.

Supported and encouraged by Lord Salisbury, Festival Director Mary Anstey and Artistic Director Guy Johnston assembled a fine series of events. Johnston, a cellist and local resident, played in many of the events and used players from his ensemble, the Aronowitz Ensemble, in several of them. In fact, one of the strengths of the festival was the way it gathered together a group of musicians and allowed the audience to hear them in a variety of locations, works and combinations.

The Festival opened with the Navarra Quartet playing in the Old Palace. Their programme mixed familiar and less familiar, as Johnston joined them for Schubert's well known *String Quintet in C, D 956;* then they were also joined by Jack Liebeck (violin) and Tom Poster (piano) for Chausson's undeservedly neglected *Concert Piece, Op 21*, for violin, piano and string quartet.

For many, the highlight of the Festival will have been the chamber music concert in Hatfield House itself. A chance to hear Sophie Daneman in Schubert Lieder, of Beethoven's *Archduke Trio* and Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet* with the talented young clarinettist Mark Simpson, all performed in Hatfield House's Marble Hall, a room which turned out to have very fine acoustics. In a talk beforehand Lord Salisbury mentioned how his predecessor, Robert Cecil, had been a great patron of contemporary music.

Other musical events continued the theme of mixing well-known works with lesser known ones. On Saturday evening, the Aronowitz Ensemble performed in St. Etheldreda's Church, playing Dvorak's *Piano Quintet* and Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence* alongside Dohnanyi's *Serenade* Opus 10.

On Sunday afternoon the group returned to St Etheldreda's Church to play Frühling's *Clarinet Trio,* Op 40. Written for the unusual but effective ensemble of clarinet, cello and piano. The composer was born in what is now the Ukraine and trained in Vienna. He wrote a lot of salon music and fell foul of the Nazis. His *Clarinet Trio* is one of a handful of his more serious works which survive. The work was paired with Schumann's wonderful *Piano Quintet*.

The festival events extended beyond just concerts. There was a performance for children from local schools, *Bows and Arias* in which Guy Johnston, Sophie Daneman and Tom Poster took part in a programme devised originally by the Wigmore Hall Learning Programme. Then on the Saturday afternoon it was time for the adults to learn, as there was a lecture recital from Professor Brian Foster of Oxford University which linked Einstein's love of the violin with many of the concepts of modern physics. The lecture ended with a performance of a movement from a Haydn String Trio in which Jack Liebeck and Guy Johnston were joined by Professor Foster.

The concluding event of the festival was a concert by the Sixteen, conductor Harry Christophers, in the Old Palace. Framed by performances of Tallis's tunes for Archbishop Parker's Psalter, the choir sang a mixture of contemporary and 16th century British music, allowing us to compare and contrast sacred music by James MacMillan with that of Sheppard, Tallis and Byrd. Secular music was represented by Madrigals and by Tippett's *Spirituals from a Child of Our Time,* and the Choral Dances from Britten's *Gloriana*. An imaginative and illuminating programme.

The Festival was well supported by local people who clearly attended many if not all of the events. Such Festivals are a challenge to mount when using historic locations which are not always regular concert venues. But Mary Anstey, Guy Johnston and their team succeeded in giving us some imaginatively programmed concerts in some fine locations, showcasing some very talented young players. I look forward to next year's festival.

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The Rise and Rise of the Hallé

Nigel Jarrett

Britain may for a long time have been the notorious 'land without music' but in the Manchester-based Hallé Orchestra it had an institution that was always considered to be special in terms of ranking native bands with their foreign counterparts, particularly in its long association with the conductor Sir John Barbirolli.

The Hallé's status in this company has only ever been aspired to by the other long-established and independent British orchestras, and though music-lovers in their catchment areas have benefited from performing standards above the norm, nothing about them has ever quite matched the Hallé's stellar reach and reputation. But comparisons have always been unfair, if not odious. It is nonsensical to assert that the Hallé at its best was greater than the London orchestras at their best, or that the playing quality of any orchestra is independent of the conductor in charge. However, it is universally agreed among critics that the Hallé, after Barbirolli's tenure, went through periods when it was far less of a musical force than before.

