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Are Human Rights Human?

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The history of what we call moral progress can for the most part be seen as the history of the substitution of hierarchical visions with presumptions in favor of equality. The recent irruption into the social scene of the animal question is part of this ongoing process–a process that is usually characterized by a direct challenge to the cultural status quo.[1] In fact, in the last few decades, nonhuman animals have been the center of a lively philosophical debate, and many voices have been raised against our current treatment of the members of species other than our own.[2] We routinely use nonhuman animals as mere commodities–we kill them for food, we use them in work and entertainment, we employ them as tools for research of all kinds. In short, we treat them in ways in which we would deem it profoundly unethical to treat human beings. Is this position morally defensible? And, if so, on which grounds? Since behind the present divergence in standards lies a deep-rooted philosophical tradition aiming at the exclusion of nonhuman beings from the protected sphere of ethics, it may be worth considering briefly how we got where we are.

I

Immanuel Kant writes that "so far as animals are concerned, we have no direct duties. Animals are not self-conscious and are there merely as means to an end. That end is man. . . . Our duties towards animals are merely indirect duties towards humanity."[3]

In the idea that nonhumans are nothing but means one can perceive echoes of Aristotle: "the other animals [exist] for the good of man, the domestic species both for his service and for his food, and . . . most of the wild ones for the sake of his food and of his supplies of other kinds."[4] And the thesis of indirect duties betrays a reminiscence of Thomas Aquinas's remarks on the subject of biblical injunctions against cruelty to nonhumans: "this is . . . to remove man's thoughts from being cruel to other men, and lest through being cruel to animals one become cruel to human beings."[5]

Though other views appeared on the philosophical scene – consider for example the Cartesian idea that animals are mere *natural automata* with which we can do entirely as we wish, and on the opposite side the utilitarian ethical concern for all the beings endowed with the capacity for suffering and enjoyment – one might say that these short quotations contain in a nutshell the elements of the most enduring and pervasive thesis about the treatment of nonhumans in all Western culture. In short: animals, as mere means, have zero grade moral status – that is, they are excluded from the moral community. However, there are limits to what can be done to them. Such limits are dictated by the fact that our behavior towards animals can rebound upon our behavior towards the only true objects of moral concern, namely, other human beings.

We can recast such a view in more formal terms. At the center of ethics lies a set of norms to govern behavior towards (at least some) other entities. Asking which are the entities other than the agent that should have their interests protected, is tantamount to asking who is a *moral patient*. The moral patient is, i.e., a being whose *treatment* may be subject to direct moral evaluation.[6] It is apparent that not all entities necessarily belong to this category – for most ethical theories, to shatter a stone or to mow the meadow's grass are wholly irrelevant actions. What the view in question claims is that, just like stones and plants, nonhuman animals are not moral patients.

The boundaries of the class of moral patients have often changed in the course of history, and it also happened that many human beings were excluded from ethical consideration – Aristotle himself held that, like animals, human slaves too were mere means at their masters' disposal.[7] Today we can easily understand how unsatisfactory such an attitude was, because a long work of rational criticism has dismantled its justifications, revealing the true nature as an implicit appeal to prejudice of the high-sounding claims on behalf of the superiority of a sex to the other, or of one race to all the other races. But if we rightly regard such a critical process as a fundamental component of our moral evolution, a question spontaneously arises: if the justifications on behalf of intra-human discrimination turned out to be undefensible, isn't it possible that the same holds for the justifications put forward on behalf of the discrimination against other-than-human beings? We shall here put to the test this hypothesis.

II

How, then, can one defend the idea that human beings are ends, while nonhuman beings are means? Before tackling this issue, it is necessary to stress that when contemporary philosophers defend the ends/means doctrine, what they are usually referring to is not the traditional Kantian formulation, but instead a softened version of it. According to such version, nonhuman animals are no longer utterly excluded from the moral community – they are, that is, numbered among moral patients. Nonetheless, the moral community has a stratified, hierarchical structure, and the continued use of nonhuman beings for our benefit is allegedly justified by their being confined to second-class moral status with respect to human beings. Both the traditional and the more recent view are defended by the same arguments. Since it is not possible to offer here a complete survey of such arguments, we shall confine ourselves to considering the most representative ones.

While not being altogether overlooked by philosophers, the first argument is, owing to its simplicity, powerful and widespread mainly at the societal level. To the question of what may draw what we might call, following Bentham, the "insuperable line" between us and the other animals,[8] this argument replies: the fact that they are not human. On such a perspective, what makes the difference is simply the possession, or lack, of a genotype characteristic of the species *Homo sapiens*.

Is it an acceptable reply? One can doubt it. Those who appeal to species membership work in fact within the framework of the intra-human egalitarian paradigm. And yet, it is just the line of reasoning that has lead to the defense of human equality which implies, by denying moral relevance to race and sex membership, the rejection of the idea that species membership *in itself* can mark a difference as far as moral status is concerned. If one claims that merely biological characteristics like race and sex cannot play a role in ethics, because ethics is a theoretical inquiry endowed with its own standards of justification, in which criteria imported from other domains cannot be directly relevant,[9] how can one attribute a role to a another merely biological characteristic such as species? Ethical views that, while rejecting racism and sexism, accept *speciesism* – as was defined, with a neologism that alludes to the parallel intra-human prejudices, the view that grants to the members of our own species a privileged status with respect to all other creatures – are internally inconsistent. For speciesism and racism are twin doctrines.[10]

Compared to this hardly plausible way of construing the relationships between species and morality, there exist more sophisticated views, to which the theoretical defenders of traditional morality tend to turn. In particular, there are, at least among philosophers, two main ways of describing the alleged difference between humans and the other animals. The appeal to the possession of rationality is central to both of them. We can set aside for the sake of argument the (questionable) assumption that all and only human beings are endowed with this capacity, in order to focus on the importance that is attached to rationality from a moral point of view.

