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Anatomy of A Disaster: Class War, Iraq, and the Contours of American Foreign Policy

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

There is a new game in town: the political establishment has decided it is time to forget the lies and blunders associated with the Iraqi War. Europe wishes to reaffirm its bonds with the United States, the United Nations needs to placate the super-power, and smaller nations are now in the position to make a deal. The angry demonstrations of time past, the loss of "the street," are apparently no longer relevant. It is indeed time to "get on with the job" of securing the peace. But not at any cost: not at the cost of burying the recent past. That would mean forgetting how the American public was manipulated, the world was bullied, and also the fragile nature of the democratic discourse. Especially when it comes to this administration, scarred by deceit, intoxicated with military power, inspired by imperialist ambitions, and guided by the interests of the wealthy, this is not a game that progressives should play. New crises of planetary importance will present themselves in the future and it seems the same strategy of mixing deceit with belligerence will be employed. An imperialist foreign policy, fueled by militarism and a hyper- nationalism, is also cloaking a new domestic form of class war. Battling the latter calls for understanding the former. This indeed turns the need to remember into a political issue.

Winning the hearts and minds . . .

There are countless dictators in the world and Saddam, though bad enough, was probably not the most gruesome. The United States cannot intervene everywhere. The question is why an intervention took place in Iraq. It has now been revealed that Saddam actually made various last-minute overtures to avoid war: his concessions apparently included unrestricted investigations for nuclear weapons by American inspectors and even, which admittedly provokes suspicion, free elections. The possibility of peace, in any event, was ignored. But that's not all: reports by the State Department forecast the difficulties associated with rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure, the looting that would follow opening the prisons, and the resentment that would greet American troops. These reports were also ignored. Another study commissioned from the current administration by David Kay, the American expert leading the search for "weapons of mass destruction," states that Saddam Hussein was not building nuclear arms or in possession of large quantities of chemical weapons. The Iraqi War, in short, was also not a logical outcome of the assault on Afghanistan in which a genuine international coalition supported an attack upon a Taliban regime complicit in the events of 9/11. Richard Haas, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, put the matter well: "Iraq was a war of choice, not a war that had to be fought."

The American public would never have supported a war against Iraq had it known then what we know now. Human rights became a fashionable justification only once the other justifications increasingly began losing their validity. The pro-war clique of "realists" in the Department of Defense made their reputation attacking "idealists" who favored human rights and Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz, actually stated in Vanity Fair in June 2003 that, while freedom from the tyranny of Saddam Hussein was an important aim of American policy in Iraq, this alone was "not a reason to put the lives of American kids at risk." The mixture of arrogance and cynicism that marks the current administration indeed virtually oozes from the words of Richard Perle, perhaps the most notorious of right-wing hawks, who, according to The Guardian (November, 20,2003), told an audience in London that with regard to Iraq, "I think in this case international law stood in the way of doing the right thing."

Other reasons were primary: geo-political dreams of controlling vast oil resources and four rivers, the upper and lower Zab as well as the Tigris and Euphrates, in one of the most arid regions of the world; intimidating Teheran, Damascus, and the Palestinians; a belief that American interests in the Middle East could no longer be safely left in the hands of Israel; the perceived need for an alternative to the bases situated in the increasingly archaic and potentially explosive nation of Saudi Arabia. Thus, the United States felt its presence in the region was required: larger interests than those of Iraq were at stake

President Bush insisted after 9/11 that the war on terror would last a long time: years, decades, perhaps even generations. There was no single identifiable enemy: only an amorphous transnational terrorist movement and a shifting collection of rogue states harboring fanatics and preparing for nuclear war. The enemy could be anywhere, its hatred could only be irrational, and thus, with a paranoia fanned by the dreadful events of 9/11 no less than the flames of the administration's own propaganda, the Bush Administration began to think anew about the calls to reconfigure the Middle East. Leading strategists of the far right like Wolfkowitz and Perle had been calling for the ouster of Saddam as early as 1991 and it made sense for administrations to consider the contingency plans formulated in September of 2000 by neo-conservative think-tanks like Project for the New American Century. These reports insisted on the strategic importance of dominating the Gulf as well as creating a "worldwide command and control system" to deal with nations like North Korea, Iran, and Syria that President Bush would later lump together and condemn as "the axis of evil."

Fighting the good fight . . .

The "war on terror," if that phrase any longer has any meaning, is not going away. Right-wing politicians in Washington continue to joke: "sissies stay in Baghdad, real men want Teheran and Damascus." Every now and then a trial balloon goes up expressing new fears about posed by Iran or Syria. Both are lambasted for aiding the attacks on American troops, harboring or selling nuclear weapons, and imperiling Israel and the stability of the Middle East. But public skepticism for yet another military adventure has grown. The economic, military, and economic miscalculations made in Iraq have thrown the Bush administration on the defensive. Its foreign policy is in shambles.

Relations between Europe and the United States will undoubtedly improve: it makes no sense for them to engage in an ongoing confrontation with the other. Both are too politically important, too economically powerful; and, also, too alike. The rifts remaining within the European Union require mending, which is only possible through a rapprochement with the United States, while the need for reliable allies has become obvious on the part of the hegemon. The United Nations for its part has now passed a resolution supporting American policy in Iraq. That, too, only makes sense. The United Nations cannot remain at loggerheads with its most powerful member: such a course would spell financial disaster and instability for the organization. Some degree of international cooperation over the future of Iraq, moreover, was probably inevitable. But tensions still remain: symbolic is different than military support and, while it is becoming ever more apparent that the United States cannot bear the costs of peace by itself, the billions in aid sought by the Bush administration are still not forthcoming. The European Union has offered $230 million and the administration will be lucky to raise an extra few billion dollars from its other allies.

But it is not simply a matter or money. This administration has also lost the moral high ground accorded the United States following the tragedy of 9/11. America is now seen by the publics of most nations as the primary threat to world peace and as a hypocrite willing to make war on weak states and then leave the mess to be cleaned by others. The world senses that this administration no longer takes the constructive criticism of democratic allies seriously while, among Muslims, its own panel of experts has advised the Bush Administration that “hostility toward America has reached shocking levels” and that the “image” of the United States must change. The source of a new public relations campaign, however, will surely not be Afghanistan.

That nation is now witnessing a revival of the Taliban amid the armed conflicts between tribal chieftains, which recall the battles between American gangsters during Prohibition, and there is precious little sense of a deep commitment to reconstruction. The stable, secular, and democratic regime promised by the Bush administration has not come into existence. Admittedly, in Afghanistan, some financial and humanitarian aid has been given by the allies of the United States in what was an internationally supported military response to a regime harboring the criminals of 9/11. But further aid is assuredly imperiled by demands for support in Iraq. This is not a good sign. Any potential ally must think that American foreign policy is at cross-purposes in that part of the world. It is.

And the situation is not that different elsewhere. The original refusal of the Bush administration to consider providing material incentives for North Korea to liquidate its nuclear arsenal, the rejection of the policy followed by President Clinton, and the attack on those who would succumb to “blackmail” or appeasement, has given way to negotiations with Pyongyang punctuated by bellicose blustering. The “road-map” to peace between Israelis and Palestinians, which was originally predicated on overestimating the pliancy of Ariel Sharon and underestimating the popular support of Yassir Arafat, has also led nowhere.

President Bush clearly did not “ride herd” on both parties to the conflict and, for all the talk

about statehood, Palestinian independence was not guaranteed as a prerequisite for curtailing the violence. Annexation of land is awaiting the completion of the “fence” separating Israel from Palestine; settlements are still being built, terrorism inside Israel is increasing, and the prospect of peace is further removed than it was before the Iraqi War. Clearly the connection between security and settlements trumpeted by the bosses of Israel is an illusion and, with the support given to the pre-emptive strike of Israel against supposed “terror bases” in Syria, the possibility of a general war in the region has increased. The belief that the fall of Saddam has created more stability in the Middle East is simply absurd and, the way things are going, even the prospect of securing American military bases on Iraqi territory is in jeopardy.

There is nothing worse than a fearful bully: feint and retreat have supplanted any sustained foreign policy. Suspended between bellicose rhetoric, and uncertain aims, the foreign policy of the Bush administration is adrift. Some half-cracked officials and advisors of this administration think that the cure, the best way to soften the impact of a failed policy in Iraq, is to gamble on a spectacular victory elsewhere. A bombing of North Korea or an invasion of say, Iran, will probably not take place while the United States is stuck in an Iraqi quagmire that is solely of its own making. But you never know. The influence of the lunatic right should not be underestimated and, as Machiavelli and Sun Tzu understood, it is always better to prepare for the worst.

The price of victory . . .

The cost of the Iraqi war has been far higher than anyone expected, and it will not be paid for a long time. More is involved than dollars and cents. American democracy has incurred dramatic wounds. The left laughs at those who would substitute the term “liberty fries” for “french fries.” But it is no laughing matter. A wave of nationalism and xenophobia has been unleashed in a country that clearly retains what the great American historian, Richard Hofstadter, called a “paranoid streak.” Coupled with the introduction of legislation like The Patriot Act, it has called for expanding federal death penalty statutes and issuing subpoenas without the approval of judges or grand juries, insisting on maximum penalties while limiting plea bargaining, and constricting the right to counsel, bail, habeas corpus, and freedom from surveillance. A “watch list” of more than 100,000 suspects associated with terrorism is currently being designed. Justification for such measures is supplied by a seemingly endless number of “national security alerts” for which neither criteria nor evidence is never supplied.

Billions of dollars, $4-5 billion dollars per month, have already been spent on the Iraqi conflict and another $87 billion is on the way. Even before adding on the $166 billion in war costs, the huge surplus inherited from the Clinton administration has turned into the largest deficit in the history of the United States. Tax cuts benefit the rich exacerbate the situation, profits are not reinvested, and low-paying jobs without benefits are being substituted for high-paying jobs with benefits. While the richest 1% of Americans acquired more after tax money than the bottom 40% combined, the state teeters on the edge of bankruptcy thereby, of course (!), rendering new social programs unfeasible. Where wars have traditionally been associated with an expansion of domestic programs, consider the G.I. Bill in the aftermath of World War II or

the complex of social programs associated with the “great society” during the conflict in Vietnam, that has not been the case this time.

Soldiers will have a much tougher time when they come back. Work requirements have been increased for welfare recipients, overtime has been eliminated for more than two million workers, child-care subsidies have been reduced throughout the country, and there is barely a single welfare program that has not felt the knife: a particularly mean-spirited example is in the virtual elimination of a tiny program costing $150 million to tutor the children of convicts. Union rights of workers engaged in the many agencies connected with the Office of Homeland Security have also been rolled back. Then there are the lives wasted and, especially for the Iraqis, the “collateral damage.” The price of this conflict was purposely underestimated, later miscalculated, and now understated by the current administration. If ever there was a president who deserved to be impeached then it is George W. Bush.

Congress, admittedly, set up two “bi-partisan” committees to “investigate” the administration. In concert with a cowed and simpering media, however, they have tended to sweep under the carpet the sheer incompetence and blatant misuse of power by the Bush administration. Every now and then a little gem is dropped: the public will then learn about new developments like the formation of a company known as “New Bridge Strategies,” composed of businessmen close to the family and administration of President Bush, which is consulting other companies seeking slices of taxpayer financed reconstruction projects. Most probably the mainstream media lost its bearings amid the outburst of euphoric nationalism that accompanied the outbreak of hostilities. But whether its ongoing laxity is due to intellectual laziness, a “club” mentality, or misplaced pragmatism is irrelevant. Independently minded people now look to other sources of information like the Internet. There they can find writings by a host of critics who insisted from the beginning that Iraq had no serious links to Al Qaeda and that it constituted no threat, and certainly no nuclear threat, to the security of the United States. There they can find commentators who anticipated that the people of Iraq would not embrace the United States as a liberator and that any number of serious, if not intractable, problems would plague the post-war reconstruction.

Grass-roots organizations like United for Peace and Justice no less than Internet groups like “Move-On” and “Truth Out” have been doing a valiant job of speaking truth to power and demanding that the president and his cronies be held responsible for the debacle. The president’s popularity has sunk dramatically from what it was in the aftermath of 9/11, due to the depressed state of the economy and growing cynicism about the failed policy in Iraq. But the forces arrayed against the opposition are mighty indeed: there is the timidity of the media, the cowardice of so many in the “mainstream” of the Democratic Party, and, of course, the $250 million that President Bush now wishes to raise for a re-election campaign whose advertisements is already condemning candidates who are “attacking the president for attacking terrorists.”

False hopes . . .

Propaganda in America won't change the "facts on the ground" in Iraq. Capturing Saddam Hussein won't either: it might even make things worse since, arguably, the only reason even more of the populace is not engaged in open resistance is the fear that the dictator will return to power. The original assumptions underpinning the policy of the Bush administration, in any event, were optimistic and naïve. There will be no quick transition to democracy, Iraqis are not welcoming their liberators, terror is rampant, and the obstacles to reconstruction are clearly enormous. We now have the prospect of a protracted war and a long occupation. How long? Some in the administration believe America should cut its losses while others like Director of the National Security Council, Condoleezza Rice, believe Americans might have to remain in Iraq for a "generation." In order to justify his policy, the president has claimed that Iraq is now the "central front" in the international war against terror: why that is the case given what is occurring in Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere remains an open question. Ironically, in Iraq, it hardly makes sense to speak of "terror" any longer: better to think of a traditional guerilla war against an imperialist military occupation, naturally remains unclear.

Knee-jerk responses won't help matters: the situation is complex. Though most Baghdadis look forward to the creation of a democratic order, and probably believe that life will improve for them in five years, different groups within Iraqi society have very different notions of what "democracy" means and what institutions should govern the new polity. Profound disagreements exist over whether this new regime should take the form of a western parliamentary democracy or an Islamic republic. Rifts also run deep not only between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, between moderates and fundamentalists within the Shiite community itself, but also between various minorities on the borders of Iraq. There is little doubt that not merely the degree of nationalism in Iraq, but the depth of competing ethno-religious identification, has become more intense than anticipated. Neither a civil war that might destabilize the region even more nor a partition, which would generate a permanent irredentism among Iraqis, is a far-fetched possibility.

Simply pulling out American troops, without transferring responsibility to a NATO or UN force under multi-lateral command, might hasten these developments. It will surely plunge Iraq into deeper chaos and ultimately empower a new set of anti-democratic forces. This would occur as security is handed over to Iraqis militia and police. Creating an Iraqi military and police is a possibility: but leaders of the 50,000 Iraqis already recruited are coming from the old regime. 650,000 tons of ammunition at numerous unsecured sites must serve as a temptation for tribal chieftains, gangsters, and the new leaders of paramilitary organizations. In contrast to the initial claims of the Bush administration that opposition to its policy is strong only among "dead-enders" like foreign religious fanatics and criminal gangs, according to most assessments, everyday Iraqis are becoming increasingly disgusted with the military occupation by the United States. Introducing substitute forces from the United Nations or Europe might provide a solution: but that will not happen so long as command remains a prerogative of the United States. There is no need for Iraq to turn into another Vietnam: there is a way out but it is politically unacceptable to the Bush administration.

No quid pro quo has been put on the table by the president. The ideological reason is most

likely the general strategic decision to reject the multi-lateral foreign policy of the past, with its reliance on NATO, the UN, and various regional associations of states, in favor a unilateral approach. But there are also practical reasons: domestic politics cannot simply be divorced from foreign policy. The domestic base of political support for the Bush Administration has never had any use for the United Nations and it always understood NATO as an arm for implementing American foreign policy goals. As for the beliefs and interests of Bush supporters: conservative elites are adamant that American corporations closely tied to the administration retain their lucrative contacts for reconstructing Iraq and its oil industry while the Christian coalition and other groups imbued with nationalistic ideology would be furious should an "apology" for the invasion be made or the "victory," no less than the symbols of American military power, be compromised.

When the Iraqi War broke out, without any sense of the different power constellations, references were constantly made to the dangers incurred by appeasing Hitler in the 1930s. Next the postwar era was invoked: Iran and Syria and other Middle Eastern states have been challenged by the United States to embrace democratic "regime change" just as Europe did following the defeat of Nazism. That is a laudable goal. But it becomes little more than posturing for domestic consumption, or veiled threats the recalcitrant abroad, since no plans exist regarding how to introduce democracy or just what democratic forces in these nations should be supported. The Middle East lacks the indigenous traditions of liberalism and social democracy that marked European history. The context is radically different and the analogy is false. An analogy of a different sort, however, might prove useful in making sense of post-war Iraq and the intensification of anti-Americanism.

In the aftermath to World War I, a defeated Germany was forced to admit sole responsibility for the conflict, compensate the victorious allies, and surrender part of its territory, while its new democratic leaders were castigated as "November criminals" and "traitors" for supposedly collaborating with the enemy and signing the Treaty of Versailles. Nationalist fervor arose among the masses and also among soldiers who, unemployed following the peace, formed any number of right-wing paramilitary organizations. Chaos followed the war, left-wing revolutions were attempted, the economy collapsed, unemployment raged, and liberal politicians were assassinated at a rapid rate. The new republic never gained the legitimacy its framers expected and dreams of revenge festered.

Iraq in 2003 is obviously not Germany in 1918. But, while there are no left-wing revolutionary uprisings taking place in postwar Iraq, unemployment is now about 70% and other similarities are striking. A defeated nation, billions in debt to a variety of countries, must take responsibility for a war, which this time was obviously the work of its enemy, while this same enemy has instituted economic policies privatizing 200 Iraqi firms, allowing 100% ownership of Iraqi industries and banks by foreign investors, and making it legal for all profits to be sent abroad. The new leaders of Iraq, Ahmad Chalabi and his friends on the provisional council nominally ruling Iraq fear for their lives. They inspire little enthusiasm and less trust: most of them are viewed as corrupt stooges of the United States and, it seems clear, that any new western styled regime will suffer from a deficit of legitimacy. The country has been humiliated,

territory might be lost, and the fabric of the nation has been frayed. More ominously: neither a civil war that might destabilize the region even more nor a partition, which would generate a permanent irredentism among Iraqis, is a far-fetched possibility.

Historical no less than political miscalculations have produced terrible consequences. It was believed by officials of the Bush administration that the United States would be welcomed as liberators and that democracy would be brought to Iraq: a full-scale guerrilla war is instead underway and only baby steps have been taken on the road to democracy. Though most Baghdadis look forward to the creation of a democratic order, and probably believe that life will improve for them in five years, different groups within Iraqi society have very different notions of what "democracy" means and what institutions should govern the new polity. Rifts also run deep not only between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, between moderates and fundamentalists within the Shiite community itself, but also between various minorities on the borders of Iraq. Profound disagreements exist over whether this new regime should take the form of a western parliamentary democracy or an Islamic republic.

No less than in Germany, following World War I, intense nationalism provides the only locus of unity: this translates into hatred of the invader. Resistance to the United States is rapidly becoming a symbol for the anti-western and anti-democratic fundamentalists in the region: linkage between Iraqi insurgents and "terrorist" forces, precisely what the Bush administration most feared, might actually come to pass. Responding to this situation has taken the form of employing police and military officers of the old regime while making deals with tribal chieftains and religious leaders. These are not reliable allies, neither by tradition nor by inclination are they disposed to democracy, and it is becoming ever to imagine the emergence of a new authoritarian state lacking in gratitude to its creators and politically incapable of guaranteeing the United States a presence in the region. Perhaps things will turn out differently. But the future does not look bright for the forces of liberty.

A Class War. . .

When the twentieth century began, among the left in the socialist labor movement, it was generally believed that imperialism, militarism, and nationalism were the natural fruits of an inevitably more exploitative capitalism. That perspective is no longer fashionable. Imperialism is a word rarely used any longer in polite company; talking about a "system" is considered old-fashioned; while history is interpreted by many on the left as an agglomeration of ruptures and contingencies. To be sure: speaking about inevitability is misleading and there is little left of orthodox Marxism. But still, today, imperialism, militarism, and heightened nationalism are functioning together amid an intense economic assault on working people and the poor. Not to see the interconnection between these phenomena undermines the ability to make sense of world affairs and respond to what more than one Nobel Prize winner has called the most reactionary administration in American history.

Imperialism need neither benefit the nation as a whole nor prove purely economic in character. It can serve only certain small powerful interests and it can project primarily geo-political aims.

Naomi Klein was correct when she noted in The Nation that, whether troops were withdrawn or power was ceded to international organizations, Iraq would still remain “occupied.” There is nothing strange in suggesting that the reconstruction contracts awarded certain American firms and the economic arrangements introduced into Iraq, coupled with new geo-political control of regional resources, are part of a new imperialist strategy undertaken by the United States, the hegemon, in a period marked by globalization. It cannot simply be a coincidence, after all, that rogue states almost always seem to be traditional in orientation, outside the orbit of global society, and with a citizenry that is brown or black. The United States is now already harshly criticizing Iran and Syria for failing to close borders, for building nuclear arms, and for posing a threat to planetary security. The propaganda machine is employing the same tactics that it used in Iraq: whether they will lead to the same result, of course, is another matter. Nevertheless, it makes sense that the Bush administration should believe the United States must back up the world-wide revulsion against its words with world-wide fear of its might.

With its new strategy of the “pre-emptive strike” buttressed by its defense budget of $400 billion, bigger than that of the rest of the world put together, the Bush administration has explicitly linked its imperialist vision with a new militarism. Little wonder then that the United States should also once again lead the world in international arms sales: its profits of about $13 billion, with $8.6 billion going to developing nations, are substantially more than the $5 billion accrued by Russia and the $1 billion by France. Israel has already claimed for itself the right to engage in pre-emptive strikes, which it did in Syria, and the increasing sales of arms world-wide will make it likely that violence will increase world-wide as well. Such developments can only benefit the most dominant military power, the United States, since new interventions will most likely be required for purposes of “security” and new subservient regimes for the purposes of securing stability.

A belief in the need for unilateral action is the logical consequence of such policies rather than simply an irrational form of machismo. It also only follows that the political mindset of those envisioning new imperial adventures and intensely preparing for war will tend to privilege the mixture of deceit and brutality in foreign affairs. But that is not something the American people can accept without undermining its sense of democratic identity. The rational justifications for imperialism and militarism therefore lose their importance. Americans become more sensitive to criticism. Old allies like France and Germany therefore are therefore not simply evidencing disagreement, but expressing their latent resentment, jealously, and ingratitude toward the United States. Everything becomes reduced to a conflict between “us and them.”

Nationalism will thus take the form of identifying American interests with those of the planet. If others disagree they are then, by definition, either fools unaware of their real interests or enemies not just of the United States, but humanity. Internal critics of a misguided foreign policy, by the same token, suffer the same fate as old allies with different views. Their good will is denied from the start. They become “traitors,” nothing more, and the need for vigilance against them and their kind must prove as unending as the war on terror itself: the Patriot Act and other attempts to curtail civil liberties in the name of national security and a national enterprise thus, once again, become logical extensions of a general imperial strategy rather

than simply irrational expressions of paranoia. That all this actually serves the Bush Administration by identifying it with the national interest, and the national interest of the United States with that of the world, is still not emphasized enough. The similarity between the current form of thinking and that of our old communist enemies, who believed that what is good for the "party" is good for the nation and what is good for the Soviet Union is good for the world proletariat, is indeed striking.

Again: it is not a matter of this or that policy but of a new reactionary agenda and the assumptions behind it. The Democratic Party is not challenging that agenda and those assumptions. The magnitude of the current crisis is still being tempered: what was called the "military-industrial complex" is working to the detriment of the nation and the welfare state is being stripped to the bone. Three million jobs have been lost since the new millennium began that would require the creation of about 150,000 jobs per month not to recover the jobs already lost but simply to keep pace with the current decline. Little is being said about what it would take to counteract these trends in a meaningful way or, to put it differently, how to reclaim the heritage of the anti-trust spirit, the New Deal, and the Poor Peoples' Movement.

Intoxicated by "the end of ideology," content as usual to offer a perspective just a little less loathsome than their opponents, the opportunistic mainstream of the Democratic Party is unwilling to engage American gun-running, the economic exploitation of Iraq, and the reality of this new class war. More radical elements stand in the wings and, arguably, even many within the mainstream are being forced to re-evaluate. But the pressure must come from outside the ranks of the party. Sources for such pressure exist: huge demonstrations now forgotten bear witness to the depth of dissatisfaction with this current regime and there exists a colorful mosaic of community organizations, interests groups, and progressive social movements.

Coordination and a common perspective on fighting this new class war are the problems not simply "apathy." Now, more than ever, it is necessary to begin furthering a class ideal, a set of values and programs, that speaks to the general interests of working people within each of the existing organizations even as it privileges none. Propagating common values of resistance and articulating new programs of empowerment can only occur by working with the reformist organizations that we have: it cannot come from the top down, through sectarian action, or through vague calls for abolishing the system. No longer is it a matter of choosing between reform and revolution. The choice is instead between radical reform and resignation. But that choice is no less dramatic: the quality of our future depends upon making the right decision.

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Why Capitalism Needs The Left

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Capitalism is a marvelous thing, a wondrous machine that has carried human societies to previously unimagined wealth. No other economic system, no matter how lofty its ambitions, has come close. Capitalism has done what clerics and moral philosophers once thought impossible: turned our self-interest, even our greed, into the motor of social progress.

Free markets, in turn, have made it possible to conduct globe spanning commercial transactions in ways that maximize economic efficiency and minimize the need for central direction. The market system has allowed society to conduct its business and organize its affairs, including the production and distribution of vital goods and services, without resort to the commands of central planners. Instead, complex enterprises are coordinated through a decentralized process of mutual accommodation and communication, assuring that scarce resources go to their best uses.

In combination, free market and capitalism have also helped usher in and sustain fundamental political changes, widening the scope both of personal freedom and political democracy. Because of this system, more people get to choose where to work, what to consume, and what to make than ever before, while ancient inequalities of rank and status are overturned. The spread of market capitalism has also laid the foundation for the expansion of democratic decision-making. With the establishment of private property and free exchange, political movements demanding other freedoms, including wider access to government, have proliferated. To be sure, capitalism cannot guarantee personal liberty or political democracy. It has produced it share of dictatorships too. But, to date, no society has been able to establish and maintain political democracy without first establishing and securing a market capitalist system.

The large corporations that stand at the heart of contemporary capitalism have proven indispensable in this transformation. They are the essential intermediaries in the modern economy, linking financial capital, expertise, technology, managerial skill, labor and leadership. They are spreading everywhere in the world not only because they are powerful, but also because they work. But market capitalism is not a machine that can run on its own. It needs rules, limits, and above all else stewardship. Partly because the system feeds off of people’s darker instincts, partly because it is a machine, and therefore indifferent to human values, and partly because there is no central planner to assure that everything works out in the end, there must be some conscious effort to bring order to this chaos, however creative it might be. Left to its own devices, unfettered capitalism produces great inequities, great suffering, and great instability. In fact, these in-built tendencies are enough to destroy the system itself. Karl Marx figured this out in the mid-19th century and built his revolutionary system on the expectation that these dark forces would prevail. But Marx underestimated our

ability to use politics to impose limits on the economic system itself.

At one time, and still in other places, even conservatives knew this to be true, and offered themselves up as responsible social stewards. Whether out of a sense of noblesse oblige or enlightened self interest, they volunteered to lead a collective effort to reform the system so that capitalism could survive and continue to serve human interests. From the 1930s through the 1970s, American corporate leaders and a fair number of Republicans seemed to understand this too. They made their piece with "big" government, seeing in the New Deal and even the Great Society a way to forge both social peace and political stability through the creation of a "mixed" economy.

Sadly, this sort of conservatism has all but completely disappeared from the American scene. The contemporary right has abandoned whatever commitment it once had to making capitalism work for everyone, at least if that involves any sort of political intervention. Conservatives find it very hard to even think these thoughts. Instead, they mechanically repeat Lockian and Smithian nostrums about limited government that even these avatars of private property and free markets would have disavowed – if only because the slavish adherence to them makes it impossible to sustain political order and social cohesion, let alone a competitive economy.

According to the American right, capitalism's problems have nothing to do with capitalism itself but are rooted in the government's misguided effort to reform it. Corporate excesses have nothing to do with corporate power, but only to the predatory behavior of a few CEO's gone bad. Blinded by these fixed ideas, conservatives now threaten many of the things that most Americans hold dear. Laissez-faire, the conservative's default position on almost every vital policy issue today, puts individuals and communities at serious risk. This bears repeating. In many of the most important matters, from the quality of the air we breathe, to the safety of our pension funds, we "leave it to the market" at our peril.

Progressives also need to make something else clear: society benefits when the left governs. This will seem counter-intuitive, even bizarre, to a generation brought up on the idea that liberals are always soft-headed, bleeding hearts, radicals are wannabe Stalinists, and conservatives are, in former Republican Majority Leader Dick Armey's words, the real "deep thinkers." 1 But the record is clear here too. To the extent that capitalism has served the interests of the vast majority of Americans, and not just a few rich investors and corporate executives, the left deserves the credit. History shows that capitalism has been made to meet human needs because progressives have challenged many of the basic principles upon which the system is premised, including the idea that private property rights are sacred, free markets are always efficient and fair, and corporations inevitably serve the public interest.

This point also bears repeating. In the 20th century, it's been the left that has fought for racial justice, worker rights, equal opportunity, women's liberation, environmental justice, consumer protection, civil liberties, and anti-discrimination laws – the whole panoply of social and political changes that have made America a better society. Truth be told, if laissez-faire conservatives had had their way, we would still be living in the Gilded Age.

This doesn’t mean that more government is always the better choice. But on the large social and economic issues that bedevil society, within certain limits the more powerful the left, the better off people are. This is why the recent and precipitous decline of progressive politics is such a disaster for so many Americans. And why it’s so important that progressives figure out how to make this clear.

The Limits of the Free Market

Capitalism needs government because free markets don’t do everything well. It’s really that simple. The political economists who helped invent the system knew this. Adam Smith fully expected, even hoped, that government would act when necessary

not only to provide for national defense, but for the establishment of justice and the provision of public works. Without these public activities, the system simply wouldn’t function. John Stuart Mill, who thought laissez-faire a useful “general rule,” also wrote “there is scarcely anything really important to the general interest, which it may not be desirable, or even necessary, that the government should take upon itself. 2

Unfortunately, conservatives who celebrate these theorists cannot or will not listen to what they actually had to say about the limits of the market system or consider several hundred years of evidence on that point. In the face of overwhelming proof that markets don’t provide everything we need, conservative economists, including Nobel Prize winners like Milton Friedman, would have us believe that if government only got out of the way, competition would be perfect and market outcomes fair, and that capitalism would grow smoothly and robustly. If their denial of reality were only of interest to academics, we could dismiss it and move on. But because the Republican Party is intent on putting these benighted ideas, however poorly thought out, into practice, they can’t be ignored.

We could proceed by pointing out that when their own economic interests are at stake, few conservatives are actually willing to live by the principles they espouse. The

very same corporate executives who decry government regulations, federal welfare programs, and excessive public spending line up for more than $150 billion a year in corporate subsidy programs and targeted tax loopholes that enhance their bottom line. Whether what’s on offer are loan guarantees from the Export-Import bank, or grants from the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, and Commerce, Fortune 500 companies like Halliburton, Mobil Oil, General Electric, AT&T, FedEx, and General Motors show up hat in hand. 3 In some cases, the amount of money involved is truly staggering. In the 1990s, agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland, a friend to both political parties, received more than $3 billion in subsidies to produce ethanol, despite any real indication that this gasoline substitute helps the environment, improves energy efficiency, or benefits anyone other than corn farmers and ADM itself. All the while, Dwayne Andreas, ADM’s chairman, brazenly denounced government spending,

decried the disappearance of free markets in America, and called for tax increases

on working Americans to close the federal deficit.4

Andreas is not alone. Corporations that can't cut it in the market routinely line up at the public trough for handouts. Chrysler did it in the early 1980s, taking a $1.5 billion loan guarantee from the federal government; the savings and loans did it in 1989, taking a $157 billion bailout from Congress; and the airlines did it in 2003, taking a $15 billion free lunch. But even successful firms feel no shame in accepting government handouts. As the high-tech economy boomed in the 1990s, bestowing billions on top managers and shareholders, high-tech executives waxed eloquent at corporate galas about the benefits of laissez-faire. All the while, the Department of Commerce's Advanced Technology Program handed these very same corporations hundreds of millions of dollars a year to subsidize the development and marketing of new products.5 One study concluded that in 1996 U.S. corporations received more in direct subsidies and tax breaks than all the American poor received from the government's safety net programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), student aid, housing subsidies, food and nutrition assistance, and other kinds of direct public assistance. 6

Congressional cheerleaders for laissez-faire are notorious hypocrites too, pulling out all the stops to get government contracts for their districts even as they denounce that same government for catering to special interests. Newt Gingrich, a famous critic of big government and pork-barrel politics, made sure when in power that his constituents were prime recipients of federal largesse, ranging from a $100,000 federal grant to the University of Georgia for research on Vidalia onions (a local crop) to a billion-plus contract to Lockheed Martin to build new military aircraft in Marietta, the Speaker's home town. 7

But while exposing hypocrisy can be fun, it doesn't speak directly to the underling issues. After all, libertarians have their own fantastic solution to that problem: they would make it impossible for anyone to benefit from public spending and government regulation. So the question remains: Can we really rely on free markets to achieve our values?

Academic economists and policy analysts have covered much of this ground elsewhere and at length. But because market worship has returned, and the critics of laissez-faire have so effectively been banned from the airwaves, it's worth repeating their most telling complaints. To begin with, as Locke, Smith, and Mill understood, only government can establish the basic rules of social, political, and economic life, including the rights to both liberty and private property that conservatives rightly insist upon. Unless these rights exist in law, and have the backing of a government sufficiently powerful to enforce them, the law of the jungle would prevail. Russia's recent

experience privatizing and deregulating its economy without first establishing these basic rules, illustrates just how difficult life can be when government is not strong enough to impose basic standards of conduct. Gangsterism prevails.

Government is also needed to regulate basic commercial transactions, including the supply of money and credit, upon which all other business activity depends. And only government can

establish and enforce limits on what can and can't be sold in the market. It took laws, not just good intentions and moral exhortation, to stop slavery and indentured servitude in the U.S. It will take laws, strongly enforced, to end the trafficking in women and the sale of dangerous narcotics to children. Without these rules, and the sanctions to back them up, these would remain viable business enterprises.

Markets fail in other ways. Some things (economists call them "pure public goods") will not be produced in sufficient quantity or quality, despite their importance to the market system as a whole. The underlying theory of pure public goods is a bit technical, but the idea is not: these are things that benefit everyone (whether or not they pay for them), and that are far too expensive for any single individual to purchase on his or her own. As a result, if we are to have it, we must do it "collectively." Lighthouses used to be a favorite example; defense is one contemporary one. Unless we use the government to decide how much defense we want, and then make people pay for it with taxes, we will not have enough. The hard truth is that people would "free ride," letting others pay the costs while hoping to enjoy the benefits. As a result, defense would be undersupplied. Even the richest among us could not fill this gap alone.

Markets also have some pretty nasty side effects. Technically, these are called "by-products" or "externalities". Put simply, there are some goods whose production or exchange has consequences for people who are not directly involved in the transaction. While these consequences can be positive, the negative ones are more consequential. Air and water pollution are famous examples. Consider the production of steel. The steel producer pumps the by-products of the manufacturing process into the surrounding air and water, polluting the environment of the factory's unwitting neighbors. They pay the price; the steel producer sees only the profits from not cleaning up. Absent government regulation, the seller (and whoever has bought his or her product) neither changes his or her behavior nor compensates the victims.

Markets also have a tendency to under produce certain things, most significantly the "social" or "public" investments that are critical to the long-term health of the economy and society. Essential infrastructure investments, including roads, bridges, tunnels, airports, and harbors, might be organized privately, but the record suggests that, for similar reasons, this is not likely to happen. These will be under produced because they do not yield returns in a timely fashion, or in a way that can be easily captured by potential investors, who are typically rather shortsighted and want to see profits relatively quickly. The stock market reinforces this tendency, because shareholders can easily dump stocks that don't meet quarterly profit expectations and move on to the next big thing. In the end, only the public sector, with its power to tax and spend, is prepared to step up and make the necessary commitment.

Take the biomedical revolution that is transforming medicine and paying huge dividends too. Biomedical research got off the ground in the 1960s not because private investors dumped millions into it, but because government agencies underwrote the research and development costs, believing that biomed would prove important down the road. Indeed, many of the most important advances in drug therapy have resulted not from research and development

spending by the pharmaceutical industry, but from government labs. While the big drug companies do spend tens of billions of dollars every year hunting for new drugs, much of that is spent developing treatments for baldness, obesity, and impotence; the publicly funded National Institutes of Health do the medically important science. A recent National Bureau of Economic Research study indicates that fifteen of the twenty-one drugs with the highest therapeutic value developed between 1965 and 1992 resulted from research done with public money. The National Cancer Institute s pent $35 million to develop paclitaxel (Taxol), used to treat breast, lung, and ovarian cancers, before handing it over to Bristol-Myers Squibb, which now sells the drug for twenty times what it costs to make. Working with Duke University researchers, the NCI spent taxpayer money to develop AZT, the anti-AIDS drug, which is now a cash cow for Glaxo Wellcome.8

Because the market wouldn't do it, the research that led to the creation of the Internet also began as a government funded project. Whether or not AI Gore invented the Internet, it's clear that Microsoft and Sun Microsystems did not. American computer scientist Vinton Cerf, working on a government project, developed the first internet and transmission control protocols (the infamous TCP setting), which were used to link computer networks at several American universities and research laboratories. An English computer scientist, funded by the European Organization for Nuclear Research – founded by a consortium of European governments – developed the World Wide Web.