No-one can adduce any specific reason for this, least of all the influence of Barbirolli's successors. Perhaps the standards set were impossibly high to maintain or other conductors thought some aspects of the orchestra's personality needed to be highlighted, both of which might have involved the paying public – and critics – as unsuspecting witnesses to work-in-progress. But the Hallé under James Loughran (1971-1983), Stanislaw Skrowaczewski (1982-1992) and the controversial Kent Nagano (1992-2000) widened its experience in extra-musical ways and it is for these that they will be remembered as much as for their music-making.

All this is preamble to Sir Mark Elder's appointment as principal conductor in 2000. In the last ten years, by common consent, he has lifted the Hallé to unprecedented heights, and he has done so significantly as a conductor who for fourteen years was music director of English National Opera and who had winning form as a conductor in European, Australasian and American houses. He was the first Englishman to conduct a new production at Bayreuth. He had also conducted many other orchestras. The combined roster of concert and opera assignments was leading to a landmark appointment rather than a mid-career switch of responsibility, and it was to happen with remarkable results in Manchester.

A lengthy term of office as musical superintendent in an opera house can often mean that a sharper, more dramatic, sense is brought to bear on the symphonic repertory. This was certainly true of Elder's first ten years with the Hallé. It was long overdue. Nagano's over-zealous and expensive programming only served to highlight the dire financial problems that dominated musical considerations, and many ascribe the low points in Hallé performances to the fiscal uncertainty hovering in the background, especially in the 1990s. At the end of the decade the orchestra was facing a £1 million-plus deficit. Bankruptcy threatened.

In an attempt to stave off extinction, drastic changes were made. Public fund-raising attracted £2 million. Redundancies on the board and in the orchestra's rank-and-file saved more money. Just after Elder's arrival, the Arts Council granted the orchestra £3.8 million. Musicians' salaries, frozen for four years, were increased. Since then, bar the effects of hard times shared by all, everything's been back on track and the Hallé is a multi-faceted organization again, buoyed by playing that seems to reach standards that would have been impossible had not Elder's appointment come at a time of restored financial stability. With commercial steadiness has come artistic consolidation and exploration.

The most felicitous aspect of Elder's incumbency for those who cannot go to his concerts is the Hallé's recording schedule. The orchestra's own label is producing what many consider to be the finest recordings by a British orchestra for years, notably – and appropriately for an English band – those of the Elgar canon. *The Dream of Gerontius*, with soloists Alice Coote, Paul Groves and Bryn Terfel, is probably the best so far, inching ahead of Barbirolli's own in sacrificing much of the earlier sentiment in favour of more theatrical splendour and loss of the old oratorical piety. Few can find a bad word to say about it. The same goes for recordings of the first two parts of the composer's projected trio of oratorios, *The Kingdom* and *The Apostles*, in which Elder is keen to underscore all signs of quasi-operatic tendency, as one would expect.

These Elgarian rites of passage, perhaps essential for a Hallé helmsman, are being undertaken while other oceans are being sailed, notably Wagner's and

specifically so far the concert performance of *Twilight of the Gods*, a revelation even by Elder/Hallé standards. Will Elder complete *The Ring* tetralogy, something he failed to do at ENO? One hopes so. As recordings, the music has a concentrated fire often missing from the sprawling staged versions and their sometimes overwhelming visuals. Anyway, in the last few years the orchestra has won four *Gramophone* magazine awards, including one for a recording of the Elgar *Violin Concerto* with Thomas Zehetmair. In 2006 Elder was named Conductor of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society. He will be with the Hallé at least until 2015. The Hallé as an institution is ever-outreaching.

The orchestra gave its first concert in 1858 under its founder, Sir Charles Hallé. His funeral procession 37 years later blocked the streets of Manchester. That will never happen again, but some sense of scale can be retrieved. Sargent, Beecham and pre-eminently Hans Richter (1899-1911) were also the Halle's principal conductors, so any late transformation has to be seen in a largely unverifiable context. In 1945 Beecham wrote, in a controversial exchange to do with Barbirolli, 'The Hallé concerts are not a piece of private property nor are they any longer an exclusively Manchester possession. They play an important part in the musical life of the nation...' Outside its jocular terms of reference, the statement applies more than ever today.

Nigel Jarrett is a freelance writer and music critic.