The first argument rests on the idea that rational beings are the existence condition of morality, and might be summarized more or less as follows. Ethical norms are addressed to a particular kind of beings – *moral agents*. In brief, moral agents are those rational beings which can reflect morally on how to act, and whose behavior can be subject to moral evaluation. In this sense, if moral agents did not exist, there could be no ethical norms. As a consequence, ethics is an internal affair of moral agents.[11]

In spite of its apparent plausibility, the argument is based on a misunderstanding. Its conclusion is in fact reached only by the shift from the idea that only rational beings can be morally responsible to the idea that only what is done to rational beings has (full) moral weight. But the *how*, that is, the possibility of morality, is one thing; the *what*, that is, the object of morality, is another.[12] To acknowledge that moral agents make morality possible does not mean to make them the only (full) moral patients. That, on the other hand, we do not really hold this view is shown by the fact that we are far from withdrawing full moral protection from those members of our species who are unable to abide by ethical norms. Small

children, or – if one wants to avoid the controversial question of potentiality – severely intellectually disabled individuals (the so-called marginal, or non-paradigmatic, humans)[13], are not on this ground relegated to the no-man's land surrounding the moral community.

A different role is played by rationality within the second argument which is usually advanced in defense of human superiority. Basically, what is ascribed to such a capacity is a particular kind of instrumental value. The core idea is that the introduction into the moral community can be justified by means of some sort of agreement. Since in order to abide by the agreement one must be rational, the agreement will include only rational beings, who will then turn out to be the only moral patients. In this light, moral norms would be the norms with which rational and self-interested individuals would agree to comply on condition that others undertook to do so as well. If the preceding argument can somehow point to the contemporary position of John Rawls, it is here apparent the influence of the mutual advantage account of contractarianism of Hobbesian ascent[14].

It is not difficult to understand why not even this approach is acceptable. For, given that self-interested contractors gain no advantage from accepting principles that offer guarantees to individuals who are unable to give any guarantee in return, they can completely ignore the interests of those who are unable to reciprocate. But if the golden rule "treat others as you would have them treat you" is replaced by what we might call the silver rule, "treat others as they would treat you,[15]" mutual advantage has the devastating effect of driving ethical impartiality off the stage. Once more, current morality clearly grasps this point, insofar as it does not deprive of rights those human beings – again, children or the severely intellectually disabled – who cannot have duties.

But if none of the major arguments advanced in defense of the ends/means doctrine[16] – the appeal to the possession of a genotype *Homo sapiens*, the appeal to the possession of rationality as a precondition of morals, and the reference to this very same capacity as a means to intersubjective agreement – can justify maintaining nonhuman animals in their present inferior moral state, it seems plausible to conclude that traditional morality is untenable.

III

If one gives up the doctrine of human superiority, what kind of moral perspective should one adopt in its place? In which ways, and toward which beings, should traditional morality be reformed? In order to tackle this question, many among the authors who have dealt with the animal issue appeal to their own specific normative position – be it utilitarianism, deontologism, virtue ethics or any other. However, only an argument starting from premises that are, as far as possible, shared, can grant its conclusions the generality that is needed for moral reform. Because of this reason, we will directly start from what is today the most widespread and accepted among moral theories – the universal doctrine of human rights[17].

At the center of the theory of human rights lies the protection of the vital interests – in welfare, in freedom and in life – of some beings. Of which beings, exactly? Though the most common,

and apparently tautological, answer is "of *human* beings," such a move is, as we have seen, precluded by the fact that discrimination based on species is analogous to those forms of discrimination that the very doctrine condemns in sexism and racism. Most of the philosophers who confront the issue seem to be somehow aware of this problem. When it is bestowed a role, in fact, reference to species is introduced in a hurried and oblique way[18]. What, then, plays in an effective, and not rhetorical, way the role of explaining the *why* of human rights – of illustrating, that is, what it is that, in the members of our species, justifies the equal attribution of the particular sort of moral claims lumped together under the label of "human rights"?

Among the solutions advanced for this problem, the most defensible, as well as the most theoretically fertile, is no doubt the one put forward by a line of argument appeared at the beginning of the 1960s,[19] and culminating in the elaboration offered by the American philosopher Alan Gewirth. According to such a line, the criterion for the access to the protection that human rights warrant lies only in being an *agent*, that is, an intentional being that cares about its goals and wants to achieve them. All the beings that fulfill the requisite of intentionality are characterized by the capacity to enjoy freedom and welfare, as well as life which is a precondition for them, both directly and as prerequisites for action; and, for all these beings, the intrinsic value of their enjoyment is the same. To choose as a criterion, instead of intentionality, any other characteristic – be it rationality or any other among the cognitive skills traditionally seen as "superior" – would be arbitrary, since it would exclude from moral consideration interests which are relevantly similar in that they are equally vital for their bearers[20].

Once articulated, such an answer – which has among other things the important effect of barring the way to discredited perfectionist worldviews – appears obvious. And yet, it involves a corollary which is not equally obvious: that, on the basis of the very doctrine that establishes them, human rights are not *human*. For not only does the more or less avowed acceptance of the idea that species membership is not morally relevant eliminate from the theory any structural reference to the possession of a genotype *Homo sapiens*, but the will to secure equal fundamental rights to all human beings, including the non-paradigmatic ones, implies that the criterion for the ascription of such rights must lie at a cognitive level accessible to a large number of non-human animals.

IV

If, in view of all this, we go back to our initial interrogative, it may be safely said that the current divergence in standards between humans and nonhumans is indefensible. All the more so: it is plausible to claim that, among those entitled to that minimum of equality and equity that allows one to live a life worth living – among, that is, those moral patients who deserve full moral status – there are many nonhuman beings. But what can mean, in practice, to extend fundamental rights beyond the boundaries of our species? Confronted with this idea, some opponents tend to make recourse to various reductios, by evoking scenarios that are either concretely impossible, such as the obligation to bring our aid-commitment all the way to the deserts or the sea depths, or socially absurd, such as the revision to its foundations of our

whole legal system.

None of this. In order to understand this point, it is worth defining more precisely that particular category of moral rights that we label as "human rights." Such category has in fact two significant peculiarities. Firstly, human rights do not cover the whole of morality, but concern the more limited theory of conduct which has been defined as "morality in the narrow sense," and which meets the special class of moral concerns which has to do with the basic protection of individuals from interference[21]. For in spite of the attempts to embody in the doctrine some *positive* rights, or rights to assistance, the ones which prevail are always *negative* rights, or rights to non-interference, that not only are more basic but – being less affected by conditions of scarcity – are less likely to be subject to exceptions[22]. Secondly, human rights clearly developed as an answer to those forms of institutionalized violence and discrimination which have marked the first half of the twentieth century. This implies, as it has been convincingly argued by the American philosopher Thomas Pogge, that the model both of their implementation and of their violation is based not on the interaction between individuals, but on the organization and the action of the state[23].