In fact, the educational system that made both of these innovations possible is itself a product of long-term, public investment. After all, how many people are prepared to front $100,000 or more to assure a single child's education? Today we call these things "human capital"." But whatever it's called, the point is the same: private investors are not fond of investments that are both uncertain and pay off far in the future. If we waited for them to act, only the children of the those could afford it would get a decent education.

Even when markets do produce enough things, they rarely distribute them in an equitable fashion. Rather, demand governs distribution and demand is a function of both desire and purchasing power. As a result, the distribution of valued things is likely to mirror the distribution of income and wealth. As long as people's economic resources vary, so will their ability to purchase what they want and need. It's hard to get worked up over every one of these inequalities. Few political philosophers would spill much ink arguing for the equal distribution of plasma screen televisions or Armani leather jackets. But the unequal distribution of other goods and services, such as health care, education, and personal safety, is hard to ignore. These are primary goods, things that shape how people live their lives, the choices that they have, and even their life spans. Unless one assumes that the ability to purchase something is the only ethical consideration that should be taken seriously, it's hard not to conclude that mar kets cannot be left alone to decide these issues.

Government also turns out to be the only actor capable of intervening effectively

when the overall economy fails to perform. Regardless of the reigning economic orthodoxy, no

one is prepared or willing, least of all bankers and industrialists, to let capitalism “take its natural course,” if that means high unemployment, or runaway inflation, or declining profits. When recession looms, or supply bottlenecks emerge, most people, including corporate executives and stockholders, turn to government for solutions. And rightly so. Firms, trade associations, even the most powerful CEO’s, cannot mobilize the resources necessary to overcome systemic and structural problems. Only the government, precisely because it is such a powerful economic actor – the single largest purchaser of goods and services, including military hardware, transportation, health care, and education – has the wherewithal to respond.

Finally, having free markets in everything would impose an enormous decision making burden on people who might be far better off spending their time thinking about other questions. Like it or not, people are not always prepared to make the decisions

that markets force on them. Many involve technical questions, requiring a fair amount of information and expertise. The choice of phone provider can be enormously complicated, let alone the decision to opt for one or another health insurance plan. In these sorts of cases, peoples’ decisions, and therefore market outcomes, are likely to be based as much on accident, ignorance, or a company’s good luck to have signed up the next NBA superstar to spearhead its advertising campaign, as they are on rational choice. Consumer education helps people a bit. But high quality, reliable information is hard to find amid the clutter of advertising and manipulation, and few people have the time to process it.

Free market advocates say that this criticism is inherently paternalistic because it implies that people are not prepared to decide important issues for themselves. But that’s a false issue. No one on the right or the left suggests that everyone should decide every important question that might affect him or her. Clearly, in matters of fundamental import, where people’s lives are affected in vital ways, we want to err on the side of self-determination. But we can and should opt to let others decide questions in areas where the requirements of technical expertise are high and the costs of delegation low. We ask government to inspect restaurant kitchens because we’re not prepared or particularly eager to do it ourselves. We don’t think we lose much autonomy or liberty by delegating this power to public agents. At the same time, the market alternative – waiting to see if anyone dies at our local eatery – is simply untenable. The same sort of calculation could be applied in a host of other areas, reducing both th e scope of market transactions and the information costs associated with making them.

Beware the Corporation

Corporations cause all sorts of harm too, unless they are closely supervised. Subject to elaborate personnel, management and surveillance systems designed to control their behavior and maximize their productivity, workers in large companies feel the impact on a daily basis. They spend half or more of their waking hours governed by a system of private governance that would have been the envy of medieval princes.

One in four large employers admit to surreptitious spying on their employees with one or another form of electronic surveillance. Nearly three quarters of large companies subject employees to random urine tests. Employers eaves drop on employee conversations, read workers' email, and pin "active badges" on them so that they can electronically monitor their movements at the workplace. 9 Jobs tasks are broken down into the smallest possible, easily repeatable, readily monitored unit to assure maximum productivity.

All the while, workers remain vulnerable to the profit-maximizing strategies and even financial chicanery of top management. Victimized by downsizing or fraudulent accounting schemes designed to increase stock prices and executive compensation, all but the most indispensable employees have little recourse. In some traditional industries, like meatpacking and food processing, the work is simultaneously low paid, hazardous, and insecure. But even "new economy" companies abuse their workers, treating all but the most valuable as interchangeable commodities. The determined effort by high tech companies like Microsoft to hire part-time, contingent labor rather than full-time workers, and the technology sector's infamous and largely successful resistance to unions, threatens to turn millions of white collar employees into a 21st century proletariat.

Recent revelations about corporate criminality in the energy and telecommunications industries, while admittedly spectacular, illustrate just how much harm companies can do to their workers' financial well being. Enron fired 4,200 workers; WorldCom let 17,000 go. 10 No doubt, many of these employees have already found other jobs. But what about their savings and pension funds, and the workers whose savings and pension funds were invested in these companies? Thanks to Enron's and WorldCom's creative accounting, public employee pension funds lost at least $1.5 billion in the Enron debacle alone. 11 AFL-CIO pension funds lost $3.3 billion in the two bankruptcies combined.12 Keep in mind the reality behind the figures. While a few executives may spend a bit of time in prison, and be forced to sell a house or two, as the Lays complained after the Enron collapse. For the next several decades, millions of people will be ret iring on less, often substantially less, than they had planned, or working far into their senior years to close the gap.

The impact of corporate behavior on the communities that shelter them can also be devastating. Business boosters rightly stress the positive income and employment affects of corporate investment; these can be quite significant. But there are often considerable costs. Increasingly, companies demand all sorts of financial incentives (including lower taxes, less stringent environmental regulations, and substantial subsidies) from state and local governments before they will commit to a particular locale. But even these commitments can prove ephemeral because most corporations are prepared to fly when they see a better opportunity. To no avail, Michigan gave General Motors $13.5 million in tax abatements to maintain its Ypsilanti assembly plant in the 1980s. A decade later, the company closed the plant and shipped the jobs to Arlington, Texas, citing lower costs and greater productivity. Michigan was left with a gaping whole in its tax base and little else. Decisions such as these are doubly devastating because t he local community first gives up potential tax revenues and then loses the jobs and incomes it sought to secure with those costly concessions.

Recently, corporate flight has been taken to extremes, with American companies shifting their titular headquarters to offshore tax havens to avoid any financial obligations in the U.S. – despite maintaining domestic production and distribution facilities. Though much publicized, the 2002 effort of Stanley- Works, a billion dollar tool and hardware manufacturer incorporated in Connecticut since 1852, to reincorporate in Bermuda was entirely unexceptional. Stanley Works backed off after intense public scrutiny, but more than a dozen U.S. companies, including ones like Ingersoll-Rand, which earn millions from U.S. government contracts, remain incorporated in foreign tax havens, avoiding U.S. taxes. In 2003, Democratic efforts to force these American companies to pay their fair share of American taxes were killed by the same hyperpatriotic House Republicans that made their cafeteria serve "freedom" fries so that they could avoid having to even say the word "French."

Government could do more to control corporate power, but it's fighting an uphill battle. Old-style corruption plays a part in bending politicians to the will of the firm. Despite seemingly endless efforts to regulate them, campaign contributions remain a powerful source of political influence at all levels of government, enabling the financially well endowed to buy private access to decision makers. But corporate political power also derives from what Charles Lindblom has called business's "privileged position." By this, Lindblom means the great deference we as a society pay to corporations, their top managers, and their big stockholders owing to the vital role these firms play in the U.S. economy. We have little choice in the matter, Lindblom says, because we are so dependent on them to create jobs and pay wages and salaries. Unless government plays a more active and directive role in stimulating and even organizing economic activity, Americans will have to continue to pay attention to the interests and pref erences of these behemoths, even as they seduce and abandon us.13

In fact, the U.S. government tends to treat the CEO's of the Fortune 500 as it treats other political leaders, as coequals, seeking their counsel, listening to their opinions, and respecting their turf. And because we defer to them, we tend not to ask hard questions about whether or not corporations really live up to the promises made by and for them. Apart from the occasional, egregious scandal, we simply do not pay close attention to the manifold ways in which corporations disrupt and injure individuals and communities.

Finally, corporate power has helped create what can only be called a corporate culture, which steadily debases public discourse by translating all questions of value into economic terms, encouraging Americans to equate consumer satisfaction with the public interest. However pleasurable this might seem in the moment, the impact on political life has been devastating, as people withdraw from public activities that are vital to democratic citizenship – walking the mall rather than their precincts, window shopping rather than knocking on neighbor's doors.

But everything we know about the nature of democracy suggests that it cannot survive without a lively, open, public discourse in which people confront each other's opinions in the course of talking about how to organize the things they have in common. Yet corporate America is replacing public debate with a massive and continuous campaign to manipulate consumer demand; to sell people things they didn't know they wanted, let alone needed; and to convince

Americans that personal satisfaction can only be achieved by buying things. Indeed, they very idea that people have other interests and that they could live other kinds of lives is obscured by the relentless effort to market everything, whether over the nation's airwaves, in its public spaces, or on the Internet,

Corporate apologists respond in all sorts of ways to these criticisms. The firm, they say, is only a passive conduit, satisfying people's wants within the limits imposed by consumer demand and the costs of production and distribution. Or, as Murray Weidenbaum, chair of the Council of Economic Advisors during Ronald Reagan's first term, has put it, corporations "serve the unappreciated and involuntary role of proxy for the overall consumer interest. 14 Market competition, surveillance by boards of directors, the need to raise investment capital, the judgments of large and small investors – these forces keep managers in check. Supporters also remind us that corporations bestow enormous benefits on society, including a cornucopia of previously unimagined delights. If companies make employees toe the line, they also offer them quite a bit in return, paying people well for the time spent at work. In fact, corporate life is far less coercive or all encompassing than its critics imagi ne. Because corporations, unlike governments, cannot command our obedience, people have choices. They can opt out of the corporate world; they don't have to work for the Gap or IBM; or buy name-brand jeans; or worry about the kind of car they drive. Workers can change jobs. Investors can sell their stock in one company and invest in another, or buy bonds, or invest in "socially responsible" mutual funds. People can live in communes, or monasteries, or in the backwoods of Wyoming. There is, in other words, choice.

But these rebuttals do not stand up to close scrutiny. The modern corporation is not a direct descendant of Smith's capitalist entrepreneur. It is not only different in size but in power and motivation. Rather, the modern corporation is more like a mini-state (sometimes not so mini) than a mom-and-pop affair, exercising power over workers, employees, consumers, local communities, national governments and global culture in ways that would have likely sent Smith reeling. Corporate defenders are also far too cavalier about what unregulated markets and unrestrained corporate power puts at risk. The panoply of consumer, environmental and workplace hazards are minimized or dismissed as second order problems that can easily be remedied, ignoring the fact that these remedies are only in place because people have used government to impose controls on what corporations do.

Finally, just because there are markets, doesn't mean that there is always real choice. Workers in particular have far fewer options than the corporation's defenders suggest. The existence of a job market doesn't mean that most people are free to move about at will, taking and leaving jobs that fail to satisfy. In fact, very few workers behave in the way that the market model imagines, picking up and moving from town to town, or state to state, in response to marginally better employment offers. To the contrary, to the extent that they have settled lives, most people's geographic mobility is quite limited. And there's no guarantee that having changed jobs, a worker will find him or herself in a substantially better situation. Trained in the same business schools, enamored of the same management theories, most employers run their workplaces in very similar ways.

The Myth of Equal Opportunity

Progressive government is especially important if we are to stand any chance of equalizing opportunity in America. Conservatives insist that the free market gives the average person his or her best shot at moving up, even getting rich some day. But free markets cannot promote equality of opportunity because equal opportunity requires that we do far more to equalize condition. Free markets cannot do that.

The bottom line is that people cannot compete on an equal footing when their "initial conditions" are radically unequal. No one would judge fair a footrace in which only some runners showed up at the starting line rested, in shape, and professionally trained, in other words, ready to compete, while others hobbled there, malnourished, sick, ignorant of the track or the rules of competition, having had no prior experience or training in the sport. Yet conservatives ask us to believe that we can have equality of opportunity despite the fact that some children have been advantaged since birth by superior educations, social connections, and family wealth, while others barely make it to school in the morning. Certainly, the exceptionally gifted among the most disadvantaged, the truly heroic, will succeed despite even these obstacles; these remarkable success stories are uplifting. But do the rest deserve their fate? Far too many Americans never get a chance to work at a good job, earn a decent income, or live in a safe neighborhood with good schools – not because they "failed," but because they never had much of a chance to succeed.

Whether or not we like to admit it, these initial conditions map rather closely the distribution of income and wealth in America. The only way to redress the problem is to assure greater equality of condition, making sure that everyone has a reasonably equal shot at early childhood education, enrichment classes, high quality public schools, good counseling, and letters of recommendation from well placed friends of the family. This sounds utopian. Nonetheless, the point stands. Equality of opportunity is intimately linked to equality of condition. And whether conservatives like it or not, only government can promote that sort of equality in a market capitalist society. No amount of private philanthropy can fill this gap.

Private philanthropy can't even compensate for the sorts of social welfare cuts that Republicans have in mind, let alone change the distribution of income and wealth in America. As a recent Century Foundation study shows, the total assets of the 34,000 charitable foundations that might be asked to play this role constitute only about 10% of what the government currently spends on social welfare and other, related programs.

The amount that these charities could actually spend on people in need in any given year is a minuscule fraction of what would be required. 15 However well meaning, the idea that we might replace or even substantially supplement the welfare state with a "Thousand Points of Light" is a fantasy. Without a serious collective, public effort to redistribute resources to the disadvantaged, income and wealth will remain sharply skewed in America.

The international record clearly supports this conclusion. In the most comprehensive analysis

of why some Western capitalist societies are more unequal than others, Timothy Smeeding and his colleagues demonstrate conclusively that government makes the difference. Societies that have with larger public sectors have less economic inequality. Where capitalism is let loose, the gap between rich and poor grows. American's recent history confirms the point. 16 Since the 1980s, as both Republican and Democratic administrations have backed away from welfare-state commitments, income inequality has widened. The right finds in every success story proof that since these barriers can be overcome that most not be as consequential as the left believes. But the real question is not whether the truly gifted can rise above their circumstances, but whether this system treats fairly ordinary people who are making a reasonable effort. On this standard, America fails.

It is true that the American class system has never been as rigid and as obvious as in Europe. The visible signs of election are a bit subtler in a society in which everyone wears jeans and tees. Politics has never been organized around social

standing in the same way, nor have the upper classes been treated with quite the same deference as elsewhere. As a result, European visitors like Alexis de Toqueville have often been misled by what they have seen and heard, confusing egalitarian rhetoric for real social equality. For their part, Americans have enjoyed the comparison, congratulating themselves on having avoided European-style class conflict.

But as anyone who has ventured out of his or her neighborhood knows, contemporary America is a very unequal society. The gap between the American rich and poor demands repeating. In the late 1990s, as the most robust economic expansion in decades was peaking, the average after-tax income of the top 1 % of American households ($677,900) was 63 times the average after-tax income ($10,800) of the poorest fifth. 17 And this was after the much-maligned "progressive income tax" had done its equalizing magic.

Statistics on the share of total, after-tax income taken home by various strata are even more striking. The top 1% of American households took home almost as large a share (13.6%) of total income as did the bottom 40% (15.0%). That means that the richest 2.6 million Americans, a tiny fraction of the society, earned almost as much as the poorest 100 million Americans. 18 And these super rich Americans own nearly 40% of all of the nation's wealth. 19 The gap between the rich and the middle class is equally remarkable in a society that makes so much of equal opportunity. That $677,900 average after-tax income of the richest 1% of American households was 18 times the average after-tax income ($37,200) of the middle fifth.20

Inequality actually worsened as the economy improved. A small percentage of Americans benefited handsomely from the boom. From 1979 to 1997, the richest 1% increased their average household income by 157%. But the income of the poorest 20% actually declined, and the middle fifth gained a meager 10.1 % over this nearly two decade span. 21 In fact, the ratio of the average household income in the top 1 % to the average household income in the middle fifth increased from 7.8/1 to 18.2/1 over this same time period. 22

Conservatives respond to these data in various ways. As Bush did in the 2000 presidential debates, some simply reject numbers they don't like, complaining about "fuzzy math." Other conservatives accept the data but question their implications. These numbers mislead, they argue, because they don't capture the dynamic character of the American economy and social structure. People are not fixed for life into whatever strata they were born. To the contrary, there's constant churning, as people's fortunes rise and fall. A snapshot may show great inequality, but over a lifetime, people experience significant mobility.

There's some truth to the point – we no longer live in a world of ascribed status where lord and peasant inherit their social positions and pass them on to their descendants. Some poor individuals and families are poor for only a while – perhaps while in school, or when out of work, or if newly divorced. Conservatives routinely roll out these examples to demonstrate the pitfalls of income and wealth distribution data. Unfortunately, in this case the statistics don't lie: the majority of low-income families have low-incomes for ears at a time. Nearly three-quarters of young adults who were in the bottom 20% of income earners in 1968 were in the bottom 40% in 1991, 23 years later.23 In fact, the available evidence indicates that income mobility is declining in the U.S.24 The hard reality is that the majority of Americans live quite close to the economic edge. The half of American families that earn less than $50,000 a year cannot help but struggle to meet simultaneously the costs of food, clothing, and shelter, let alone

medical and elder care while saving for college and retirement. In this world, a week without work is a serious shock; a month of unemployment a major loss; a prolonged family illness a catastrophe that is almost impossible to recover from. With an average after-tax income of less than $11,000 a year, the poorest fifth of Americans are living in truly dismal circumstances.

Contrary to the self-congratulatory rhetoric, not only does American capitalism display the same sort of class inequality typically associated with older, European societies, on all accounts, the U.S. is one of the more unequal of the world's capitalist democracies, typically at or near the bottom on most measures of income and wealth equality.25 With income and wealth so skewed toward the top, the claim that Americans can compete on equal footing without help from the government cannot be taken seriously.

Right Vs Left

The right's refusal to admit, let alone address, these realities, has led to some rather dreadful political choices. Sad to say, conservatives have led the opposition nearly every social reform that has lightened the burden on the average American, or ended unconscionable discrimination against some minority group, or sought to protect some especially vulnerable population from the vicissitudes of the market.

In the early 20th century, as Progressivism peaked, conservatives opposed protective child labor legislation because it infringed on state's rights, and maximum hours legislation because it interfered with workers' "right of free contract." During the New Deal, as the country moved

leftward, trying to cushion the blow of the Great Depression, conservatives opposed social security legislation because it violated traditional notions of self-help and individual responsibility, and wages and hours and labor legislation because it restricted the freedom of managers to dispose of their property as they wished. Even after the principle of government intervention into the economy had been well established in law and practice, conservatives fought the Great Society's efforts to set and enforce health, safety and environmental standards, arguing that corporations were eager to voluntarily clean up the air, water, and work, and that strict standards would make things worse, not better.

This knee-jerk opposition to anything progressive has only worsened in recent decades as conservative activists, typically from the South, have taken control of the Republican Party and forced on it their extreme right wing views on the economy, race, and labor. As a result, the party of Abraham Lincoln, once a strong supporter of civil rights, reversed field. In 1964, the Republicans adopted a platform that not only opposed federal civil rights legislation, but also declined to condemn the activities of racist groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

Since then, under conservative direction, the Republicans have attempted to undo nearly every aspect of the modern regulatory and welfare states. Beginning in 2001, the Bush White House and Congressional Republicans moved to open up the Artic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling, lift the limits on arsenic in drinking water, build more logging roads in the national forests, relax EPA rules that forced older coal power plants to meet modern standards when they renovated, end race-conscious college admission policies, cut spending on public assistance and Medicaid, privatize social security and Medicare, and, perhaps most significant, remove whatever elements of progressivity remain in the federal income tax code. In some cases, social security for example, when political extremism has cost them at the polls, conservatives have sought to cover their tracks, explaining their opposition to popular programs as the principled defense of the public purse and individual liberty against government waste an d overbearing federal bureaucrats. Nonetheless, it is only a slight exaggeration to say that Americans would still be living in a Dickensian world if conservatives had won every election.

Why has the right chosen to fight such retrograde battles? It's partly a political calculation. The political coalitions that carry even the most moderate conservatives to power often include some very nasty people, from the paramilitary far-right to unreconstructed racists who still pine for the days before Brown v. Board of Education. These people expect and often get a seat at the table.

In this increasingly conservative climate, even the more respectable elements of the conservative coalition, from corporate elites to small-town, small business owners, have taken a harder line, rejecting legislation that might raise their costs or limit their ability to act as they wish toward employees and customers. In these cases, self-interest plays an obvious role. Progressive government is far more likely than market competition to empower the average person while reducing inequalities of income, wealth, or power. It's dangerous for this reason. Finally, some conservatives argue that whatever we might wish, human nature and the

inevitable failings of government make it impossible to end discrimination, reduce inequality, or eliminate poverty through politics. The effort is futile.

But whatever the motivation, the end result is the same: conservatives have rarely been on the side of equal justice; it's fallen to the left to make capitalism serve the public interest. This is, of course, ironic. At the outset, the left first sought not to humanize but to overthrow capitalism, believing other, more collective, economic arrangements to be preferable. But having failed at revolution, the left ended up reforming capitalism – making it more livable for workers and the dispossessed. The welfare states that we now take for granted in North America, Western Europe, Australian and New Zealand were built either by the left in power (by Social Democratic, Socialist, or Labor parties), or by political elites and moderate social reformers who, fearing that the left would triumph at the polls or in the streets, made concessions to working-class voters in order avoid revolution. But in both cases, it was pressure from below, whether in the form of strikes, or mass protests, or the formation of radical p olitical parties, that made structural change imperative.

Different countries have gotten here in different ways. In Denmark and Sweden, welfare state building preceded the emergence of a politically powerful, socialist working class. There, political elites initiated reforms in the early 20th century in order to avoid the (further) radicalization of workers. But once welfare-state building had begun, working class political parties took over, forging political alliances in the 1930s with farmers who were also seeking shelter from the free market. Later, political alliances between blue- and white-collar workers helped consolidate earlier gains, maintaining majority support for reform to the end of the century. 26

On the European continent, in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Italy, centrist governments under the control of religious parties or traditional conservative elites (not the laissez faire conservatives found in the U.S.) expanded social spending by providing generous transfer payments to support working families. In Great Britain, liberal elites, not labor party representatives, took the first steps toward state-sponsored economic security. 27 But in all cases, reform occurred as support for the left among workers and small farmers grew.

In the U.S., the left has been weaker because working class organizations have been weaker and working-class voters less class conscious. As a result, reformers have traveled a different, less radical route. Under the direction of liberals drawn from the middle classes and the professions, with less input from mass-based organizations, political reform movements from the Progressive period to the Great Society have pushed for incremental reforms rather than demand dramatic structural changes in the economy or political system. The radical left has still mattered in American politics; liberals have gotten many of their best ideas from it, from unemployment insurance to the progressive income tax. But because they haven't had the support of a more militant, class-conscious political movement, liberal reformers have had to settle for less – for fewer limits on corporate power and fewer restrictions on the free market.

Here and abroad, most reforms imposed by the left on capitalism have survived into the 21st

century because they have measurably changed people's lives. The right acts as if the power of modern government is, at best, a mistake, or worse, a plot by liberals to enslave the people and replace capitalism with socialism – that government has expanded because liberals, in league with government bureaucrats, want to take our freedoms and turn America into some sort of Soviet-style dictatorship. But whether or not every one of the things government does inappropriate, the inescapable fact is that government has grown because the market has not been enough.

Until recently, voters have understood this and been willing to defend reform against the right's assault. But progressives have been on the defensive here and abroad for two decades. Retrenchment is occurring everywhere as the left has weakened and global capitalism has spread. Further reform is likely to depend on the reemergence of a left that can challenge corporate power and restructure political institutions so that progressive voices can be heard.

Obviously, this sort of project has become even harder in an increasingly internationalized economy. As capitalism has become global, free markets have pushed back the public sphere and transnational corporations have found it even easier to exercise political influence. Without supervision from transnational institutions, governmental or nongovernmental, both may prove even harder to control than before. But progressives can take heart from the history: people want more than capitalism alone can deliver.

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Bush Does London

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

In the late 19th century German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck brusquely remarked that the Balkans, always a rough neighborhood, 'were not worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier." Every national leader grapples with difficult decisions as to the best application of limited resources to unlimited foreign ambitions. So how many Western lives is Iraq worth? In the grand scheme of what passes for strategic thinking inside the Bush administration, a few hundred – even a few thousand – sacrificed servicemen are a trifle compared to the ecstasies of toppling Saddam, seizing control of Iraqi energy and rigging the Middle East game board to favor Israeli right wing zealots.

The looming threat for Bush and Blair today is not al-Qaeda marauders but the fact that their own citizenries do not value gains and losses in the same way as elites do. That is why policy makers conceal the seamy purposes of their actions, or coat them in sticky moral rhetoric. What irks Bush today is

that he never before was forced to face a genuinely difficult choice. Instead of displaying shrewd guidance, he resorted after 9/11 to crowd-pleasing jingoistic gestures, which are not working anymore. Bush followed to the letter a megalomaniacal program devised in the ultra-right think tank, Project for a New American Century, to achieve "full spectrum dominance" for generations to come.

The PNAC scheme anticipated that in the wake of a Pearl Harbor style attack, which Al-Qaeda so obligingly provided, that frightened Americans would pony up recruits and money for a perpetual Orwellian military campaigns against any imagined foe. However, the American public is awakening to the cold fact that they were deceived as to the motives for a bloody and costly occupation. The British public, with a broader range of political sources available, was always way ahead of the media-manipulated Americans. In London Thursday afternoon, while Bush was curtsying to a perfectly

polite Queen, several hundred thousand marchers assembled in Trafalgar Square for the largest working day demonstration in British history. (Police estimated over 100,000 while organizers claimed 350 thousand; splitting the difference is usually close to the truth.) Stressing the anti-Bush, rather than Anti-American, sentiment animating the massive protest, Vietnam Veteran and anti-war activist Ron Kovic, whose gripping life story was told in Oliver Stone's 1989 movie Born on The Fourth of July, was wheeled out to assure the multitudes that "you are the ones who really care about my country" and that "millions of Americans are standing with you today." The tiresome charge of anti-Americanism always figures as a convenient mantra for pro-war commentators anxious to discredit the case against the invasion and the occupation. Kovic counted down as a huge garish Bush stature – resembling a wrinkled

Oscar statuette with a tiny mandolin in its hands (supposedly a missile) was ceremonially toppled below Nelson's column. Jeremy Corbyn, a rebel Labor MP, told the crowd that Blair was as much a target as Bush. Both had to go. Yet the Trafalgar protesters taunted men who probably heard and heeded nothing of what they had to say. A speaker impishly claimed "We have [Bush] under house arrest in Buckingham palace," which would be true had Bush shown an inclination to depart from his highly protective schedule. Bush was whisked from one posh spot to another in a gleaming black bulletproof limo. Another speaker delightedly informed the Trafalgar crowd that Bush's planned stop at a village Church the next day was cancelled because the bulletproof car was too damned heavy to cross a local bridge. So the whole stage-managed spectacle of Bush's state visit conjured Vietnam war days when the only public venues Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon could visit without fear of vehement protests were military academies and Christian fundamentalist colleges (in effect, American madrassas). Bush saw what he chose to see, and, if that pattern continues, it will be his downfall. Leaders are elected to face reality, not be shielded from it.

When a Machiavellian investment of blood and treasure becomes distressingly disproportionate to what one hopes to gain, the best thing is to fold your cards, cut and run, or seek, in the notorious Nixon phrase "peace with honor." The true believers in Bush's administration (Wolfowitz, Perle, Bolton, Cheney and others) won't concede their original plans of conquest easily but there are signs that Bush is prowling around for a palatable compromise to extract US troops. The solution is somehow to install an administration of local dignitaries who covertly will do Yank bidding. But the independent images such a governing body needs to be credible may really put it beyond American control. Still, the spectre of bloody body bags is haunting Bush. The phony tale that the Pentagon dreamed up about the "rescue of Jessica Lynch" is exposed as an embarrassment. The ballyhooed economic recovery under way in the US is generating far fewer jobs than expected. Bush has cause to be nervous.

The London visit was a boon to the anti-war/occupation movement, but Bush (and to some extent, Blair) can rely on favorable depictions in a self-censoring pseudo-patriotic press – for what is patriotic about a media that relay lies without any challenge ? Television reports even in Britain downplayed the Trafalgar rally. The preferred media images are those crafted to show Blair and Bush side by side standing tall–with Britain treated thrillingly as a major power, if only as a matter of courtesy. Yet Bush is grateful for the legitimacy that Tony Blair's approval conferred on the Iraq war, which is not to say the US would not have gone to war anyway. The American military reportedly were puzzled at the time about what to do with what they viewed as surplus British forces. (And anyone who believes the tales of British soldiers' superior manners in Iraq really ought to have a chat with a Catholic in Northern Ireland sometime.)

America, once a colony itself, drove out the British in 1783 (with indispensable French aid) and established a republic. In the 20th century the British desperately sought American aid in two world wars. America helped, but in a cunning way that suited its own geopolitical interests. US diplomats behaved as ruthlessly as the British would if positions had been reversed. Presidents Woodrow Wilson and, later, Franklin Delano Roosevelt knew very well the USA stood to be the

chief beneficiary of the demise of the teetering European Empires.

After the Second World War Churchill, leader of a worn-out nation, reluctantly requested in his famous speech at Fulton, Missouri that the USA assume leadership of the so-called free world. Since then British played the faithful side-kick role, even if forever chafing at it or grumbling about it.

Margaret Thatcher showed undeniable spirit when she denounced the US invasion of tiny Grenada despite Ronald Reagan helping her in the Falklands conflict. (The British upper crust never ever lost the consoling conceit that they are intellectually superior to their rough-hewn American cousins.) Labour Party prime minister Harold Wilson supported Americans during the Vietnam War, but withheld the British regiment that LBJ badly wanted in Vietnam to justify that ghastly venture. Wilson declined the obsequious role that Blair has filled with alacrity since 9/11.

Blair misled the parliament and public, and harassed the press to support every whim of an incorrigibly unilateralist American administration. Blair, who justified himself as a moderating influence on Bush, got nothing visible in exchange for his dogged support. Can public protests gain concessions that Blair was unable or unwilling to gain? Hard-pressed politicians always pretend to ignore mass popular protests. In part, they hope to discourage dissenters by making them feel futile, but in private they usually take heed of strong public feelings. Bush desperately wants to be reelected, and not repeat his father' s ignominious end as a one-term president. Bush may yet find a formula in Iraq to satisfy his own fanatical acolytes while at the same time extricating the US sufficiently from harm's way to reassure voters. But don't bet on it.

Does this royal visit matter in the US as a selling point in an election year? Do Americans really care if the British legitimize Bush? One suspect that the kudos Bush hoped to gain from the visit are overrated. And he certainly learned nothing during his London trek. The dreadful Istanbul bombing, instead of stirring reappraisal of the ill-thought Iraq invasion, was an occasion for the same sad refrain of pursuing wicked terrorists relentlessly, no matter how many more terrorist recruits are generated in doing so. The official British visit, in fact, was redolent of haughty privilege, of snooty distance from the unsightly masses. The only genuine surprise was that the Bush and Blair entourages weren't toting snuff boxes and wearing powdered wigs.

Iraq, Hegemony And The Question Of American Empire

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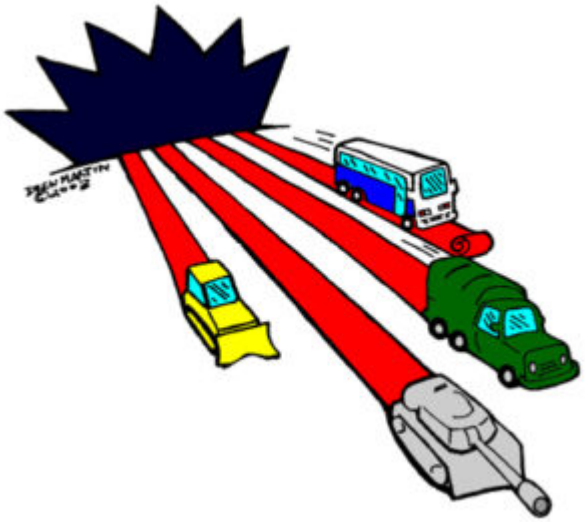
It is rare that political debates typically confined to the left will burst into the mainstream with any degree of interest, let alone profundity. But this has not been the case with the question of American empire and the recent military campaigns in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan. For many on the left, this was a political question with a cut and dried answer: the American-led military campaign was a clear expression of its imperial policies and motives, the object of which is economic global dominance. But in some ways, such assumptions voiced by much of the American and European left, specifically among its more dogmatic and sectarian strains, mischaracterize and even misunderstand the reality of American global power and the possible contributions of the western political tradition more broadly.



With each passing day the events in Iraq deliberately evoke the question of American empire, and not without good reason. The neoconservative position on this has been to see American policies and its position in the world as that of a hegemon: a nation which seeks to lead the constellation of world nations into the end of history itself where the fusion of “free” markets and liberal democracy is seen to be the institutional panacea for the world’s ills and with this the enlargement of capital’s dominion. But the deepening morass of the occupation of Iraq belies such intentions. Paul Bremer’s statement that “we dominate the scene [in Iraq] and we will continue to impose our will on this country,” is a concise statement betraying not America’s imperial motives, but, rather, the way that its hegemonic motives have ineluctably been pushed into a logic of imperial control. America has, in other words, become an empire by default, not by intention, and the crucial question now is: how are we to respond?

But the charge of America-as-empire is not as obvious as many have assumed even though

many superficial elements of its history point to that conclusion. Students of American political history know of the dual policies of American empire from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. “Gunboat Diplomacy” was the imperial policy of backing up all foreign territorial policies with direct military force. From the Philippines to Cuba, Grenada and Haiti, this was an effective policy, copied from the British and their acts in the Opium War, which allowed the United States to extend itself as a colonial power.

“Dollar Diplomacy” was America’s effort, particularly under President William Howard Taft, to further its foreign policy aims in Latin America and the Far East through the use of economic power. Theodore Roosevelt laid the groundwork for this approach in 1905 with his Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, maintaining that if any nation in the Western Hemisphere appeared politically or fiscally so unstable as to be vulnerable to European control, the United States had the right and obligation to intervene. Taft continued and expanded this policy, starting in Central America, where he justified it as a means of protecting the Panama Canal. In 1909 he attempted unsuccessfully to establish control over Honduras by buying up its debt to British bankers. In Nicaragua, American intervention included funding the country’s debts to European bankers. In addition, the State Department persuaded four American banks to refinance Haiti’s national debt, setting the stage for further intervention in the future.

Both policies were imperial to the extent that they wanted to manipulate and use other countries as geographical means for domestic economic and political ends. To expand markets were meant, during the late 19th century and early 20th, as a means for displacing excess domestic industrial productivity, the cause of most cyclical recessions during that period. Goods produced in excess could be unloaded in more local foreign markets and there was also the return of agricultural goods and natural resources, too.

We could probably say that America is once again becoming an empire of sorts, but this is something that is more recent than some may in fact think. The Cold War was a battle of hegemons, between the U.S. and the Soviets, and this has, since the latter’s collapse and the ascendancy of neoconservatives to positions of influence and power in Washington, turned into a political situation where American interests are pursued unilaterally without the intervening countervailing tendencies of international institutions such as the UN. And it is here that the moment of empire begins to eclipse that of hegemony: when a single nation begins to hold direct control over foreign territory for its own interests. The Iraqi oil fields were up and running not long after the fall of Baghdad where, even now, electricity and clean water are in short supply if even existent. (An Iraqi friend in Baghdad tells me that they have power for about one hour a day.)

When I visited Baghdad in January of 2003, several of my colleagues and I were fortunate enough to be able to have a private conversation with several members of the faculty from the College of Political Science at Baghdad University. For them, the consensus for political change in Iraq was clear: the ousting of Saddam Hussein was necessary for the Iraqi people and any semblance of political freedom, but it was his regime that was the problem and it was the regime, they felt, that should be the focus of UN sanctions and pressure, not the total

annihilation of state institutions that the Ba'athists had inhabited and, in part, created. (See the interview in *Logos*, Winter 2003: 2.1 at www.logosjournal.com/issue_2.1.pdf)

Hegemony in international terms without some kind of competing force, such as the Soviets, can clearly lead to the abuse of power and a unilateralist flaunting of international institutions that do not serve at the imperium's whim. But this should not mean that hegemony itself is a negative concept. Although empire is something rightfully reviled, hegemony may not be as bad as everyone thinks. We need to consider what is progressive and transformative in the ideas and values of the western republican and liberal traditions. We need to advocate not an anti-hegemonic stance in form, but an anti-hegemonic and anti-imperialist stance in content, one that advocates the particular interests of capital of the market in more broad terms rather than the universal political interests of others. Rather than choose between western hegemony on the one hand and political and cultural relativism on the other, we need to approach this problem with an eye toward cosmopolitanism and what the political theorist Stephen Eric Bronner has called "planetary life."