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Prince Charles and John Ruskin

a Tale of Two Cultural Conservatives

Kieran Gallagher

> *While your divine intelligence and will, Imperator Caesar, were engaged in acquiring the right to command the world,.....I hardly dared , in view of your serious employments, to publish my writings and long considered ideas on architecture, for fear of subjecting myself to your displeasure ……I began to write this work for you, because I saw that you have built and are now building extensively, and that in future also you will take care that our public and private buildings shall be worthy to go down to posterity by the side of your other splendid achievements. I have drawn up definite rules to enable you, by observing them, to have personal knowledge of the quality both of existing buildings and of those which are yet to be constructed. For in the following books I have disclosed all the principles of the art.*
>
> Vitruvius (80-15 BC)

The *Ten Books on Architecture* by Vitruvius (80-15 BC), the only text on the subject to have come down to us from ancient Greece and Rome, provides not only a manual of Classical architecture but also provides a clear insight into the nature of the politics of the time. Vitruvius not only dedicated the book to Caesar but claimed that his book "disclosed all the principles of the art." This, for me, also provides a certain amount of humour since today, no architectural theorist would claim to have settled, finally and irrevocably, all theoretical controversies surrounding architecture. However, while no two architectural theorists can agree on everything, one British architectural theorist, Prince Charles, seems to have acquired a quite remarkable level of certitude in his own beliefs.

Prince Charles' first intervention in the debate on architecture consisted of a television programme and a book, both entitled *A Vision of Britain*. In the television program he examined a drawing, illustrating the primitive hut of classical architectural theory, a group of tree trunks which fortuitously grew close together with branches strewn across the top forming rafters and beams. From this he concluded that the Classical style of architecture, since it derived from nature was therefore eternally relevant, and appropriate in all times and places. Since that time he has opened the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, and conducted high-profile interventions into developments such as the Chelsea Barracks site, effectively torpedoing the design by Rogers Stirk & Harbour, insisting that his preferred design 'relates to nature.' Leaving aside the issue that deliberately scuppering an architectural project does raise very real constitutional issues, he insists he does not advocate a style such as Classicism. In a speech he gave to the RIBA in 2009 he stated:

> *I am sorry if I somehow left the faintest impression that I wished to kick-start some kind of 'style war' between Classicists and Modernists; or that I somehow wanted to drag the world back to the*

eighteenth century.

And

I propose to speak of 'organic' rather than Classical or Traditional architecture.

And this, he partly explains is:

one which is informed by traditional practice, and by traditional attitudes to the natural world

But here he seems to have embraced a rather circular form of reasoning.

The idea that Classical architecture self-evidently 'relates to nature' is rather more contentious than Prince Charles seems to realise. The subject has been discussed down the ages, especially during the 18th and 19th centuries when the subject of the hypothetical origins of classical architecture in nature became a huge bone of contention between various architectural theorists. Leaving aside the views of Vitruvius on the origins of architecture, the primitive classical hut was an idea invented by 18th- century theorists such as Abbé Laugier in France and William Chambers in Britain. This led to a more rational conception of classical architecture; Laugier argued that the five classical orders were based on columns and hence should only be used as freestanding elements and never in relief. In the 19th century, British architecture turned towards a revival of the Gothic. This style had never entirely died out, surviving in unlikely quarters such as 18th Century notions of the picturesque. A W Pugin, architect of the Houses of Parliament, would only countenance a Gothic rather than Classical approach. Indeed, he believed Classical architecture was flawed from the beginning. A primitive timber hut may have been the inspiration behind the Greek Classical Temple, but he did not believe these forms could simply be transposed from timber to stone. A key example of this was the triglyph. Triglyphs were the vertical channels on the frieze of a Classical temple which represented the ends of timber rafters. The features were considered to be representations since the frieze of a Classical temple was constructed in stone, not timber. And hence this motif, when reproduced in stone, indicated that the architecture no longer truthfully expressed the structure.

The other great instigator of the British Gothic revival was John Ruskin who shared with Pugin a dislike for Classical architecture. Ruskin wrote a book on Venice, which he regarded, rather strangely, as the birthplace of Gothic architecture. Here, he describes the kind of architecture he admires in the great chapter 'The Nature of Gothic.' Ruskin makes much of the savageness of the northern climate and the quickening of energy which must accompany endeavours, qualities which people of the north expressed in their architecture. Ruskin was a great advocate of architecture which 'relates to nature,' and firmly believed that in the context of Northern Europe, Classical architecture was incapable of fulfilling this role.