Let's therefore reconsider the present situation in the light of these two aspects. Billions of nonhuman animals who meet the requisite of intentionality are tortured, confined and killed in the pursuit of the most varied human goals. But *codified* killing, confinement, mutilation and torture are just the opposite of that protection from *institutional interference* that human rights theory aims at granting. What, then, could an implementation at the social level of the conclusions so far reached mean in such a context? Far from involving impossible practical interventions and complicated legal alchemies, such implementation would merely require a legal change aimed at removing in the status of property the basic obstacle to the enjoyment of the denied rights. In other words, it would imply for these animals the shift from the condition of objects to that of subjects of legal rights[24], and, as a consequence, the prohibition of all the practices that are today made possible by their current state, from raising for food to scientific experimentation to the most varied forms of commercial use and systematic extermination.

This is, I believe, the conclusion awaiting anyone who wants to seriously reflect on our current behavior toward nonhuman animals. Far from belonging in the different, and lesser, moral category in which they have till now been confined, (most) nonhumans confront us with all the force of a justified ethical demand. And this because it is the very logic of the doctrine that tried to overcome the most serious difficulties for intra-human cohabitation which forces us to extend basic rights beyond the boundaries of the species *Homo sapiens*, thus offering a plausible solution for the problems of a community broader than the human one.

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[1] On this, cf. Steve F. Sapontzis, "Everyday Morality and Animal Rights," *Between the*

Species 3 (1987), sect. III.

[2] For a rapid survey, see the first chapter of David DeGrazia, *Taking Animals Seriously. Mental Life and Moral Status* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[3] Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis Infield (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 239.

[4] Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 3, 1256 b.

[5] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, book III, part II, chap. CXII.

[6] We owe one of the first formulations of the concept to G. J. Warnock: cf. his *The Object of Morality* (London: Methuen, 1971) p. 148. See also Harlan B. Miller, "Science, Ethics, and Moral Status," *Between the Species* 10 (1994), p. 14.

[7] See Aristotle, *Politics*, I, 2, 1253 b.

[8] See Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (New York: Hafner Press, 1948), chap. XVII, IV, note 1.

[9] For the autonomy of ethics, see Thomas Nagel, "Ethics as an Autonomous Theoretical Subject," in *Morality as a Biological Phenomenon*, ed. Gunther S. Stent (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). For the moral irrelevance of biological characteristics, see e.g. Michael Tooley, "Speciesism and Basic Moral Principles," *Etica & Animali* 9 (1998), pp. 5-36.

[10] Cfr. Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 2nd edn. (New York: The New York Review of Books, 1990), p. 9.

[11] Once again, we owe the paradigmatic formulation of this argument, which is particularly widespread in the continental philosophical tradition, to Immanuel Kant. See Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis W. Beck (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1997), p. 45.

[12] See Steve F. Sapontzis, *Morals, Reason, and Animals* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), pp. 146 ff.

[13] A comprehensive survey of the discussion of the case of non-paradigmatic members of our species can be found in Daniel A. Dombrowski, *Babies and Beasts. The Argument from Marginal Cases* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

[14] For the similarities and differences between Rawlsian impartial contractarian theory and Hobbesian mutual advantage approach, see Paola Cavalieri and Will Kymlicka. "Expanding the Social Contract," *Etica & Animali* 8 (1996), pp. 5-33.

[15] I borrow the expression "silver rule" from Edward Johnson, *Species and Morality* (Ph.D.

diss., Princeton University, July 1976 [University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI]), p. 134.

[16] For a concise critique of many minor arguments see Paola Cavalieri, *The Animal Question. Why Nonhuman Animals Deserve Human Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), chapters III and IV.

[17] For a more articulated version of the following argument see ibid., chapter VI.

[18] Cf. for example. what Adam Bedau writes: "Are human rights to be thought of as possessed by all and only persons, human beings, or human persons? . . . [T]he last alternative . . . is the least controversial way to resolve the problem. The concept of human rights was not designed to embrace non-human persons, and it was clearly intended to exclude infra-human beings, such as animals." See Hugo Adam Bedau, "International Human Rights," in *And Justice for All*, eds. Tom Regan and Donald VanDeVeer (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1983), p. 298.

[19] Its first seeds are to be found in Gregory Vlastos, "Justice and Equality," in *Social Justice*, ed. Richard B. Brandt (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

[20] See Alan Gewirth, *Reason and Morality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978). A summary of the argument can be found in Alan Gewirth, "The Basis and Content of Human Rights," in *Nomos XXIII: Human Rights*, eds. J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman (New York: New York University Press,1981).

[21] On the notion of narrow morality cf. in particular W. K. Frankena, "The Concept of Morality," *The Journal of Philosophy* 63 (1966); G. J. Warnock, *The Object of Morality* (London: Methuen, 1971), in particular chap. 2 and chap. 5; and J. L. Mackie, *Ethics. Inventing Right and Wrong* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 107-108.

[22] In his "Human Rights, Old and New", in *Political Theory and the Rights of Man*, ed. D. D. Raphael (London: Macmillan, 1967), D. D. Raphael plausibly claims that *positive* rights, rather than as "human rights", are to be classified as "citizen's rights".

[23] See Thomas Pogge, "How Should Human Rights Be Conceived?" *Jahrbuch für Recht und Ethik* 3 (1995), pp. 103-120.