Simple resistance to American "imperial" tendencies is no longer enough for a responsible, critical and rational left. Not only does it smack of *tiers-mondisme* but at the same time it rejects the realities of globalization which are inexorable and require a more sophisticated political response. The real question I am putting forth is simply this: is it the case that hegemony is in itself inherently bad? Or, is it possible to consider that, because it can, at least in theory, consist of the diffusion of western political ideas, values and institutions, it could be used as a progressive force in transforming those nations and regions that have been unable to deal politically with the problems of economic development, political disintegration and ethnic strife?

It is time that we begin to consider the reality that western political thought provides us with unique answers to the political, economic and social problems of the world and this includes reversing the perverse legacies of western imperialism itself. And it is time that the left begins to embrace the ideas of the Enlightenment and its ethical impulse for freedom, democracy, social progress and human dignity on an international scale. This is rhetorically embraced by neoconservatives, but it turns out to be more of a mask for narrower economic motives and international realpolitik, and hence their policies and values run counter to the radical impulses of Enlightenment thought. Western ideas and institutions can find affinities in the rational strains of thought in almost every culture in the world, from 12th century rationalist Islamic philosophers like Alfarabi, Avicenna (Ibn Sinna) and Averroes (Ibn Rushd) to India's King Akbar and China's Mencius. The key is to find these intellectual affinities and push them to their concrete, political conclusions.

Clearly, the left's problem with the idea of the spread of western political ideas and institutions is not entirely wrong. There was a racist and violent precedent set by the French and English imperial projects lasting well into the 20th century. The problem is in separating the form from the content of western hegemonic motives and intentions. And it is even more incorrect to see the occupation of Iraq as a symptom of western ideas and Enlightenment rationalism. Nothing

could be further from the case and the sooner this is realized, the more the left will be able to carve out new paths of critique and resistance to a hegemony that is turning into empire.

And it is precisely for this reason why, in institutional terms, the UN needs to be brought back in. Although there are clearly larger political and symbolic reasons for this, such as the erosion of a unilateralist framework for the transition from Hussein's regime, there is also the so-called "effect of empire" where Iraq is being transformed into an instrument of ideological economics. The current U.S. plan for Iraq, one strongly supported by Bremer as well as the Bush administration, will remake its economy into one of the most open to trade, capital flows and foreign investment in the world as well as being the lowest taxed. Iraq is being transformed into an neo-liberal utopia where American industries hooked up to the infamous "military-industrial complex" will be able to gorge themselves on contracts for the development of everything from infrastructure to urban police forces.

As time moves on, we are seeing that Iraq provides us with a stunning example of how hegemony becomes empire. It is an example of how the naïve intention of "nation building" is unmasked and laid bare, seen for what it truly is: the forceful transformation of a sovereign state into a new form suited to narrow western (specifically American) interests. Attempts to build a constitution have failed not from the lack of will, but from the lack of any political discourse about what form the state should take and about what values should be enshrined in law. Ruling bodies have become illegitimate almost immediately upon their appointment because there exists almost complete social fragmentation, and the costs of knitting it together are too great for America to assume.

In the end, America has become, with its occupation of Iraq and its unilateralist and militaristic posture, an empire in the most modern sense of the term. But we should be careful about distinguishing empire from a hegemon and the implications of each. And since, as Hegel put it, we are defined by what we oppose, the knee-jerk and ineffectual response from the modern left has been to produce almost no alternative at all to the imperatives that drive American empire as seen in places such as Iraq. To neglect the military, economic and cultural aspects of American power is to ignore the extent to which it provokes violent reaction and counter-reaction. But at the same time, to ignore the important contributions of western political ideas and institutions and their power and efficacy in achieving peace and mutual cooperation, whether it be between ethnic communities or whole nations themselves, is to ignore the very source of political solutions for places where poverty, oppression and dictatorships are the norm and remain stubbornly intact.

Western hegemony will not be seen as problematic once the values of the western political tradition and specifically those of the Enlightenment, from the liberal rule of law, the elimination of the arbitrary exercise of power and the value of political and social equality, are set in a cosmopolitan global framework. Only then will the words of Immanuel Kant take on any kind of concrete meaning for people the world over. "To think of oneself as a member of a cosmopolitan society in compliance with state laws is the most sublime idea that man can have about his predicament and which cannot be thought of without enthusiasm."

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Dual Layered Time: Reflections On T. W. Adorno In The 1950s

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

What seems to be trivial in retrospect could not be taken for granted by the time I joined the Institut für Sozialforschung (Institute for Social Research); that its reputation would be more dependent on Adorno's incessant productivity, which was only then heading for its climax, rather than on the success of the empirical research with which the institute was supposed to legitimize itself in the first place. Although he was the nerve-center of the institute, Adorno could not handle administrative power. Rather, he constituted the passive center of a complex area of tension. When I arrived in 1956 there were symmetrical differences between Max Horkheimer, Gretel Adorno and Ludwig von Friedburg that were defined by the fact that their respective expectations toward Adorno were thwarted.

Friedeburg had a legitimate interest in a content-based cooperation with Adorno, which would lead to a more theoretical orientation of the empirical research. Separate from this Gretel wanted the personal success of the philosopher both as a scientist and writer, which Adorno actually gained only posthumously. And for Horkheimer it was Adorno's task to establish a public prestige for the institute through politically pleasant and academically impressive studies but without denying their common philosophical intentions and without harming the non-conformist character, the important image in terms of attracting students.

To me Adorno had a different significance: time had a dual-layered quality in the institute. During the fifties there was probably no other place in the whole Federal Republic, in which the intellectual twenties were so explicitly present. Certainly, the old staff members of the institute like Herbert Marcuse, Leo Löwenthal and Erich Fromm, also Franz Neumann and Otto Kirchheimer had remained in America. However, also names like Benjamin and Scholem, Kracauer and Bloch, Brecht and Lukács, Alfred Sohn-Rethel and Norbert Elias, of course the names of Thomas and Erika Mann, Alban Berg and Arnold Schönberg or those of Kurt Eisler, Lotte Lenya und Fritz Lang circulated in a completely natural fashion between Adorno, Gretel and Horkheimer.

This was no name-dropping. In an astonishingly natural way these names were used to refer to people they had known for decades. The names belonged to people they were either friends with or, more importantly, fought against. Bloch, for example, was still persona non grata by the time Adorno wrote *Die große Blochmusik*. The irritatingly casual presence of these minds brought about in me a discrepancy in my sense of time. "For us" the Weimar Republic was lying beyond an abyss-like caesura, whereas "for them" the continuation of the twenties had only recently ended in emigration. Three decades had hardly passed since the time Adorno used to visit his future wife in Berlin where she as a trained chemist and carried on her father's

factory for leather goods, and on one of these occasions he had also met Benjamin. Benjamin's Angelus Novus that George Bataille, who by that time was librarian at the Bibliothèque Nationale, had taken into safekeeping was hanging at the wall right next to the entrance in Gretel's room. Then the picture became Scholem's property and is hanging now in exactly that room of the Hebrew University in which the unique library of this obsessive collector is housed. When I came to Frankfurt, Benjamin was for me as he was to almost all the younger ones, a stranger. But I was soon to learn about the significance of this picture.

Gretel and Teddy Adorno had just published Benjamin's first essays with Suhrkamp Publishers. Since the public response was weak Gretel asked me to write a review. Therefore, I got hold of those light-brown leather-bound volumes that retrieved Benjamin from oblivion. Ute and I immersed ourselves in the dark shimmering essays and in a peculiar way we were moved by the opaque connection of lucid sentences and apocryphal allusions, which did not seem to fit in any genre.

I was not completely unprepared for the aspects of the dual-layered temporality of everyday life at the institute. However, only they made me aware of the academic milieu of German-Jewish tradition and of the long noticeable extent of the moral corruption of a German university that had not directly engaged in, but at least had tacitly accepted, the expulsion and annihilation of this spirit. In those days I began to imagine the state of mind of those colleagues who must have been staring at empty chairs at the first faculty meeting of the summer term, 1933. In Frankfurt, the young university owed its fame it found during the Weimar Republic to the non-discrimination rule in its policy and hiring procedures that were unbiased toward Jews, but in Frankfurt the faculty was reduced by almost a third.

Intellectually I entered a new universe in 1956. In spite of familiar issues and sets of questions, it was different and fascinating at the same time. Compared to the environment of Bonn University, here the lava of thought was moving. Never before had I encountered such subtly differentiated intellectual complexity at its embarkation, in the mode of movement before finding its literary manifestation. What Schelling had developed in the summer term, 1802, in his Jena lectures to serve as a method of academic studies as an idea of the German university, namely to "construct the whole of one's science out of oneself and to present it with inner and lively visualization", this is what Adorno practiced in this summer term in Frankfurt.

Effortless as it seemed, he presented the dialectic production of speculative thoughts without notes but in a polished style. Gretel had asked me to accompany her to the lecture that still took place in those days in the small lecture hall. In the following years when I already was busy with other things, I noticed that she hardly ever missed one of Teddy's lectures. The first time I struggled to follow the talk; blinded by the brilliance of expression and the way he presented it, I was lagging behind the diction of the thought. I only noticed later that this dialectics often fossilized into mere manner/affectation. The main impression was the sparkling pretense of enlightenment that was still in the darkness of the not understood, the promise to make concealed connections transparent.

How a whole new world opens up

However, those unknown authors and thoughts, Freud and Durkheim, psychoanalysis and sociology of religion, did not enter as from outside, as a reduction into the holy realm of German Idealism. With the help from Freud's superego and Durkheim's collective consciousness, he did not examine the miserable other side of the categorical imperative, its inappropriate usage, in order to denounce Kant's free will but he did so to denounce the repressive circumstances that made this potential fade away. What Paul Riceour later called the "hermeneutics of suspicion" was not Adorno's thing. This was due to the protective impulse, which was just as strong as the critical one that served anyone, at least that is what it appeared to me. We had studied at the morally-deteriorated universities of the Adenauer era that were marked with self-pity, suppression and insensitiveness. In the mind-fetishizing shallow and murky environment of the "loss of the center," our vague need for an act of a comprehending catharsis could not be satisfied. Only the intellectual fervency and the intense analytical work of a solitary working and defiant Adorno saved the substance of our own great traditions for us in those days. He did this in the only possible way: by relentlessly criticizing their views.

The imperative consciousness of needing to be absolutely modern was combined with Proust's gaze of remembrance to the wildly leveling-off of progress in a modernization devoid of any remembering. Modernization was hardly anywhere as overpowering as in the hastily and roughly performed corrections in the wounded streets of a town as hard hit as the Frankfurt Berliner Strasse. Whoever was listening to Adorno could not fail to tell the avant-garde spirit of modernity from the fake, aesthetically self-destructing progress of the "reconstruction." This haste had lost touch with the insight into this forward-looking dialectics of the nonconformist, which had been dismissed as obsolete. To me new and outrageous, in a philosophical context, aesthetic arguments gained immediate political affirmation.

If I remember correctly, the ambivalence of my first impressions in this new environment, to me with all of my intellectual excitement it was a mixture of disconcertment and admiration. I felt like being in a novel by Balzac, the clumsily uneducated boy from the province whose eyes were opened by the big city. I became aware of the conventionality of my way of thinking and feeling. I had grown up in the dominant traditions, that had persisted during the Nazi-era and now I found myself in a milieu in which everything was alive that had been eliminated by the Nazis. It is easy to remember those unknown issues that had to be learned about then. However, it is hard to describe how a universe of concepts and mentalities changes through the opening of a whole new world. It is this what happened shortly after my arrival while attending this memorable series of lectures that was held by Alexander Mitscherlich and Horkheimer on the occasion of Sigmund Freud's 100th birthday anniversary. All these new thoughts were eye opening, overwhelming.

At least I was prepared for Adorno and the reconciliation of philosophy and sociology and of Hegel and Marx, even though I was not used to the systematic style that promised to live up to the radical expectations of a social theory. Adorno gave new life to the systematically used and

amalgamated concepts by Marx, Freud and Durkheim. By means of a contemporary-sociological thinking, he removed the simple historical from everything that I already knew from the Marx discourse of the ’20s and made it very present. It was only in the melting pot of this enlightened culture informed by social theory critique that the vague concepts of my Bonn University days dissolved. But the fog would not have lifted as fast had I not convinced myself of the scientific character of the new perspective on the facts.

The power of negating thought

The now-legendary Freud lectures were very helpful in this. At that time in the USA, in England, Holland and Switzerland, psychoanalysis was at the peak of its reputation. The groundbreaking works of Erik Erikson, René Spitz, Ludwig Binswanger, Franz Alexander, Michael Balint, Gustav Bally and many more (among which was Anna Spitz, of course) enjoyed worldwide respect. Hardly more than one decade after the end of the war this elite circle of scientists addressed a German audience to report on the progress of this discipline that had been ousted shamefully in 1933. I do not know what had fascinated me more now, after having encountered Freud only in derogatory contexts: the impressive individuals or the brilliant talks. In this respectable environment Adorno’s and Marcuse’s contributions to the Horkheimer festschrift received an enhanced scientific character.

At that time I did not know the research agenda of the old Institute and was not aware of the fact that it was these two authors alone who continued the tradition without even considering a discontinuity. Leo Löwenthal’s most productive days lay behind him; Otto Kirchheimer and Franz Neumann had always gone their own ways; Erich Fromm was now considered a “revisionist” from the perspective of the core of the institute circle; Friedrich Pollock had practiced theoretical abstinence since the discussion on state capitalism in the early ’40s.

Not everything was different in a liberating sense. Someone who had graduated from a traditional philosophy department noticed irritating gaps in the Frankfurt canon. Those I considered the philosophical “contemporaries,” the great authors of the ’20s and ’30s like Scheler, Heidegger, Jaspers, Gehlen, but also Cassirer, even Plessner, let alone Carnap and Reichenbach, they all did not appear in seminar nor lecture. If at all, they were mentioned then only in a bon mot like the one from Horkheimer: “If it has to be Jaspers then preferably Heidegger.” The hermeneutic tradition from Humboldt to Dilthey was branded as Idealist. The Phenomenological School did not have a better position either: Husserl’s development seemed to stop before his transcendental change. Of the Neo-Kantians only Cohen and Cornelius, Horkheimer’s teacher, were mentioned with a certain respect.

The relevant history of philosophy seemed to end with Bergson, Georg Simmel and the Göttingener Husserl, hence before WWI. Only while reading the posthumously published inaugural lecture on the “Actuality of Philosophy” did I discover with a certain astonishment that Adorno must have taken a good look at Heidegger’s Being and Time as an outside lecturer; The Jargon of Authenticity, which had been published shortly after that had not been able to convince me of this fact. Nevertheless, I have to add that this first Adorno lecture was not to

remain the only one I visited over the course of one whole semester. I often attended the Hegel seminars. The absence of the philosophy of the ’20s created a somewhat old-fashioned air of the Frankfurt discourse. Even stronger was the contrast to the spirit of the aesthetic and Freudian avant-garde that was expressed by Adorno in a radical way, from head to toe.

If I want to try and describe the change in consciousness and the impact of the mental influence that the daily contact with Adorno had brought about in me, then it is best captured by the distancing from the familiar vocabulary and the outlook of the very German historical humanities that are rooted in Herder’s romanticism. The sobering sociological perspective on the complexity of the tied-up whole of a mutilated life-framework yet to be understood was connected with the trust in the analytical power of a negating thinking that would unravel the knot.

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On Triumph Of The Will

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Propaganda is hardly less true than any traditional art which seeks to achieve certain specific emotional effects, to manifest a vision of the world compellingly. Its poor reputation rests largely on the fact that it succeeds so seldom or partially. Such failure is virtually a condition of the fiction propaganda film, where the world presented is not necessarily the real one, where the work is ostensibly imagined, and though emotion may be stirred, it is not stirred by the facts of life. Since propaganda is concerned with influencing attitudes toward life in a given time and place, and indeed in terms of specific events and people, its ideal must always be to present this life, these events, these people. When this is done in the context of a story, with actors playing realities, the limitations mentioned above still obtain, fiction is most obtrusively strange when it works with specific fragments of "truth". The semi-documentary approach, sticking as close to fact as possible, using history rather than story, minimizing the role of actors (particularly actors of famous personages) so there is no sense of the creation of the illusion of Lenin or Kerenski; this re-enactment of event is Eisenstein's way, and Goebbels so admired the power of *Potemkin* that he made it an ideal of German propagandists in the thirties.

However, *Triumph of the Will* did come to surpass *Potemkin* as the ultimate in cinema propaganda. This is for one essential reason: *Triumph is* a true documentary, completely made up of "actual" footage-the ultimate in incontrovertible credibility. The wonderful paradox here is that under any conditions but this absolute reportorial truth, the propaganda itself would be quite incredible.

The reportorial truth is footage of the Nuremberg rallies of 1934. The propaganda is the myth of resurrection of Germany to its ancient heroism through the medium of one man, Adolf Hitler, the savior. To fuse such truth with such propaganda, compromising neither, Riefenstahl creates a unique cinema: a cinema which transfigures "real life" while apparently recording it; which is essentially avant-garde while ostensibly conventional; which, in short, is dedicated to the creation of grand and ultimate illusion. Magic of various sorts has always been a staple of fiction film, archetypally reputed to be escapist entertainment. But documentary has invariably been considered the spinach or castor oil of cinema fare, the occasional dose of fact that can be sugar-coated or spiced, but never can have magic or even much imagination without becoming something other than documentary. This tradition is the formal point of Riefenstahl's departure, and subtle play with documentary convention is her basic alchemical technique.

Triumph of the Will is structured straightforwardly enough, in the most literal documentary narrative tradition, events proceeding according to strict chronological order, starting with Hitler's arrival in Nuremberg, continuing through processions, rallies, and speeches in the order they happened, and ending with the Führer's final address. To the events themselves

nothing is added (except some music), and apparently nothing left out save for purposes of economy. Yet Riefenstahl transfigures all, and this by the unobtrusive manipulation of standard cinema devices: camera set-ups and movement, editing, dissolves.

With these devices the basic images or motifs are varied, orchestrated. These motifs are: ancient things (buildings, statues, icons); the sky; clouds (or smoke); fire; the swastika; marching; the masses; Hitler. The central theme which they develop is that Hitler has come from the sky to kindle ancient Nuremberg with primal Teutonic fire, to liberate the energy and spirit of the German people through a dynamic new movement with roots deep in their racial consciousness.

Riefenstahl's choice of motifs to repeat and emphasize is greatly facilitated by the staged nature of the events, in which most of these images were deliberately conceived to function "live". Indeed, the structures built to accommodate the rally are–'reminiscent of film sets of the 'twenties, most pointedly Lang's *Nibelungenlied.* But Riefenstahl's precise cinematic rendering of them creates yet another dimension, purging whatever "worldliness" remains, while preserving the appearance of "reality". What at first glance may appear just picturesque photography-dramatic angles," buildings seen through mist, silhouettes against the sky-on closer examination turns out to be a truly fantastic "point of view" most subtly imposed upon the material.

Camera set-ups create two fundamental, related effects: *disorientation* and *animation.* Disorientation is achieved by leaving some crucial aspect of "reality" out of the frame; mainly by showing only the upper parts of things and people; giving them "nothing to stand on". Thus more often than not we see buildings in relation to the sky and not the earth, some literally castles in the air. This is one way in which the material events of the Rally are "spiritualized", and all the marching masses after all are just the word of Hitler made flesh.

Animation, that is the imparting of spirit or life to matter, is achieved by close-up and angle of vision. Most remarkable here is the episode of flags parading, in which there are the merest glimpses of those bearing them. Close-up plunges the viewer into the midst of flags that seem to move of themselves, and in longer shots the camera angle obscures any human presence. Again, "reality" becomes figurative, things move as if charged with supernatural power, with a will of their own, or more precisely, the will of Hitler.

Such transfiguration, or triumph of the will over the world, is further realized through camera movement, a venerable Germanic cinema tradition whose silent virtuosi were Murnau, Dupont, Pabst. As a rule when the subject is not in motion (and often when it is) the camera moves. Thus a sense is created of being caught up in the Movement, the dynamic of the Cause. Further, this being caught up in almost constant motion constitutes a quasihypnotic disorientation of the spectator from the stable world where "objective fact" holds still to be examined. And further yet, the camera movement animates still subjects, moving them with the spirit of the occasion-the life Riefenstahl imparts to buildings is quite remarkable.

Editing also disorients the viewer, making him lose perspective by sudden shifts of angle or from close-up to long shot. And the cut can reinforce the animistic power of the image overwhelmingly, as when the crowd cheering within a stadium suddenly becomes, in a long shot from outside, the stadium itself emitting the spirited cry. Thus by constant flux of subject matter, constant motion of camera, constant shift of viewpoint, the concrete "reality" of Nuremberg becomes tenuous, figments which are coherent only in a dream, a vision with no perspective but only absolute vistas.

Indeed the dissolution of the material, "reality", is evoked and symbolized in specific imagery, that of mist or smoke, and that of night. There is a considerable vapor floating through the film, and whether it suggests spirits in the air, primeval Teutonic mist, or quasi-religious incense, it surely does create an "atmosphere" of literally transfigured and rarefied matter. Again, there are scenes where the earth is lost in darkness, and people and objects move in indeterminate space. Thousands of torches become flickering stars, and fireworks shot high complete the confusion of heaven and earth, confirming and celebrating the union of the lower world with that from which the Führer descended.

Of course dissolution of the subject matter is most directly, literally expressed in-the "dissolve." Like all the other cinematic devices, it is employed unobtrusively, almost as if it were just the standard 'thirties technique for facile smooth transition. But when Riefenstahl dissolves from banners or monolithic symbols to camp grounds or crowds, she does not just make the shift; she leaves the symbol superimposed for a telling time over the new subject before washing it out. Thus the apparent transition is in effect a hovering over her subject matter of the transparent spirit of the previous shot, whether eagle or swastika. Triumph even ends with a dissolve, from a giant swastika to marchers who represent its powers incarnate and militant. The marchers themselves are shot from an angle to show them not merely against the sky, but heading up into it. The final shots then become a developed image for "his [Hitler's] spirit goes marching on"; a subtle, even subliminal ascension of the German nation to the heavens from which, in the beginning, the Führer came.

Before discussing this beginning in more detail, a brief consideration of one aspect of the end-the technique of symbolism -would be appropriate. Essentially this technique, used throughout the film, is to relate the masses to specific symbolic objects, and it takes as many guises as there are filmic devices. Riefenstahl frames crowds dominated by huge banners or movements; has the camera move from swastikas or eagles to the masses, or vice versa; cuts directly from people to gigantic Nazi emblems in close-up; or, finally, dissolves the distance from symbol to "reality." Thus within the constantly shifting, at times almost phantasmagoric spectacle staged in ancient streets and modern stadia, the swastika and eagle are the stable images, constantly emerging; while all human beings, save Hitler, come and go like apparitions, individuals sub-merged in massive waves of racial demonstration. Again and again by camera, cut, or lab, mass passion is connected to the heraldry of Nazism, the *Geist* is rendered unequivocal.

Most intensely possessing and possessed by this spirit is Hitler, not so much a god as a prophet who has been in the realm of vision and returns to inspire his people with the true word. His

arrival on earth, the start of the film, is worthy of particular examination, being a statement of the key themes of *Triumph*, and an unusually inspired (even for Riefenstahl) development of them.

In the beginning all is without form and void. The documentary genre is maintained by making it clear we are in an airplane which is flying the Führer to Nuremberg. But the essential impact of the sequence is far, infinitely removed, from the merely reportorial. The flight through the sky is reminiscent of that in Murnau's *Faust*, but really more fantastic. The endless processions of clouds suggest both an eternal realm of the spirit and the primeval chaos out of which worlds are created. Soon the earth does emerge, born from the clouds. The ancient spires of Nuremberg are wrapped in mist like the afterbirth of the heavens. Hitler, the genius of the German renaissance, now nears the earth. The shadow or spirit of his airplane travels over the streets, touching the city, possessing it. The plane makes contact with the earth. The German people await their leader. The airplane door opens, there is mysterious, suspenseful emptiness. Crowds gape with expectation. Borne out of the heavens, Hitler now emerges, through the dark opening of his vessel, in the flesh.

Even in this most extravagant and romantic passage the technical bounds of "documentary" are never strained beyond the breaking point. The Führer's ministry on earth which follows-complete with speeches or sermons or prophecies, and vast throngs, titanic structures or miracles-never exceeds "correct" reportage. Thus Riefenstahl ultimately succeeds by virtue of her objective genre and material, combined with her intensely but subtly subjective vision, in creating perhaps the definitive cinematic obliteration of the division between fantasy and "reality".

Afterword: 2003

This is a response to events subsequent to the above essay, and to material about and by Riefenstahl which appeared in the same issue of Film Culture as said essay, and of course immediately to the death of Reifenstahl. It all could have been said thirty years ago, since nothing crucial has changed; and since nothing still has changed, it is all the more worth saying now. No matter what new facts have or have not emerged, Riefenstahl is always admired and despise, always controversial in the same predictable, inevitable ways. Why has nothing changed? Why can't it?

Consider *The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*, a highly regarded documentary, distinguished for perhaps the most politically correct title in the history of cinema. The idea which informs the title is that artists are responsible for their work. How, exactly, is a question not sufficiently simple to engage the filmmaker. But Riefenstahl did serve Hitler, and if you dine with that particular devil you had better use an infinitely long spoon, which she obviously did not. I think her spoon was quite long enough, although at times she seemed to make it look a lot shorter.

Riefenstahl's problem has two basic aspects. The first claim by her antagonists is that any

relationship with Hitler is absolutely reprehensible, since Hitler was absolutely evil. The second is that no matter what Riefenstahl said she knew, she had to know or, at the very least, she should have known.

The big thing against Riefenstahl is big indeed – *Triumph of the Will* is the greatest documentary ever, and the supreme cinematic achievement of the thirties. And this tremendous film does make Hitler look good. Case closed? Not really. One has to put the making of the film into context. The Hitler of Triumph was not the astoundingly triumphant conqueror of 1940, or the unmitigated invader of 1941. Hitler in 1934 was a figure of some doubt and controversy, but generally perceived throughout Europe as a promising statesman who was learning to play by the rules; and in Germany as the restorer of national pride, the rejuvenator of the economy, the architect of an effective government – the man on a white horse. All this was not mere propaganda – it was virtually true. And there were no invasions, no concentration camps – what was not to like? Of course Hitler was clearly a demagogue and a reformed terrorist, but it was understood that a tough job required a tough guy.

So why was it so wrong to advocate Hitler in 1934? It wasn't then, it is, now. Now we know. Then we didn't. And that's the problem. Maybe Riefenstahl didn't know then, but did know later. And she acted like it was all right, she wouldn't compromise. She always told it like she thought it was. Hitler wasn't so bad, said Riefenstahl. Certainly not then, in 1934, and she was right, which many considered unforgivable. Since Hitler, being absolute evil, must have always been so bad. Such abstraction meant nothing to Riefenstahl. She was an idealist, but intensely pragmatic. Ideology was alien to her. She knew what she knew, and it wasn't theory. She believed in her art, and in her perceptions, and in her memories, and not in anyone else's. She was strong and alone.

So she offered explanations. To many they appeared disingenuous. Actually, they were ingenuous, the naiveté of the confirmed idealist. Her most provocative claim, of course, is that Triumph is not propaganda.

Could Riefenstahl have been unaware of her mythologizing? Of the precise power of her symbols? Of their very existence? Such unawareness would indicate a great but credible political indifference; but also a breathtaking cultural obliviousness. Or, "pure" genius? Riefenstahl was certainly inspired. She may well have found her images subconsciously; that is, not out of calculation, not looking to mesmerize or even to persuade, totally absorbed in the act of creation.

Even so, is it possible that in editing, in the whole process of viewing and reviewing *Triumph* over six months, it did not occur to Riefenstahl that Hitler comes across as heroic, indeed a messianic figure? It may well be that she was transported by the Nuremberg drama and spectacle, and only express, "documented" her own response. Fair enough, it's now scientific commonplace that the act of observation changes the thing observed. But, Riefenstahl was then in the position of observing over and over her original response, the effect she recorded, Could she then not have recognized it as serving the purpose of propaganda?

Precisely. This was her blind spot. She always was adamant in her “purity.” She refused to perceive that she did not do as she originally intended – to make a true documentary, a work of art above the merely political. It was impossible for her to admit, or even to see that something had gone out of control; that for all her skill and discipline and will, the unexpected had taken over. Ironically enough, that is what made the film particularly notorious, and transcendent, and uniquely great. Inspiration betrayed intention. The result was not pure documentary, but pure genius. And terrific propaganda.

The Political Legacy of Edward Said

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In the fall of 2002, before the U.S. led the invasion of Iraq, the Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz ran an article by Akiva Eldar on a meeting held in Washington for some members of the Pentagon. The host was Richard Perle, then Chair of the U.S. Defense Policy Board. The sponsor was an unnamed think tank. The subject was the future shape of the Middle East. The slide show depicted "Iraq: a tactical goal, Saudi Arabia: a strategic goal," as well as describing "Palestine is Israel, Jordan is Palestine, and Iraq is the Hashemite Kingdom." (1)

Several months later, a leading Palestinian doctor and grassroots activist, Mustafa Barghouthi, Director of the Health Development and Information Policy Institute, in Ramallah, appeared to confirm the ominous "visions" described earlier in Washington. Denouncing "Israeli measures taken against the Palestinians," as "perhaps more dangerous than those taken in 1948," Barghouthi observed that, "under Sharon's plan for the Palestinians, they may now be clustered in ghettoes over no more than 9% of historic Palestine." (2)

In the interval, a handful of Israeli journalists and activists regularly denounced the very same Israeli policies, demonstrating their solidarity across the landscape of checkpoints and ghettoes, pointing, as did Gideon Levy, to the role of the Israeli military in promoting the the progressive dehumanization of the Palestinians. (3)

It is safe to say that among consumers of the news in the U.S., none of the above sources constituted familiar fare. Outside of a minority of specialists and concerned activists and intellectuals, reports exposing Israeli policies against Palestinians were viewed with suspicion if not open disdain, particularly as both the Israeli and American administrations vied with each other in identifying Israel with the U.S., and Palestinians with Arab terrorists. The struggle to maintain this status quo in public opinion was not new, and unfortunately, it was not news. It remained a battle fought at public and private levels, one directed at universities, the media and offices of Congressional representatives and political candidates. The object, preventing Americans from confronting Israeli policies, including those exposed by Israeli dissidents.

Representing a challenge to such developments, including the persistent myths of "road maps" and elusive peace processes, have been the voices of those raised in support of a binational state encompassing Israel and Palestine. Among those who endorsed such an option was Edward Said, whose endorsement was matched with support for the National Political Initiative in Palestine, involving major social and political reform. The combination constitutes an ineradicable check to Israeli denial of Palestinian rights. It offers, as well, an alternative to nationalist solutions that Said argued, were no longer tenable, although they required recognition within a new framework.

Said's recent writings on these questions are considered below. They speak to political realities in the Palestinian landscape that remain little known and inadequately appreciated. And they do so by giving voice to "emerging alternatives" as Said described them, those that reveal the dogged determination of hope and human solidarity as the bases of a Palestinian and Israeli future, unlike the past.

A leading literary critic and academic, and musician, the roster of Said's interests and publications cannot be easily summarized, neither can the range of his writings that dealt with matters of culture, politics and resistance. Suffice it to note that in the political domain, Said was recognized as among the most articulate and passionate spokesmen for the Palestinian cause, a subject that his work effectively internationalized beyond the parameters that defined its origins in the Middle East.

Said's political trajectory took him from the role of unengaged bystander which ended with the Israeli-Arab war of 1967. Between 1977 and 1991, he became an independent member of the Palestine National Council, choosing to leave in the later year after which he resumed his activism on behalf of Palestine as independent critic, fully armed with the only weapon that defined him, his words.

In the interval, Said published his first major work, Orientalism (1978) and in the following year, The Question of Palestine, followed two years later by, Covering Islam, and in 1983, The Word, the Text and the Critic, a work whose production coincided with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, a period of grief and suffering for Lebanese and for Palestinians in the Sabra and Shattila refugee camps, who were massacred by Israeli-backed Phalangist forces. The events led to a major inquiry in Israel, including an investigation of the role of Ariel Sharon. Said's writings on 1982 are to be found throughout his works, attesting to his eloquent defense of Palestinians under siege, and of those Lebanese, defeated in their struggle for a secular, democratic state.

Said's literary and political output reflected his conviction that the worlds of politics and culture were not severed but rather parts of a whole whose integrity could not be ignored, as works such as Culture and Imperialism, and The Politics of Dispossession, made clear.

The remarks that follow focus on some of Said's more recent political writings, those in which he argued against separation and the myths of the "peace process," and for bi-nationalism, as well as for the Palestinian Initiative, the ground-breaking grassroots movement that he and other Palestinian professionals, intellectuals and independent political figures endorsed in the summer of 2002.

None of the above can be analyzed outside of the context of Said's political writings, and notably, his insistence on challenging the Israeli denial of the role of Zionism and Israeli policy in the Palestinian exile of 1948. Implicit in such a challenge was the demand that the "Palestinian narrative," be integrated into that of Israeli history. It is in this context that Said's writings on "invention, memory and place," on history and memory, can be situated. In the

1980s he recognized the parallel efforts of Israeli journalists and historians who broke with the apologetic narratives of the past, a development he followed closely from its inception.

“In my opinion,” Said wrote, referring to those Israelis who contributed to such efforts, “their genesis lay to some considerable extent in the aggravated, but close colonial encounter between Israelis and Palestinians in the occupied territories.” (4) Such encounters, he argued, when not undermined by separation and exclusion, permitted the apprehension of the suffering of each community by the other.

These were themes to which Said repeatedly returned, even as he denounced the utter imbalance of political and military power between Israel and Palestine, whose effects on Palestinian life were increasingly dire.

In his January 1999 article, “Truth and Reconciliation,” written for the Egyptian weekly Al Ahram, January 14-20, Said wrote, referring to Oslo, that it was time again to question the so-called peace process that had brought no peace. “It is my view that the peace process has in fact put off the real reconciliation that must occur if the 100 year war between Zionism and the Palestinian people is to end. Oslo set the stage for separation, but real peace can come only with a binational Israeli-Palestinian state.” This, he continued, was scarcely imaginable. At present, both Zionist-Israeli and Palestine “narratives” he insisted, were “irreconcilable.” Reviewing Zionist history in the recent work of Israeli historian Zeev Sternhell, Said pointed out that the founders of the Zionist movement had not been blind to the presence of Palestinians, or to the “insurmountable contradictions between the basic objectives of the two sides,” referring to the Zionist movement and Palestinian national movement. At present, he explained, “the conflict appears intractable because it is a contest over the same land by two peoples who believed they had valid title to it and who hoped that the other side would in time give up or go away. One side won the war, the other lost, but the contest is as alive as ever.”

Deeply familiar with internal Israeli politics, and with the courageous struggle of Israeli dissidents, Said argued, “I see no other way than to begin now to speak about sharing the land that has thrust us together, sharing it in a truly democratic way, with equal rights for each citizen. There can be no reconciliation unless both peoples, two communities of suffering, resolve that their existence is a secular fact, and that it has to be dealt with as such.”

In that frame of mind, he questioned: “What can separation mean?” in November 1999 (Al Ahram, 11-17 November), making it clear that he believed separation to be unworkable. The dream of a Palestinian state, he wrote, was no longer realizable under current conditions. Neither were Israeli efforts at separation. “Neither Palestinians nor Israelis can be made distant from the other. In the area between Ramallah in the north and Bethlehem in the south, 800,000 Israelis and Palestinians live on top of each other, and cannot be separated.”

Instead of considering partition as the route to independence, he argued that it was “a legacy of imperialism,” as ominous in its effects in Pakistan and India, Ireland or Cyprus, or the Balkans, as in historic Palestine.

“We must adopt a strategy with like-minded Israelis, this is a crucial alliance, on matters where we have similar interests: secular rights, anti-settlement activities, education and equality before the law, whether it is Palestinian law, which is anti-democratic, or Israeli law, which is equally anti-democratic when it comes to non-Jews as well as secular Jews.” He wrote, he explained, “in order to be heard by other Arabs and other Israelis, those whose vision can extend beyond the impoverishing perspectives of what partition and separation can offer.”