The Old Chelsea Barracks

Evidently, he considered Gothic to be a sort of 'organic' architecture. For instance, he wrote in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* the following on piers in Gothic cathedrals:

the resemblance in its shafts and ribs to the external relations of stems and branches.. . . necessarily induces in the mind of the spectator a sense or belief of a correspondent internal structure; that is to say, of a fibrous and continuous strength from the root into the limbs....

Concurring with Pugin's argument, that classical

architecture was an essentially dishonest imitation of a timber hut, he argued that there could be no beauty in architecture without truth. In what is arguably the greatest book ever written about architecture, Ruskin devoted an entire chapter to 'The Lamp of Truth.' Here he eloquently condemns all forms of untruth in architecture. The first is

> *The suggestion of a mode of structure or support other than the true one*

However, he also states:

> *The architect is not bound to exhibit structure; nor are we to complain of him for concealing it, any more than we should regret that the outer surfaces of the human frame conceals much of its anatomy; nevertheless, that building will generally be the noblest, which to an intelligent eye discovers the great secrets of its structure, as an animal form does, although from a careless observer they may be concealed.*

He also condemns

> *The painting of surfaces to represent some other material than that of which they actually consist (as in the marbling of wood)'and 'The use of cast or machine-made ornament of any kind.*

In 1859, Ruskin produced an essay about industrial materials, ' The Work of Iron, in Nature, Art & Policy.' Iron, Ruskin states, can be seen in the British landscape in the form of ochrerous stains, oxidised iron or rust on hillsides or in streams. A conclusion that might be reasonably drawn from this is that metal, used as a material in architecture, can relate to nature. He states:

> *what do you suppose dyes your tiles of cottage roof? You don't paint them. It is nature who puts all that lovely vermilion onto the clay for you; and all that lovely vermilion is this oxide of iron.*

Ruskin was capable of almost schizophrenic views on the subject of whether iron could produce appropriate forms for architecture. In *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* he writes: 'True architecture does not admit iron as a constructive material.' And 'the time is probably near when a new system of architectural laws will be developed adapted entirely to metallic construction.'

The Gothic revival overturned the Classical tradition of axes and the orders and celebrated qualities such as asymmetry, originality and 'truth to materials'. Once these ideas had been accepted, the floodgates were opened to a wave of architectural innovation. I cannot help but feel that even in Ruskin, we can sense the stirrings of something new in architecture. Regarding the popularity of modern architecture with the Royal family, there seems to be one member of that household who does not view it with universal disfavour. The Order of Merit is an award which is the personal gift of the Queen to bestow. In 1997 she gave the award to Norman Foster.

Kieran Gallagher has a decade's experience working in architects' offices.

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Paper's the Thing

Frances Halliman

Electronic tablets are electronic crack cocaine. Spend a day or two on one and you become addicted. It begins innocently enough. Seeing one in a shop it occurred to me if I bought one I could compress my entire library into it and carry it everywhere. A flash of the credit card and the deal was done. That night, full of worthy intentions, I settled down to read a Dickens' novel. What I did not know was that this was the crack addict's equivalent of the silver foil, the candle and a heap of the magic white powder. It led to hell.

Half way into Miss Havisham's polemic about the wickedness of her lover, I started wondering why, deprived of sunlight and Vitamin D for twenty years, the harridan's bones did not snap like dried sticks. Maybe the net could help? Before long I was on a page about Vitamin D deficiency, then headaches. From there it was only a short step to brain tumours and depression. By two in the morning I was looking up the price of cheap CAT scans in Hungary – some included a free trip on the Danube.

Within days my first port of call each morning had become the *Daily Mail* – just for the science articles you understand – but within a month it was celebrity gossip, then ichat, mindless conversations about new software, and ~~then a~~ followed by a preoccupation with the health of my electronic tablet. Was it functioning as well as when I bought it? Should I buy a new type of word processor for it. Maybe I should upgrade?

My attention span was haemorrhaging like water over the Niagara Falls, my thoughts beginning to surf. At first I could manage a page of the printed word, but soon it was only a paragraph, then a line or two of print, then only a phrase, finally a word or two. I had joined that huge regiment of lost electronic travellers endlessly surfing to mindless oblivion.