[24] For a discussion of this problem see e.g. Gary L. Francione, *Animals, Property, and the Law* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

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Animal Rights Advocacy – Right Ethics, Wrong Target

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To many of those working in the field of animal ethics, the case for the rights of animals is so eminently invincible that its demonstration needs little rigorous argument. To be sure, there are interminable debates about the relevant ethical criteria, revolving around pain and suffering, the value of life, the appropriate nonhuman animal and human animal distinctions, and the like. But the basic idea that animal interests are entitled to radical promotion and protection remains unchallenged within the coterie. Indeed, the rights of animals are seen to be so obvious that they are assumed within the discourse and, frequently, subsequent argument appears more like rationalization than elaboration or objective justification. Argument and evidence are chosen not because they are logically and empirically appropriate but because they further the cause. We are left more with ideology than with philosophy. As a consequence, many animal rights advocates assert their case rather than argue it or explain it. Their adversaries are depicted in the worst possible light (as are the animal rights advocates by their opponents) and thus appear as outright behaviorists, indeed often as Cartesians, when in reality they often hold to an only slightly different view of the animal world than do the radical advocates themselves. Despite the similarities and the fact that the animal rights advocates readily convince those who are susceptible to their claims, they utterly fail to convince those who ought to be the object of their hortative endeavours – those with the greatest professional interests in animals and with the greatest influence on public policy with regard to animals: the animal welfare scientists, veterinarians, ethologists, zoologists; and the professional historians and anthropologists of the human-animal nexus.

There is, in fact, at least one glaring inconsistency in animal rights discourse. To talk of generic animal rights is, indeed, "speciesist," to borrow Richard Ryder's favourite coinage, introduced by analogy with the terms racist' and sexist.' And this is the very complaint animal rights

advocates direct to their adversaries, that they are “speciesist,” assuming something exclusive in the human armoury when none is warranted. In fact to talk of animal rights is itself “speciesist.” That is, to compare human rights with animal rights, as opposed to the rights of particular species, is already to treat the human as a special case. If it is appropriate to talk of distinctive human rights (the right to vote, the right to freedom of speech, the right to assemble, for example) then one must talk of the rights of giraffes, gorillas, lemurs and zebras rather than the rights of animals, unless one assumes that all species share identical rights – and thus that the right to vote is of relevance to the horse. In fact, even Peter Singer claims that few, if any, members of the Animal Liberation movement would claim that a mouse shared the same right to life as a human. And Tom Regan writes of rights peculiar to mammals of a year or more.

Nor is it always clear just what is to count as an animal, for the conception of animal is in part cultural. Thus in hunter-gatherer societies the quarry of the male hunters is viewed as animal while the gatherings’ of the women, including lizards, birds and small mammals, are thought of as vegetable food. And the classical Greeks distinguished between land animals and sea animals, thus numbering the porpoises and whales among the fish. Scientific taxonomy is only more explanatory than these conceptions within our own cultural context. Yet animal rights advocates continue to talk, and write, of animal rights in the abstract. To put the matter differently, in order to know the rights of a human, one must understand the needs, purposes and wants of the human species. Correspondingly, to know the rights of a giraffe one must know the species needs, wants and purposes of a giraffe. To be sure, all animals may be said to have rights, but they differ according to the specifics of the species. The bat’s capacity for echolocation is essential for it to continue to act as a bat. The koala requires access to eucalyptus leaves for its health. Neither echolocation protection nor access to eucalyptus leaves are appropriate rights of cattle. In order to gain an understanding of the rights of, say, a pig, animal rights advocates must refrain from their generic language and look to the research of the animal scientists to comprehend the nature and needs of the pig. It is not that the ethics of animal rights advocates are wanting, far from it. Rather, it is the language in which the ethics is expressed which often alienates those who have an abiding interest in the well-being of the animals they study.

If the rights of particular species are to be understood, they are not be understood as abstractions but in relation to the wants, needs and purposes of the species in question. Animal scientists customarily reject the claims of animal rights advocates out of hand, at least in part because the language of the advocates pays insufficient attention to the empirical nature of the particular species and describe the rights of animals without reference to the enormous amount of empirical research undertaken to determine the needs of a given species. And on the odd occasion that they do take the specifics of a species into consideration they usually get it wrong by ignoring the findings of the scientists unless those findings accord with what the advocates hoped would be the findings. It is, then, scarcely surprising that the animal scientists often look askance at animal rights advocates when the conclusions of their research are rejected or employed according to their usefulness to the advocacy alone.

Frequently the animal scientists are painted in very misleading strokes by the advocates. Such scientists are often depicted as quasi-Cartesians, denying that animals feel pain and suffer or have emotions. In reality, the scientists are attempting to determine not just whether a species feels pain, suffers and has emotions – which in most cases they accept without question – but the degree to which pain may be anticipated, the relation between pain and suffering, and the relation between pain, suffering and emotion in particular species – all of which is of considerable importance in determining the appropriate treatment for the species in question. Of course, animal rights advocates are absolutely right that a great deal more needs to be done to promote the interests of all animals, including a vast improvement in general attitudes toward animals, which in turn requires that animals not be employed for human purposes unless the animal also benefits. But, unless the animal rights advocate is willing to listen (with a critical open mind) to the scientist, the interests of the animal will receive short shrift. Unless animal rights advocates take a more open-minded approach to the scientists, they will hinder the progress of the cause which they advocate with such justified ethical indignation. And when they do address themselves to the scientists in more respectful terms the scientists themselves may well be persuaded to ask questions in their research which relate to the issues which animal rights advocates bring to the fore.

If animal rights advocates miss the appropriate target with regard to the empirical nature of animals their general description of the history of attitudes to animals is even more wide of the mark. Again, the history is more like a rationalized ideology than an attempt to discover a truth. Indeed, the history of animal ethics as written appears more like a how much better *we* are than *they*,' how superior *we* are to our recent ancestors,' story. In almost all general books on animal ethics and its development we will find a section (usually a lengthy one) on the impact of the seventeenth-century doctrine of Cartesianism, stating, or at the very least implying, that the views of Descartes and Malebranche on animals as automata played a predominant role in the history of Western ethics. In fact, no more than a handful in Britain appear to have subscribed to the doctrine (and even some of those who did in theory stated they were unwilling to abide by its implications in practise). And if there were more adherents in France they were still outnumbered by those who treated the whole idea as preposterous, including the Catholic Church itself. The prolific epistolary Mme de Sévigné wrote to her daughter that even the reputation of Descartes could not convince her of the idea of animals without thoughts and emotions. As often as not, Cartesianism was merely fodder for the wits. Noting Descartes' analogy between a watch and an animal, Bernard Fontenelle declared that if he put a dog machine beside a bitch machine in short order he would have a pup machine but if he put two watches side by side and waited a whole lifetime no third watch would appear. That convinced him that dogs were worthier and more noble than watches. In England, Viscount Bolingbroke noted the same analogy and declared that, despite Descartes, he was sure his peasants would still be able to tell the difference between the town bull and the parish clock.