In the period following the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, which coincided with the emergence of the George W. Bush administration, and the return of Ariel Sharon as Likud Prime Minister, Said was unrelenting in his expose of the hypocrisy of American claims and the denial of Israeli violence and continued expansion into the West Bank and Gaza. He continued to argue on behalf of a political solution of the crisis, albeit one that represented the interests of Palestinians as well as Israelis, a situation belied by the Oslo negotiations. In works such as Peace and Its Discontents (1996) and The End of the Peace Process (2000), Said excoriated the role of the Palestinian leadership, notably in its accession to the Oslo Declaration of Principles (1993), which Said viewed as “an instrument of capitulation.” (5) It would have been preferable, he wrote, to acknowledge that “we have failed as a people in our struggle to restore our rights. Israel has maintained its settlements and very partially redeployed its army. It controls land, water, security, and foreign policy for the Palestinian ‘self-rule’ authority.”

Instead of declaring victory, Said maintained, the Palestinian leadership should have confronted its defeat. “How much more dignified and admirable it would have been to admit defeat and ask the Palestinian people to rally in order to try to rebuild from the ruins.” (xxx) Said’s criticism of the Palestinian leadership and its lack of preparedness, its ignorance of the U.S., was unambiguous, as was his recognition of the utter disparities in power on which such accords rested. What Palestinians and Arabs must remember, he argued, was “that our desire to coexist in peace with each other and with our neighbors is sustained not by blind loyalty to one or two personalities nd their rhetoric, but by an abiding faith in real justice and real-self-determination.” (xxv)

Said’s appraisal of Oslo was compatible with that offered by Israeli historian, Baruch Kimmerling, who underscored the compromised agreement made in Oslo which left Palestinians in control of bantustans. As for Sharon, Kimmerling argued that “Israel has become a state oriented towards one major goal: the politicide of the Palestinian people. Politicide is a process whose ultimate aim is to destroy a certain people’s prospects, indeed, their very will, for legitimate self-determination and sovereignty over land they consider their homeland.” (6)

Said had supported the two state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which the Palestine Liberation Organization had formally adopted as its position at the Palestine National Council meeting in 1988. In a series of interviews with the Israeli journalist, Ari Shavit, recorded in August 2000, Said explained his current position. As Shavit observed: “It seems you’ve come full circle-from espousing a one secular-democratic state solution in the 70s, to accepting the two-state solution in the 80s, back to the secular-democratic idea.” (7) Said replied that

partition and separation were no longer workeable. In its place, he turned to bi-nationalism. Replying to Shavit, he answered:

I would not necessarily call it secular-democratic. I would call it a bi-national state. I want to preserve for the Palestinians and the Israeli Jews a mechanism or structure that would allow them to express their national identity. I understand that in the case of Palestine-Israel, a bi-national solution would have to address the difference between the two collectives.

Those differences were daily magnified by the continued struggle on the ground whose consequences Said relentless exposed: the increasing number of Israeli military checkpoints that defined Palestinian ghettoes, the mounting death toll, the numbers of those rendered homeless, the expansion of Israeli settlements in violation of U.S. and UN agreements. In the midst of increasing violence, wrote Said in Al-Ahram (December 19-25, 2002) and the continued bleeding of "the Palestinian civilian population," that remained "obscured, hidden from view, though it continues steadily all the time: 65 percent unemployment, 50 percent poverty (people living on less than $2 a day), schools, hospitals, universities, businesses under constant military pressure, these are only the outward manifestation of Israeli crimes against humanity."

In the midst of such conditions, Said and other Palestinians turned their efforts to the state of "Palestinian and Arab politics," which Said argued, had never been as corrupt, nor as harmful to its own populations as at the present time. He criticized Arab leaders, albeit not for the first time, for having failed to a "systematic strategy, much less even a systematic protest against Washington's announced plans to re-draw the map of the Middle East after the invasion of Iraq." Said's sharp criticisms of Arab politics were not unique. They matched those of critics throughout the Arab world whose demands for social justice and secular political reform, were as little heard in the U.S., as were his own.

Said joined with other Palestinian signatories, including Dr. Mustapha Barghouti, cited earlier, to found a a new secular Palestinian national initiative. The initiative, as Edward Said wrote in Al Ahram, in 19-25 December 2002, "puts forward the idea of a national unified authority, elected to serve the people and its need for liberation, for democratic freedoms, and for public debate and accountability." It was supported by a host of professionals in the fields of health, education, and labor, along with political independents. "The old divisions between Fatah, the Popular Front, Hamas, and all the others, are meaningless today," Said argued, calling for a Palestinian leadership capable of speaking "to our need for independence of mind and responsible, modern citizenship."

This was not to be Said's final contribution to the future of Palestine. In their last conversation, Ilan Pappe, the Israeli historian and activist whose work Said respected, reported that Said "beseeched me, as he did others I am sure, not to give up the struggle for relocating the Palestinians' refugee issue at the heart of the public and global agenda. He stressed the need to continue the effort of changing the American public opinion on Palestine…." (8)

It remains to be seen whether such efforts have reached their audience.

Notes

1. Akiva Eldar, “Perles of wisdom for the Feithful,” Ha’aretz, Nov. 2, 2002.*Return up*
2. Mustapha Barghouthi press conference, Oct. 16, 2003, Jerusalem, Israel.*Return up*
3. Gideon Levy, “The IDF’s Chorus of Incitement,” Ha’aretz, Oct. 26, 2003 (online).*Return up*
4. Edward W. Said, “Invention, Memory, and Place,” Critical Inquiry, 26, winter 2000, p.189.*Return up*
5. Edward Said, Peace and Its Discontents, New York, Vintage Books, (1996), p.xxix; all subsequent citations, unless otherwise identified, are from this source.*Return up*
6. Baruch Kimmerling on Ran Edelist, Ehud Barak: Fighting the Demons, in New Left Review 23, September-October 2003.*Return up*
7. Edward Said, Power, Politics, and Culture, Pantheon Books, 2001, p.452. The interview is reproduced in ch. 29, “My Right of Return.”*Return up*
8. Ilan Pappe’s tribute to Edward Saidm “A Lighthouse that Navigated Us,” may be found in the online Edward Said archives, and in Arabic Media Internet Network, Sept. 26, 2003.*Return up*

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The Pebble That Became A Fist-full Rock: On The Continued Importance Of Edward Said’s Orientalism

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

After some twenty-two years of the most brutal occupation, an occupation that tore the very fabric of Lebanese society, killed thousands of innocent Lebanese civilians, murdered cold bloodedly women and children taking refuge in a United Nations shelter, demolished houses, displaced and deported thousands of Lebanese farmers, humiliated the population by subjecting their every move to checkpoints and road detours, turned some of them into surrogate forces, traitors and killing agents, raped and tortured prisoners for long term detention periods without due trials or even as much as issuing warrants for their arrests, designated simple farming villages as “terrorist strongholds” and bombed them from high-flying F-16 bought and paid for by U.S. tax payers thus killing countless innocent farmers in the process, stealing water, and even bulldozing top soil and trucking it across international borders to land settlements that were themselves built on stolen land taken by force, finally the Israeli forces pulled out of Lebanon on May 24 of the year 2000.

Israel did not carry out this act because it suddenly found itself in violation of the United Nation’s Security Council resolution 425 which stipulated some 22 years earlier that Israel should pull out its forces immediately without any condition behind the international borders. It did so only after it had been forced out by the longest sustained resistance movement in Lebanon, first started by a variety of Lebanese political factions as a reaction to the Israeli occupation itself and then continued, organized, and brought to an effective victory by what became the Lebanese Resistance Movement led by Hizbollah.

Within days of the fateful pullout, and as Hizbollah resistance fighters were still parading the captured armored vehicles, tanks, and artillery pieces that were left behind by the fleeing Israeli forces, which had coordinated its pullout in the wee hours of the early dawn, thousands of Lebanese flocked to the liberated land of the South, a South that had become like every forbidden and occupied land the subject of longing songs and romance over the years of occupation, in order to smell its soil, to gaze once more at its terraced rolling hills, to embrace and gently caress its little shrubs and trees, to lie down on its meadows and gaze at the free and “liberated” skies, skies that are incidentally still subjected to almost daily incursions by the Israeli airforce up till this very day. Jubilant, and drunk with the smell of dignity coming back to them, almost every Lebanese made or wanted to make a pilgrimage to the South to greet its residents who started to return to their farms and houses, to congratulate them, to shake the hands of the prisoners who were finally freed from the Khiyam notorious house of torture called prison. But they also all wanted to get as close as possible to the Lebanese Israeli border

to take a look at the monster that lay behind the barbed wire and concrete walls, a monster that had turned their lives into nightmares for more than twenty-two years, and continues to threaten their very existence on daily basis. The curiosity, the jubilation, the congratulatory embraces to each and every one who survived the occupation of the South, made it feel like a continuous festivity and each and every Lebanese wanted to scream at the top of his/her voice "Free at Last."

For the Palestinians who still live in miserable conditions in refugee camps in Lebanon, the joy was mixed for it scratched a deeper wound and stirred up a much deeper anger. The Lebanese victory allowed them now to see the land they had to flee almost fifty years earlier under the onslaught of the Israeli forces who were brutally establishing their state in 1948. But they also came to the border, they also looked at the monster. Some of them, especially the children, had never seen the space beyond and were then gazing for the first time at the land that carried in their minds all those images and dreams of return that their fathers and mothers had told them about, the orchards and the vineyards and the keys to their houses that they still carried with them during all those years of dislocation. Yes, the Palestinians came too, some of them from as far as Paris and London, to take their first look at their land of dreams. And yes all of them embraced the southern Lebanese and joined in their dance, and yet envied them a little, for they could not scream, as the Lebanese were doing, that they were free, too.

One of those Palestinians who also came to the border was Edward Said. He too wanted to look at the forbidden land. He too wanted to join in the on-going festivity along the Lebanese border, and he too wanted to exorcise the monster that had tortured him all his life. He too picked a pebble and tossed it in the direction of that monster. Old men and women, children, even well behaved children from nun-schools did the same. The big party stirred up all sorts of emotions that are very hard to explain to any person who have never slept under a walnut or an almond tree or in his own vineyard along the eastern Mediterranean shores during the warm months of the summer. It is the kind of joy that I think citizens of a snow-ridden countries will never understand.

It was in that mood that Edward Said, picked up his now-famous pebble and tossed it in the direction of the land of Palestine, a land that changed its name to Israel during his lifetime, and was lying there, right in front of him, and yet he could not reach it. It was with curse and joy that he tossed that pebble, and only he could answer to the underlying motives that I am sure would have taken him years of therapy to figure out which of them were motives stirred by hurt, which by joy, and which were stirred by sheer rebellion against the injustice that had befallen his people and his country.

But with that pebble toss, Edward Said stirred another controversy. As it happened, there was a photographer around, and just at the moment when Edward Said had picked up the pebble in his right hand, stretched his hand backward in preparation to toss it, the photograph was clicked and the picture made it to the wires. It was first made available for the press by Agence France Press, I believe, and since then has appeared in newspapers around the world. Because of this wide distribution of the photographs, I bet any reader who has even a minimum

acquaintance with any internet search engine can get a copy of it freely and glance at it for him/herself. And once you do that, you immediately see a frail man, definitely not in tip top physical shape, who had by then been fighting leukemia for a full decade, holding an object in his right hand, literally with only three of his fingers: the thumb, and the first two fingers, the other two duly folded onto his palm. So here was this man carrying an object with his three fingers stretching his hand in a gesture willing to toss that object. Across from him in the direction where he was about to toss his pebble all you can see on the photograph is what looks like a concrete wall, but quite some ways away.

Now just think about it. How big that object could be, in order for a frail man to attempt to through it in any direction if it could be held by three fingers only? The photograph shows this very clearly, take a look at it. And even if he had succeeded to throw that pebble all the way across the well defended border, with all the concrete walls and bunkers and armored vehicles and personnel on the other side, how much damage could that pebble create, and what kind of violence it could arouse that would threaten the state of Israel, which had the fourth largest and well armed forces in the world? How could it be any more damaging than the other pebble also widely published in the hand of a Palestinian child, about 10 or 11 years old, attempting to throw it against and Israeli tank?

Admittedly, it was not the object that stirred the controversy at Columbia University, but the very gesture itself.

The gesture was interpreted by two of Edward Said's Columbia colleagues on the faculty, and I am ashamed to say my colleagues as well, as an act of violence and demanded from the university administration to at least reprimand University Professor Said, if not more. The picture was not attached to the article that my and Edward's colleagues published in the student's paper, but the pebble was duly transformed into a "stone," a term at once conjuring the "stone"-throwing children of the Palestinian intifada, and probably the "stone" of the New Testament. The children of Palestine who were also fighting their own demons and monsters of occupation had been tossing their own "pebbles" for years. They have to be pebbles, for how big a stone can a child of ten or eleven years old throw? But since those children had already been vilified in the Western press, and especially that of the U.S., as "terrorists," Edward too was connected by the same term. And thus a big outcry at Columbia, for and against Edward Said, ensued during the early weeks of the Fall semester of 2000.

But it was not only the gesture that irked the opponents of Edward. They knew that language mattered, and thus wanted to attach some form of criminality to his gesture, and thus sought to do so by changing the name of what is obviously an innocuous pebble into a "stone," and later on as the controversy grew the "stone" became a "rock," as if to say that he really intended to hurt someone with it. In the latest re-incarnation of this episode, which unfortunately was also repeated in the New York Times obituary, true to form good old New York Times words fit to print, the gesture was used to add to Edward's name the adjective "controversial," a term also wisely chosen to imply that he could not be taken without a grain of salt, so to speak. And in the latest attack on Edward's memory that came to my attention in the website of Daniel Pipes,

the pebble became “a fist-full rock.” If this controversy keeps growing, and I expect it to grow once Columbia University has a formal memorial for Edward Said, I also suspect that someone somewhere will transform that “pebble” into a “boulder.” All that without anyone looking at the picture that had three front fingers grasping this small pebble ready to be thrown.

I repeat all of this not in jest, for I do believe that the episode should teach us a lot about Edward Said’s legacy. It is not the first time that the grounds of the discourse had been changed from the facts to the incriminating intent of Edward Said. What happened is that his assailants did not want to discuss the facts that were obviously captured in the picture, but deformed those facts to impute his intent. They did not want to point to the fact that no one could have been hurt by that pebble, and that it was only an expression of joy, shared with thousands of Lebanese and tourists who did the same, but wanted to translate that gesture into an act of violence. It is to the credit of the then Provost of Columbia University, Jonathan Cole, who finally issued a statement declaring that Professor Said did not commit any crime by that gesture and no one was intended or could have been hurt by what he did. And thus the University interpreted that as an expression of his free speech.

But the lesson is not there. The lesson lies in the fact that even Edward Said’s defenders fell for the polemical arguments of his opponents and went along with them in the process of the deformation of facts, for they too referred to the “pebble” as a “stone” and even a “rock” in their defensive writings. At one point, and in a neglected interview, Edward himself referred to it as a “pebble,” but in the heat of the polemics no one noticed, and both friend and foe continued to speak of the pebble as a stone, a rock, and now a “fist-full rock.” We can all anticipate the “boulder.” I think it is coming.

This episode brought to mind another similar one, as I was sitting in the Riverside Church, bidding farewell to Edward Said. I thought then that Edward’s friends have also failed him in another context. They let the opponents usurp the discourse and forced them to fight their battles on their own terrain. I thought of the controversy that surrounded his epoch-making book Orientalism. I remembered how some of Edward’s friends thought that he did not expose the orientalists enough. He, for example, did not say enough about the German Orientalists who were also responsible for the deformation of facts about the Orient just as much as their French and English colleagues if not more. Everyone was caught in that controversy in the late seventies and the early eighties. But the controversy was framed as such: Did Edward, the well-acknowledged literary critic, have the right to critique a field that had its own parameters, jargon, and specialists that date as far back as the Renaissance if not earlier? What was a literary critic doing in the halls of well-grounded orientalists who chalked several Semitic languages next to their names, and had a series of Dr. Dr. and final Profs. appended to their names in the good old German professorial fashion?

The debate over the thesis of Said’s Orientalism shifted then too from arguing the merits of that thesis, namely the damage that those orientalists had done to the field by their ideological biases, conscious or otherwise, to a debate over whether Said had the right to do that or not. The fact that the orientalists had indeed warped the facts of the field by their ill-conceived

ideas, just like the facts in the picture of the hand tossing a pebble, were quickly forgotten, and his defenders were side-tracked into the polemics of the argument.

Some of his friends even misunderstood the main thesis of Orientalism. They were worried that if Said was preaching that the orientalists did not know even the languages of their own field and his demand that they should have known their field better, that in fact meant that he was inviting them to offer better services to their colonial masters, and thus endangering the very people he was trying to protect from the orientalist deformation. By his heavy emphasis on the modern orientalists, and by exposing their amateurish grasp of the field, he sounded, even to his friends, as if he were excusing the older well-grounded orientalists who did indeed master the tools of their trade. His opponents would site one orientalist after another who edited an Arabic classical text here, or authored an Arabic-English, or even Arabic-Latin, dictionary there, all to say that the orientalists did something worth respecting and thus Said was unfair in attacking them. These polemical arguments branched off in all directions and all, in my view, missed the point, and still do.

To me Said was not saying that orientalists are simply incompetent, biased, and worked within an ideological colonial framework that could not allow them to see any better. They were all of that. He was not only saying that they served their political masters instead of serving their academic fields properly. They did that too. But he was also saying, and that to me is the most endurable legacy of Edward Said's Orientalism, that they theorized the history and culture of the Orient in such a way that its true features were no longer retrievable. It is not enough to edit texts, and write dictionaries, it is equally important to understand those texts and deploy those dictionaries in their cultural context and not distort them by incompetence, political bias, colonial desires and the like.

And like the defense of the pebble that became a stone Edward Said's friends have not yet looked at the facts for themselves, have not examined the picture of their own history, and here I speak of his Arab and Muslim friends, for they are still engaged in the polemics and the political repercussions of Said's Orientalism, and continue to defend him to the death, but not for the right reasons.

Unfortunately many a friend of Said in the Arab countries continue to defend him, especially when they speak of the modern period of their history, but when the occasion calls for their analysis of the historical continuity that brought the modern times of their history into being, that is when they need to theorize about their own Orient; almost all of them turn around and adopt the theories of the orientalists. How many a modern Arab or Muslim intellectual can one still read, for example, who is an avowed friend of Edward, and still thinks that the golden age of Islamic civilization, to which modern Islam is umbilically connected, was the period of the first two centuries of Abbassid times, that is from the ninth to the eleventh centuries! How many a friend still does not realize that the very periodization of Islamic civilization into periods of gold and silver, and periods of decay and decadence were all formulated by those very orientalists who also edited texts and composed dictionaries? It is those very orientalists who had pronounced Islamic civilization dead as of the twelfth century, and with that laid down

the foundation for the contemporary dehumanization of that civilization, by designating the modern period as simply a continuation of that process of decadence that was begun in the twelfth century. Incidentally, the twelfth century is very important for those same orientalists, who were all European, as well as for their respective students from the Arab and Muslim worlds, for the twelfth century also brought the medieval Renaissance in the West, admittedly produced by direct contacts between the Europe of the time and Islamic civilization. It is those same orientalists and their followers who see no further contacts beyond medieval times, and thus theorize the European Renaissance as a European miracle almost in tandem with the Greek miracle to which it is often wedded.

The good news is that there are some good friends of Edward Said who may have not have known him in person but who are beginning to subject the pronouncements of modern Arab and Muslim intellectuals to fresh scrutiny and are also beginning to critique those very statements as perpetuating the orientalist legacy. There are few books that have appeared within the last few years that deal particularly with that issue. Others have yet to come.

But the most important task for those who inherited the legacy of orientalism has barely begun, and that to me is the most enduring aspect of that legacy, namely, the task of looking again at the very history of Islamic civilization with new eyes, eyes that are not blurred by orientalist aberrations, and to study that civilization for its own sake, and thereafter emerge with a new theorization that will replace the general paradigms of the orientalists.

Those who are beginning to go down that road are beginning to find new periods of gold and silver in Islamic Civilization that do not mesh well with the orientalist periodization, and are also beginning to find out that this whole metallic analogy is not all that useful anyway. That work has barely begun, but thanks to Edward Said's Orientalism it can now proceed with steady footsteps. And that too is a pebble that was once tossed by Edward Said into an academic pool whose ever-widening circles are now touching every field connected to Edward's Orient.

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Adorno Letter To Fromm On Women

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Nearly 66 years ago, on the 16th of November in 1937, T.W. Adorno (1903-1969) wrote a letter to the Institute of Social Research (ISR)—the center of "critical theory"—with a proposal. Adorno was living in Oxford at the time. He had drifted from partial into permanent exile as hopes faded of a brief NS-interlude. Anticipating such a development, even before the National Socialists came to power, the German institute had begun work abroad in 1932 and it received new impetus after coming to New York in 1934. In his letter Adorno outlined his ideas for a project "on the feminine character."

From an analysis of the bourgeois woman under capitalism, Adorno proposed a deduction of her gender-specific personality traits. As examples he cited "the completely irrational behavior of women in dealing with commodities," their pleasure in shopping, or even the gesture of the girl, who, "while giving herself to her lover is dominated by anxiety that something will happen to her dress or her hair-do"—as if the woman had already fetishized herself in such a way "that she had placed her own commodity character between herself and her own sexual activity." This, Adorno concluded, called for a "theory of female frigidity."

I

The critique of "stereotypical thinking" and the study of prejudice in general were revolutionized by the American research projects of the ISR during the 1940s. These were guided by the central claim of The Authoritarian Personality (1950) by Adorno et altera: "that the political, economic, and social convictions of an individual often form a broad and coherent pattern, as if bound together by a "mentality" or "spirit," and that this pattern is an expression of deep-lying trends in his personality." The disposition to think in rigid categories ("stereotyping") and the outward projection of unconscious emotional impulses ("projectivity") were investigated as significant variables of prejudice. That is why the misogynous stereotypes used by Adorno in his letter sound so surprising. His "undeveloped expressions" were probably articulated because what Pierre Bourdieu termed the "structural censor" weakens during intimate communication. That should not occur in academic discourse. The question then is whether Adorno made similar references in his published work.

Even apart from its content, however, Adorno's letter from 1937 presents an interesting document with regard to the history of the ISR in exile. Living in exile in different countries, its members had to communicate through letters. All were committed to sustaining the original interdisciplinary approach of the Institute. Every topic was analyzed from the most diverse disciplinary perspectives such as philosophy, literary studies, musicology and economics with the intent of "making society with its contradictions visible" (Horkheimer). All of this was based on linking Marx's political economy with Freud's psychoanalysis.

The Institute had a three-pronged structure: a board of directors under the direction of Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) with Erich Fromm (1900-1980) and Friedrich Pollock (1894-1970) as co-directors, and Leo Löwenthal (1900-1993) as editor of the institute's *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*: The second tier of the institute's organization included collaborators such as Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979) and Franz Neumann (1900-1954) while the third tier was composed of free lancers like Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) who had emigrated to France and Alfred Sohn-Rethel (1899-1990) who went to England. Adorno, who was still living in England, represented a notable exception in this hierarchy. He still had not found his niche. Nevertheless he was convinced that he—more than the others—should be in charge of the Institute's conceptual work and that he should occupy the most important role alongside Horkheimer.

Adorno emphasized that his proposal, though part of an internal communication, was not intended as private correspondence. A copy of his outline was sent to Horkheimer. The letter itself, however, was addressed to Fromm whom Adorno also had in mind as the researcher of the "feminine character." This is astonishing since hardly any communication had taken place between these two men. Adorno considered Fromm his rival. Only during the last two decades, however, has Fromm's impact on critical theory and the Institute in general been rediscovered. Nevertheless apart from Horkheimer, Erich Fromm was "arguably the most important theoretician during the early years of the Frankfurt School" (Bronner) and certainly its most important specialist on psychoanalysis. The history of the Institute for Social Research in exile developed in two phases which can virtually be personified in Fromm and Adorno—or rather, their relationship to Horkheimer who was at its centre. Until 1937 when Fromm's "divorce" from the institute began—it would be finalized in 1939—he was the most important intellectual confidant of Horkheimer. In 1938, however, Adorno replaced him after marrying Gretel Karplus in the late summer 1937 and moving to the United States during the spring of that year.

Adorno had often tried to move from the periphery to the centre before. His jealousy can be seen in his many letters expressing his own ideas, his harsh criticism of others closer to Horkheimer, and his proposals for a number of projects that he would lead. This competitiveness, whether Adorno subconsciously knew it or not, also pervades the letter of November 1937. That he did so may be deduced from his description of the situation in terms of a classic family conflict and his numerous long letters to Horkheimer where he "for years, again and again, had pressed for his incorporation into the ISR in the manner of a girlfriend intent on marriage" (Letter of Adorno to Horkheimer, November 2, 1934).

II

Adorno's letter suggested nothing less than a paradigm shift with regard to the conception of psychology and society for the Institute of Social Research. Three points seem to me of particular interest:

1. If the relationship between men and women until then was predominantly analyzed in sociological, sociological-psychological and historical terms, from the standpoint

of today, Adorno can be seen as attempting to develop a radical "Gender"—perspective on capitalism. The proposal as such—research "on the feminine character"—derived fully from the logic of works that the Institute had already undertaken. "Gender" (avant la lettre) had been researched extensively with regard to various subjects: the social-psychological significance of the mother-right theory by Fromm, but also Horkheimer and Benjamin; comparative research on the sociology of the family by Jay Rumney, who directed the London branch of the Institute for Social Research, and literary criticism with regard to the emancipation of women in the 19th century by Leo Löwenthal. These works belonged in the tradition of the classical Marxist ideas on women formulated by Engels, Paul Lafargue, the son-in-law of Marx and a founder of French socialism, and August Bebel, the long-time leader of German Social Democracy. All of them belong to an Enlightenment tradition that saw women as symbols of capitalist exploitation. In dialectical terms, according to Löwenthal, women could thus "represent a glance towards a freer development of humanity" while, on the other hand, Adorno found precisely "Woman" to be the executor of capitalism who represented capitalist exploitation in an explicitly gender-specific manner. "Bourgeois woman," to him, served as the agency of capitalist development.

2. Sociologically-speaking Adorno also suggested a shift from the macro- to the micro-structure in the analysis of gender relations. Instead of the concept of "authority," which had until then been central to the Institute, Adorno wanted its members to provide their analysis with new specificity by using Marx's idea concerning the "fetish character of commodities." This was fully in accord with Horkheimer's conviction that Marx's analysis of commodification is "not one that is underwritten by so many equitable motives (which would make him a pluralistic sociologist), but rather that the category of commodity is one that sheds light on society as a whole" (Letter from Horkheimer to H. Mayer, March 32, 1939). If the fetish character of commodities was universal to capitalism, in this vein, it was obviously necessary to study the effects of the commodity form on sexual exchange. Did not sexuality assume analogous fetish forms that were postulated by Marx in the fetish chapter of the Capital for commodification? And did not "Woman" much more than "Man" represent the commodity character of capitalism, that is regression, irrationality and infantilism?
3. In light of all this, Adorno wanted to reexamine economic terms like the "fetish character of commodities" by using psychoanalytic concepts like "frigidity" or "castration anxiety." In the technical use of "fetish," indeed, two specialized discourses merged: the critique of political economy inherited from Marx and the psychoanalysis of Freud. Both had originated in the anthropological discourse of the 18th century. Only in 1932, however, would the important Marxist thinker, Karl Korsch, publish an edition of*Capital*in which he became the first to note the relevance of Marx's concept of the fetish character of commodities. This influential edition circulated in intellectual circles to which both Brecht and Benjamin belonged. This Marxist perspective was well known to Adorno, not least due to his extensive debate with Benjamin over the "diverse definition of the commodity in

> high capitalism" (Letter from Benjamin to Adorno from June 10, 1935). Both were also influenced by the 1936 manuscripts of the economist Alfred Sohn-Rethel dealing with the "commodity form" whereby commodities are valued not for their use-value, or for the ways they can concretely be employed, but rather for their exchange value that expresses itself more abstractly in money. Thus, insofar as the life-world of advanced capitalism is ever more surely realized in the categories of exchange, its use value can no longer be sensuously experienced. This inversion is what Marx expressed with his metaphor of the "fetish character of the commodity."

More than half a century after the publication of the first volume of *Das Kapital* (1867) it seemed plausible to consider how the fetish character of the commodity form was defining what had previously seemed to transcend capitalism. "Woman" as a prescribed "natural being," as a "product of history that denatures her" (*Dialektik der Aufklärung*, 1947) serves as an example. The dialectics of the artificial and the natural, of use and exchange value, consequently made it plausible for Adorno to speak about the "fetish character of women." This however could only be a starting point for analysis. First the "objective" or "material" connection between Marx's theory of the commody and Freud's psychoanalysis would have to be proven. Adorno was of, course, fully aware of this. His letter may have been "irresponsibly improvised," as he himself put it. Nevertheless, he was convinced that he had developed "key positions on the present situation" (Adorno to Fromm, November 16, 1937). The question revolves around whether this paradigm shift is plausible in Adorno's published work where he used Marx's theory of the commodity form as his theoretical frame of reference. Space constraints prevent my elaborating this point apart from the few following points. This theory was most consistently pursued by Adorno from 1934 to 1939 and applied in three published essays on the social functions of music: "On Jazz" (1936), "The Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Listening" (1938) and "Fragments on Wagner" (1939/40), which were later published as a full-length monograph, *In Search of Wagner*. All these kinds of music, according to Adorno, were characteristic of the monopoly stage of capitalism. His theory explained the commodity character of Jazz through its stereotypical form. It relentlessly conformed to the norms or rules while seemingly breaking them. According to Adorno, this reflected an unconscious and paradoxical unity of fear and fulfillment, obedience and reward, as well as a form of gaining potency by emasculation (in German: "wenn ich mich entmannen lasse, bin ich erst potent"). Social and psychological ambivalence of this sort expresses a voluntary subjection to power and domination. In this vein, the listener of jazz or popular music would be characterized—like women—by regression, infantility, and irrationality.

III

Adorno's studies on music were also works of social theory. Horkheimer said of "On Jazz": "With this strict analysis of an apparently trivial phenomenon, you make society with all of its contradictions visible" (Letter from Horkheimer to Adorno, October 23, 1936). In these essays dating from 1936 to 1939-40 the theory of music, capitalist society, and "gender"—*avant la lettre*—formed a unity. Adorno was, however, sharply criticized by some members of the

Institute: Pollock, an economist, accused him of flirting with Marxist terminology while Adorno's use of psychoanalytic terms reminded others of "the mundane sexual babble of New York" (Letter from Adorno to Horkheimer, June 25, 1936). In other words, what he wrote was not economic enough for the economists and not analytic enough for the psychoanalysts (Letter from H. Mayer to Horkheimer, April 23, 1939).

Adorno's assumptions on women also seem not to have been entirely convincing to Fromm. The addressee of Adorno's letter replied coolly and politely. One has the impression of a subtle irony when Fromm seems to emulate Adorno's dialectical mode of expression: "I believe that women simultaneously embody the qualities of commodities in the most and least pronounced ways" (Letter from Fromm to Adorno, January 4, 1938). The Institute never followed through on Adorno's project "on the feminine character." Promising beginnings were made in analyzing the social psychology and the social history of the sexes during the phase of the close collaboration between Horkheimer and Fromm. But they were 'forgotten' in the wake of Adornos paradigm shift. With the explicit signification of "Woman" as a subject of social research, indeed, all further research on this topic by the Institute came to a halt.

* * *

Adorno to Fromm

November 16, 1937

Dear Mr. Fromm:

I assume that you heard from Horkheimer or Leo about my idea for a journal article—first—on the feminine character. I have not heard from New York. Neither do I know whether this is feasible at this point or whether it fits into Horkhekimer's or your work schedule. It has been on my mind a lot, however, so that I can't stop help indicating briefly what I am aiming at.

The initial interest is connected with the discussions that led to the studies on authority and family [Max Horkheimer/Erich Fromm/Herbert Marcuse (eds.): *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, Paris 1936] some time ago; it is about the glue that holds current society together even while it creates increased suffering and the threat of catastrophe for its members. Back then the state, religion and family authority were considered the foundations of this bond. But for some time now it has appeared to me that these explications are no longer appropriate. In fascist ideology the state plays the main role: perhaps that is true in backward Italy but not at all in highly industrialized Germany. On the contrary: in Nazi ideology any etatism is disdained for the sake of the "people." It is clear to me that, even in England, the vast majority is indifferent towards religion. Regarding authority, much can be said: in the current phase the crucial authority is not that of the family, however, but that of fetishized collective groups. In view of these insights, I think it necessary to pose the question regarding the glue that binds society together anew. And I am inclined—to tell the most important first—to see this glue in the economic principle even as it affects both the conscious and the unconscious of the people, the development of which defines the law of movement of society, and drives it towards

catastrophe: namely the commodity.

More and more I am convinced that the actual coincidence of Marxist theory and psychoanalysis lies not only in analogies of superstructure and base with ego and id etc., but rather in the connection between the fetish character of the commodities and the fetishized character of human beings. I believe that the methodological difference between Marxism and psychoanalysis becomes can be overcome only at the moment, in which it becomes possible to show successfully how the economic fetishism turns into psychic fetishism; this is something that—in a side note—also suggests tracing back the economic fetish character beyond capitalist society potentially to prehistoric times, in which the original facts of economic fetishism found their first mental sources. But for now I will leave aside this point that is probably connected to certain tendencies of your interest in Bachofen and your going back to the Oedipus complex.

The immediate stimulus for the idea of analyzing the feminine character was a passage in Leo's [Löwenthal: "Das Individuum in der individualistischen Gesellschaft." In *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* vol. 5 (1936), 321-363] essay on Ibsen, in which he attributes a lesser degree of reification and mutilated sexuality and a lesser degree of repression to woman than to man. Immediately, Leo's remark appeared to me to be somewhat romantic, and the more I thought about it, and the more consciously I observed things, the more it seemed to me that woman today is to a certain extent dominated more by the commodity character than man and that she is—now I am varying an old and nice formula of yours—functioning as the agency of the commodity in society. Very closely related to this, it appears to me that women and their specific consumer consciousness must be regarded as the social glue to a far greater extent than, say, family authority with its ascetic sexual morality, which is already crumbling without having any significant effect on the character of the middle-class.

(As you see, I strongly oppose Reich, as I do in other pieces, who regressed to the pre-Marxist, Feuerbachian point-of-view of "wholesome sensuousness" in, what is for a talented psychologist, unbelievable naiveté and who via his detour through anarchism will undoubtedly end up with reformism. Any observation could teach him that even sexually uninhibited, or at least in the primitive sense, completely uninhibited women bear the worst features of the bourgeois character.)

One could certainly object that we find here—and also with the political-reactionary behaviour of the majority of women—a new attitude, which was evoked directly out of fear in a catastrophic situation. But I am inclined to doubt that. The history of the unconscious has to deal with incomparably longer periods of time; I rather suspect that Ibsen's Heddas and Noras are the illusions of a desperate individual, and that he assumed the female childishness produced by capitalist society for an immediate and natural trait. If this were the case, then from a Marxist point of view, Strindberg would be right against Ibsen in a sense in which I was not aware at all of in New York, namely insofar as he destroys Ibsen's anthropological illusion and shows that in modern society there is hardly any refuge of "nature" left. My view was reinforced by my work on my almost completed piece on Wagner. In his work, through

characters like Isolde and Brunnhilde, woman has all those accents of romantic directness, and they seem to be unharmed by the evil world forces, ready to sacrifice, even ready for their death. On the other hand the characters of Fricka or Gudrune or even Elsa show that Wagner unconsciously perceived specifically bourgeois traits in women, and it was quite revealing to me that Siegfried in the *Twilight of the Gods* misses the last chance to get rid of the bewitched ring uttering: “If I wasted my property on you, my wife would be angry with me!”

I now imagine one could attempt to show that woman, due to her exclusion from production, developed special traits of the bourgeois which, though different from those of man, do not transcend bourgeois society as Leo seems to assume in the Ibsen essay—although I don’t think he would insist on this anymore. Yes, I’ll even go as far as to blindly assume that Horkheimer agrees with me when I claim that especially the traits with which woman seems to maintain her “directness” in reality are the stigmata that the bourgeoisie inflicted on her; traits, that conceal in a veritable context of bedazzlement what will be possible in terms of her actual nature. Put analytically it is obviously the case, that with most women, precisely due to their economic position, the formation of the ego has remained incomplete. The higher amount of infantilism they bear in comparison to men, however, does not make them more progressive in comparison to men. The task now would be, though I wouldn’t dare to engage it as someone who is neither an economist nor an analyst, to identify first a couple of specifically female traits as a way of analyzing women’s position in the economy; then showing exactly how these traits work for the preservation of society, and finally how these traits in particular lead into the fascist reproduction of stupidity.