I sold my Electronic tablet. The buyer told me he wanted it to keep in touch with his family when he was travelling. Should I have told him what was in store? Would he have believed me? Within a month his family were no more likely to hear from him than from Livingstone in Africa. Feeling like Mephistopheles making an offer to Faust he could not refuse I took less than half price and hurried away.

The grieving process took a few weeks. I took to woodwork and breathing exercises, toyed with a bit of oil painting and walked for miles. Then one afternoon on a train, surrounded by people staring into screens with that weird hypnotised look of electro-maniacs, I knew I was free. The night before I had taken a copy of Antonia White's *The Sugar House* from my shelves and I was reading it now. A book is a whole world. It does not have electronic windows that keep winking at you, which if you get up to look out, only present you with more and more windows. A book is self contained, a living thing with living people, which is why we at the *Salisbury Review* recommend the pleasure of a paper rather than an electronic magazine. However, there are those of you in a hurry, or who travel a great deal with heavy suitcases who still want the pleasure of reading. They can get it with ease from our electronic website, in any version, iPad, Kindle, pdf or Kobo. But readers, beware of serious surfing. Paper's the thing.

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The Doomsday Book

IN SHORT

Pharmageddon, David Healy, University of California Press, 2012, £27.95.

Dr Healy, with an eye for the American market, takes a nostalgic look at two doctors of New England and makes a comparison between Alfred Worcester and Richard Cabot and their successors, influenced as they are by the drug industry. Worcester and Cabot were not affected by that industry for it did not exist. The medicines they used were cheap and largely useless. They were thoughtful, kind men but they could offer little to combat disease. Today every doctor has access to thousands of drugs that are costly but usually potent.

Some manufacturers make a lot of money and sometimes by dubious methods, but as Adam Smith pointed out this also applies to those who supply bread, beef and beer. However these companies do sometimes produce things which are sometimes unnecessary and even harmful. Medicines which will cure pneumonia in a week do not offer as much scope for profit as chronic conditions which may call for permanent treatment. Increased longevity largely owing to medication has meant that there are more older people than ever before. Conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease and arthritis are now bearable.

Healy concedes that some of the treatments are necessary but believes that many are not. Some people with high blood pressure might not go on to have strokes or heart attacks – but how to discern the lucky ones? Indeed we might question the widespread use of anti-depressants; but we are not unemployed and living in Middlesborough. People are now less stoical and want better lives, better food, more comfort and less pain. Healy thinks that the drug firms have cashed in on this in ways that are dishonest and even criminal. Spurious illnesses have been invented and encouraged. Moods of anxiety and depression, once accepted as natural, are now classified as illnesses which must be treated. Rowdy boys are labelled with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and are fed their daily Ritalin.

This well researched book by a professor of psychiatry shows how some firms, in pursuit of profit, have manipulated statistics and tampered with evidence; they have promoted drugs which have proved harmful or even fatal. And yet this industry has been responsible for the greatest revolution in the treatment of disease the world has ever known. There are now effective treatments for conditions that once led to disability and death in middle age. Millions of us can now lead active lives in our eighties and beyond. This has been brought about by an industry which has had its share of ruthless entrepreneurs but which on balance has been a boon to mankind.

An iconic picture by Sir Luke Fildes in the Tate Gallery shows a frock-coated physician sitting by the bed of a sick child. The artist knew from experience the pathos, not only of a dying infant, but of a doctor, powerless to help. It was commissioned by Sir Henry Tate, who endowed the Gallery and many other causes. He built his huge fortune from making refined sugar available to the masses and so helping to spread dental caries, diabetes, obesity and so on. Fortunately the drugs industry has come to the rescue by marketing remedies for these conditions – 'and thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.'

James Docherty

Murder in Notting Hill, Mark Olden, Zero Books, 2011, £11.99.

All the devils – racial tension, class war, societal rupture – are here. In the late 1950s London's population of West Indian immigrants was 10,000 strong and growing fast. In 1958 'race riots' broke out in Notting Hill; they were quickly quashed but tensions lingered. Then at midnight on 17 May 1959, a gang of white youths attacked 24 year-old Antiguan Kelso Cochrane on a street corner. A knife was plunged into his heart, and the young carpenter bled to death in forty seconds.