Again, in most books on animal ethics the idea of animals being capable of pain and suffering, and that fact being of vital importance in ascribing rights to animals, the eighteenth-century utilitarian Jeremy Bentham is accorded pride of place. Indeed, the pain and suffering criterion has been described more than once as the "Benthamite dictum." Yet the relevance of pain and

suffering was recognized long before Bentham and placed as a central point of argument in the writings of Dean, Berrow, Hildrop, Primatt and many others who have been largely ignored or downplayed in the literature. Surely, the fine statement from Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) ought to have long been a primary recognition in the animal advocacy literature on the preeminent role of suffering and the human awareness of it: "Emile…will begin to have gut reactions at the sounds of complaints and cries, the sign of blood flowing will cause him an ineffable distress before he knows whence comes this new movement within him.…Thus is born pity, the first sentiment that touches the human heart according to the order of nature.

To become sensitive and pitying, the child must know that there are beings like him who suffer what he has suffered, who feel the pains he has felt, and there are others whom he ought to conceive of as being able to feel them too. In fact, how do we let ourselves be moved by pity if not by transporting ourselves outside of ourselves and identifying with the suffering animal, by leaving, as it were, our own being to take on its being. It is not in ourselves, it is in him that we suffer." This is perhaps not as pithy as Bentham's famous phrase – "The question is not, can they *reason?* nor can they *talk?* but, can they *suffer*?" – but it surely reflects empathy and the awareness of the relevance of suffering far better than any other historical statement. Why is it ignored? Ostensibly because many prominent animal rights advocates do not like to recognize that, along with a myriad of similar, if less profound, statements, Rousseau's words reflect a general compassion felt throughout human history. Contrary to the impression one receives in so much of the literature, a recognition (and even sometimes the language) of animal rights is no new phenomenon but is a part of general human consciousness. Many influential animal rights advocates wish to be seen as a vanguard rather than a historical continuity. They do not wish to acknowledge the generality of their worthy precursors lest it detract from their self image as innovators and purveyors of a new and striking ethic.

But if they have the significance of Descartes and Bentham wrong – and a host of others to boot – nowhere are they further from the truth in their honouring of Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin is, of course, to be admired greatly for his discovery of the process of natural selection, though his role in discovering the theory of evolution is less impressive, there being at least three millennia of prior contributions to the idea of, and even evidence for, evolution itself. Where animal rights advocates get Darwin hopelessly wrong is in his supposed novel appreciation of the attributes of animals. It is a commonplace to read in the animal rights literature, here in the words of Marian Scholtmeijer, that "the Darwinian revolution profoundly altered society's conception of animals," or, by the convinced vegetarian (as am I) Michael Allen Fox who referred to "the work of Charles Darwin (1809-1882), which breached the species barrier so dramatically." And these statements are from among the more admirable of animal rights' scholars. In fact, while Darwin's influence on our understanding of the manner in which evolution takes place was without parallel, he had little or no influence on the status of animals. Darwin is often lauded for his recognition in the *Descent of Man* (1871): "that there is no fundamental difference between man and the higher animals in their mental faculties." Moreover, Darwin continued: "man and the higher animals, especially the Primates, have some few instincts in common. All have the same senses, emotions, intuitions and sensations similar passions, affections and emotions, even the more complex ones, such as

jealousy, suspicion, emulation, gratitude and magnanimity…they possess the same faculties of imitation, attention, deliberation, choice, memory, imagination, the association of ideas and reason, though in very different degrees."

Certainly, in light of the frequent animal advocate assumption of few, if any, prior sentient and rational acknowledgements, the claims appear to be revolutionary. Yet they are merely a restatement of views long held in Western society on the human-animal relationship. Thus, for example, even ignoring the classical Greek examples, the French army surgeon Ambroise Paré stated in the mid-sixteenth century that "magnanimity, clemency, docility [ie., the capacity for learning], love, carefulness, providence, yea knowledge, memory & c. is common to all brutes." In the seventeenth century, the Puritan leveller Richard Overton was citing Paré with admiration and approval. We find extensive listings of similar attributes in the writings, for example, of Rorarius, Gilles, Bary, de la Chambre, Bayle, Voltaire and George Nicholson, with Nicholson citing the comments from a broad variety of sources. In the eighteenth century we encounter the influential Bishop of Durham, Joseph Butler, taking it as common knowledge that other animals as well as humans "share apprehension, memory, reason…affection…enjoyments and sufferings." By the nineteenth century, the acknowledgement was even more pervasive.

Thus, for example, the devout theist and anti-materialist Sir James Brodie, President of the Royal Society when the *Origin of Species* (1859) was published, avowed sixteen years before Darwin's *Descent of Man* and a few before the *Origins*, that the "The mental principle in animals is of the same essence as that of human beings; so that even in the humblest classes [i.e., species] we may trace the rudiments of these faculties to which, in their state of more complete development, we are indebted for the grandest results of human genius. I am inclined to believe that the minds of the inferior animals are essentially of the same nature with that of the human race." But all this palls against the claim of the veterinarian William Yoautt, writing in 1839, some twenty years before *The Origin of Species,* in words very similar to the later expression of Charles Darwin in the 1871 *Descent*, that animals possess senses, emotions, consciousness, attention, memory, sagacity, docility, association of ideas, imagination, reason, instinct, the moral qualities, friendship and loyalty each of which is acknowledged to exist in other species and to differ from human attributes only by degree. Nor did Youatt seem to think he was advancing a new and especially controversial doctrine. Clearly, Charles Darwin added nothing to the conception of animal attributes, however much he may have greatly influenced our understanding of the manner of evolution. The sentient, emotional and rational nature of animals was well recognized long before Darwin. The honour bestowed on Darwin by the animal rights advocates is without any serious merit.