These traits seem to be closely connected to the relationship between the consumer and the commodity that I cannot prejudge. One should analyze thoroughly the completely irrational behavior of women in dealing with commodities—shopping, clothes, hairdressing etc.—and it will probably become evident that all those moments that seem to serve sex appeal are in reality desexualized. The gesture of the girl who, while giving herself to her lover, is dominated by the anxiety that something will happen to her dress or her hair-do that might ruin dress and haircut appears crucial to me. And I assume that even the sexuality of the woman is largely desexualized, as if her fetish of herself? Her character being a commodity, for example, in the form of the often occurring sentiment of being-too-good-for-it had constantly interjected itself between the women and her own sexual activity, even in total promiscuity. Here a social theory of female frigidity could be developed. This in my view does not stem from the amount of sexual limitations to which women are subjected, or from the fact that they do not find the right partner, but that they even during coitus in their own perception continue to see themselves in terms of exchange value for a naturally non-existent purpose and that they will not be able to reach orgasm due to this displacement. Even in sexuality, use value has been smothered by exchange value. It would certainly be a dialectical point if one could show that lust could only be reconstituted through the complete implementation of exchange value; in other words: that the only remedy against the fetishizing of sexuality is sexual fetishism. Perhaps you could discuss this with Horkheimer with whom I often discussed this issue—in any case from the standpoint of male and not female psychology.

I imagine that this work will culminate in a critique of the “feminine” in the way this term is affirmatively used today society. After it has been reduced to the mechanism of its production one could show what kind of ideological function this term actually exerts and, by this, demonstrate even in psychology, the system converts its real victims into a source for its protection; thus, one could demonstrate the inescapable context of bedazzlement that dominate the contemporary processes of society. I could imagine the critique of Goethe’s “eternal feminine” as a blasphemous ending. Needless to say that this work should not be seen as an “attack” on women but as their defense against a patriarchal society that made them what they are today and that they can employ for its own ends just because they are what they are.

The most useful approach to this project is perhaps to study Freud’s remarks on female psychology i.e. the inner analytical discourse, as to whether female psychology is biologically characteristic of woman or conditioned through her identification with man. I tend to believe that the actual biological aspects are at least covered and distorted within bourgeois female psychology; on the other hand, I think, one can do without a substructure or a mechanism of identification, which anyway would probably be hard to prove, if one succeeds in reducing female psychology directly to the position of women in the process of production and consumption. Probably the identification with man occurs only via detours—via the commodities whose worship seems the key to me. Whether commodities are being identified in a very deep-seated way with male genitals I cannot say, but it appears to me that there are many reasons to believe so. I would also like to point out that certain phenomena in the Anglo-Saxon world like “flirting” and “having a good time,” running around from one party to the next etc. seem to elucidate what I have in mind much more effectively than how we know these things in backward Germany or in France.

I would be glad if these preliminary and undeveloped annotations were of use to you and if you could pursue this complex of issues. I am certainly convinced that they contains key insights into the current situation. Since this suggestion of mine is not a private matter I took for granted your consent and sent a copy of this to Horkheimer.

I hope to see you soon.

With kind regards

Yours,
Teddi Wiesengrund

(Typescript; Erich Fromm Papers, The New York Public Library) Translated by Kai Artur Diers

A Conversation with Bianca Jagger, Human Rights Advocate

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Bianca Jagger is a prominent spokeswoman for human rights, social justice and environmental protection in a wide variety of threatened locales. Born in Nicaragua, she studied political science in Paris, married and divorced Mick Jagger, and became deeply involved in upheavals across Latin America. From the late 1970s onward she worked unstintingly with humanitarian organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Washington Office for Latin America. Among other honors, Ms. Jagger received the 1994 United Nations Earth Day award, the 1997 Green Globe award from the Rain Forest Alliance for her efforts on behalf of saving tropical rain forests and securing the rights of indigenous peoples, and an "Abolitionist of the Year" award from the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. Ms. Jagger also spent a great deal of time and energy in the embattled Balkans and in AIDS-afflicted Africa. She visited Baghdad in January 2003 together with a peace delegation of American academics and was a strong antiwar voice in the run-up to the Anglo-American invasion. She is a member of the Executive Director's Leadership Council for Amnesty International, a member of the advisory Committee of Human Rights Watch/America, the advisory Board of the Coalition for International Justice, a member of the Twentieth Century task Force to Apprehend War criminals, a board member of People for the American Way and the Creative Coalition and a special advisor to the Indigenous Development International at Cambridge University. This interview was conducted in September 2003.

* * *

Q: You were born in Nicaragua which historically has been a very tense and troubled place. Does politics run in your family?

Jagger: My father was a businessman and he was not political. My mother was a housewife and she was very political. There is no question that her views influenced my vision of the world when I was an adolescent; she was a staunch opponent of the Somoza regime. After I left Nicaragua to study in France, she actively opposed the regime during the insurrection. Later on she became disillusioned with the Sandinistas and left Nicaragua to live with us in the U.S.

Q: Would you call what you had a privileged upbringing?

Jagger: During the first ten years of my life, while my parents were married, I enjoyed a privileged upbringing. After their divorce my mother found herself single, without a profession and with three small children to care for. In the Nicaragua of the 1960s, life was difficult for a divorced woman It was then that I learned the meaning of discrimination. It was a traumatizing experience. She worked to put us through school. The child support she was receiving was not

enough to keep us in the Catholic school we attended.

Q: Were you politically aware in your youth?

Jagger: Yes, very much so. In the 1960s, before I left Nicaragua, I participated in student demonstrations against the Somoza regime to protest against the student massacres perpetrated by Somoza's National Guard. We were tear-gassed and took refuge in a church. My father had to rescue me.

Q: You won a university scholarship in Paris. Why political science?

Jagger: I wanted to have a political career and I thought studying political science would be the best way to achieve it. I didn't want to face my mother's fate, to be discriminated against because of my gender and status. I promised myself I was never going to be treated as a second-class citizen.

Q: What impact did Paris have on your view of the world?

Jagger: I was avid to learn, to discover a new world, a new culture and wanted to escape the narrow perceptions of the women of the Nicaragua of the 1960s. I cherished French literature, and the first book I read in French was *L'etranger* by Albert Camus which had a profound influence on my adolescent life. In Nicaragua liberty, equality and the rule of law were the stuff of dreams. But in Paris I discovered the value of those words, their precious meaning. I arrived in Paris on Bastille Day, July 14, in the mid-1960s, a very significant time. I will say that I am closer to a European viewpoint of the world than an American one. I mean, my ethics and ideals are based on European concepts. At the same time my links to Latin America and the developing world are very strong. My umbilical cord was never cut. I feel great identification with the developing world.

Q: Who were the main influences on you there?

Jagger: Philosophers from the 18th century like Voltaire and Rousseau. Later on, Gandhi became my role model. I have always been interested in Eastern philosophy. Since early in my life I've been fascinated by India and I have spent a great deal of time traveling in that country. The more I know about Gandhi the more I [value] his success through his power of persuasion by non-violent action. There was so much he was able to achieve. But today when we think about state terrorism, we talk a lot about terrorism, but rarely talk about state terrorism, we sometimes see how state terror can drive people to terrorism, but it still would be important to highlight the achievements of Gandhian non-violence.

Q: The usual objection is that Gandhi wouldn't have done so well against the SS as he did against the British.

Jagger: I ask myself the question, would it be possible to achieve success if you adopt a Gandhi-like attitude to state terror? Would that really be successful when confronting the imperialistic

and ruthless tactics of the Bush administration, who have absolutely no regard for the international rule of law and human rights. Are they capable of being persuaded? I don't know.

Q: You met Mick Jagger, and married him in 1971. Were you politically active during that period?

Jagger: I was politically active as I was before and after my marriage? Perhaps not. What I can say is that it was a very politicized period of my life. I don't think there was really a time when I have not been politically aware. I inevitably became concerned with women's rights.

Q: So you returned to Nicaragua in 1972 after the earthquake?

Jagger: In 1972, on Christmas Eve we were having dinner in our house in London. The television was on in the next room. Suddenly I heard the announcement that there had been a devastating earthquake in Nicaragua. I rushed to see the news. I tried to contact my parents and couldn't reach them. All flights were suspended. So we decided to fly to Jamaica the following day and from there we took a shipment of medicine in a small charter plane into Managua airport. When we landed, the airport was partially destroyed, and was shut down. There were no immigration authorities in view and there were hundreds of boxes scattered on the runway.

The airport, and surrounding area, was teeming with National Guards. They were making sure the supplies went to the government warehouses. Not far from the airport. there were hundreds of people pleading with the guards in front of the warehouses to let them have access to food and water. It became apparent to me from the moment we landed that the aid that was pouring in from the U.S. and other nations was not going to the intended victims. Only Somoza and his cronies had access to it. People had to put red flags on their doors to proclaim they were supporters of Somoza in order to get access to food and water.

I was anxious to find my parents. Fortunately, I found a British journalist to help us go through the city of Managua. I still remember the stench of burned flesh. There were many fires still burning and I couldn't find my parents. During that period I witnessed the outrageous mismanagement of the aid. Three days later I finally found my parents in Leon. I came back to the U.S. and I urged Mick and the Stones to do a relief concert to raise funds for the victims. They raised $280,000. So I went back to Nicaragua with the intention of building a small clinic with the relief. The Somoza regime did everything not to allow that to happen. In fact, we had a meeting with Hope Somoza. Mick was present at that meeting. There, Mrs. Somoza said, "I am in the process of building a children's hospital and we would be delighted if you would donate the money to help with the construction."

I said, unfortunately, the money raised is American tax-exempt money and we are obligated to the American people to make sure the earthquake relief will get to the intended recipients. I don't think they will be satisfied if we gave the donation to your government. Mrs. Somoza wasn't very pleased and after that meeting I became persona non grata in Nicaragua. She was head of social security and consequently had some measure of control over doctors. Most of the

doctors I tried to secure to help with the clinic were apprehensive because she had taken my rebuff personally. In the end, that clinic turned out to be an impossible task. So we donated the funds to a Nicaraguan foundation to build homes for earthquake victims. For many years I was afraid to go back to Nicaragua.

Q: The Sandanistas were taking power, or about to take power in 1979. Is that why you went?

Jagger: The victory of the Sandinista revolution coincided with the end of my marriage. Sometime in the spring of 1979, the British Red Cross asked me to help them spearhead a fundraising campaign for the victims of the war in Nicaragua. After I was done helping them, I went to Nicaragua with an International Red Cross delegation to visit victims of the war and political prisoners. It was toward the end of the Somoza regime. I saw first-hand evidence of the brutality and oppression carried out by the Somoza regime against my countrypeople. It was a turning point in my life. It began my commitment to justice and human rights issues.

Q: What did you make of the Sandanistas?

Jagger: The Sandinista revolution was without any question a popular insurrection, I think the difference between El Salvador and Nicaragua is that in Nicaragua you had a popular insurrection and in El Salvador you had a revolution. The revolution in Nicaragua only began to take place after the Sandinistas overthrew Somoza. There is a question for which we will never know the answer: had the U.S. not launched the Contra war to overthrow the Sandinista government, would they have succeeded in bringing socio-economic justice to the people of Nicaragua? Would they have succeeded in generating prosperity? Or would they have failed even without a U.S. intervention? We will never know.

I think for the U.S. government the Sandinistas represented a threat to their dominance of Latin America. First, you had the Cuban revolution. The Sandinista revolution represented a further threat to their economic monopoly in the region. U.S. government officials always invoked the domino theory. They feared that if the Sandinistas succeeded, that what happened in Nicaragua would [spread to] other countries and shake the economic dominance that America enjoyed.

Q: You also were critical of some Sandanista policies.

Jagger: At first I supported the revolution, like millions of people throughout the world. However, I became disillusioned after a while. In the end some of the leaders betrayed the very principles for which they fought the revolution. It was a great missed opportunity.

Q: Chomsky observes that a counterrevolution always forces the revolutionary regime to become authoritarian, works like a charm.

Jagger: Not only did they force them to become authoritarian but they were forced to invest a disproportionate amount of their budget on military spending instead of focusing on what they initially tried to do, which was invest in education, eradicate illiteracy, health care reforms, and

economic improvements. The Sandinista government became consumed with fighting a war of survival. They were up against the biggest superpower in the world.

I think it is important to point out that the U.S. embargo imposed on Nicaragua, rather than weakening the Sandinistas, actually maintained them in power. It was only when the embargo was lifted that the Sandinistas were voted out of power. When the U.S. government imposes these immoral and counterproductive embargoes and sanctions, the people rally to support their government even when they otherwise oppose them, because they consider their sovereignty is under threat. Those who suffer are not those at the top, but are the less privileged members of society. I saw the same mistakes in Iraq where the sanctions were even more inhumane and cruel. I saw the appalling effects of two wars, 12 years of UN Security Council sanctions and the Food for Oil program. Today people in the U.S. fail to understand the Iraqis' resentment and hostility toward them. It is very much based on the sanctions, which affected millions of innocent Iraqis. As a consequence, hundreds of thousands of children died. The Iraqis never forgot Madeleine Albright's statement that it was worth the lives of half a million children. When I left Iraq [in January 2003] I was convinced that American would not be regarded as liberators, but as occupiers and that the Iraqis would profoundly resent the occupation.

Q: How did the Sandanistas go wrong?

Jagger: When a government has to face a situation like you had in Nicaragua, they become isolated. I often traveled to Nicaragua to speak against repressive policies by the Sandinista government, such as the imprisonment of members of COSEP [members of the private sector who publicly opposed their policies] and their attacks on the press, particularly the closing of la Prensa. Some members of the National Directorate regarded me with suspicion notwithstanding my vocal opposition to the Contra war in the U.S. When you have an embargo and a Contra war you put moderate voices in an untenable position. I could not allow the Reagan and [George H.W.] Bush administrations to use me as a tool. They offered me a green card if I was prepared to apply for exile in the U.S. Of course, I declined. If I had accepted I would have become the most prominent Contra.

I could bring my criticisms to the Sandinistas, but I could not use the criticism to fuel the actions of the Contra-revolution. I know there were a lot of other people in my situation who disagreed with some of the policies of the Sandinistas, but at the same time couldn't let themselves be manipulated by imperialistic forces. I was distrusted by some of the Sandinistas because I spoke plainly to them about their mistakes; I was trying to make them see what the stakes were. The Sandinistas couldn't deal with criticism. In the last years, they were incapable of accepting even constructive criticism and that contributed to their failure..

Q: Very sad. Didn't you have an especially dramatic experience in Honduras in 1981?

Jagger: In 1981, I was asked to visit a refuge camp in Honduran territory. At the time the U.S. government was providing economic and military aid to a Salvadorian government that was

engaged in killing its own people. They were bombing wide areas of Morazan in the northern countryside. People were trying to cross the border to reach Honduras. A river divides the border between El Salvador and Honduras and many drowned attempting to cross it. Thousands of people came to Honduras seeking refuge and the UN set up refugee camps all along the border.

I traveled to Honduras as part of a fact-finding mission with a U.S. congressional staff on Salvadoran death squads, and the Salvadoran army was crossing the border with the Honduran Army's blessing, entering the refugee camp, abducting young male refugees, taking them back to El Salvador to be killed. I traveled to Colomoncagua situated quite a remote area, quite an inaccessible area in the mountains [about 20 kilometers from the Salvadoran border] with a five person delegation. When I arrived I first went to the village. A few minutes later, I was urgently called back because the death squads had entered the refugee camp. I rushed back and saw approximately 35 death squad members, some wearing military clothes, and all of them carrying M16s and wearing bandanas. They had tied the thumbs of 30 to 40 male refugees and started marching them out of the camp.

We, the members of the delegation and the relief workers, had only a few minutes to make up our minds. We had nothing to defend ourselves with. We decided to run behind them. Along with us came the mothers, wives and the children of these refugees. We ran along a dry riverbed for about half an hour. Some of us had cameras and we were screaming that we had evidence that we were going to present to the world. At one point we got close to them, and the death squad members turned around pointed their M16s, They were near enough for us to hear them [saying], "Esto hijos de puta ya nos estan controlando" ("These sons of bitches are going to catch us"). They pointed their guns at us and we yelled that they would have to kill us all. They talked among themselves. At that moment I thought we would be killed. A few seconds later, which seemed like hours, they turned around and let everyone go. I realized how a small act of courage can save lives. The mere fact of an American being present, or someone perceived to be an American could help save the lives of innocent people. That's why I believe in the importance of bearing witness, to become a voice for the voiceless.

Q: Was that the end of the episode?

Jagger: When I came back to Colomoncagua the press was saying I had been killed along with everyone else. We went back to the capital where a very strange incident occurred. When I first arrived in Honduras, I was a day later than the rest of the delegation. There was no room in their hotel and I had to go another one. After we returned to Tegucigalpa we first went to my friend's hotel and I waited in the car. At the reception desk members of the Honduran army were looking for me and since they didn't believe the hotel receptionist and they proceeded to look through the guest book. As soon as they left we made calls to the American and the British embassies to ask them to meet us when we appeared at the Honduran airport. There the Honduran army general said that they wanted to interrogate me and didn't want me to leave. So both the U.S. and U.K. representatives objected that they didn't understand why I was prevented from leaving, if five members on the delegation were allowed to go. The other

delegation member said they were not going to leave unless I would leave with them. The Americans stressed to them that it wouldn't be a good public relations move to hold me for questioning. They finally let me go.

When I arrived in Washington I was invited to testify before the Congressional Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs. At the hearing I spoke about the dangers of widening, of regionalizing the conflict. At the time there weren't many people talking about collaboration between the Honduran and Salvadoran armies and the role the Honduran army was playing in the contra war in Nicaragua. Many eyebrows were raised in Washington at my statement. However what I said turned out to be a sad fact in the tragic history of Central America. That began my fact-finding missions, from Honduras to Guatemala to remote rainforests in Brazil, to Bosnia, Kosovo, Zambia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and many others.

Q: Did you ever find yourself harassed in the U.S. by officials for your activities?

Jagger: No, I must say no.

Q: Any other notable events in Central America before I move on to Yugoslavia?

Jagger: There is an important incident. In the early 1990s, I wrote an op-ed for the New York Times about a logging concession Mrs. Chamorro's government was granting to a Taiwanese company. Her government was selling, I think, 280,000 kilometers of land. I discovered that Somoza had started it and Antonio Lacayo, Mrs. Chamorro's son-in law, and Pedro Juaquin Chamorro, director of la Prensa and a former member of La Contra became involved in this scheme. I was surprised that General Humberto Ortega, head of the army and an archenemy of Lacayo and Chamorro also became involved in this shady deal to sell out the territory of Nicaraguan Miskitos. It took me a while to get a hold of the contract. I was finally able to break the deal by launching a campaign to inform the international community and foreign donors concerned with environmental issues. I found the contract had it translated and analyzed by an American environmental law professor. I brought it to Congress and launched a campaign of faxes [and e-mails] to Mrs. Chamorro and General Ortega. I lobbied house members in the Appropriation Committee of the U.S. congress, to stop the aid that the U.S. government was going to give to Nicaragua. There is a clause that stipulates that aid from the U.S. to developing nations can only be given to nations which pursue sustainable development policies. That enabled members of Congress to threaten to stop the aid.

Q: The treatment of the Miskito was a great propaganda ploy for the U.S. against the Sandanistas at the time. Do you think there was mistreatment?

Jagger: The Miskitos have been mistreated by every government in Nicaragua and not just by the Sandinistas. Most governments in Latin America have failed to recognize the rights of indigenous people and their right to their own traditional territories. So although the issue was exploited and exaggerated, the Sandinistas engaged in serious abuses against the Miskito. But this mistreatment is not unusual. The Miskitos still are being discriminated today and the Atlantic coast where they live in one of the poorest areas of Nicaragua.

Q: Did you have more success in northeastern Brazil defending the Yanomammi tribe against the invasion of gold miners?

Jagger: We had only a measure of success in Brazil with our work to demarcate the ancestral lands of the Yanomammi people, but their struggle continues. I am concerned at present by a project in Peru called the Camisea Gas Project, which is being developed by five oil companies and has all the makings of a potential disaster. The American Development Bank (ADB), just approved a loan. After the devastation left behind by Chevron-Texaco in the Ecuadorian Amazon, the Camisea project is set to destroy invaluable rainforests in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon, which contains precious biodiversity, and it will affect the lives of remote and vulnerable indigenous people. This area in Peru has a reserve comparable to that of the Galapagos, and there are plans to build a plant 30 kilometers away to refine gas. Halliburton will be building the plant to liquefy the gas that will be exported to the U.S.

The U.S. abstained from voting at the International Development Bank because they knew that the political price for voting yes would have focused attention on the connection between George W. Bush's administration and Halliburton and Hunt Oil. Both companies are closely connected to George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Hunt Oil was one of the biggest financial supporters of George W. Bush, and Dick Cheney was the CEO of Halliburton. I've been told that Vice President Cheney was lobbying for the Camisea project to go through.

Q: How do you get past your celebrityhood in getting people to listen to you?

Jagger: Early on when I began my humanitarian work I understood that in order to gain credibility I needed patience, commitment and unwavering perseverance. And I needed to ignore the skeptics. I thought there would come a time when they couldn't deny my accomplishments. I find it disturbing that the media keeps referring to my marriage, since I got divorced in 1979. But the media never wants to let me forget. A man who gets divorced is not forever going to be talked about for it. There are very different standards that we have for women than we have for men.

Q: You make appearances on mass media stations. How are you treated and how do you handle the flak from the right?

Jagger: I will gladly do debates on television versus doing written interviews because live interviews are more difficult to distort. When I do political debates I find it challenging but interesting. It doesn't matter to me if my opponents have totally different views, I can deal with it. What I find hard to deal with are journalists that misrepresent or distort my words.

Q: Are there any differences in how you are treated by interviewers? Wolf Blitzer, for example, versus Bill O'Reilly?

Jagger: I've enjoyed doing Wolf Blitzer's program, and I even enjoyed having a heated debate with Bill O'Reilly. I will do it any time. I must tell you that just as I don't believe in lobbying only progressives and liberal members of Congress, I don't believe in doing interviews only

with those who share my views. I want to reach a wider audience.

Q: How did you get involved in the new Balkan wars and what did you experience?

Jagger: I first arrived in Bosnia in 1993, to document the mass rape of women in the former Yugoslavia. I had been asked to testify before the Helsinki Commission in the U.S. Congress. During my visit to Bosnia and Croatia I traveled with members of UN personnel and I listened to hundreds of shocking testimonies of women who were used as [spoils] of war. I visited refugee camps in both countries.

I learned about the horrific conditions people in Srebrenica were living under. That year a UN Security Council resolution had declared the enclave a "safe area," guaranteeing protection, and demanding that all military or paramilitary units withdraw from the demilitarized zone or surrender their arms. In February 1995, Srebenica was placed under the care of a Dutch battalion operating under the UN. Instead of a "safe area", the people in Srebrenica lived under relentless shelling, it became a nightmare zone teeming with refugees, many living on the street. For two years, the Serbs blocked most United Nations convoys to Srebrenica, cutting off food, medical supplies and clothing. They even confiscated cooking salt from United Nations convoys, replacing it with industrial salt to poison the townspeople.

In July 1995, Srebrenica was overrun by Bosnian Serb troops. Eight thousand civilians, literally the entire male population, were systematically massacred in cold blood in four days, delivered to their executioners by the international community. It was the worst massacre on European soil since the Third Reich. The title "safe area" became an obscenity. It was a legitimized concentration camp. The international community was aware that the Serbs were preparing the extermination of Srebrenica. There was only one voice who refused to be an accomplice to the cover-up: Thaddeus Mazowiecki, former prime minister of Poland, who was the United Nations envoy for human rights.

General Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic have been indicted but never been arrested. Is it because they know too much about the cover-up of the international community and the UN? There were consistent lies, duplicity, cowardice, intrigue, appeasement and deals like General [Bernard] Javier's deal at Zvornik. The international community wants to forget Srebrenica and is reluctant to apprehend the war criminals. It knows that to bring to trial those responsible for the massacres will highlight its own liabilities.

Governments are mandated by international law to protect people from genocide. The Clinton administration always insisted they were unaware that tens of thousands were massacre in cold blood. But only a few days after the fall of Srebrenica the U.S. reportedly presented to the Security Council satellite photographs of men kneeling on the soccer fields before they were killed, and of mass graves where they were buried. Human rights organizations have requested those photographs under the Freedom of Information Act and the U.S. Government refused to hand the photographs over. One of the shocking aspects of the Srebrenica genocide is that it occurred against a background of warnings and intelligence updates.

Q: Have any governments behaved any better?

Jagger: The only government that has done a thorough investigation, and admitted wrongdoing, has been the Dutch. A minister had to resign recently because of the shameful role the Dutch played in the fall of Srebenica. The French have continued to try to cover up. An investigation took place in the National Assembly to find out whether General Bernard Janvier, commander of UNPROFOR troops in Srebenica, had struck a deal with Bosnian Serb General Mladic that in exchange for release of hostages, 450 French soldiers had been taken hostage, and a promise not to shoot at UN troops that he would not call for air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs? A promise which is believed to have given the green light for the Bosnian Serbs to go ahead in Srebenica.

Q: What did you do about it?

Jagger: For many years I lobbied UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and various UN undersecretaries to establish a commission of inquiry to investigate Srebrenica and determine whether its personnel should be held accountable for crimes against humanity. When that failed, I began to urge members of the General Assembly to pass a resolution that the secretary general establish a commission of inquiry. I went to the General Assembly because I knew it would never be approved in the Security Council since most of the members were involved in the cover up. When a number of states agreed to support the effort, I was told that Bosnia needed to make the official request. I went to see the Bosnian ambassador to ask if he was prepared to make the request. He said, “It will cost me my job, it may ruin my career, but I would do it.” He did it and to my great surprise in November 1998, the resolution passed, and today he is in jail in the U.S.

Once the resolution was approved, Kofi Annan had two options: one, to call for an independent commission of inquiry by a panel of independent experts or, two, to call for a UN internal commission of inquiry. He did the second. He appointed two people to prepare the report. When the report was ready to be published I got a call from one of the two people involved. He told me that the UN wanted to scratch the report or do a whitewash. In the end all the names were taken out from the report. The irony is that Kofi Annan took credit for the report, although, for years he was adamant against calling for an investigation or establishing a commission of inquiry. When the report was published he gave the impression that the report was done under his initiative because of his commitment to reform the UN. Furthermore, he gave the appearance that the UN was prepared to admit mistakes when what he did was to eliminate names from the report in order to make those guilty of collaboration with the culprits immune from prosecution. I believe the people in Srebrenica need to know and have the right to know what happened and who the culprits are, and why the international community failed them, allowing this terrible genocide to happen. We need to know in order to prevent it from happening ever again.

Q: So did you find yourself on the side of the NATO bombing in 1995 and again in 1999?

Jagger: I was against bombing Serbia. I called for the use of ground troops. I must add to that that if the international community had responded to earlier signs that genocidal activities were underway in Bosnia and later Kosovo there wouldn't have been the need for military intervention.

What are we human rights campaigners supposed to do in the face of genocide? The international community simply procrastinated, pretended it was not happening, turned their backs and closed their eyes in the face of the atrocities. There was a big debate among human rights organizations, who until then believed their role was to monitor human rights violations. The question was whether they should continue to monitor atrocities and count the bodies or should they call for intervention? I felt that one simply cannot watch genocide unfold without calling for intervention. But I am against indiscriminate bombing, the bombing of Serbia was wrong; the killing of innocent people is always wrong.

Q: In Iraq in January, you were in the delicate position of opposing an invasion of Iraq while at the same time trying not to provide yourself as a prop for the Saddam Hussein regime. That was a precarious tightrope walk. How did you feel while doing it?

Jagger: I felt it was important for those who opposed the war not to accept the status quo. I believed we needed to put pressure on Saddam Hussein. I urged the Iraqi government to pass a law allowing political pluralism. I called for freedom of expression and dissent, for a proactive approach with regards to weapons inspection and for allowing opposition factions like the Kurds, Shias and others to participate in new UN supervised parliamentary elections. I made that clear in meetings I held with Iraqi officials, such as Foreign Minister [Nagi Sabri], Member of the Regional Command Council [Hoda Ammash], Speaker of the House [Saadoon Hammadi and Minister of Health Omeid M. Mebarak]. I brought a request from Amnesty International to allow human rights monitors inside Iraq. I said, "I am here to oppose the war. However, I am here to urge you to start a process of democratization. Your government needs to engage in significant changes if you want to avoid the war." I was very conscious from the moment I landed that I was facing the danger of being used by the Iraqi government. I informed them that I was not going to talk to the Iraqi media and would do no interviews. I urged them not to try to use me as a propaganda tool.

Q: It's very tricky, isn't it?

Jagger: Definitely. I am always conscious of that. During the Contra war in Nicaragua I found myself in a very difficult position. On one hand, I publicly opposed the Contra war and, on the other, I wanted the Sandinistas to know that I opposed their crackdown on freedom of the press and on freedom of expression. I walked a very difficult and fine line. In Nicaragua the poor campesinos found themselves caught between both sides. I understood that many joined the Contras because they were upset by mistaken policies of the Sandinistas. You had innocent people on both sides who were used as tools in the war.

I went back to Nicaragua and spoke on behalf of Contras for redistribution of land and I spoke

for them when the United States tried to force them out of the U.S. after they had incited them to fight against the Sandinistas. When they were of no use anymore the U.S. government wanted to repatriate them to Nicaragua.

Q: Weren't the Contras just a bit bewildered to have you as their advocate?

Jagger: Maybe some did but others accepted me. I have always been willing to admit when I made a mistake. I made a mistake in my understanding of the composition of the Contras, not on my opposition to the Contra war. I went back to Nicaragua to film a documentary just after the Sandinista defeat in the elections against Violet Chamorro, during the repatriation and disarmament of the Contras. I came to the sad realization that many Nicaraguans who died in the war on both sides, particularly among the campesinos, had been tools of either the U.S. and Contra leaders, or leaders of the Sandinista government. I am still profoundly troubled by the war in Nicaragua. The United States, a superpower, launched a covert war against another nation in violation of international law, a war that was wrong and immoral.

Q: Bush rampaged right into Iraq despite massive international opposition and is now caught in a very dirty war.

Jagger: Why was this war so wrong? The war in Iraq was not about weapons of mass destruction, not about non-compliance with weapons inspectors, not about the connection between Saddam Hussein and September 11, and certainly not about the liberation of the Iraqi people. It was about oil and world dominance. George W. Bush and Tony Blair had to convince the world that Saddam Hussein represented an imminent threat. That is why Tony Blair lied when he claimed in last September's dossier that Iraq could launch a chemical or biological attack within 45 minutes. And George W. Bush lied when he mentioned the Iraq-Niger uranium connection. What he failed to say is that the British were relying on their intelligence white paper based on the same false information that Joseph Wilson [former ambassador to Niger] had already refuted. The IAEA's Mohamed El Baradei told the UN Security Council that the allegations were unfounded. Despite this, Bush and his administration claim they had proof that Saddam Hussein was reconstituting his weapons program when clearly they did not.

Since by now it is evident there were no WMD, George W. Bush and Tony Blair are desperately trying to find new arguments for going to war in Iraq. I was surprised to read in an interview of Paul Wolfowitz where he said that the decision to highlight weapons of mass destruction as the main reason for invading Iraq was only a "bureaucratic" choice. For George W. Bush to invoke human rights as a justification for war is cynical, opportunistic and laughable. When he appeared shocked by crimes by Saddam Hussein against the Kurds and Iranians, he failed to tell us that when those crimes were committed during the '80s, the U.S. and the U.K. supported Saddam Hussein and were selling the weapons that gave him the ability to annihilate them. There is that famous photograph of Rumsfeld shaking hands with Saddam Hussein in [1983].

Bush and Blair combined their efforts to deceive both nations, both peoples in a carefully

coordinated manner, more so than anyone is willing to point out in the media. Did Tony Blair release his famous dossier to support George W. Bush when he was going through a thorny patch? The media in the U.S. let Bush and his administration get away with lies and deceptions.

The bottom line is that the decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein was clearly defined in the documents published in 1997 by a small clique of neoconservatives, members of a think tank, the Project for a New American Century. The members of this cabal are now in the inner circles in the Bush administration [Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle, Paul Wolfowitz, Feith, I, Lewis Libby, Elliot Abrams, Jeb Bush and many others]. The project was concerned with world dominance and particularly with getting hold of Middle East oil. For someone born in Nicaragua who has seen the U.S. government at work overthrowing governments in Latin America, now I see a similar pattern of deceptions used by George W. Bush to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Bush invoked the threat to national security and WMD. The only difference between now and then is that now the threat is terrorism instead of communism. The media continues to accept some of these arguments [and the concept of pre-emptive strikes appears to have become an acceptable argument to attack another state].

Q: How do you see the Iraqi situation playing out?

Jagger: In order to try to salvage this experiment George W. Bush will have to come to the UN and admit that he was wrong.

Q: Now that would be a sight.

Jagger: There is a need for some admission of wrongdoing. What I cannot understand is why George W. Bush and his administration are not being more pragmatic in their approach to what's happening in Iraq. It's not a question of whether he likes or dislikes the UN or whether the UN is a perfect institution. His political future is at stake unless he's prepared to admit that he was wrong in going to war against Iraq in violation of international law and the UN Charter. The only hope we have for the experiment in Iraq to succeed is for the UN to be in charge of nation-building.

Q: Do you ever feel that you perhaps have dispersed your energies among so many causes, AIDS, the death penalty, and so on?

Jagger: The work that I do is all related to issues of social and economic justice. It might not seem so to an outsider but they are all intricately connected. It's all to do with issues of justice: the debate between developed nations and developing world, the oppressed and the oppressors, crimes committed by Chevron-Texaco against indigenous populations in the Ecuadorian Amazon, or speaking about AIDS, the massacre in Srebrenica, the war in Iraq, inequalities of resources, or the death penalty. I am always talking about justice.

1. According to Oxfam, "There was clear evidence that sanctions had brought Iraq to the brink of a humanitarian disaster. . . . Water and sanitation system was on the verge of collapse, the system they were using depended on an electric supply that

was crippled during the 1991 air strikes." In 1999 UNICEF reported child mortality rates had dramatically increased for children under five reaching 131 deaths per 1000.

2. In his letter of resignation shortly after the massacre, Mr. Mazowiecki wrote: "One cannot speak about the protection of human rights with credibility when one is confronted with the lack of consistency and courage displayed by the international community and its leaders. The very stability of international order and the principle of civilization are at stake over the question of Bosnia. Crimes have been committed with swiftness and brutality and, by contrast, the response of the international community has been slow and ineffectual."
3. See Samantha Powers, A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide (London: Flamingo, 2003), pp. 396-398.
4. "Controlling Iraq is about oil as power, rather than oil as fuel," says Michael Klare, professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College and author of Resource Wars.
5. "That information was erroneous, and they knew about it well ahead of both the publication of the British white paper and the president's State of the Union address," Wilson said on "Meet the Press."
6. Mohamed El Baradei, told the UN Security Council: "Based on thorough analysis, the IAEA has concluded, with the concurrence of outside experts, that these documents, which formed the basis for the reports of recent uranium transactions between Iraq and Niger, are in fact not authentic. We have therefore concluded that these specific allegations are unfounded."

Three Poems By Huu Thinh

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

by Huu Thinh Translated from the Vietnamese by George Evans and Nguyen Qui Duc

In Phan Thiet

He owns nothing, not even a blade of grass Though the hills are wide, not even a small plot of earth, Yet my brother belongs to the land and sky of Phan Thiet.

It was here he first saw the sea, Through an opening in a bunker After days of climbing' The ocean immense, the bunker so narrow A sand shower whitened his shoulders at the slightest motion.

The stench of gunpowder and sweat in that place, The uncontrollable beating of his heart, The intense moist wind, The sea rocking as anxiously as a ship about to leave.

Stars shining in the deep night Cut trails towards the water, The soldiers groping through hills by their light that December, My brother among them, Ocean rushing forward, embracing all, And love for the sea made them careless- He died in bombs raining down Only inches from the water.

Here you are elder brother, though I'd been looking Elsewhere, hope motivating me to scale the slopes in Tan Canh, Sa Thay, Dac Pet, Dac To.

I've had the fevers you had, Soaked in the same jungle rain you soaked in, But never imagined an afternoon in Phan Thiet When I would stand crying alone behind a car.

The jungle is still there, the battle ground still there. A few more steps to reach Highway One, Just a few more, And yet Nothing can change what is or what happened. The sea is the same deep blue as when you fell.

I don't know the name of that hill, But I know you are still standing there Unaware the alert has long ended, Unaware of news from home, or of your brother's face.

Not lying in a cemetery, You live with the hill, turning green with its grass, The blades of it have become our family's joss sticks, And this hill is also our mother's child.

I've had to bear all other family concerns.

Car horns blare as night deepens in Phan Thiet. Lights of the city show the way for a fisherman. You do not sleep, and the fisherman does not sleep- You both have nightly conversations with the sea.

In that way, Phan Thiet owns my brother.

Asking

I ask the earth: How does earth live with earth? -We honor each other.

I ask water: How does water live with water? -We fill each other up.

I ask the grass: How does grass live with grass? -We weave into one another creating horizons.

I ask man: How does man live with man?

I ask man: How does man live with man?

I ask man: How does man live with man?

The Cuoc Birds Cry

The clouds float off, We stay behind, The cuoc birds cry by the river docks.

They cry because the traps are dangerous. Weeds float on the water. I silently call out the names Of tables, chairs, old clothing, And suddenly my youth returns, Looking at me in confusion, Kites decorated like tufts of hair on a child's head More joyful than the source of joy. Rice crisps ballooning in the market Cover some of the sadness. I sit and call out the names of cards from the tam cuc game: Chariots, artillery, horses on distant roads. Only the cries of the cuoc birds remain.