Mark Olden explores the murder and its aftermath as a mix of social commentary and amateur detection, evoking a half-forgotten era of slums, boozers, bomb-sites and betting shops. It reads like a slightly flat urban thriller as the author tramps around modern-day Notting Hill, browsing dusty files and transcribing tales of Teddy-boys and inter-family feuds. Old neo-nazis, gazing glumly at crowds of hijab-clad shoppers, are among his interviewees and there is also a clutch of ex-coppers dropping hints about a cover-up.

Back in 1959 London was not the harmonious 'melting-pot' dreamt of – and still awaited – by progressives. After the 1958 riots, the authorities were anxious to keep the lid on any future trouble; it would have been irresponsible for them not to be. But Olden suggests a deeper motive; officialdom's fear that if a white man was hanged for a black man's murder half of London would go up in flames. To allay that fear,

the author alleges, Cochrane's killer was allowed to escape justice.

Similar sentiments were abroad at the time of the killing. Rising Labour MP Barbara Castle compared Cochrane's murder to the deaths of Mau Mau suspects in Kenya. As the Governor of Antigua flew urgently to London, mass meetings were arranged and a new organisation – the Inter-Racial Friendship Co-Ordinating Council – was formed by Claudi Jones, chain-smoking, communist editor of the *West Indian Gazette*. Meanwhile, Cochrane's chequered past – he'd been convicted of assault in America – was quietly cleaned up.

'Officer-class' Forbes-Leith in charge of the case, was too refined to gain the confidence of the back-street slums. He also failed to pay much attention to Mosleyites and local agitators like the White Defence League. There was a whole sequence of police errors involving un-interviewed witnesses, lost evidence and a patchy search for the murder weapon. Olden particularly regrets that the much stronger powers the police had in the 1950s weren't put to full use. The issue of how and why those powers have since been diluted isn't discussed.

By the time the summer-long police investigation was scaled down, the name of Kelso Cochrane – like those of hundreds of other murder victims, before and since – had faded from public consciousness. But his ghost walked again thirty years later when Stephen Lawrence was murdered in April 1993. The similarities between the two cases, according to Olden, are 'overwhelming'. A new political zeitgeist, however, meant no escape for Lawrence's attackers, who were 'named and shamed', harried by the press, tried (and re-tried) until found guilty and given long jail sentences.

Olden names the two main suspects in the Cochrane case, both of whom had serious race-hate 'form'. The one identified as the actual killer was an 'over-the-top-racist', his guilt 'the worst-kept secret in Notting Hill'. Olden takes it for granted that Cochrane's murder (and Stephen Lawrence's) had purely racial motives. He also presumes that racial hatred when it involves violence against blacks by whites is a more serious motive than any other; an idea now fairly entrenched in our judicial system.

Olden's postscript appraises the changes that have come to Notting Hill over the last fifty-odd years, especially the 'vibrant street life' and the 'cosmopolitan edginess' they have brought. The most notable change is the disappearance of most of the area's 'oldest tribe', the white working class. The few remaining survivors have seen their neighbourhoods transformed by mass immigration, but Olden says they are happy to live, work and start families with the incomers, so much so that:

> *Many of the black and white grandchildren of people who fought each other in the 1958 riots now speak in the same multi-ethnic London dialect, listen to the same music and wear their jeans in the same style, half-way down their back-sides.*

Peter Coady

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The Salisbury Review

Published quarterly in September, December, March & June, volume commencing with September issue.
Annual subscription rates: £20, Europe/surface rest of world £25.
Airmail rest of world: £27, Single issues £4.99.
ISSN: 0265-4881.
Printed in the UK by The Warwick Printing Company Ltd.
Typesetting — DASH
Design — Jessica Chaney