The animal rights advocates are no less misleading when we are told, as PETA has recently stated, that Pope John Paul II declared in 1990 that animals have souls. Indeed, he did. What is misleading is to leave the impression that John Paul II was changing the direction of the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, the Church has traditionally held the view that animals have souls, but sentient and mortal souls as opposed to the rational and immortal souls claimed exclusively for humans, as Thomas Aquinas explained the matter. Pope John Paul II's statement did not

clarify or amend the issue of the nature of the animal soul. To all intents and purposes the apparent doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church remained the same.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that many animal rights advocates choose their evidence and argument with more concern for the cause than for scholarship, and in so doing alienate a large number of people of influence who would be more readily convinced by a sober and industrious investigation of the issues. Despite the justice of their cause, through their tactics and the slipshod methods of some, they mar their own reputation, causing many to take them less seriously than they might. Animal rights advocacy could benefit from a healthy dose of earnest and honest scholarship in lieu of ideology. Ideology masquerading as scholarship serves ultimately to harm the eminently worthwhile cause of animal protection and promotion . And, of course, if the advocates need to move closer to the scientists, a reciprocal *rapprochement* of the scientists to the advocates is equally necessary. Advocates and scientists, even though their roles must be distinct, share a lot more in common than either of the adversaries is normally willing to concede.

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Regarding The Last Frontier Of Bigotry

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The lunch provided for participants at an ethics conference includes no vegetarian entrée-even though you specified in accepting the invitation that you would need one. You ask the head of the catering team what vegetarians are supposed to eat. He says, “Oh, no problem. There’s a salad”-as if those who try to eat cruelty-free are not entitled to a main course (even at an ethics conference).

Dining with a distinguished philosopher who has devoted much of her career to defending “human dignity,” you discover that she has never morally questioned meat eating; indeed, she has never thought carefully about the moral status of animals at all. Surely, you think, extensive training in critical thinking entails some obligation to examine one’s own complicity in harmful practices.

You go to the house of friends, neighbors, or relatives for dinner. Knowing you don’t eat most meat and apparently feeling defensive-even though you have not brought up the issue-they try to put *you* on the defensive by demanding an explanation for your willingness to eat shrimp or to play catch with a leather football. What is the point here? That 100% compliance with whatever standards you hold is more important than having morally defensible standards? Or that less than complete success in your effort to live morally gives everyone else implicit permission to ignore completely the moral concern at issue?

A colleague sits next to you at a faculty meeting and says, “Oh, I brought a chicken sandwich. I hope you won’t be offended.” While you appreciate his sensitivity to your feelings, it seems pretty clear that *your* interests should not be the focus of moral attention here.

The last frontier of bigotry will be hard to cross.

But what is the last frontier? Part of the difficulty is that it is hard to articulate. We can call it

"speciesism" or "species bigotry" and characterize it as *an unwillingness to give some individuals their due simply because they are not members of our species (or of some group assumed to include only humans such as autonomous beings)*. But what are nonhuman animals due, exactly? And, since it isn't so obvious what they are due, how can we even advance a charge of species bigotry? If reasonable people can disagree about what animals are due, why shouldn't we be pro-choice about decisions affecting them?

Let's back up a minute.

Morally serious people disagree about what justice requires in connection with affirmative action, but that hardly prevents us from knowing that slavery, lynching, and Jim Crow in the American south were viciously racist. Thoughtful, decent people differ about the reasons for the dearth of women in university physics departments. But that doesn't obscure the fact that it's sexist to discourage women across the board from seeking careers outside the house. Meanwhile, differences about whether respect for gays and lesbians demands full legal recognition of gay marriage hardly invites doubts about whether homophobic physical assault is morally repugnant.

In the same way, uncertainty about what animals are due doesn't prevent us from recognizing clear cases of species bigotry such as factory farming, cosmetics testing on animals, the fur industry, whaling, abuse of circus animals, rodeos, bullfights, and complacent acceptance of such practices and institutions.

"Wait, how can you say that?" someone might object. "All morally serious people agree that racial minorities, women, and homosexuals deserve no less consideration than whites, men, and straight people-that they have equal moral status or standing-even if some details of appropriate policies and treatment are debatable. But, as you yourself have acknowledged, with animals it's not even clear that they're entitled to any such principle of equality.[1] Nor are matters much clearer if we note that only *sentient* animals, possessed of feelings, can be benefited or harmed in ways they care about-meaning they have a welfare and interests, the commonsense foundation of moral status. For, as you have noted, even with sentient animals there is honest disagreement about whether they deserve equal consideration or (as suggested by some of our considered judgments about pest control, indigenous peoples' hunting rights, and several other issues) substantial but less than fully equal consideration. If we're not even sure what animals deserve at this fundamental level, how can we know what counts as giving animals less than they're due?"

In response to this objection, I will advance two claims. First, much human use of sentient animals (hereafter "animals" for brevity) is inconsistent with *any* serious regard for them and so is clearly beyond the moral pale. Much animal use causes them extensive suffering either for frivolous purposes (e.g., amusement, vanity) or for more substantial purposes (e.g., nutrition, warmth) but where non-animal alternatives are readily available. Second, a lot of the contemporary discussion of animal rights obscures this important point, impeding moral progress.

In advancing the first claim, I will focus on meat eating. More specifically, I will consider (a) factory farming, the institution that probably causes more harm to animals than any other today, and (b) the purchasing and consumption of its products, the practice that keeps factory farming in business. I will sketch an argument that factory farming and consumers' routine support for it are indefensible.

If there is one moral principle that is beyond serious doubt, it is the principle of *nonmaleficence*. This principle states that, other things equal, we should not harm others; put another way, we should not harm them unnecessarily. A system of thought that did not embrace nonmaleficence would hardly be recognizable as a *moral* system. Let's assume, then, that we accept the principle that it is wrong to cause others unnecessary harm. Or, since one might argue that very slight unnecessary harm to others, or even greater unnecessary harms to which others consent, aren't so clearly wrong, let us specify the principle so as to make it breathtakingly obvious: *"It is wrong to cause extensive unnecessary harm to others without their consent."* Presumably, anyone who is neither a nihilist nor a psychopath accepts this principle. Now….

"I see where you're going with this," one might interrupt. "You'll say animals are among others' and then apply the principle to animals. But that may be cheating. Our moral tradition has always favored human interests over animal interests, so maybe this principle, however sensible it sounds, shouldn't be extended to animals."