Cuoc birds have been crying since before they were named. My father mixed earth to pave the road. From clay He sculpted the kitchen god, a bowl. The wine drinkers left one by one. My father held up the bowl As if holding a part of his life Dried into clay.

The cuoc birds cry in the far away fields. Cuoc birds have cried since the day bamboo leaves were too young to be woven into mats. People settled on the wet soil, Began like brown roots, Created everything to feed each other, Hoping their children would one day look up with pride. In the dark they relied on lamps, Storm lights fueled by peanut oil, Lights often stolen by the wind.

The cuoc birds cry in the far away fields.

They've cried since the day you learned to bow to your mother and father. Following the red silk thread, You came to me in marriage. Love with its many broken strands and retied knots. We asked the jungle for a small bed, Clay for a small tea pot. Just one life, but so much struggle. You gripped the bed, clenched the mat waiting for me. You avoided the faces of handsome men And waited Hoping only that I would return. A torn shirt still smelled good. A small cupboard with a few pairs of chopsticks. I thought that after the war there would be nothing but happiness, We had waited for each other diligently. But it's not true, my love, the

cuoc birds cry otherwise.

* * *

Something makes the cuoc birds cry as though screaming. I lost two brothers, Both very young. This morning two neighbors came over. Each time after a funeral. Everyone's soul is shriveled, Everyone's heart mournful. I thought there were no bad people left. I thought no amount of kindness for one another would be enough. But it's not true, Heaven, the cuoc birds cry otherwise.

The well laments that so many have wavering feet. The garden laments: there are snails looking up at the sky, After flower season the butterflies go away. I sit, said as a torn lotus leaf.

What tortured cries from the cuoc birds at noon.

Sitting, I sadly count my fingers Back and forth, all ten, Back and forth until late afternoon.

Death pushes us to one side. False fame pushes us to one side. We must cross many oceans to see a smile.

But soon as we see a smile, We hear the cuoc birds again.

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Fiction: Confessions Of An Irish Werewolf

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

As I walked toward my lodging at a respectable widow's house near the Marino, my thoughts turned to teeth. I lost two molars when visiting the Hyde Park Exhibition in 1851. I blame the Sudan giant, sent by the Khedive of Egypt to decorate his pavilion. Such strong bones: camel meat, I expect. I left a great deal of his ebony carcass in the remaining market gardens of St. Marylebone. Caused a deuce of a scandal. Anyone would think he was a Knight of the Garter instead of the younger son of a prosperous slave trader. Of course, they were all against slavery. The British government, the Egyptians, the French and the Sudanese, but everyone knows how to look away when a financial interest requests a little accommodation: a blind eye or a job for a brother-in-law. And theoreticians like Malthus or Adam Smith have a lot to answer for. While piously regretting the agony, they reckoned our Irish Famine a great social success. It reduced the population by half and improved the acreage available for pasture and ranching.

I arrived at my lodgings to be greeted warmly by Mrs. Devereux, who set about preparing a meal of codlings and ragout. This excellent woman, originally from Wexford, I believe, and a true Munster lady, was nevertheless descended from the stray fruit of the Richard Devereux who offered up his head in the Tower of London to Tudor political scheming. An ignoble death, yes, but his generous seed thrives in Ireland where he had served his Queen a little unwisely.

After the meal, before a fire of tree trimmings, I set about examining my clues to the identity and fate of my young quarry who had so successfully eluded me on Ireland's Eye. I admired her ingenuity, which made me long to meet her. I felt we might have a lot in common. Yet, somehow I was perfectly able to reconcile this feeling with the knowledge that I felt compelled to eat her; or, at least, her more succulent parts. There is always a rejected residue, as in Nature. A lion eats part of its prey, scavenging animals snarl over most of the remainder, and there is always a little left for the vultures. In Ireland there were always scavengers. The wolves driven into the open by the rape of the Munster forests, the foxes, the pine martens, the crows and the eagles. And after them the insects, wasps and the demon of corruption itself, a living and baleful entity.

Ah, but this is a scatological digression. I laid out my clues on a collapsible bezique table, such as were quite popular a hundred years ago and are still found lying around. Perhaps even used for bezique or patience. I dipped a phosphorous Lucifer stick down into the bottle, which still contained 1/10 fluid oz. of liquid, and touched it to the back of my hand. It made a dark brown-purple spot, which I enlarged to a short stroke. When dry it remained insoluble under tap water in the scullery but came away readily with powdered pumice from my washstand. I resolved to leave it with an intelligent apothecary on the North Strand to learn more.

The handkerchief was incomplete, but by laying it on a sheet of foolscap I could deduce that it was originally nine inches square. I examined the lace crochet. Beyond being pretty in a girlish way, it seemed neutral of identity. As a nervous relief I laid a piece of fine paper on the needlework and rubbed it with a fingertip smeared with lamp soot. This was an old trick, employed in divination or to seek a different perspective of the same object.

I did it idly, almost out of habit, not hoping for any enlightenment. Almost immediately I could pick out the oddly-formed letters MACN on a wider cartouche segment of the lace on the leg of the drawers. This was facing the front of the garment, though it was hard to tell. A similar lacey pattern that would have hung over the back of the knee of the wearer seemed to show the letters CON . . . Y. A degree of speculation was involved, since the art of the crochet hook or, perhaps, the skill of the crocheteuse, did not lend itself to clear calligraphy. The purpose of the lace, I am told, is twofold. To reassure the wearer as to her status, her social and general acceptability, or to titivate her limbs when undressing before a lover or a young husband. Country maidens wore none at all, nor do most serving girls, as the reader has probably noticed. In these classes, a shift or a petticoat is usually found sufficient. This tells us something about the wearer of this half garment.

She was not a young lady born in that class, or she would not have traveled by horse tram and certainly not alone. Not a milkmaid or a servant girl, so what? A shopkeeper’s daughter or the favorite daughter of a senior clerk in a city counting house. Speculation is so fascinating, but something more solid is needed. For people like me, and we are very rare beings, the hunt is obsessive and cannot be set aside or evaded. We are chosen by some destiny as hunters and all our blood and flesh is directed to that end, whatever moral doubts or aesthetic reservations which centuries of experience and ever-changing cultures may have insulated our bestial core.

So I rang for my landlady, an intelligent woman with an extensive knowledge of local events and important trivialities.

“Is there a good apothecary in the neighborhood, Mrs. Devereux?”

“There is indeed, Mr. Fitzlupus, just down the road. A fine Medical Hall with the usual three jars of colored liquid in the window and the two pyramids of rhubarb and garlic pills.”

“Garlic pills?”

“Yes, Mr. Fitzlupus. His own brand. Young Mr. Stoker next door is studying medicine and swears by them. So do I. For the fever, stones or even the gout. Economic too. Look at the cost of getting the steam tram to Lucan Spa and drinking that awful water at tuppence a glass.”

“Quite so, Mrs. Devereux.”

“And sitting in the water in a wet shift, pardon my mentioning it, sir.”

“Of course, of course. We are both, I think adults. I think I will visit your apothecary.”

“Straight down the road past Fairview Corner, you can’t miss it.”

A few minutes later I pushed the door of the Medical Hall and discovered Mr. Jeremy Owens, an amiable and observant Welshman, in the act of casting pills from a boxwood mold. He was about forty, with slightly wavy brown hair, well coiffeured, and a moustache trimmed to a point where it grew down the sides of his mouth. He was dressed in striped trousers, linen shirt and green waistcoat, rather like a surgeon in an amputation theater. I produced my small bottle from the island and asked if he could analyze its remnants. He uncorked it and smelled with deep sniffs. “Well, let us see now,” he announced.

He put his finger on the opening, inverted the bottle and tipped his tongue to the dark spot on his finger. He did this a few times, then poured some water from a flask into a drinking glass and cleansed his mouth. He repeated the process before drawing a few drops onto a sheet of white glazed paper. He examined it by eye before drying it over the fantail of a gas burner. Scratching the dried stain with a scalpel, he pursed his lips and said: “As I thought. A solution of potassium permanganate in walnut juice.”

“Walnut juice. Good heavens.”

“A very intense stain for skin, wood or anything, really. The potassium permanganate is also a purplish stain when its crystals are dissolved in water. It is for writing on a reluctantly permeable surface: not paper. Polished wood, smooth stone, shell, even human skin.”

He laughed dismissively.

“I see! Thank you very much. Instead of enlightening me you have added to my perplexity. But I am grateful. Pray what is your fee?”

“Don’t bother about that. Need any garlic pills? You look a bit pale to me.”

Now I know, and many others know, the popular belief that garlic is a bane to the Deathless. Well, we werewolves are the only deathless ones. All others are mere hobgoblins, pisogues and mindless thoolermerauns without corporal reality. All the garlic in the world would not trouble their insubstantial reality nor could it cure the belief in them by the ignorant. Down the years I have banqueted on their bodies: usually young ones. Either sex will do, though my tastes incline me to young women. My three sisters near Ballymore Eustace prefer young men, especially poets and musicians. Goodness knows they eat infrequently but their cave is well known. The Earl of Kildare and the Duke of Ormonde both rode to see them, but kept out of sight, far from the mouth of the cave.

I suspect the fact that the were-girls were naked as well as transcendentally beautiful has something to do with it. Typical of humans. Their lives are so brief that scattering or collecting their seed is an urgent need. My own sexual urge is enormous, coming up to my killing season, but I suspect that a natural philosopher with his brass microscope would find my sperm count nonexistent. In my pre-menopausal phase I suspect that I infect with infertility. But I am no

expert in these matters.

However, my business with the apothecary was done. I bought five boxes of pills, resolving to throw them in the horribly polluted River Tolka nearby. As I left I remarked amiably, “I hope you enjoy your work with pills and powder cachets.”

He shook his head. “I have a very sad duty, assisting Dr. McEvoy in a post-mortem examination of a young woman whose body was recovered from the estuary yesterday. She must have been digging for sand eels because, although she was dressed in a two-piece suit, her feet were bare and her stockings were in her pocket.”

“Would you describe her as a boule de suif?”

“Plump,” he smiled. “Pleasantly plump, anyway.”

I felt excited. “Could I come with you? I am a licensed surgeon.”

I hoped he wouldn’t ask me when and where I was awarded this distinction. The answer, “In the wars of the Spanish Succession,” sounded a long time ago, even though it only feels a few years to me. Anyway, I never served under John Churchill and not very much with Dillon’s regiment in Flanders. Ah, the happy days before the Hanoverians crossed the sea to flaunt their weighty mistresses in London. Their chair carriers earned their pennies the hard way.

But the apothecary, who was a Huguenot or a Moravian, appeared prepared to take me at my word. I tend to speak with gentle friendly authority.

“Dr. McEvoy’s experience in forensic matters is not extensive. I am sure he would be delighted by your kind offer. Certainly he relies on me to detect poisons or certain drugs. I rely mainly on smell, which is usually unpleasant when removed from the stomach of a corpse.”

“Are you sure that will be acceptable? How will I know? Should I bring my surgical case?”

“Don’t concern yourself. I will send a messenger with a note and a note of confirmation to you afterwards, if you will furnish your name and address.” The apothecary twisted his mouth and raised his eyebrows when I gave my name. “Mr. Fitzlupus. Unusual name, but of good Hiberno-Norman stock, I am sure. Well, sir, you shall hear from me.”

The same evening, after lamplight, the messenger boy arrived with a note indicating a time and place for the post-mortem, at half past eight in the temporary morgue in Store Street just beyond, but safely so, the brothel district, so beloved of callow college students and rutting ranks of the British army. It often seemed that alcoholic drink and rowdy company were as important as willing flesh, though both were usually in full supply.

The following morning I hailed the first car passing: a jaunting or high car, speedy dangerous vehicles with high strapped seats, attainable by steel stirrups and perched above very high

wheels. The driver, or “jarvey,” faces forward at the same height as the imperiled passengers, flicking his whip and coaxing the nag into a sportive gallop. We were in Store Street in a few minutes, much quicker than by cab, a double fare hansom or a more commodious growler.

The dark door was open but the flagged passages and adjoining rooms were bare, cold and empty. I waited. A woman appeared. She stared at me with apparent hostility while removing her shawl and bonnet. “Are you Surgeon Fitzlupus?” she admonished me severely.

“Yes, ma’am. I am waiting for the others. They are late. Is this the right place?”

“They’ll be along, don’t worry, sir. The chemist usually picks up Dr. McEvoy from the pub where he has breakfast. Meat pie and tay and a few brandies. Can’t start the day without it all.”

Even as she spoke I heard voices and discerned the apothecary and a large fleshy-faced man with a Monaghan accent whom I took to be McEvoy. I distrusted him instantly, as much as I doubted the surroundings. The apothecary smiled and attempted an introduction, which McEvoy almost ignored.

“Where’s the specimen?” he practically bawled. “I haven’t got all morning.”

“You have some visits in Mountjoy Square and Belvedere,” said his assistant, his soft voice concealing a possible irony. I discovered that he answered to the name of Jeremy.

Dr. McEvoy was impatient. Furthermore, he did not remove his jacket or don an apron. “Where’s the cadaver?” he demanded angrily. “Why isn’t everything ready? I am a busy man.”

The Dublin-bred Sarah Gump took things easily. “It’ll all be ready in a minute, sir. In a couple of ticks.”

McEvoy grunted while the nurse, if such she was, wheeled in a three-wheeled flat trolley on which the body of a young woman was lying, not very symmetrically, one arm hanging down the side.

“Dammit, woman,” McEvoy roared. “Do you call this ready? What do you call all this?” He fingered the hem of her skirt.

“Give us a chance, sir, the polis men only brung her down here last night.”

“Plenty of time. Well, get her ready.”

The doctor’s brain was becoming heated. Jeremy had been rummaging in his bag and produced a pair of tailor’s shears, about to cut away the crumpled clothing from the body.

“God forgive you,” the nurse stopped him with indignation. “How do you think I can live on a half crown fee?” She undid the waistband of the dead girl’s skirt and pulled it down over the

feet, folded it and put it on a bench. She struggled with the bodice or jackets but got it off with Jeremy's help. It joined the skirt, neatly folded on the bench. A petticoat and a sort of shift proved more difficult, due to the drawstrings and sodden knots. The dragon permitted Jeremy to cut these. They could easily be replaced. The girl was wearing no drawers, but one garment remained: a tailored band of brocade covering the rib cage and held by three inches of lacing, slightly loose or shelved on top to support the breasts and hold them to a degree of uplift decreed by fashion.

By this time, almost ten minutes later, McEvoy was incandescent and seemed about to strike the woman, but Jeremy, quietly efficient, snipped the laces that joined the girdle. The two sides popped apart and the woman manage to drag the garment from under the corpse. This meant that the body was lying slightly to one side, bent, one breast hanging to one side and the other unsupported and flattened by its own weight on her ribs.

Jeremy nodded and together we succeeded in laying the poor girl out on her back, crudely brushing back her hair on to the bare boards of the kitchen table and closing her eyes. Rigor mortis was ebbing. I carried out these duties dumbstruck and with a strange mixture of feelings. This poor relic was the girl in the horse tram and Ireland's Eye. I know that people say the world is small, but this made it seem like an atomic globule, such as the natural scientists postulate.

Together Jeremy and myself had laid the poor girl out and were waiting for Dr. McEvoy's directions as to where to mark her body for the incisions. To our surprise, instead of indicating anything, or indeed examining the front of the body in any detail whatever, while we were struggling with the girl he had been striding up and down the dismal room, testing the tap on the trough and pouring noggins of brandy into the cup on his pocket flask.

As we awaited his instructions he yelled impatiently, "When the devil are you going to prepare her fully?"

"What do you require, sir?" Jeremy spoke quietly.

"She isn't shaved, dammit. Can't see much with all that."

Both of us stared in puzzlement. Two pockets of hair in the armpits and a firm growth in her groin. Surely these would not form the first points of inquiry. As we stood cogitating McEvoy roared, "Her head, dammit. Get her scalp clear. How the hell do you expect me to see through all that hair?"

After a couple of seconds we understood that he needed her head shaved. But why? The apparent cause of death was due to drowning, although injury or even death could have occurred before she entered the water. Did he expect head injuries? We encountered no major extrusion of flesh when combing her hair. Combing her hair? McEvoy must have thought we were mad. However, Jeremy set to work with his shears while I tried to follow with a freshly stropped scalpel. For some reason I hated the task, as did Jeremy. The girl had been my quarry.

My need would have done her the ultimate harm, but this poor thing, spread on a kitchen table, aroused pity. The shaving of her head was the final humiliation.

With some difficulty, Jeremy, the woman and myself managed to turn her face downward to crop and shave the top and back of her head. It made her look more impersonal, remote, sexless. Beyond humiliation.

Before turning her onto her back again I noticed a possible wound in the middle of her back and some broken brownish marks on her left buttock. The shaving was so difficult with the scalpel that I did not have time to examine either mark in detail. Dr. McEvoy would do so and put them in his report. He was not the kind of man worth advising on technical, or indeed I suspect, any matters.

What followed was astonishing. Peering closely at the slopes of her crown, above her forehead, he went to his bag and produced a razor, a jar of soft soap solution and an ordinary round hog fitch. After lathering accessible areas of the patchy stubbly cranium, he shaved it, lovingly. Then with a fine sable brush dipped in a black pigmented suspension from another sealed pickle jar he marked off areas of bare scalp. When he had finished impatiently, we both knew his next need. Together we turned the poor girl over on her face again.

The doctor went at it like a man driven by a feral force, which he probably was, and fine-shaved and marked out irregular areas on the back portion of her head. Then he transferred all this, with some accuracy, to several sheets of paper printed with head profiles. Dr. McEvoy was a phrenologist! We waited in the cold dark room while this mad discipline was recorded.

We were still shivering when he abruptly ceased and began to pack his bag. Neither Jeremy nor I could believe it. “But Doctor, the wound on her back, the marks on her posterior. Surely . . .” McEvoy started to pull on his coat, then fumbled in his pocket for a coin to give the woman orderly, if that is what she was.

“No need to go further,” he snapped. “I have all the information that I can expect. A member of the female criminal class. An abortionist, a poisoner, a prostitute. It’s not important.”

“But how did she die? You have to write the report for the coroner.”

“Pooh, that’s easy. Drowning, suicide, or misadventure. That’s for the police to decide.”

“But the marks on her body?”

“The matter is closed. One criminal less; I have the evidence from her own cranium. You can’t have better evidence that that. You might call it cranial confession.” With that, he left abruptly and after his footsteps pounded down the flagged corridor we heard him whistle for his conveyance.

Even the dour woman was surprised. She must have been used to many a grisly performance

on the same kitchen table. But I had to find out more.

Jeremy held the colza oil lamp over the dorsal area and I examined and probed. Something like a sharp knife had pierced the flesh between the ribs, probably punctured a lung. That's all I could extrapolate from a brief and, I might say, highly illegal probe. My surgical apprenticeship dated back to the wars against the Sun King, under Marlborough and Queen Anne, when science had just begun. We have come a long way since then. Nowadays people take beef tea for consumption, fish extract for brain fever and carbolic acid for wound infection and gangrene. My medical knowledge is somewhat out of date. In any case I might entangle poor Jeremy. People are always suspicious of apothecaries. A customer buys a noggin of laudanum and takes 100 drops in a bottle of Bual to kill the sharp taste. He or she or someone in the household dies, and who is blamed? The apothecary who was lulled into charity by wrenching stories of a toothache or petit mal.

The vulnerability of both Jeremy and myself became apparent very shortly. After the doctor's exit, the two of us had examined the stab wound in the girl's back and thought it was a possible cause of death. We had also examined the left cheek of her buttocks carefully, using the oil lamp held by hand and a magnifying or quizzing glass: a useful device, in a pinchbeck cover that I used to carry on my watch chain.

Together we made out the following stray letters, part of a longer inscription in some sort of brown ink, possibly done with a reed and pith pen, but this is pure guesswork. Both Jeremy and I thought of the bottle of inky substance which had been identified by Jeremy by his singular analytical process the previous day. My passing strange chemistry affords me a stunningly sharp discerning vision and I read out the words to Jeremy, who wrote them down as best he could. When we came to examine them we found: "— as he sun — to God — he sets — look — turned —ose."

The singular canvas chosen by the graphologist (for it was certainly not written by the girl) was scarcely large enough to contain the message, if such it was. The last barely decipherable syllables were on the top of her thigh, just under the gluteal fold. The lettering had been blurred by the abrasion of clothing, perhaps even more than if she had worn her drawers. It had also been diminished by action of sea or brackish water and the handling of the body on recovery, of which we know nothing.

I called on the woman to restore the clothing, since we could hardly leave the body bald and naked on the table. To my surpass and apprehension she replied aggressively, "They're gone. Me daughter took them through the yard."

"But this is theft," cried Jeremy.

"Sorry a bit of it. They're no more than me rights."

"This body was not a pauper," I protested. "By now the police may well have found her relations."

“It’s up to them, then. The clothes will be half laundered by now, and ironed and sold by tomorrow morning.”

“Only with paupers,” I explained. “And it is not a right, merely an unofficial concession.” I had in fact no idea, but thought this possible.

“Well, it’s too late now,” the stolid harpy complained. Then, though aggressively ignorant, she showed some discretion. “There’s this book that was in her skirt pocket. No money, though.”

I was pretty sure there was some sum of convenience, without which no young lady would venture far from home. The price of a cab or a pot of tea, at least.

“You and the chemist, you were doing things to her that Dr. McEvoy didn’t order. You had no right. I’ll tell him.”

This was awkward. What we had done was innocent, even proper. We knew the doctor to be so obsessed with phrenological nonsense that he gravely neglected his duties. Perhaps he always did. The legal administration was heavy on theory but excessively light on practice. Nonetheless, Jeremy as an apothecary and I as a furtive immortal could not afford too deep an inquiry. Knowing the Royal Irish Constabulary as I do, I suspected that if the girl’s affairs proved too onerous, they would quite happily pack several box files on to both Jeremy and me. Papers, and the more the better, seemed to satisfy their purpose, as they saw it. Dublin Castle must be a tumulus of chewed foolscap and mouse nests in token of the paper dreams of the Royal Irish Constabulary: the men in dark green with short carbines to keep Ireland obedient, faithful and, dare I say, grateful.

“I refuse to leave her like this. Here’s a half sovereign. Go to Amiens Street, five minutes away. There are several haberdashers. Montgomery Street, the red lamp area, is adjoining. Bed linen and ladies’ requirements must be in plentiful supply. Get some sort of decent undergarment and a Manchester cotton sheet.”

“And a chignon clip, for the hair,” Jeremy added. Since she was quite bald I could not see the purpose but Jeremy, being totally human, had a deeper sense of feeling for human dignity. Down the centuries I have become perhaps overly cerebral.

As the woman donned her shawl I remembered: “Here! Where is this book? Let me have it before you go. There’s another crown for you if you get back quickly.”

She handed over the sodden package instantly and hurried away.

Near the oil lamp, by the girl’s foot on the table, I opened the package. It was a notebook, possibly a diary, and it gave her name and place of abode. She was Dympna Conway of Phillipsburg Mews, near Fairview, near my lodgings and even nearer to Jeremy’s pharmacy. The pages were written in lead pencil, which was fortunate, but impossible to read in its present condition. It would have to be carefully dried.

I could hardly give this task to my very inquisitive landlady but Jeremy, a bachelor with a daily lady, could do it neatly and reliably. My first instinct about him as an intelligent, honest and well-read man was proving true.

By the time the female creature returned we had decided on the next stage of the inquiry. To inform Dr. McEvoy of the dead girl's name, etc., and to read her journal, if such it proved to be. As we manhandled her into a shift or camisole, her body had to be bent, which stretched the skin in places, particularly the buttocks. Lying face down, the dead flesh compressed a little under its own weight, as did her breasts when she lay on her back. All fatty parts were affected by gravity and unsupported by muscles to the slightest degree, excluding the breasts, which have none. But when the body was bent as the woman and Jeremy struggled with the garment, I was able to extend the word "sun" to "sunflower." How extraordinary! What possible message could this be? I drew Jeremy's attention to this and we resolved to finish matters here, and adjourn to consider the problem in greater comfort.

With the grudging help of the woman we swathed the girl's body in a cotton sheet, cowled over her shaven pate. But before finishing and pinning it securely to prevent accidental unwrapping, Jeremy carefully gathered her shorn tresses from a shelf and rearranged them somehow on her head with the help of the cheap metal hair clip. It was a touching gesture of respect. Two thick fronds of hair separated on her brow and were swept back behind the cowled folds of sheet.

We packed our bags, gave the female creature a further half crown and emerged onto the cobbles of Store Street, where we whistled twice to summon a clopping empty cab returning from the railway terminus. Jeremy descended at his pharmacy, where his "boy" was holding the fort, and we arranged to meet later. I returned to my lodgings where my landlady sent out to a nearby pie shop while I settled down to copying any necessary parts of the dead girl's writings. Having done this, I could safely give it to the police, providing that seemed proper. Our police are a monumental and obese collection of semi-educated Irish peasants, and better suited to protecting landlords and applying curfews and the latest Coercion Act that detecting deaths in peculiar circumstances. Over a pot of porter and a veal pie I started to read and take notes.

Dympna was, it appeared, quite an intelligent girl who lived alone in a mews cottage at the rear of a large mansion, now a home for widows of Church of England clergymen. Rows of small brick houses with garden patches and service lanes were being built in the neighborhood, though much of it was still market gardens and small dairy farms.

Neighbors thought it odd that Dympna lived alone and did some work locally as a milliner. But she was friendly, a member of a local church charity, and had at least one relative who visited her every week: her Uncle George, a hearty and bucolic man, who worked as a brewers' taster, traveling the province of Leinster by steam train and being met at the railway stations by a cab or a high car to take him on to the taverns of the neighborhood, where he would arrive unannounced to sample the condition of the brown and the yellow ale.

If its condition were grievously wrong, sour or flat, the brewery would stop his supply, leaving

him to hunt for alternative suppliers, though they too would be suspicious. In practice this never happened. All the townslands of the county would know of his arrival. He was welcomed like royalty: a couple of mouthfuls of porter or ale, spat into the sawdust, and he would settle down to a meal or a snack washed down with whiskey or brandy, depending on whether there was an R in the month. In towns like Bray, Wicklow or Arklow by the sea, he gorged himself on oysters, mussels or scallops. But no doubt his odyssey ensured a higher quality of beer service. He was an honest man. He could afford to be.

Much of this was written on the first few pages of the sodden book. But it was just possible to read it. It was or seemed to be a summary of what had gone before the beginning of the journal, though written in somewhat disjointed observations to herself, not to an outside reader. Statements like, “I know people think it odd, me living in this little house, but what else can I do? The women of the parish are friendly enough. Some of the young men are over-friendly, not that I mind that too much. Last year we all went to Raheny in a brake to pick crabapples and blackberries. It was great fun. Jenny Flanagan’s brother kissed me, right in front of everybody. But I didn’t care. Jimmy Clancy would have been nicer but Nelly Hanratty has him by a rope. She’s a show-off. Thinks she can do what she likes.”

Much of the writing, including the curriculum vitae of Uncle George, was written in this style, but the interior of the book was too wet to spread or read. I set it upright, pages splayed slightly, before the fire. It was quite warm weather but a fire was usually set for night, to drive away night vapors and damp. I may be fairly immortal but I do not like being a sick immortal. I found the plague very uncomfortable at a time when any kind of comfort was at a premium, when the burghers of Dublin could not choose between the Fitzgeralds and the King of England (who also laid claim to be the “Lord of Ireland”).

While the damp pages were drying and curling I set out the situation as I saw it. A young woman, not quite as slender as I first thought, traveling by tram and steam train to the fishing village of Howth, a hilly peninsula encircling the north of Dublin’s circular bay. She visited a cliff-girt island off the coast and disappeared, leaving a leg of her drawers, half a lace handkerchief and some brown wood stain in a bottle. Then she reappears dead, in the North City morgue, to be examined by a crazy and incompetent police surgeon who measured the bumps on her cranium, leaving Jeremy, his occasional assistant, and myself, an interested drop-in, to carry the inquiry further.

For the sake of our safety and general propriety, the police would have to be told. But so much needed to be explained: the writing, the extensive writing on the left buttock. Why? Who did it? It was of course possible that the girl had written it herself on paper with the appropriate ink. This image could then be transferred to a jelly hectograph such as is used in notaries’ offices or large counting houses. Normally, half a dozen prints can be taken from such a device, providing the paper is grease—or wax- free and slightly damp.

Now it was just possible that Dympna, for some unfathomable purpose, had seated herself in a sitz bath until her seat was thoroughly soaked. Then, by wiping the chosen buttock with a swab

of alcohol, aqua vitae or whatever, to remove all skin secretions. Having done all this, it is possible, though not probable, that she carefully seated one cheek on the hectograph jelly, leaned forward and backward once or twice, and then carefully arose, leaving the hectograph on the chair or whatever. She would then need to leave the lower half of her body uncovered until the imprint dried, probably in the privacy of her own bedroom.

Such a process, if undertaken, would almost certainly be undertaken alone. If in the company of a woman friend it would surely evoke a destructive giggle, and even in the year 1869 it is unthinkable in male company.

Many years, nay centuries ago, when I first came to this country from Wales, there were some strange things done. But clans and families have survived them. It is sometimes alarming to realize the extent of the change. But we all progress, and this is an incredibly progressive century.

The damp pages were tolerably dry, so I set out for the pharmacy to have the crumpled pages smooth-ironed by Jeremy and to continue the inquiry. I wonder whether this obsessive drive is a reflection of my age-long compulsion to tear and eat human flesh at fortunately rare intervals. Who can judge the cross-relationship between mind, soul and body? Neither the theologians, the philosophers nor the doctors of medicine have probed this bond.

Jeremy was waiting for me and led me to a room behind his Medical Hall, next to his workshop and store. I passed by tiers of wooden drawers, each with its chemical content scripted in Latin. Pestles, mortars and pill molds were laid out neatly, sparkling clean. Shelves of bottles carefully labeled stood on the opposite wall. The lighting was bright: a skylight and two fantails of gas over the working surface. The room beyond held a small table, a bookcase and two fairly comfortable farmhouse chairs.

“A dish of tea first, to lubricate the mind?”

I nodded assent and Jeremy poured with the authority of a chatelaine or a monitoring grandmother. A plate of sliced crumpets spread with bramble jelly lay between us. This pleased me. The tea was aromatic Darjeeling and the conserve was jelly, not jam. Seedy fruits are best conserved as jellies rather than jams.

As we took our comfort Jeremy pointed to his workshop.

“I have the ironing stones heating in my curing oven. So whenever you are ready. And there’s something else that may help.”

I washed down the last piece of crumpet and Jeremy collected the tea things and laid down a folded strip of blanket on the table. He went next door and came back with a smoothening iron, fully charged with two hot stones. Rather expertly, he spat on the surface and when it hissed violently left it on a piece of slate to cool a little while he opened the book and laid one page on the blanket.

The smoothening of the single page only took a few seconds and we managed a dozen or more before the smoothening iron required two new hot stones. These were replaced in a few moments and the task was soon completed.

“Now I want to show you something that will save us many weary hours.”

I followed Jeremy into the chemical workshop.

“This—” he gestured to a structure that held a wooden photographic camera, lens downwards to a small table on which a document could be laid. “This—” he pointed to a large circular mirror glass, “will focus the light of the evening sun through the glass ‘coach roof’ and condense it onto the pages of the notebook.”

He put it on the rostrum and adjusted the mirror. Even without the direct sunlight the luminosity was vastly increased.

“Very soon now,” said Jeremy as he opened a box of plate carriers, fully loaded.

“How did you get so many?” I asked in surprise.

“Like to be well prepared. Prepare them myself in the winter months. Printing cartons as well.”

“Are you a professional photographer as well as an apothecary?” I inquired, slightly puzzled.

“Just a little scientific recording. For my own information.” He spoke a little shortly, so I didn’t bother to press the point.

The photographic recording of the diaries proceeded smoothly as soon as the evening light hit the window.

“The pencil marks are very pale, but I can print them as black as I like,” he told me. This pleased me for two reasons. It would assist me to read more of the journals, and the frail calligraphy of the original would deter or diminish the police interest in the case.

I cannot think why but there lies a deep dislike of the police in the heart of most citizens. They sing “The Peeler and the Goat” or “All those fat-arsed big police/ Monumentally obese/ Is it never going to cease?/ says the Shan Van Vocht.” Well, the Shan Van, the poor old woman, may say it, but so do the highly irreverent children of Dublin. Irish-Anglo-Norman I may be, but I distrust all Peelers.

The evening sun rays had sunk to a more acute angle and no longer limelit the pages of the diary via the convex mirror, but Jeremy had finished his exposures and was in and out of a heavily curtained cupboard, developing his plates. The first couple had emerged, washed and fixed, and seemed clearer than the originals, but in negative of course. This hardly mattered since they could be read easily against a sheet of frosted glass, behind which stood a colza lamp with a well-polished reflector. Jeremy had indeed substituted the metal reflector with a

shaving mirror. The few sheets that might prove difficult could be printed onto a positive paper to whatever size (within reason) that would aid interpretation.

This was done with the help of a magic lantern which was often used in the local church hall, evangelical, of course. The Roman Catholic majority church was busy sinking the foundations of its empire, with the help of the Conservative or Liberal government in Westminster. The Low Church Protestants favored by Huguenot descendants like Jeremy throve on fee-raising entertainments of converted Berbers or Tuaregs or hand-tinted slides of biblical interest.

A muffled lowing of cows from the back lane reminded me that the cows were being driven back from evening milking to their small pastures and byres beyond the half-built suburban houses. A few customers entered the shop, sounding its doorbell automatically, but Jeremy, busy as he was, dealt with them rapidly. He had drawers packed with this favorite nostrums already made up in neat packages or pill boxes, carefully labeled Headaches, Flux, Purges, Toothache, Ladies' Delay pills and so forth. He would also administer a few drops of laudanum in sweet rhubarb wine. This was a great favorite, though the patients invariably died later of some terrible wasting ailment. Still, Jeremy's nostrums gave some comfort and many a night of sleep.

Before taking the diary to the police, I decided to acquaint Jeremy with my summary of the full story, excluding my own initial motives, of course. Very few have been privy to them down the years. He was, in his quiet way, a capital colleague in an extra-legal, though not illegal inquiry such as this. Despite his fifty odd years he had far more resources than me. After reading him my summary I even advanced my hectograph theory in full, expecting him to share the ingenious joke. To my surprise he accepted it as one of several equal possibilities. He also had a suggestion of his own. He claimed it could have been etched photographically and offered to show me an example.

Although giving no credence to his thought, I expressed a curiosity to see such an example. He went to another cupboard off his workroom and rummaged through what sounded like files, and came back with two positive prints.

"I coated these papers myself. I don't trust the commercial laboratories. But the point is that I have adapted a silver solution that takes readily to human skin, providing its surface is swabbed with alcohol first. Look at this."

He thrust a half plate print before me. It showed the naked back of a young man, lying on a table. His head was turned sideways: could he be dead? On his back was his name, place of discovery and two dates.

"A young fisherman from Howth. I helped in his recovery. Didn't trust the police or the municipal idiots to get things right. While he was lying all day in the Coulters' coach house I did this. Everyone thought it was a good idea, but no one adopted the practice, I need hardly say. The dates are the probable time of drowning and the time of recovery. This gives useful information about tides, currents and winds. Very useful data for a fishing community, don't

you think?”

I swallowed my surprise but agreed wholeheartedly.

“Now look at this one. A living subject, in a manner of speaking.”

A youngish woman with a fine figure: wide hips, narrow waist and generous thighs appeared to hover above a neatly tended grave. Her eyes were open and she looked straight at the beholder. But the truly astonishing thing is that she was entirely naked, had two large feathered wings sprouting and spread behind her shoulders and seemed to be about a foot above the ground. Across the generous tops of her thighs, in a very decorated script with linear ornament, were the words “Vitam Aeternam.” On each knee was a Maltese cross within a circle.

Now I have seen many strange things, but this, as the country boys from the central plain would say, “Beats Banagher.”

“What’s this?” I spluttered. “The rear view of a naked young man, a very dead one, and the living and charming ghost of a very dead woman. I suppose the lady is meant to be the occupant of the grave.”

“In a manner of speaking, Mr. Fitzlupus. The grave is real. The young woman is real and is one of the dark angels of Montgomery Street, the red light district down the tramtrack. Oh, this was a few years ago, but after the Fenian Rising at Tallaght and Greenhills. Before the tramway rails. Those damned omnibuses. Expensive, dangerous and quite unreliable.”

“But the girl’s face.”

“From a photograph supplied by the grieving husband, grafted onto the body of Imelda, who at that time was only a kitchen maid in the brothel. It was an expensive but splendid memorial to a young wife carried off by the fever, for her widower. He told me he gazed at it nightly as he lay in his cold bed. Very touching.”

“No doubt, no doubt,” I muttered. “People yearn for such things.”

Jeremy shook his head. “People tell me the strangest things when I recommend a certain kind of pill or suppository to them.”

“I’m sure they do” was all I could say.