Web site: http://www.salisburyreview.co.uk

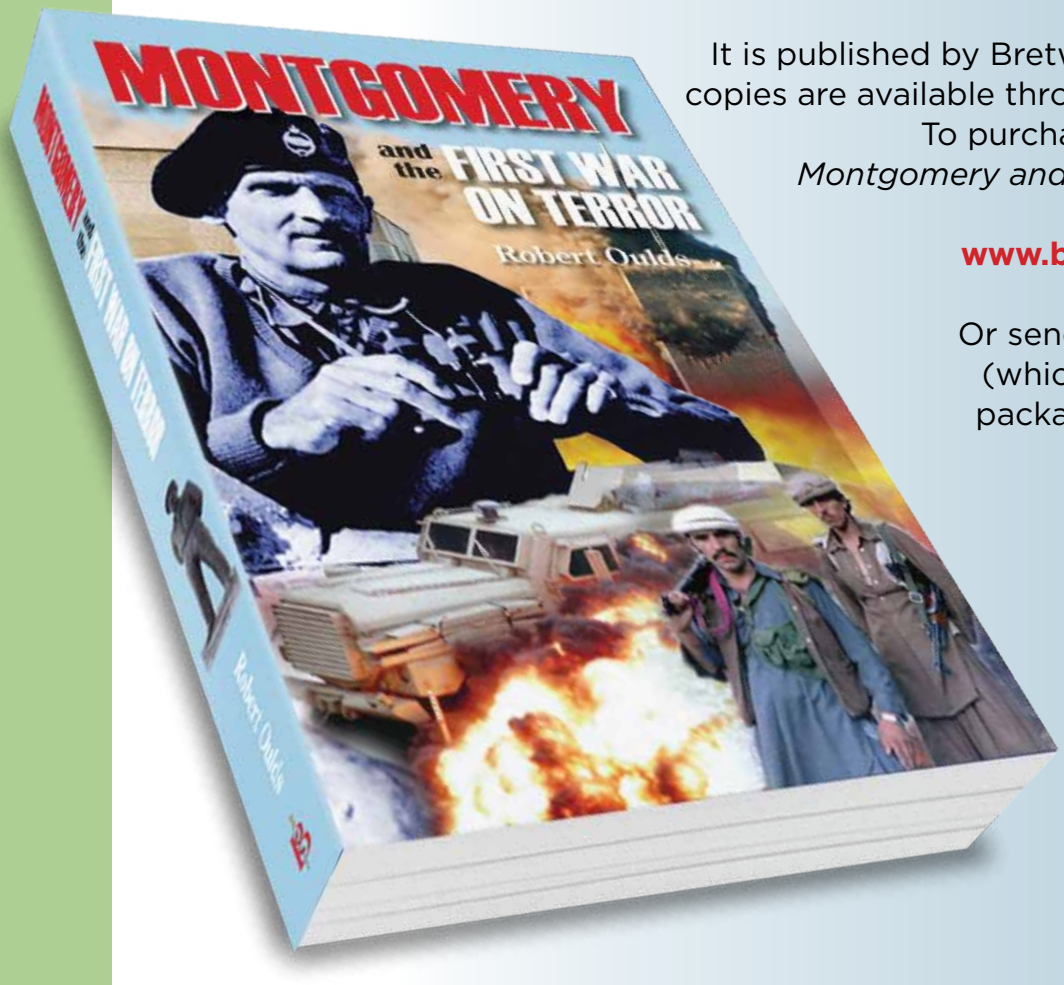
Montgomery and the First War on Terror

What a British Military Hero Can Teach Those Fighting Today's War on Terror

BRITISH MILITARY STRATEGY IN THE RECENT conflict in southern Iraq failed to defeat the insurgency. The on-going battle against the Taleban in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan is heading the same way. The military leadership need to learn lessons from Monty, the UK's most able counter-insurgency commander who knew how to win and defeat a guerrilla war.

As well serving on the volatile North West Frontier of the Raj prior to the First World War and again in the 1930s Bernard Law Montgomery, later Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, fought two wars on terror. He faced first the IRA in Ireland in the early 1920s when he commanded British troops in County Cork, hotbed of violence. Next he faced Islamic insurgents in Palestine during the Arab Revolt on the eve of World War II. In both conflicts he introduced new tactics, new training and new techniques that surprised and defeated his enemies. He also came to profound conclusions as to how the contrasting wars in Ireland and the Middle East should be handled.

Montgomery has much to teach us. This book details this little known period of Monty's career. And looks at the wider political situation and the lessons of Monty's counter-insurgency campaigns and how they should be applied today in the modern war on terror in Afghanistan. As well as learning the lessons from the earlier conflicts in Ireland and Palestine this book also looks at the lessons to be learned from the modern conflicts in Iraq (2003 – 2009) and Northern Ireland.



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