My interlocutor is right that our moral tradition has always favored human interests. Many people today challenge this favoritism, or at least certain aspects of it such as unequal consideration at a fundamental level. But whether such favoritism is defensible is not an issue we need settle here. That is because everyone involved in this debate over animal ethics agrees that paradigm instances of cruelty to animals are wrong. How to explain this considered judgment, and how to conceptualize animals' moral status in light of it, are matters of disagreement; but that paradigm instances of cruelty to animals (e.g., smashing them to death for fun) is wrong is a judgment that all serious discussants affirm. And it takes little further reflection to see that the most plausible way to ground this judgment is by acknowledging that our obligations of nonmaleficence extend to animals (sentient animals, who can be harmed in ways that matter to them). For while the moral judgment that condemns cruelty to animals is confident and unwavering, efforts to explain this judgment *without* allowing that animals are due nonmaleficence are much less certain. This point merits expansion.

Some, following Kant, have argued that we should not be cruel to animals because such cruelty is likely to spill over into brutish treatment of our fellow humans. Others have claimed that the only thing wrong with such cruelty is that it upsets the sensibilities of animal lovers. But such human-centered accounts always seem empirically questionable or at least to admit of exceptions-though the moral condemnation of cruelty does not. More importantly, these accounts miss the most obvious reason cruelty is wrong: the great harm it causes to its victims for no compelling reason. The only ones who are *clearly and in every case* wronged by cruelty

are its victims. Set up a case, as contrived as you like, that can guarantee that cruelty to some animal would have no negative effect on humans, and still the action-say, kicking around a nonthreatening dog-will seem obviously wrong. The only satisfactory account of the wrongness of cruelty acknowledges the moral status of its victims. Animals have moral status in this sense: Their interests have (at least some) moral importance independently of how our treatment of animals affects humans. Thus the scope of nonmaleficence includes animals.

We return, then, to our principle: "It is wrong to cause extensive unnecessary harm to others without their consent." Factory farms do precisely this. Obviously, cattle, pigs, chickens, and turkeys do not consent to the harms inflicted on them. And, as anyone familiar with the conditions of factory farms knows, they cause very extensive harm to animals confined in them.

Consider the lives of factory-farmed hens (and their brothers) in the United States. Where chicks are raised to produce eggs, male chicks, lacking commercial value, are commonly gassed, ground up alive, or suffocated. The females live their lives in crowded, highly unnatural, uncomfortable settings. Many are subjected to forced molting, in which water is withheld for one to three days and food for up to two weeks in order to extend their productive lives. When considered spent, they are stuffed into crates and transported by truck, sometimes for days, without food, water, or protection from the elements. At a slaughterhouse, hens are shackled upside down on a conveyor belt until an automated knife cuts their throats. They are fully conscious during this process because the Humane Slaughter Act does not apply to poultry-despite the fact that, at more than 6 billion per year, they represent the animals most commonly slaughtered for food in this country. Clearly hens raised in factory farms undergo extensive harm during their lifetimes. Any detailed account of these lives suggests that they are not worth living; better, from the standpoint of their interests, not to have been brought into existence at all. The same may be said for broiler chickens, hogs, veal calves, and arguably cattle raised specifically for beef (whose six months of roaming outdoors, I would argue, do not compensate for the harms they experience during that time and especially afterward).[2]

With this sketch of factory farms in view, one might wonder whether farm animals raised in more natural, less intensive conditions can have lives worth living. In this essay I focus on the institution that apparently causes the greatest overall harm to animals while producing most of the meat, eggs, and dairy products consumed in the United States. I have discussed family farms elsewhere.[3] For now, in passing, I urge readers not to overlook harmful practices that characterize even this more benign form of animal husbandry-including unanesthetized branding, dehorning, and castration; the separation of mothers from their young; and rough, sometimes brutal, treatment in transport, handling, and slaughter.

Returning to factory farms, they clearly cause extensive harm to animals. Just as importantly, this harm is *unnecessary* insofar as eating the products of factory farms is unnecessary. No doubt some of the world's people, due to impoverished food options, need to eat meat in order to be healthy. But this is not the situation facing, say, most Americans. It is unlikely that anyone who will read this essay will really need to eat meat, eggs, or dairy products produced

in factory farms. After all, readily available alternatives are adequate for a healthful diet. Nowadays, even such mainstream grocery chains as Giant and Safeway carry tofu, soy milk, non-dairy cheese and margarine, cage-free eggs, and many varieties of soy-based "veggie meats" (burgers, imitation chicken, sandwich "meats," etc.) For most Americans, and similarly situated people in other countries, a little planning should be sufficient for a healthful diet that steers free of factory farm products. Considering that most readers of this essay can achieve such a diet *without even changing grocery stores*, it would hardly be plausible to assert that, for these individuals, buying and eating factory farm products is necessary.

One might counter, however, that doing so is necessary *for the specific economic purpose of keeping factory farms in business*. But this appeal is unpersuasive. For one thing, any economic harm caused by the demise of factory farming would have to be borne just once whereas the harms to animals will be exacted indefinitely if factory farms remain in business. Second, there should be a rough parity between agribusinesses' losses and the gains of other businesses such as producers of soy products; as meat consumption plummets, the consumption of alternatives rises. Third, the risks to *human* well-being entailed by factory farming-including environmental degradation, health risks, inhumane working conditions, and highly inefficient use of grain proteins-would be avoided or reduced (indefinitely) if the industry is eliminated.[4] Finally, there are moral limits to what we may do to others in pursuing economic interests, and causing billions of sentient beings massive harm every year, I submit, oversteps those bounds.

In sum, it makes sense to say that the harms of factory farming are unnecessary. That is, they are unnecessary for any purpose-such as human life or health-that might plausibly be thought to justify the massive harm involved. Indeed, the conditions of factory farming provide paradigm instances of cruelty, which any plausible specification of nonmaleficence must condemn.

Factory faming causes extensive, unnecessary harm to which its victims have not consented. Since causing such harm is wrong if *anything* is wrong, the conclusion that factory farming is unjustified seems inescapable. "Hold on," one might object. "Even if factory farming is morally indefensible, that doesn't mean buying and eating its products is wrong. After all, consumers aren't causing any harm." Suppose someone said, "I'm not kicking cats to death. I'm just paying someone else to do it." We would judge this person to act wrongly in encouraging and providing financial support for cruelty. Similarly, were it not for consumers' continual patronage of their products, factory farms would be unable to survive. Regardless of how distant they may feel from the harms caused to animals by this institution, consumers bear significant responsibility for these harms. Although somewhat vague, the following rule seems plausible: "Make every reasonable effort not to provide financial support to institutions and practices that cause extensive unnecessary harm."