I must confess to some surprise at the resurrection photograph. After so long a time on earth, very little shocks me, but the older one becomes the more conservative they say. I think not. Certainly not universally. But as years and generations are surpassed, the memory of old certainties secretes a black pearl of bigotry to cushion the irritable mind. It is no nacreous jewel of the soul but a poisoned pearl.

As I was wrapping the diary in brown paper I asked him. “Are there many people who cling to memories of life like that young widower?”

“Dear me, yes. He was quite normal. This is a century of science and industry, but also an epoch of splendid tombs and mausoleums. Storied urns and animated busts abound a short walk from here, along the banks of the river Tolka. In other countries they have built great cities of the dead where memories decay slowly. But decay they do. Take my word.”

A bit overwhelmed by this, I muttered, “Ah yes, indeed. Poor Thomas Gray would have no churchyard to write his Elegy now.”

“Oh, there are still ten thousand humble places. By the ruined church of Kilbarrack, a few miles away, where the sea birds soar and scream and the sea geese call mournfully.”

“Do you get many requests like the resurrected lady?” I asked.

“Oh lots. Some I refuse but I often photograph the ‘laying out’ of someone: a parent or a spouse. A long exposure in a dark room with lighted candles. Death masks, often. They pay well and I got used to it. The dead are gentle in their last smile. I have been asked to cast a full body, oh, several times. But I did so only once, and for two reasons. It has to be done in large sections, carefully keyed to fit after removal. It is hard heavy work and, for some reason, I don’t like seeking an assistant. Everyone from the viceroy down to the coal porter would soon know all about it. And something else. After the first time I began to wonder about the motives of my clients. When I undertook to do a cast for another widower, if such he was, I dressed the body in a long shift, with the help of the laying-out lady. Always formidable creatures. I then drenched the garment and the body in sweet oil to form a barrier to the plaster. Very tastefully too. In the Greek style of delicate swirling folds and pleats. Very difficult on a prone figure since such folds are formed by gravity, and a bit of Greek fancy as well. Greek girls on vases or metopes always seem to wear wet clinging nightdresses. But, just as I stood back in triumph, the client called to see how it was going.

“ ‘Sir, I wish none of this. My dear one must be as pure and naked as an angel of Paradise.’

“Taken aback and slightly hurt, I remonstrated. ‘I can cover the hair with a cap and build up a plaster mass afterwards, as in some death masks.’ But there is hair elsewhere on the body. It would mesh in the plaster.’

“ ‘Then, sir, you must shave it,’ he directed and, see, he reached into his pocket and produced a brown wig of lustrous human hair. ‘You can glue this to the head of your cast, and a few ringlets will suffice for the groin.’

“As I began to remonstrate he threw something onto the table: a pair of carefully matched glass eyes. ‘Can these be inserted and the eyelids remodeled? The cost is of no importance, but I must have a perfect effigy to dress in whatever clothing I desire.’ I started to splutter. ‘But sir . . .’

“ ‘That is quite enough. No evasions. Do you know who I am?’ he said.

“I had indeed his name and that of his dead wife, with all the proper documents, left by the funeral undertaker. He handed me a card in gilt script, giving the name of one of the most illustrious Anglo-Norman families in Ireland, still secure in their estates like the vicar of Bray, despite Penal Laws and confiscations.

“I was struck dumb by much of this strange work which had to be done in the early afternoons, when housewives are resting, or at night when photographic records are difficult and protracted. Furthermore, I doubted the morality of this cult of death, for such it certainly seemed to be. A photographic image or a death mask could serve for post-funerary purposes. Tombstones and carvings, or secret drawers in a private chest of sad memories. I know the Montgomery Street area of brothels and have executed many tasteful ‘Etudes Academiques’ of the residents to decorate the walls and screens of the waiting rooms. These are artistic, though some of the clients may savor them more carnally. When Maisie Madigan from Athlone changes her name to Yolande and poses, dimples and all, with a Greek water jug on her head it may stretch credulity a bit but the artistic intention cannot be doubted. It is common knowledge that there is a ‘special’ chamber, draped in black, where a Cape Coloured girl called Elsie lies in a coffin, but her services are flesh and blood. I think that people like my ‘resurrection wife’ or the cast of a young woman with a wig and glass eyes is for visual stimulation only. It harms nobody. It seems a lonely pleasure, but it offends my taste as a scientist and a photographic artist. I intend to leave my collection of plates to Trinity College Library where they can be appreciated in a more enlightened age, when machines can carry man in aerial flight and fast ships can cross the Atlantic Ocean in five days. Mark my word, that’s how it will be in a hundred years.”

This unexpected outpouring and philosophizing left me with little to say. “We must discuss these and more urgent matters further. Meanwhile I will walk to the police barracks and deliver the diary. I think I will say it is from you, since you are one of the crazy doctor’s most frequent assistants. Good evening, sir. I will see you very soon.”

With that, I quitted the premises of this remarkable apothecary and made my way in the late sunset toward the police barracks, reflecting as I strode purposefully on my luck in encountering Jeremy. Yet those strange photographs and his ingenuous description of some of his strange encounters made me realize the need for my own greater discretion.

Too long a submersion in the rising middle class of this city and a period of prosperous merchandising before that and other pursuits had grafted onto my primordial soul a moral code that I fully accepted and approved of; despite my violent actions to the contrary from time to time.

The sergeant was civil and welcoming. “Is it about a horse biting you?” he inquired as I entered.

“No, it is not.”

“Some say the starving hackney animals are after the padding in gentlemen’s suits. Like the shoulders.”

“Certainly not,” I snapped, a bit startled by his odd solicitude. “I assisted the doctor in a routine post-mortem this morning and he left before Mr. Jeremy and I found this diary in the clothing. It identifies the dead person by name and dwelling.”

“That is a matter of great convenience,” the sergeant remarked ponderously, but as he thumbed his way through the pale silver grey scribbles on the ironed pages I realized that he would not pursue the girl’s history very far. “Ah, here we are. Name and address. Now let’s.” He thumbed his way rapidly to the last writings. “Mmmm—‘Spoke to Julia on leaving the sewing group. Promise to take tea on Monday, 3.40. Must bring Ladies Own Journal on tight lacing and flushes. Hope she will not take offence.’ Nothing much here, is there sir? None of us ever know the fate the next hour might bring.”

“Indeed, no.”

“Oh, that’s a certain fact that no one can avoid.” The sergeant flipped the diary with a mournful shake of his head. “Did Mr. Jeremy examine this, sir?”

“Oh he did, sergeant. Very thoroughly.”

“Oh! Good, sir. Then he will surely direct me to any particular relevance.”

“I don’t doubt that he will, sergeant. A very good night to you.” The amiable disinterest of the police in the identity of the dead woman, the search for the next of kin and the burial: all this was unresolved. “Uncle George” had not been informed, nor her church sewing circle. Even her exact age was unknown, beyond a reasonable conjecture of youthful womanhood. Was she a virgin or not? Dr. McEvoy’s phrenological bumps would hardly help in these very important lines of inquiry. The Irish, like most peoples who derive their livelihood from the land, are a disputative and legally-inclined lot, but criminal law administration is almost entirely confined to landlords, land agents and tenants or the exact observation of the successive Coercion Laws that free expression of clergy, werewolves and laity alike. The popular song “The Peeler and the Goat” was barely satirical. Many a goat or ass or a heifer was impounded with heavy fines for wandering abroad after curfewed darkness.

With these thoughts on my troubled mind I wandered far amongst the green lanes and market farms from Clontarf, where King Brian Boru was hewn to death in A.D. 1014, to Swords, where the tall Round Tower bore witness to more turbulent and yet more peaceful days. That is if one is disposed to feel sentimental about round towers and ruined monasteries. But it is a long time since “Malachi wore the collar of gold/ That he won from the proud invader,” and I felt my “change” coming on.

I’m OK, You’re OK On Niall Ferguson’s Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power

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De te fabula narratur? Ferguson’s stated purpose is “to write the history of globalization as it was promoted by Great Britain and her colonies,” not to write yet another history of the British Empire (p. xxvi). Thus does he begin to intimate here and in related introductory passages that that Empire was but a factor, albeit a key factor (of a supposedly beneficial type), in a larger, more complex set of global arrangements. As he sees it, something like an empire must function if the complex global system Britain did so much to create is to continue in being. For the attempt since World War Two to run the world without an empire has, he asserts, failed (p. 362). And so who better than the Americans, who happen to embody the most important British attributes, the concern for liberty, both political and economic, to carry on where the British had to leave off? From this perspective Ferguson’s explicit attempt to address an American audience is perfectly comprehensible. Ferguson’s rather large claims must be examined, however, as must the character as well as the assumptions and the logic of his argument.

Take for example, his presumption, that his chosen people are imperial innocents requiring his instruction and encouragement. Can a historian of his much touted brilliance really be unaware that the nature, scope and depth of American imperialism has long been the subject of scholarly and political critique among Americans themselves? Yet this is something Ferguson does not concern himself with–though I can all too easily imagine some future American Ferguson also exploiting and perhaps also damning with faint praise such critics to prove that American imperialism had its own built-in, liberty-defending, self-corrective mechanism. But an American empire has ceased to be the concern solely of the American left. Recently, such an empire has been receiving acknowledgement and praise on the American right, not only for its contemporary manifestations (see, e.g., Robert Kagan, *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1998), but also for its past (see, e.g., Thomas Donnelly’s review of Max Boot’s, *The Savage Wars of Peace*, in *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2002). It is these latter Americans with whom Ferguson is, in fact, politically allying himself. But they surely have no great need to be urged on by an outsider in their crusade to create and maintain an “empire of liberty.” Nevertheless, every little bit helps, I suppose, in the waging of the propaganda war to generate support for the imperial project among those who must most immediately bear the costs of the endeavor. And who better to help advance the cause, especially among those who experience a frisson of cultural transgressiveness and a confirmation of their superior sensibilities by watching “Masterpiece Theatre” and other British cultural imports than “Britain’s brightest young

historian," "the *enfant terrible* of the Oxford history establishment" (dust jacket). At the same time, Ferguson does seem to believe that his advice and blessings are very relevant to the debate now being waged within the United States over its post-Cold War, post 9/11 role in the world. But might this not be just one more indication that the British imperial mind-set dies hard–even if it now persists only in its etiolated, politically self-deluding post-WW II form, the "special relationship" with the United States?

As regards the character of Ferguson's argument, it deserves to be noted that he has not relied only on the printed word. His book is rather lavishly illustrated. But more than that, *Empire* was constructed with the aid of a television production team as seeking to address the British and American publics, Ferguson explicitly claims merely to be presenting evidence, leaving it to them to judge the merits and the demerits of the British Empire (p. xxix). But that is a claim I now wish to question.

This questioning might well begin by attending to the words Ferguson places at the very beginning of his book—that opening passage from *Heart of Darkness* in which Joseph Conrad evokes the heroic, brilliant history of the Thames from which had floated "the dreams of men, the seed of commonwealth, the germs of empires" out "into the mystery of an unknown earth" (p. v). Eventually, Ferguson does get around to noting the horrors of the Belgian Congo which Conrad portrayed in his book. But he does so in an interesting fashion: he juxtaposes to the horrors of the Belgian empire the less oppressive, as he claims it by then to have become, British Empire (pp. 294-296). Conrad himself, however, almost immediately confronts us with Marlow's understanding, that the Thames, London, has also been "one of the dark places of the earth." And *Heart of Darkness* concludes with the same less positive vision, the evidence of enlightened Europe's dark center having been amassed: "the tranquil waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth flowed sombre under an overcast sky—seemed to lead into the heart of an immense darkness." It is thus to be doubted that Conrad, whatever the paradoxical complexities of his work and despite the limitations some impute to him, would have been happy with the unqualifiedly celebratory pro-British uses to which Ferguson appears to have put him.

If the elisions in the epigraph raise doubts concerning Ferguson's purpose and methods, so too, I believe, do the elisions in his definition of his authorial self. For before he leaves it to his audiences to judge the British Empire he deploys a rhetoric of personal openness to preempt their skepticism. His family, he tells us—but not just *his* family!—must be numbered among the beneficiaries of Empire (p. xxiv). So far, so good. But it has to be asked whether his imperial filiations, about which he presents himself as so open, honest and unassuming in recounting some of his family history, are in fact beyond critical consideration, especially given his tendency to make his family and its pro-imperial attitudes the epitome of his nation. Because, as it so happens, my own filiations with that same Empire are both so similar in some respects yet so different in others from Ferguson's, I hope I will be excused when I follow his example and try to counter his insinuations with familial intimacies of my own.

Like Ferguson—to focus first on a family identification to which he alludes both in *Empire* and

in his earlier book, *The Pity of War*—I had a grandfather who labored in the Fife coalfields. In fact, I had two. These were more than enough to bring home to me, long before I became at all reflective about such things, just how terribly strife torn the politics of empire could be even at the heart of the system. Being rather older than Ferguson—he had the misfortune to come of political age in the Thatcher era when the post-War dream was beginning to be systematically trashed–I have sad memories of bitterly opposed attitudes towards the Empire which antedate when it became the joke of Ferguson's childhood (cf. p. xx), a joke Thatcher would, in fact, try to undo in the South Atlantic war with Argentina. In my intertwined families of origin, when I was a child, in my hearing, Churchill and the monarchy and what they signified and defended were revered on the one side and despised on the other: for me, the political was always intensely, often painfully personal; for me, unlike it seems for Ferguson, there can be no unitary, salt of the earth Scot, not even among the working class, to be trundled out in defense of some particular political position.

Ferguson's attempt to ground his analysis of empire in the purportedly irrefutable evidence of his own rather remote experience of a particular empire is, to be sure, a rhetorical move any of us might find tempting. But his seeming openness, his confession that he thinks of himself, his family, his nation, his world as benefitting from Britain's Empire, should not be allowed to afford him any argumentative advantage. In its "I am a camera and here is the technical data on my lens" assertion it smacks, does it not, of the way in which that other medium for which *Empire* was constructed, namely, television, too often purports to be that medium which does not mediate, even while it often frames and edits what it transmits to its audience to some unstated end? That surely is not nowadays a presumption that would be allowed to pass without question, though the innocence of the image remains, I think, a dangerously seductive illusion.

But what, now, of the argument Ferguson's rhetoric is meant to sustain? Here we must first distinguish between his principal hypotheses and the evidence he deploys. His hypotheses, which interweave with one another, are of several kinds: empirical and ethical; retrospective and prospective.

Retrospectively and empirically, Ferguson claims the British had no blueprint for what they sought to achieve, but that from the outset in the late 16th and early 17th centuries they methodically and not at all absent-mindedly brought their Empire into being. His target is thus, as he himself makes clear, that sort of British self-understanding promulgated in the late 19th Century by J. R. Seeley, that the British Empire had not been deliberately constructed, but that they would have to be deliberate in ensuring its continuation (pp. 246-247). (Despite Ferguson's disagreement with Seeley's proposition, that the British had "conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind" (p. 246), he does seem to be admonishing Americans in Seeley-like fashion, to become deliberate about their imperial role in the present global order (p. 368).) The British story Ferguson tells is one much more centered on interest and calculation. Beginning as scavenging pirates, they conducted "a sustained campaign to take over the empires of others," the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Dutch, the French (pp. xxvi-xxvii). Eventually, deliberately employing commercial, financial and military power, and

colonization they constructed by the early 19th Century “the largest empire the world had ever seen” (p. 56). Conducting “globalisation with gunboats” that British Empire “proved that empire is a form of international government that can work–and not just for the benefit of the ruling power” (pp. xxvi, 362).

In creating a global system that they dominated, Ferguson continues, the British simultaneously created political entities and an overarching global system embodying or at least not hostile to their own dominant socio-political characteristics and values. Among “the distinctive features . . . they tended to disseminate” into the parts of the world they penetrated was, most important of all “because it remains the most distinctive feature of the Empire–the thing that sets it apart from its continental rivals,” “the idea of liberty” (p. xxv). Moreover, this particular rapist had a saving grace, a conscience? For British despotism, Ferguson tells us, regularly elicited a powerful “liberal critique” within Britain and its Empire (p. xxv). And so once a violently penetrated society gave birth to a new form of itself modelled on its victimizer, “it became very hard for the British to prohibit that political liberty to which they attached so much significance for themselves” (p. xxv). But even were this a fair portrayal of the progress of the Empire, would it really be as praiseworthy as Ferguson takes it to be? Surely it is by no means unusual for those who dominate to convey to those they dominate, “you are free to be like us (but you are not free to be different from us!)?” Further, where it is the security and maintenance of the system that is of primary concern, surely those who had been made over in the image of their British masters were then seen to present neither challenge nor danger to the British global order and British interests? (Is it not in certain circles one of the guiding truisms of our day, that once the Iraqis have been Americanized “democratized”—they will no longer present a problem to America’s global order?)

There is also the question, whether the tendency to critique domination is somehow inborn among the British and peculiar to themselves and those they have tutored. His just noted distinction between the empires of Britain and its continental rivals (p. xxv) would seem to suggest that Ferguson believes just that: “Would other empires have produced the same effects” as the British one, he asks? “It seems doubtful,” he answers (p. xxv). He presents as grounds for his doubt a dilapidated remnant of the Dutch empire, an archaic remnant of the French one, the remains of the criminal Japanese project to bridge the Kwai. Why, he proposes, New York might still be called “New Amsterdam” and look like Bloemfontein (pp. xxv-xxvi). Since Ferguson is an acknowledged pioneer of “what if” *Virtual History*, his reflections on these matters are perhaps much more profound than they seem? But what if . . .? Should we really overlook, because it is convenient to his case, his own later account of what the British actually did to help Bloemfontein become Bloemfontein (pp. 277-278)?

More generally, his assumptions about the British and the continentals and their several empires seem to foreclose any consideration of the possibility that it was the interactions among all of these pieces of the world that contributed to the historical development of each as well as of the whole. But it is surely implausible to assume that the British were not shaped and reshaped by their Empire just as much as Britain, especially those who were dominant within Britain, shaped and reshaped the Empire? And it is surely implausible to assume that the Dutch

and the other continental empires were not shaped and reshaped by the their existence within a global order dominated by Britain and its Empire? In short, in framing his hypotheses in the way that he does, given what appear to be some of his grounding assumptions, is not Ferguson being a rather ahistorical historian?

There are, however, occasions when Ferguson does seem to countenance a complex interactive historical process linking the "homeland" and the Empire, as for example in his substantive commentaries on Jamaica (pp.191-195) and India (pp. 195-203), on the tensions which arose in these places between those British who were trying to live their lives there and those who critically commented from afar on the actions of the former, on the emergence of racism against the non-British people in these places and on the almost simultaneous emergence of racist attitudes and racist ideology in Britain itself (pp. 259-261), Nevertheless**,** unless I'm missing something, Ferguson's account of racism's imperial connections is, I think, just too abbreviated. For while he does note that "emigration from Britain gave way [in the 1950s] to immigration into Britain" (p. 358), he does not mention Enoch Powell or the Notting Hill riots or the anti-immigration or anti-refugee sentiments and laws that the society supposedly so committed to human liberty has become home to.

That Ferguson perceives a dialectical processes shaping both the British "homeland" and the British Empire is also suggested by his observation,

In previous centuries the British had felt no qualms about shooting to kill in defence of the Empire. They had started to change after [Eyre's brutal suppression of the revolt against white rule in Jamaica in 1865]. By the time of [the killing and wounding of hundreds of demonstrators in Amritsar in 1919], the ruthless determination exhibited by the likes of Clive, Nicholson and Kitchener seemed to have vanished altogether (p. 328).

If so (and surely Amritsar itself casts doubt on his claim), was this because the forces of liberty had become stronger at home–and if so, why? But if the forces of liberty had grown stronger, what are we then to make of Ferguson's observation that the British Prime Minister's speech in the aftermath of 11 September "bears more than a passing resemblance to the Victorians' project to export their 'civilization' to the world" (p. 365)? Is it Ferguson's own vision of how global order is to be achieved and maintained that discourages him from saying much else about Tony Blair's evangelical ruthlessness even where evidence which might justify his actions is lacking? Is the pro-imperial ruthlessness of today's British government some strange anomaly, or is it the old United Kingdom reasserting itself given the opportunity? In sum, however, as regards interactions within the Empire, Ferguson's politically relevant general claims seem to be ill-matched with the details he provides.

Similarly, it is arguable that Ferguson's depiction of the relations between the Empire and the competing empires involved some mutual interactive development. To be sure, when he compares the Belgian treatment of the Congo with the British treatment of their Jamaican slaves and rebels he goes on to aver that "the correct comparison must be between these other empires and the British Empire as it was in the twentieth century" (p.294). But that is surely an

awfully self-serving yardstick for those of us who are British; it is surely an especially self-serving yardstick for Ferguson to employ given his larger aims, his support for a new British-like imperial ordering of the globalized world. And what, in this particular context, are we to make of his discussion of Hitler: “There was one man who continued to believe in the British Empire . . .” (pp. 328-332). “What Germany had to do, he [Hitler] argued, was to learn from Britain’s example,” etc. Was this not learning from the British example with a vengeance? When rebuked for his savagery, might not Hitler have responded, citing chapter and verse from the history of the Empire, “you behaved in the same way when it suited you, and you’d do so again?” And while the British might deny such a future, they surely could not deny their past—it is a past that Ferguson himself makes crystal clear.

It is to Ferguson’s credit, let it be acknowledged, that he provides so much ammunition with which to dispute his ethical and political claims. But it must also be said that if he was seeking to demonstrate that the strain of liberty eventually became dominant within Britain and its Empire, we really have little more to go on than his claim that this was so. The actual evidence he provides does not, I would submit, support him in this. Indeed, his descriptions of the progress of Empire may even contradict that claim. For following the Empire’s origins in piracy, as Ferguson tells it, there ensued the “white plague” of colonization and the slave trade (ch. 2, pp. 58-113). This is followed by his troubling account of the role of British christianity in the enlargement and securing of the Empire: Despite some genuinely laudatory attempts to provide what was needed to those who needed it, arrogance—some of it mindless, some of it intellectually elaborated—would seem, from what Ferguson tells us, to have been a dominant feature of “the mission” (ch. 3, pp. 114-161). And when the response of those on the other side of “the clash of civilisations” (pp. 136-154) was less than positive, quick and terrible was the vengeance of those whose best intentions and high ideals had been spurned.

For example, the revenge wreaked upon the Indian people for the Mutiny in 1857 was truly horrible. Ferguson recounts a number of hideously brutal incidents in a hideously brutal campaign which will surely summon to the mind of many a reader images from World War Two. He goes so far, in fact, as to suggest that one particular incident may remind us of the way SS officers treated Jews—but, he quickly reassures us, we have his word for it, but nothing more, it would be inappropriate for us to draw such a parallel (p. 152). Yet just such incidents and campaigns as this may well have been what Hitler found so commendable about Britain’s imperial ways. Moreover, Ferguson’s conclusion regarding this entire ghastly episode would appear to deny the highly educated, high-minded Victorian gentleman who ordered it and managed it any moral agency—from being the victimizers they become the victims, forced to behave in detestable ways: “The project to modernize and Christianize India had gone disastrously wrong; so wrong it had ended up by barbarizing the British” (p. 152). But, he concludes this chapter, the mission would continue. Only, “Commerce, Civilization and Christianity were to be conferred . . . just as Livingstone had intended. But they would arrive [in Africa this time] in conjunction with a fourth ‘C’: Conquest” (p. 161)

But before he tells us about that, Ferguson takes us back to India, to recount how after the Mutiny the British managed, despite some bitter internal wrangling and despite creating a

reality, an anglicized, educated Indian elite, that would return to haunt them, to turn India into a bulwark of the Empire (ch. 4, “Heaven’s Breed,” pp. 162-219). However, by the time India became the jewel in the British imperial crown, high Victorian pomp and circumstance were already coming under challenge by those who wanted Britain to return to imperial basics: new markets, new colonies, new wars (p. 219).

In his fifth chapter, “Maxim Force” (pp. 220-289), set between photographs of dead bodies in a Natal trench and of bright-eyed, militaristic British boy scouts, Ferguson recounts “the Empire’s phenomenal expansion in the late Victorian period [thanks to] the combination of financial power and firepower” (p. 223). Abroad—some of this will seem terribly contemporary—the latest in military technology, which rendered the weapons of those to be defeated and dominated relatively harmless: for example, the half-hour battle of Tel-el-Kabir in 1882 (p. 235), or the five hour battle at Omdurman, which saw the transformation of almost the entire opposing 52,000 strong Islamic army into a heap of casualties, almost 10,000 of them being killed outright, while fewer than 400 of the Anglo-Egyptian force and only 48 British soldiers lost their lives (pp. 267-268). (Were Bush, Rumsfeld, et al., to read of this, they might even have to revise their estimations of the place of the recent assault on Iraq in military history!) At home—and this will seem awfully contemporary too—a barrage of media propaganda: books, plays, music hall entertainment, paintings, poetry, newspaper reports, imperial exhibitions, stories directed at the young (pp. 251-259), and the “targeting [of] voters’ narrow economic interests” (pp. 250-251) helped maintain sufficient domestic support for the imperial adventure, including the 72 separate military campaigns Britain mounted in defence of its pax britannica during Victoria’s reign (p. 251).

I emphasize these details at length because Ferguson’s account of the reaction of the forces of British liberty against that massive organized violence, and against the political manipulation and the gross financial-political corruption that accompanied that violence, is so singularly slight (pp. 279-282), suggesting the minor place it occupies in his conception of the grand scheme of things. Neither should Ferguson’s own dismissive contempt for the liberal response as unrealistic or worse go unremarked (p. 282). His urging that British liberalism moderated British imperialism would seem to be no more than a rhetorical gesture designed to make his British audience feel good while also placating those among his American audience who might soft-heartedly reject the American imperial project he favors. But to provide a more detailed account of British anti-imperialism might encourage others to draw the wrong sort of lesson from his history?

Just how qualified is Ferguson’s admiration for liberty is oddly evident in one of the few sections of his book where he actually explores the subject in some depth, in his discussion of the American War of Independence (pp. 88-102). “It was,” he asserts, “the moment when the British ideal of liberty bit back” (p. 88). But while duly noting the significance for liberty of Jefferson’s preamble to the Declaration of Independence (p. 94), he emphasizes that it was the New Englanders, “about the wealthiest people in the world” at that time, “not the indentured labourers of Virginia or the slaves of Jamaica, who first threw off the yoke of imperial authority” (p. 89). And he delights, it seems, in remarking that the worst of the violence in the

conflict was committed by American rebels on American loyalists (p. 95), and that the self-styled lovers of liberty went on to perpetuate slavery and all but exterminate the native Americans (p. 102). Ferguson's lovers of liberty do tend to come across as hypocrites or woolly minded.

It is, however, only in his final chapter, "Empire for Sale" (pp. 290-355), that Ferguson finally brings liberty to the fore. But it is rather circularly defined: liberty is that for which the British Empire stood as compared with all the other, "evil," empires. Bad as Britain had been, bad as other past empires had been, "all this would pale into insignificance alongside the crimes of the Russian, Japanese, German and Italian empires in the 1930s and 1940s" (p. 296). And so it fell to Britain to defend the less evil against the more evil: "Yet what made it so fine, so authentically noble, was that the Empire's victory could only ever have been Pyrrhic. In the end, the British sacrificed her Empire to stop the Germans, Japanese and Italians from keeping theirs. Did not that sacrifice alone expunge all the Empire's other sins" (p. 355)? Only, I would suggest in answer to Ferguson's concluding rhetorical question, from a certain way of looking at things; only from a point of view which was eager to exonerate Britain and which did not wish to explore how the "evil empires" might have emerged out of that very imperial global system which Britain had played the major role in creating and maintaining.

In chapter after chapter, then, very little evidence, by Ferguson's own telling, either of progress towards a global or "homeland" order marked by liberty or of a clear victory of liberty over despotism.

Similarly with respect to what Ferguson early on urges us to think of as globalization—"'Anglobalization,' if you like"—rather than imperialism (pp. xxvi-xxix): While his substantive chapters do indicate how the British way of doing things was imposed and, finally, how the British way of doing things was preserved from immediate destruction through its sacrifice of its capacity to dominate its global order, especially in World War Two, we have only his word for it that some sort of imperially managed global order was necessary and that Britain's was a (more) virtuous global order (than others might have been). What he does lay bare to our view is how Britain's Empire was created and advanced throughout its long history by some extremely predatory Britons supported at home and abroad by others whose predatoriness was qualified to some degree by political and strategic calculation, supported in turn by a people cajoled, driven, manipulated and bribed into doing so—the same sort of hierarchy of moral culpability so evident in the United States and in Blair's Britain today. What seems to have made "Anglobalization" different was simply that it was such an enormously successful imperial venture, that it was so dominant. But as to the character of its accompanying orderliness, it might be salutary to remember what Tom Paine noted of an earlier Conquest: when the Norman gangsters gained control of England in 1066 they did tend to want the conquered to obey their rules, they did become very concerned with civility, respect and obedience, they did prefer policing to waging perpetual war. But the latter is never ruled out. In the case of the Empire, as Ferguson makes quite evident, it again and again generated resistance, resistance that the masters of the Empire and their assistants could only judge to be thoroughly illegitimate and which they punished in brutal, vengeful ways.

What also made “Anglobalization” different was that, quite by historical accident, it, unlike other empires, had a rival-successor whose global-order needs were in so many respects so similar to those of the mother country from which it had broken away in the late 18th Century (pp. 88-102). When “the British ideal of liberty bit back” it resulted in a polity that, as many even in the ‘homeland’ recognized (p. 98), valued liberty–especially economic liberty–highly; the United States was, moreover, Anglophone, something Ferguson deems important (p. 364). The similarities between the two did not prevent the United States, a devotee of informal empire but an opponent of formal empire (North America excepted), from exploiting Britain’s wartime needs, forcing it to liquidate its Empire (pp.341-346)–a democratic peace does not, it would seem, exclude all predatoriness. While doomed, the Empire would drag on for a few more ignoble years after the War. It is at this point that we encounter Ferguson’s prospective hypothesis, which happens to conform to the political and strategic aspirations of some Americans in this post-9/11 world.

“It must be said,” claims Ferguson, “that the experiment of running the world without the Empire cannot be adjudged an unqualified success” (p. 362). There are surely those, not necessarily all of them entirely opposed to all forms of imperialism, who would find fault with this assertion–informal empire still has its devotees, as some of the critics of the Bush administration demonstrate. But let that pass. Let us focus simply on the fact that despite all that he has revealed about the way the Empire actually ran the world, Ferguson now urges his audiences, particularly his American audience, to believe that the world needs some form of “international government” to deal with the contradictory tendencies, economic globalization and political fragmentation, and that “the British Empire proved that empire . . . can work” to provide such a government (p. 362). Thus, the United States, which has the economic capacity “to impose [as Britain did] its preferred values on less technologically developed societies” (p. 367), should now pursue formal empire (p. 368). Indeed, according to Ferguson, part of the post-Empire global predicament may be that “the Americans have taken our old role without yet facing the fact that an empire comes with it” (p. 370).

It must again be noted, it cannot be noted enough, that Ferguson pretty much asks us to take his empirical and evaluative claims on faith: We must, it seems, submit to the strength of his beliefs, the power of his words, the seductiveness of his chosen images. For he has not, I think, *demonstrated* by argument or evidence that empire is necessary for some sort of global order to exist; he has not *proved* that Britain’s Empire functioned in largely beneficent ways. [If it, as Ferguson approvingly tells us, promoted massive labour migration out of India and China to the benefit of consumers everywhere, did it not also contribute substantially to the reduction of India and China “from being quite possibly the world’s most advanced economies in the sixteenth century to relative poverty by the early twentieth” (pp. 359-360, 361)? Etc.] Certainly, in comparison with the amount of information he provides on the violence of the Empire Ferguson provides very, very little information on the flow of costs and benefits; and what he does provide for the most part concerns the costs and benefits accruing to the “homeland.” Hence, his urging that the United States “take up the white man’s burden” (p. 369) would seem to follow solely from his own penchant for empire.

Since Ferguson is explicitly seeking to influence the American public, what should Americans make of his claims upon them? I am not unmindful of Ferguson's protestation that he is merely providing information on the Empire and that it is up to his readers to come to their own conclusions concerning it. I have, however, urged that to arrive at a negative judgment of Empire requires one to read against the ideological and emotional grain of his account. Fortunately, Americans are unlikely to take pride in the episodes in British imperial history that Ferguson seems at some level still to relish. Surely, furthermore, much of what Ferguson describes the British doing in previous times already reads eerily like a description of some post-War American projects, especially some post-Cold War American projects. These projects have already excited misgivings, have prompted soul-searching and debate, have brought hundreds of thousands onto American streets and millions onto streets elsewhere. Ferguson's book must be seen as an attempt to discourage misgivings, to discourage soul-searching, to move the ongoing American debate in a thoroughly pro-imperialistic direction, and to discourage opposition to a violence-based formal empire in the United States, in Britain and elsewhere. I, for one, as will be obvious, hope he fails in his endeavour. Ferguson's American publisher's promotional material notes that "it's very likely that the British past offers the key to the American future." But those who read *Empire* might well conclude that empire is something to be avoided and opposed root and branch. If those who read *Empire* attend to the violence, the predatoriness, the excesses and the material and moral costs he describes rather than to the course of action he advocates and the universal benefits he so inadequately proves would flow from such a course of action, they will take his publisher's praise as a warning not dissimilar to the warning Marx once gave his German audience concerning an earlier British example.

A Long Short War, by Christopher Hitchen

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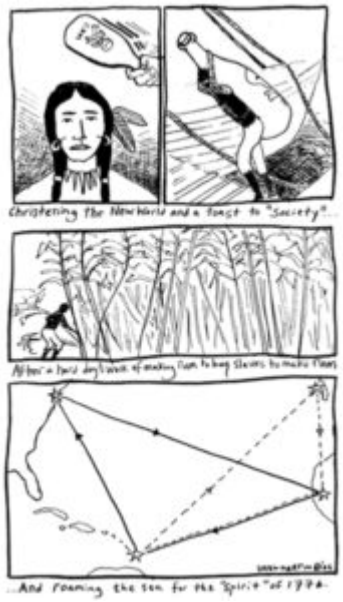
Rum and revolution have been associated together for centuries. Rum is “the global spirit with its warm beating heart in the Caribbean,” the one factor that is shared by all the cultures of the region, and enthusiastically drunk by the descendants of those who were enslaved to produce it.



I began drinking rum with uninformed enthusiasm at an age that would have had the child welfare crowd taking me into care if I had been in New York instead of Liverpool. But I began researching the subject seriously many years later while working in the Caribbean, which was my point of departure.

All over the islands are massive forts and harbors, barracks and other monuments to the time when the Caribbean was to the world what the Gulf is now. Literally hundreds of thousands of soldiers died in the struggles to control these fecund volcanic hilltops where ample supplies of sun and water combined to make sugar.

It was not the only parallel with the modern world: rum and sugar anticipated modern problems of globalization, of empire and deficits, of war and taxation.

The sugar trade provided the liquid capital to fund the British National Debt, the real secret weapon that ensured British dominance against the threat from a much richer and more populous France. So where does rum fit?

It was in Barbados in the first half of the seventeenth century that the British colonists realized that the by-product of sugar refining, molasses, was more than just an inferior sweetener. In the tropics it fermented quickly, and although the immediate product was an intestinal

challenge of a high order to any drinker, when distilled, a gallon of molasses produced a gallon of high-octane spirit.

Known *as Kill-devil, Barbados Water*, or *rumbullion*, before rum became the common term, it was a desirable commodity that quickly enhanced the profits of the sugar trade, while making more bearable the endless toil in the tropical heat necessary to grow and refine it.

The production of rum in Barbados transformed the economics of the island, which switched rapidly to a sugar-growing monoculture and equally rapidly from a majority white indentured work force to a chattel slave based economy. Incidentally, the white workers also rose, and were suppressed with mass executions in the early stages before racism was added to the Planters' sins of cupidity and cruelty.

It would repay study to see how much the mainland North American colonies benefited from the experience of the Barbadian plantation owners. Not only did they invent the principle of no taxation without representation in an agreement with the Cromwellian government during the Civil Wars in Britain, they were the first to introduce legislation that codified African slavery as different from the traditional indentures for white workers and to justify this breach of Common Law by inveighing against the supposed inferiority of Africans.

Many of the English settlers in North America came via Barbados and they brought their social innovations with them, as well as a thirst for rum, which became a major item of trade.

It was not until much later that the British Isles and their North Atlantic colonies produced enough of a grain surplus to make gin or whisky on a regular basis, and even when they did, it took much more bulk of grain to produce the same amount of alcohol. Nor did they produce grapes and wine on any scale, so the metropolitan government saw no problems with rum production within the colonial system.

Not so France, where in the early eighteenth century the cognac producers successfully lobbied for a ban on rum production for export from the French islands.

On the one hand, the lucrative production of rum gave the British colonies an economic advantage; on the other hand, Adam Smith's invisible hand was busily mixing it between the North Americans and the British.

The British islands used all their molasses to make their own rum, which the colonial elite drank for preference. The colonists largely benefited from the imperial connection, but rum was a crucial commodity. The presence of lakes of molasses in the French islands proved an irresistible temptation, so much so that the Yankee traders were easily able to overcome any scruples that may have resulted from the wars being fought between France and Britain, even though a major purpose of those wars was to safeguard the American colonies from the French threat in Canada.

The colonists drank prodigious quantities of their own rum, but they also used it to trade for

furs with the Indian tribes, while many of them quietly rejoiced at the damage rum did to Indian societies which amounted to alcoholic ethnic cleansing. Even more sinisterly, New England rum was the major trade item for slaves on the African coast.

When the French and Indian war was over, the British were paying over a quarter of their GDP in taxation, mostly to pay off the National Debt. The colonies offered but never delivered contributions. It was clear that “no taxation” was the primary thought, not representation. The British sent in the Navy to enforce customs collection, and played into the hands of the secessionists by providing an excuse for insurrection.

Even when the war came, rum was an essential war supply, with both sides fighting to deprive the other side. George Washington, that unlikely socialist, even advocated government owned distilleries to meet the need and was as scornful as any modern Virginian about French fries in the Congressional canteen at any attempts to substitute a French wine ration for rum for the continental armies.

Aided by temperance and prohibition, this inconvenient history, both rum and the essential Yankee role in the slave trade has been edited out of popular historical consciousness.

But then, more recently, who remembers that the Bacardi family bankrolled Fidel Castro up in the hills, and greeted him when he arrived in Havana with a banner “Gracias a Fidel” draped across their headquarters? Of course, they took it personally when he nationalized their distilleries, but they had already gone multinational, incorporating in the Bahamas and distilling in Puerto Rico, so they still conduct their grudges against Castro in the American courtrooms for ownership of the Havana Club brand, which, although banned by the Embargo from the US, is selling far more successfully than Cuban sugar across the rest of the world. And touchingly, Fidel was telling Cubans that drink was bad for them, so that there would be more for export.

Perhaps more damaging than this family feud is the way that Bacardi has used its economic and political clout to flood out better rums from the rest of the Caribbean with its own undistinguished spirit. For many islands, faced with competition from European sugar beet, Archer Daniel Midland’s high fructose corn syrup and their accompanying tariff barriers, making high value added branded rum from their sugar crop is one of their ways forward in a world where the empires have moved on and forgotten how much of their own and African blood they shed to conquer these volcanic rocks, and how much money they made from it.

* * *

For its first two centuries, Barbados’ position as the first port of call for ships to the other British colonies in the Western Hemisphere gave it an importance greater than its tiny. Any “good” ideas that originated in the island, whether rum, sugar plantations, African slavery, or even the idea of calling the head of the local government the President, were sure to spread to all the British colonies, and in those early days, they were carried by the departing colonists.

Some of them founded Charleston, where they left their marks on the names and habits of the Carolinian town and helped to establish a long established but frequently forgotten connection between the Caribbean and the Eastern seaboard. Eleven of the first 23 governors of South Carolina came from the islands, seven from Barbados.[i] Henry Winthrop, son of John Winthrop, New England's first governor had put in three years in Barbados before moving north.[ii].

While maintaining the trading connections that progressively expanded over the following century they took something far more pernicious than rum. Slavery had no basis in contemporary English Law, and it took the autonomy of the Barbadian planters to codify it separately.

The Barbadian slave code in 1661 was a legal breakthrough that was in fact adopted by Antigua and Jamaica, and then copied and emulated by South Carolina and Virginia, transforming the English legal idea of indentures for a fixed period into a state of perennial servitude for one group of people only. Whom the planters wished to enslave, they first insulted. "The Act for the Better Ordering and Governing of Africans and Negroes," began by referring to its subjects as "heathenish," "brutish," and a "dangerous kind of people."[iii]

So, along with an aversion to taxation, and the title of President, the codification of black slavery went along with rum as Barbados' contribution to the development of the North American colonies. Two out of three of Churchill's triptych on the Navy, Rum and the Lash are definite Barbadian exports to the mainland. Buggery was optional, one supposes.

Many other aspects of the economic and social structures of the Southern Plantation system had a dry run in Barbados. Even at this early stage Barbados had some amusing precursors of later stereotypical Southern lifestyles. Long before the Kentucky Colonel's heyday, every planter or "gentleman" on the island is titled as "Captain" – or "Colonel." But there were more serious precursors, a persistent semi-feudal politics setting poor whites as the first bulwark against the possibility of slave revolts. You could say that the fuse for the American Civil War fizzled its way north from Barbados, the sugar colony that rum made profitable and habitable.

Many of the founding fathers had family connections and current ties to the islands, ranging from George Washington's sojourn in Barbados to Alexander Hamilton's birth in Nevis, and Thomas Jefferson's visit to St Kitts, where his grandfather had had a plantation. There they had time to appreciate the model mix for the new republic, at least from the Southern colonies perspectives – slave-owners' autonomy.

Washington visited Barbados in 1751 and was almost tempted to stay by his calculations – which could have started a whole new alternative history. He confided to his diary, "Canes is from 40 to 70 ton of sugar, each ton valued at 20/ out of which a third is deducted for expenses, unless rum sells for 2/ and upwards pr Gallon than it is, though the sugar is near clean."[iv]

Adam Smith put it more cogently than the founder of the US, whose grammar and style improved over the years. "It is commonly said that a sugar planter expects that rum and

molasses should defray the whole expense of his cultivation, and that his sugar should be all clear profit."[v] The presence of Washington is testimony once again to the connections between the mainland colonies and the Caribbean.

However it was not just the South, but also New England that owed its heritage to the island. It was two Indian slaves, John and Tituba, brought from Barbados to Salem by minister Samuel Parris, whose native rituals inspired the Salem Witch-hunts, thus setting the precedent for the periodic paroxysms of intolerance that still beset the American mainland.[vi] Barbados was everywhere – in spirit and in rum – throughout the new colonies.

But it was not only the plantation system that the Barbadians exported northwards – it was also one of the more commercially lucrative ideas about what to do with their rum, and morally on a par with the "customs of the country" that they had exported. Soon emulated by Jamaica and the other islands, they took their rum to Africa to trade for slaves.

John Winthrop was a pioneer of the Barbadian- Boston connection. His journals record the first documented slave voyage from Boston November 1644, with a voyage that took staves for casks to Cape Verde Islands, traded them for slaves which they took to Barbados and exchanged for sugar and tobacco which eventually reached Boston after a five month round trip voyage.

Rum Rapine and Revolution – the Triangle

It was one thing selling dried fish to feed slaves and drinking the profits. But in the hands of the New England merchants, rum soon became a double enslaver, depending on the toil of slaves to make and being the main trade item to buy slaves in West Africa. To get their drinks, from an early stage coastal monarchs staged slave raids on their weaker neighbors. By 1679, French slave traders were already complaining that the brandy they had formerly used in trade for slaves in Africa had been flooded out by cheaper rum, and one recorded that a large bull was bought for one pint of spirit in 1697 in Senegal. The Monarchs along the coast had a huge thirst and in Gabon, they gave an elephant tusk for a measure of liquor which they had emptied before they left the vessel.[vii]

British histories always depicted the Triangle Trade with its apex in Liverpool and Bristol. Manufactured goods left Britain for West Africa, and were traded for slaves who were taken to the Caribbean and the mainland colonies where they were exchanged for with sugar, molasses and rum for the British home market.

The New England colonies had a triangle all their own, although it shared a base on the same gruesome middle passage. But its apex was across the Atlantic in New England, Boston and Providence rather than Bristol and Liverpool. Regardless of whose "triangle" it is, reality does not always favor simple geometrical metaphors and the so-called triangle was much more like a cats cradle with multiple nodes. There was a lot of direct trade between the American colonies and the Caribbean and between both and Britain, not to mention the voyages carrying Grand Banks fish to Southern Europe.

From a moral dimension, there was indeed a triangle, or rather the trinity, of disrepute: slaves, rum and sugar. In this "triangle," the rum that was made from the molasses that had been traded for cod, was then bartered in West Africa for yet more slaves who were taken to the Caribbean or southern mainland colonies. The resulting trade links connected the frozen seas of the North West Atlantic to the torrid beaches of the Bight of Benin – with the keystone of the structure the slave-worked sugar plantations of the Caribbean.

The mainland colonies were "the key to the Indies without which Jamaica, Barbadoes and ye Charibby Islands are not able to subsist,"[viii] one writer commented in 1661 – and it became truer as the decades rolled by – and as the hogsheads of molasses and rum rolled into the holds of the trading fleets. But it was also doubtful whether the mainland colonial economies would have taken off so quickly without the trade to the islands.

The movements of men, goods and ships which rum impelled ensured that New England and the North American colonies were not like French Canada, or the Spanish Main. The traditions of local autonomy and lively entrepreneurship ensured that they did not linger as a sleepy backwater fossilized economically and socially at the time of the settlement, but became a major link in the global network, with a vigorous and growing commercial and industrial life of their own.

The ships were built, supplied and equipped locally in New England, on a scale that matched the mother country's capabilities. Indeed their shipbuilding and navigation techniques overreached that of their more conservative transatlantic cousins. For example, Franklin remarked on British captains' refusal to take advantage of the extra speed offered by the Gulf Stream. Yankee skippers roamed the globe in emulation of the Viking example of seeking riches at sea that they assuredly could not cultivate in their cold and relatively infertile home.

However, the rum trade also distorted economic development. George Weedon concluded that, "the substitution of rum for food affected the whole business of commercial exchange in this period. Between the derangement of an inflated currency, and the diversion of productive industry to distilling and its collateral slave importation, the building of vessels and the catch of fish fell off."

While allowing for some effects from the wars with France, he concluded unequivocally, "the main cause in the decline in these important industries must be found in rum."[ix] It did not take long for the New England traders to get in on the act. In the late seventeenth century, Taussig comments with bitter irony, the Yankee merchants' first battle for "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights" was their petitioning parliament, along with their English colleagues, to break the monopoly of the Royal Africa company on the slave trade along the coast of Africa. They enthusiastically proposed export duties of 10% on goods leaving for Africa to defray the costs of the slave forts and factories along the coast. Their proposal was adopted: whether they paid the tax as scrupulously is another story. [x]

In the Treaty of Utrecht – following the War of Spanish Succession in 1713, in addition to

Gibraltar, Britain secured Newfoundland, along with confirmation of the Royal Assiento, whereby British ships, in return for a large cash payment up front to Spain, were licensed to trade slaves to the Spanish colonies. British for these purposes included the British colonies as well and the trade just grew and grew.

By 1721 the factor for the British Royal African Company on the Slave Coast reported that rum had become the "chief barter" there even for gold, let alone slaves.

There was much more to show in the way of negative results for the people on the base of the triangle. In 1740, four out of every ten slaves bought by the Codrington Plantation in Barbados died within three years. We must not belabor the New England divines alone for their flexible ethics. They were drawing on an old tradition. Since the Codrington Plantation was owned by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, its overseers branded slaves on the chest with "SOCIETY," to remind them and others that these human chattels were doing the Lord's work. James Oglethorpe when he founded Georgia tried to keep out both rum and slavery – with only very temporary success. The great evangelist George Whitefield sympathized with the colonists against John Oglethorpe, who he complained deprived them of – rum and slaves.

The heartland of abolitionism, piety and the Union in the Civil War, and Prohibitionism afterwards, has not often been ecstatic about being reminded of its close connections to rum and the lash. So popular histories have tended, if anything, to minimize both.

Even at the time, there were some mild signs of embarrassment about the business. For example, Captain David Lindsay of Newport called the vessels engaged in the trade "rum Ships" rather than slave ships and another slaver captain referred to "us rum men." Even the rum for the slave trade was euphemized into "Guinea Rum." As Taussig put the hypocrisy, "New Englanders in honesty referred to 'Missionaries on deck and rum in the hold.'"[xi]

"Guinea Rum" was what we now call overproof. It was double or even triple distilled to save the cost of freight, and water would be added at the destination to get it to the appropriate and more drinkable strength. Champlin's trade book of the Rhode Island slaver, the Sloop *Adventure*, records that they traded 500 more gallons of rum than they had shipped – despite evaporation,- which could have been sharp practice - or just normal business.[xii]

As Simeon Potter, who had himself made his fortune privateering, ordered his Captain Earle of the King George in 1764 "Make Yr Chief Trade with the Blacks and Little or none with the white people if possible to be avoided. Worter yr rum as much as possible and sell as much by short mesuer as you can."

One could say that Potter's political principles were just as flexible. Despite calling his ships "The Prince Charles" and "The King George", he became a superpatriot at the time of Revolution and was made Major General of the Rhode Island Colonial Forces. More consistently, he was as remiss at paying taxes to the revolutionary government as he had been to the royal government.

He anticipated his successors in American politics by having his legal residence in the town of Swansey, Massachusetts, where the taxes were much lower than in Bristol RI, where he made most of his money. Neither tax evasion, nor slave trading stopped him finishing his days as a vestryman at St Michael's church in Bristol. It was what Weedon called "A casuistry of culture, combined with rude impassioned humanity- a commingled hash of Satanic civilization and simple savage nature. " that enabled such to speak of the inalienable rights of man, and liberty or death, while either dealing in slaves, or owning them. [xiii]

And what was the price of soul? In 1764 it was £12, – or 110 gallons of rum in the standard unit of exchange. [xiv] In 1755 was 799 gallons of rum, two barrels of beef and one of pork for four men, three women, three girls and one boy.

Twenty years later, just before the Revolution, Rhode Islander Aaron Lopez was paying only 22 gallons a head.[xv]

George Washington was perhaps the most outstanding example of weighing souls against spirits and the osmosis of deceit involved in the process. In 1766, while still a British officer and a gentleman, the future President shipped off a slave called Tom to the West Indies to be sold in exchange for other things, a hogshead of best Jamaican rum.[xvi]

With no truth in advertising law to inhibit him, he did not tell prospective purchasers that Tom seemed to have nursed the spirit of independence and freedom that later canonized his master and was being sold because he was "unruly." Somehow, it seems more shocking that he actually sent Tom to sell himself! He sent him to the Captain of a sloop bound for the Caribbean with a letter saying that "With this letter comes a negro (Tom) which I beg the favor of you to sell in any of the islands you may go to, for whatever he will fetch, and bring me in return for him,

> One hhd. of best molasses
>
> One ditto of best rum
>
> One barrel of lymes, if good & cheap
>
> One pot tamarinds, containing about 10 lbs.
>
> Two small ditto of mixed sweetmeats about 5 lbs each. And the residue, much or little in good old spirits."[xvii]

Setting the price of a human being in such tawdry trade goods rather than in coin of the realm appears more shocking even if the effect is the same. To sell ones own soul for a cask of rum is one thing, but to sell someone else's certainly tarnishes the halo of the founding father.

Like most people of taste, Washington preferred the West Indian to the New England rum, just as he preferred the Virginian definition of freedom to that elaborated by Lord Mansfield in

England in his famous declaration that slavery was illegal in Britain itself. “How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?” Samuel Johnson asked, and has never been adequately answered.

But one of the side effects of the Revolution for freedom and liberty was that a critical shortage of New England rum affected all the slave traders along the coast. The locals had become habituated and were unhappy with the substitutes.

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[i] Tree 19

[ii] Tree 11,12

[iii] Beckles, Barbados 33

[iv] Washington Diaries, q in Taussig, p 37

[v] Smith, 157

[vi] Dunn 337

[vii] Huetz de Lemp 88

[viii] see Barty-King, p 158 TK original

[ix] Weedon op cit., cited in Taussig 18

[x] Taussig 155

[xi] Taussig xi

[xii] (appendix Taussig)

[xiii] Taussig 102

[xiv] Taussig 97)

[xv] Thomas 328

[xvi] Aykroyd 92

[xvii] Taussig 27

This article is adapted from the book Rum: A Social and Sociable History of the Real Spirit of 1776, Nation Books, July 2005.

Two Books on Israel-Palestine

By | 2003: Vol. 2, No. 4

The Land Beyond Promise: Israel, Likud and The Zionist Dream **by Colin Shindler**

Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid **by Marwan Bishara**

I

In *The Land Beyond Promise* Colin Shindler provides an historical perspective on one of Israel's main political movements, namely, the Nationalistic-Right. In particular, Shindler traces the development of Israel's biggest political party, the Likud. His account is even-handed and dispassionate. Nonetheless, it could make readers rather pessimistic (if they aren't so already) with regard to the possibility, arising lately, that Ariel Sharon could break with a long tradition of "rejectionism."

The book covers a century of political activity, analyzing different right wing factions that eventually formed the Likud. Its ideological roots are traced back to Zev Jabotinsky but Shindler demonstrates that Likud was infused with other ideas that were often inconsistent with Jabotinsky's vision. Shindler shows that radical influences were absorbed especially from "Yair" Stern and the Lehi underground (later headed by Yitzhak Shamir). Nonetheless, these streams shared more or less the same core conviction, namely, a Zionist ideology of a particularly fierce kind. A more recent development is Likud's ideological association with the religious-Zionist movement.

All these factors turn the Likud into a fascinating object of study for social scientists, historians, and anyone interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Two-thirds of the book ably relates how the tragic events of the Middle East evolved. The final third deals illuminatingly with particular issues, such as the Shamir plan for a solution to the Palestinian issue and how Zionist propaganda is designed. Since Shindler focuses on the Likud, he inevitably provides a partial account of events (because Labour, the Palestinians and other actors are absent). Still, the book cogently explains the way the right in Israel thinks and accordingly, acts. In this respect, the book is an important contribution to a deeper understanding of the roots of the conflict. It can help us realize the responsibility that Likud governments bear for the vexing condition Israeli society finds itself in these days as well as the repercussions for other Middle East nations and peoples, and in particular the Palestinians.

This book could be read as a litany of shortsighted acts of political incompetence. Some historical examples that the author provides are dismaying, and readers (those who are aware of the realistic possibilities of the time) could be incensed. These events include "Yair" Stern's contacts with the Nazis in order to secure support to fight the British, Menachem Begin's insistence on the east bank of the Jordan as "absolutely necessary," Sharon's lies during the

Lebanon war, and Benjamin Netanyahu's irresponsible incitement during Yitzhak Rabin's abruptly terminated premiership. These nasty examples pile up to a point where it seems that the Likud is incapable of doing one reasonable thing, with the exception of the 1977 peace with Egypt. From the persuasive evidence the author provides, Likud is still based on discouragingly dogmatic notions. Yet, from the standpoint of a follower steeped in Jabotinsky and Begin, Likud policy could be deemed successful. Although reluctant acknowledgement that the Greater Israel doctrine is failing is growing today, the way Likud leaders doggedly drag out the process of giving up this dream is, on its own terms, rather impressive.

The Greater Israel doctrine and the militaristic approach that different Likud leaders espouse are the sources of the various policies the right advocates. "Security" is the justification for every policy, and on that basis almost any policy can be acceptable. The fear that the Arabs will "throw us to the sea" is invoked regardless of the strength of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) or of the Arab armies. This becomes even more bizarre when looking at the danger posed by the Palestinians. Any peace agreement, Likud says, is a ploy by the Arabs to achieve their goal of Jewish extinction. This refrain was exploited to a point far beyond mere counter-productiveness, as the second Intifada shows.

Shindler provides striking examples of how the security argument was employed. Those familiar with a nationalistic rhetoric would not be surprised by the way the Likud behaved not only toward the Palestinians in the territories but also toward the Arab-Israeli population and toward the Jewish left. All were, at different stages and to different extents, deemed threats to national solidarity and security. A particularly interesting example is the Begin government's change of language used in the Israel Broadcast Associations; reporters were ordered not to use phrases like "administered territories" but to call them by Hebrew proper names. Employees who resisted were dismissed (p. 100). Many similar examples stem from Sharon: his merciless operations against Palestinians, referring to Israeli-Arabs as "foreigners," and statements comparing the Israeli left to the racist parliament member, the late and unlamented Meir Kahane (pp. 101, 111, 132, 205).

Although the Likud began as a secular movement and to a certain extent is still one, the religious-Zionist extremists are a natural ally. Both advocate that the West Bank is a part of "Eretz Israel" and should never be handed to the Palestinians "at whatever cost." The grounds for these claims are religious yet the Likud's version of them is a nationalist one. The Likud is as adamant as the religious zealots that "Eretz Israel" belongs solely to the Jews. This is conveniently couched in security arguments. The situation that Jews and Arabs face today results, to some extent, from the fact that these religious and nationalistic ideologies successfully displaced all other interpretations of what it means to be a patriotic Israeli (Jew). This is their overwhelming success and, as I believe and as seems apparent, the origin of the eventual downfall of this ideology.

Shindler's discussion of the case of the Jewish underground is illuminating (p. 187-201). Jewish Underground members were arrested in 1984. Its attacks had maimed and killed innocent civilians as well as political figures (all Palestinians). The "understanding" of their actions as

expressed by Shamir and Sharon highlights the moral basis on which the Likud is operating: any act done in the name of the nation is not immoral but "courageous." Polls show that a considerable part of the population "understood," if not endorsed, the Jewish Underground. The judges who sentenced the Jewish Underground members were denounced by Likud spokesmen. Recently there are reports of a revived Jewish Underground operating in the Occupied Territories. The way the Israeli government and the Israeli public will deal with this issue could well indicate which direction the crisis is heading.

The activities of the Jewish underground, and other extremist organizations, reveal all too well the right's mindset and its ideological commitments. The fantasy of a Greater Israel is illustrated by slogans: "Jordan is Palestine" or "Lebanon as the North Bank" (pp. 159, 193, 221). They refuse to grasp that the West Bank was taken by force and that its population legitimately seeks national self-determination. Moreover, the Likud has manipulated much of the Israeli public to accept that the Palestinians are a threat and will always be, that the territories are essential for security, that Israel can impose law and order in them, and above all, that holding these lands is a patriotic act. The price of this doctrine is very high for Israelis, too.

The book highlights the "stark" choice Israel must make between a commitment to democracy and equal rights, or to an unchecked nationalistic ideology. The ideology of the Likud, and its more unruly associates, heavily influences the way many Israelis perceive reality and thus the nature of the conflict and its solution. Shindler's account conjures a strong sense that a fear-driven fantasized perception is guiding Israel. This perception not only underpins Israel's defense policy but increasingly its internal social policies, which are hostage to defense expenditures. Shindler's book provides many valuable insights and could even be utilized as a guide on how to approach and handle the volatile sensitivities of Likud leaders. Understanding their core convictions, and addressing them appropriately, can help when seeking a just resolution to the conflict, especially when it appears that for the foreseeable future the Likud will dominate Israeli politics.

II

If there is one thread that runs through Marwan Bishara's book *Palestine/Israel: Peace or Apartheid*, it is that all diplomatic efforts in the "peace process" were a mask for continued control of Israel over the Palestinians and the territories. He states: "Palestinian dissatisfaction aside, the central problem in the region before and after the Intifada has not been Palestinian per se; it is an Israeli problem. Israel is not ready for a decolonization that will end its military control of the Occupied Territories." This might well be true, and it seems true for many Likud voters.

Yet, too many of Bishara's claims are advanced without setting them in an adequately comprehensive context. He does not mention so much as one error that the Palestinians made in the "Oslo period." Palestinians act out of good and peaceful intentions while everyone else, including the Americans, are deceivers. Bishara argues the "Palestinians have been ready for

almost three decades to reach a historic reconciliation based on the 1967 borders and the recognition of the Right of Return." (p. 135) Well, this might be the case, but, as far as even reasonable segments of Israeli society go, it is widely seen as a doubtful one. My aim here is not to justify any party to the conflict; the quote only stresses Bishara's argumentative intent.

Consider the title. If there is a regime of unalloyed apartheid in Israel or in the occupied territories, that is a serious matter. Yet, no explanation is offered to back up his analogy between South Africa and Israel and the Palestinian territories. As I am extremely sympathetic to the Palestinian case, I am not claiming that Israel's actions can be justified. I simply hoped that the author would provide compelling evidence of what he holds to be a parallel situation. Without one, the book is in danger of losing credibility through overstatement. Of course, "occupation," in some regards, is worse than apartheid and some de-facto policies that go hand in hand with the occupation are indeed racist. However, stating the Palestinian plight with a view to persuade readers with systematically evaluated evidence would have been a more fruitful course.

Bishara says on page 121: "The post-1967 occupation was a clear case of outright colonialism (for profit and exploitation) developed in concert with American policy in the Middle East." There are no ideological or other historical roots that explain the occupation, only economic factors. This seems simplistic. He mentions "ethnic cleansing" as if it occurs on a daily basis. Again, the reader wonders why aren't there examples. He refers to the 1948 war, which created the refugee problem. This indeed was a terrible case of "ethnic cleansing," which will haunt Israel in costly ways until it is remedied. Merely stating that Israel must recognize the Right of Return seems too pat an answer and does not begin to address the issue.

Bishara devotes the middle of the book to the charge that U.S. foreign policy is biased toward Israel. This is a strong and troubling claim. However, his characterization seems overly personal:

This was the most deceptive phase of the entire peace process. [Ehud] Barak went to Camp David in order to make the Palestinians accept his ultimatum, an agreement favorable to Israel, or show Israelis and international public opinion that the Palestinian leadership was not ready for peace. At Camp David, Barak had the full support of President Clinton and his advisors, almost all of whom were both Jewish and Zionist. (p. 54)

The chapter on the U.S. role stands in contrast to the rest of the book because there is an attempt to provide a serious theoretical analysis. However, I believe this chapter too suffers from overstatement. It does not establish the case convincingly and more crucially, it lacks evidence. Bishara writes: "The Clinton administration consistently lied to the Palestinians and deceived their leadership into believing it understood and sympathized with their frustration and anxiety as the terms of reference shifted and narrowed, especially when UN resolutions were being by-passed or blatantly violated." Regardless of the considerable truth of these claims, the U.S. remains the only party which could pressure Israel to end the occupation. There is nowhere else to go. So Palestinians still can learn from their mistakes and "mistaken

trust"; they must improve the ways to deliver their case to the American public and its politicians. In this respect, I guess they have much to learn from the pro-Israeli lobby.

Bishara gets tangled in his own argument. Regarding Rabin's 1994 assassination, he claims that there are grounds to think that Israel's Internal security service (Shabak) was behind it. I doubt this, but he bases his case on the fact that the Shabak recruited extremists to penetrate right wing cells and, as years went by, they rose to occupy senior positions. Fearing that Rabin would end the occupation, they decided to kill him. Yet, if this scenario were so, then the peace process was sincere, after all, which counters Bishara's thesis. Bishara also says that Israeli occupation is more brutal than Palestinian violence and that "a few violent actions by Palestinians should not be compared to the violent and brutal occupation." (p. 134) The occupation is very brutal indeed but Palestinian violence inflicts its own distinct cruelty, which cannot be discounted either. What is the point of the invidious comparison anyway? I sincerely believe that such comparisons do more harms than good for the Palestinian cause and especially when a Palestinian intellectual expresses them.

Finally, virtually out of the blue, Bishara shifts his tone to airy optimism (p. 138): "If they choose to integrate, a democratic Israel/Palestine, liberal or bi-national, could revolutionize the region and reinvent its economic and social relations, allowing both people to partake of milk and honey." The contrast between his relentless grim case and the suddenly sunny outlook is just overwhelming. This is not to say, however, that a solution is out of reach. Bishara's energies would have been put to better use addressing a perennial issue, such as the problems posed for everyone else by extremists on both sides, rather than reiterating familiar claims.

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Teamsters and Turtles?: U.S. Progressive Political Movements in the 21st Century Edited by John C. Berg

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Just as the building trades workers' attack on New York anti-war demonstrators in May 1970 came to symbolize the gulf between labor and the new social movements, the November 1999 Seattle demonstrations against the World Trade Organization now evoke the hope of cooperation between them. Bringing together blue-collar union members, environmentalists costumed as sea turtles, crusty-punk anarchists, middle-class human rights activists, ACT UP militants, and thousands of others, Seattle offered a tantalizing glimpse of the unity that leftists have only dreamed of for the past few decades. As John Berg cautions in his introduction to this collection, such unity "remains a goal, not an accomplishment." Understanding how long-term Teamster-Turtle solidarity might be achieved is the ambitious goal of this volume.

In this book, 13 contributors examine 10 contemporary left political movements in the United States. Each of the essays includes an overview of the movement in question, a detailed study of a particular movement's organization, and some attention to the larger significance of the movement. Although all the authors have both academic and activist credentials, few of the essays seem to be informed by their authors' political experiences; only Benjamin Shepard, who links personal narrative and movement analysis with uncommon felicity, uses his own experiences to significantly deepen his article's insights.

One gap in Teamsters and Turtles? is the lack of any article on racial justice organizing. For a book on left politics in the U.S., where race matters in a way it does not in any other industrialized country, this is a problematic omission. Race is all the more urgent an issue here given that one of the most striking political problems with the Seattle demonstrations from which the book takes its title was their overwhelming whiteness.(1) The new social movements are often as distant from people of color as they are from the white working class; one wonders how incorporating research on anti-racist organizing might have shifted the tenor of the book as a whole.

Berg notes that questions of ideology (what is "the left?") and organization (what is a movement, as opposed to a party or a conventional interest group?) divide the groups examined here. Furthermore, these movements appeal to different constituencies, seek different goals, and employ different strategies. For Berg, these distinctions are at least as important as those emphasized in the academic discourse about new social movements that draws on Ronald Inglehart's distinction between "materialist" and "postmaterialist" values. Inglehart posits a profound cultural divide in advanced industrialized societies between

privileged political actors who pursue a politics of personal autonomy and cultural symbolism and those who, because they are less materially secure, concentrate economic gain. Berg notes that if Inglehart is right, a broad egalitarian left is unlikely to cohere; materialist and postmaterialist movements, as Inglehart understands them, are separated by too deep a shift in consciousness to work easily together. The key question for Berg thus becomes: what are the actual divides between and within movements?

Berg insists that any move toward a united left must be preceded by theoretical work: we need to know why left movements are fractured before we can bring them closer together. However, Berg refuses to offer premature certainties. The questions at stake here are difficult, and the book's lack of theoretical closure allows for an invigorating review of the state of left movements while suggesting promising directions for future exploration.

Ronald Hayduk's examination of Global Exchange and the global justice (or "anti-globalization") movement, the first piece in the volume, rightly emphasizes the fragmentation of what "often looks more like several movements that are at odds with each other." Hayduk points in particular to the divide between those who would abolish institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and those who would reform them, as well as the debate over property destruction and other quasi-violent tactics. Hayduk indicates that questions of goals and tactics are related: direct action militants are often also World Bank and IMF abolitionists, and like Global Exchange that favor pragmatic tactics generally have reformist goals. Relationships between the organizational structure of global justice groups and their ideologies are also evident in Hayduk's account, as when he draws a parallel between the decentralized, loosely coordinated framework of many global justice organizations and what he calls their "radical democratic" vision of global social change. Hayduk's suggestion of a complex relationship among ideologies, organizational structures, and tactics introduces a theme that reappears at several points in the book.

After Hayduk's article, Berg arranges the nine remaining pieces into three groups: "Movements Based on Material Needs," "Movements Based on Postmaterialist Identities," and "Altruistic Movements." Given his suspicion of Inglehart's categories, this is a strange decision. He states that the classification is "for convenience," but the reader is tempted to interpret it instead as a device for putting the shakiness of Inglehart's thesis on display. Berg notes that "the fuzziness of the distinction will become even clearer as the individual chapters are read." This is an understatement.

Some articles in the book discuss groups with clearly materialist or postmaterialist concerns, for instance, Laura Katz Olson and Frank L. Davis's piece on senior citizen interest groups, or Melissa Haussman's on the women's peace movement, a quintessential new social movement. More often, however, the movements examined blur the line between Inglehart's categories. In his article on the disability movement, David Pfeiffer strenuously objects to the notion that disability rights activists are concerned with "postmaterialist" concerns, pointing out that this movement's highest priorities include workplace rights, health care, and physical access to buildings, unarguably material concerns. Similarly, Benjamin Shepard describes ACT UP as an

organization formed in response to a cultural and ideological phenomenon, the “sex panic” of social conservatives, but one that has nevertheless focused its demands on material issues such as affordable housing and access to medicines. Claude E. Welch, Jr.’s brief comments on the increasing openness of human rights groups to the notions of economic and social rights also disrupt the materialist-postmaterialist distinction.

If the categories “materialist” and “postmaterialist” fail to adequately account for movement differences, where should we turn? Suggesting more promising avenues for social movement theory, other contributors to this book take up ideological and organizational themes. As in Hayduk’s piece, Immanuel Ness’s article on labor and Meredith Reid Sarkees’s on the direct-action peace organization Voices in the Wilderness (VitW) propose relationships between organizational structure and ideology. Ness sees a decentralized labor federation as one of the central causes of declining union density and political influence, since fragmentation hinders organizing and campaign efforts. At the same time, labor leaders like John Sweeney have linked an emphasis on organizing with a policy of fostering ties to other social movements. In Ness’s vision, if labor is to act more militantly, more like a class-based social movement than a “parochial” interest group, it will need the strength that can only come with a greater degree of centralization. Changes in organizational structure, Ness suggests, are part of the answer to Berg’s question about the possible basis of lasting Teamster-Turtle unity. Sarkees introduces a distinction between “expressive” and “instrumentalist” ideologies within peace activism as she details the non-hierarchical, amateur-led structure of VitW. Her discussion makes clear that VitW’s expressive orientation is tied to both its structure and its decision to use “outsider” tactics of civil disobedience, and, one might add, to its lack of strong ties to social movements outside the radical sector of the peace movement.

Here we have one potential re-description of the divide between elements of the contemporary left, and a hint of how to understand that divide. Centralization, mass participation, and orientation toward effective action seem to go together, as do decentralization, intense personal commitment, and an expressive orientation. Like Hayduk, neither Ness nor Sarkees offers a full account of how organizational, ideological, and tactical questions are related, but all note that a relationship among the three factors is clear in the movements they study.

In the contribution to the book that offers the most rigorous engagement with theoretical questions, Christine Kelly and Joel Lefkowitz show how the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) illustrates a path by which the “conscience constituency” can find its way into cooperation with the labor movement. Kelly and Lefkowitz argue that USAS represents a “new class politics” that is pragmatic in its strategies but radical in its goals and analysis, in contrast with the sharp divide between expressive and instrumentalist orientations that Sarkees assumes. USAS also marks one of the points at which Inglehart’s categories break down: USAS is unambiguously concerned with material issues, but not material issues that directly impact its own members. The capacity of USAS to bridge the differences of constituencies and goals that bedevil the left at large, Kelly and Lefkowitz argue, is due to its decision to define itself through a “class ideal” or “class ethic” (2), albeit in the case of USAS a class ethic that self-consciously avoids a critique of capitalism as a system. This adoption of an

ideological emphasis on class concerns has allowed USAS to shift gears fairly smoothly between confrontational and conventional tactics, to bring together students, a core constituency of the new social movements, and workers, and to achieve concrete victories without losing a radical edge.

Unfortunately, Kelly and Lefkowitz choose not to discuss the telling events at the 2000 USAS conference, now legendary among student activists. This gathering saw a lily-white, largely male, pro-consensus, decentralist, direct-action faction pitted against a pro-voting, pro-centralization, more pragmatic group that included most of the people of color and women at the conference.(3) If Hayduk, Ness, and Sarkees are on the right track, we might expect organizational and tactical debates to fall out very much like this. An analysis of this tension within USAS would have given Kelly and Lefkowitz an opportunity to illuminate the ideological dimensions of organizational and tactical questions, something they would be well positioned to do given their discussion of USAS's role as a "bearer of ideas."

If ideology is central, then the fundamental divide might not be between materialist and postmaterialist movements, but between those with a commitment to social equality that transcends the radical-pragmatic divide, and those without. Berg suggests exactly this when he asks whether "a common desire for greater equality" has the potential to unify labor and the new social movements. What the contributors to the book add is a sense of the organizational and tactical decisions that match this ideological choice. In this context, James R. Simmons and Solon J. Simmons's discussion of the Greens makes it embarrassingly clear that there really is something to the Greens' claim that they are "neither left nor right." If we take the example of the Greens seriously, an ideological decision to eschew a class ethic appears to entail both a persistent orientation toward non-pragmatic action (to put it kindly) and an organizational inability to reach beyond what Simmons and Simmons call a "new class" constituency. Despite Simmons and Simmons' sympathy for their subject, their article calls into question the possibility that the U.S. Greens could ever play a helpful role in bringing Teamsters and Turtles together for the long haul.

Berg avoids tying these threads together into an explicit argument. This makes sense, given the loose connection between the various articles in the book. Neither Berg's introductory discussion of ideological and organizational questions nor the contributors' essays attempt to provide a full-fledged alternative to Inglehart's account of a cultural incompatibility between labor and the new social movements. Instead, what Berg and his contributors offer is a suggestive outline of the categories on which such an alternative might be built, along with a set of timely social movement studies that are useful in and of themselves.

Notes

1. Elizabeth (Betita) Martinez, "Where Was the Color in Seattle?" ColorLines 3:1 (Spring 2000).*Return up*
2. See Stephen Eric Bronner, Socialism Unbound (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002).*Return up*

3. Daraka Larimore-Hall, “Race, Structure, and Vegan Food: A Look at the USAS Conference,” The Activist (Fall 2000).*Return up*

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