This plausible rule suggests that routine patronizing of factory farm products is, at least for the vast majority of this essay's readers, morally indefensible. The rule does not require extraordinary effort or sainthood. It does not condemn making some exceptions to personal

policies that accord with the rule. Nor does it make it obvious what our obligations are with respect to seafood or products from family farms. But this rule does condemn a practice in which most people, including most philosophers and ethicists, engage-apparently with little or no prickling of conscience and little or no effort to reduce their complicity in extensive unnecessary harm.

That it's wrong to cause extensive unnecessary harm seems intuitively obvious. That we should try hard not to encourage and pay others to cause such harm seems nearly as obvious. How can we account, then, for the violation of these norms by the vast majority of the public, including those trained in critical thinking and those specializing in ethics? There are many factors we could consider: the psychology of avoidance, denial, rationalization, and self-interested bias; the sociology of following traditions and not questioning what most people do; the business of promoting benign images of industry while hiding its dark side; the government's role in protecting big business; the American ideology of capitalism largely unconstrained by moral concerns. All these factors, and others, contribute to species bigotry. In advancing the second major thesis of this essay, I will focus on a single factor that is commonly overlooked even by scholars in animal ethics: the very terms in which arguments for animal protection are commonly made.

Many animal protectionists use the language of *rights*. Animals have rights, they say, and this is why it is wrong to exploit them. But what does it mean to say animals have rights? Three meanings can be helpfully distinguished. In a very broad sense, to say animals have rights is simply to say that they have moral status, that they are not mere tools for our use or playthings for our amusement, that their interests have at least some moral weight (irrespective of how promoting their interests may promote our own). Assuming I am right in holding that no account of the wrongness of cruelty can fail to acknowledge the moral status of its victims, then animals clearly have rights in this moral-status sense and their having such rights has everything to do with the wrongness of exploiting them in various ways.

But, according to another usage common in ethical theory, to say that animals have rights is to say something much stronger: that their most important interests-such as avoiding suffering-deserve such strong moral protections that it is nearly always wrong to sacrifice these interests even if doing so is necessary to maximize overall utility (where everyone's comparable interests, including those of animals, receive equal consideration). This is a very controversial claim. Indeed, it is somewhat controversial to assert, as utilitarians deny, that human beings have rights in this strong, utility-trumping sense.

Unfortunately, many animal advocates maintain not merely that animals have such strong rights, but that the moral case against factory farming and other animal-exploiting institutions *depends* on their having such rights. Meanwhile, many defenders of the status quo of animal usage contend that it is precisely because animals *do not* have such rights that the status quo is justified. Thus, in a recent book, Tom Regan, who champions animal rights in the utility-trumping sense, and Carl Cohen, who defends most current animal usage, both claim that the crucial issue is whether animals have rights in this sense.[5] Each claims that the other's

position is *clearly* indefensible once all the relevant arguments are in.[6] The reader is thereby offered this impression: Either thorough-going liberation of animals from husbandry, biomedical research, and other animal-harming institutions is justified or something resembling the status quo is justified; the single crucial determinant of which of these polar visions is correct is whether animals have utility-trumping rights; and, since each author expresses utter certainty that his view is correct, one of the authors must be mad. I hope readers reject this bizarre impression and, with it, the thesis that whether animals have utility-trumping rights is the most important issue in animal ethics. It is not. Moreover, by falsely dichotomizing positions, those who advance this thesis obscure the ethical issues about animal usage and, to that extent, impede moral progress.

Far more important than whether animals have utility-trumping rights is whether they deserve equal consideration (as both utilitarians and strong-rights theorists, in their differing ways, contend). If animals deserve equal consideration, then wherever humans and animals have a prudentially comparable interest-that is, where humans and animals have roughly the same thing at stake-we ought to give the animals' interest no less moral weight than we give humans' comparable interest. Since many animals can suffer, and since avoiding suffering is the interest we can most straightforwardly attribute to these animals, the interest in avoiding suffering best illustrates what equal consideration would mean: at a minimum, that the moral presumption against causing animals to suffer is as strong as the moral presumption against causing humans to suffer. Even this minimal claim is very significant. For many types of animal usage-including not merely factory farming but also family farming, nearly all animal research, and most current zoo exhibits-are incompatible with such a strong presumption against causing animal suffering. Thus whether animals have rights in this equal-consideration sense is far more important than whether they have utility-trumping rights. Despite being a utilitarian, and therefore rejecting utility-trumping rights, Peter Singer seems to appreciate that the issue of equal consideration is more important. Thus, his *Animal Liberation* stresses equal consideration rather than utilitarianism in particular.

Yet it would distort matters to claim that equal consideration is *the* crucial issue in animal ethics. There is no single crucial issue. The equal-consideration issue is very important, but so is the prior question of whether animals have moral status (or rights in that loose sense).

So the direction of discussion I recommend, in contrast to the terms encouraged by the aforementioned authors, is to promote awareness of the many forms of current animal usage that are indefensible on the modest assumption that animals have moral status. Factory farming, as I have argued (somewhat briefly here), is indefensible assuming animals have moral status. So, I suggest, are standard methods of the fur industry (even if people in danger of freezing may permissibly kill animals for their furs). There are other examples, but we need not consider them here. The key insight is that, contrary to some authors and activists, we don't need to know whether animals have rights in the utility-trumping sense or even the equal-consideration sense to know that factory farming, and routinely buying and eating its products, are indefensible. This represents a better strategy for criticizing factory farming because it is maximally broad-based-intuitions about the wrongness of cruelty being sufficient

to launch the argument-rather than depending on highly controversial moral theses. (While I believe Singer would accept my argument, his writings tend to stress the equal-consideration issue in yes or no terms, not explicitly noting that unequal yet serious consideration for animals is enough to justify many significant reforms.) The more we recognize the possibility of justifying important reforms in this maximally broad-based fashion, the more we can engage the great majority of people in moral terms that make sense to them.

Notes

[1] See especially *Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and *Animal Rights: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[2] For detailed, well-documented accounts of factory farms and slaughterhouses, respectively, see Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 2nd ed. (New York: Avon, 1990), ch. 3; and Gail Eisnitz, *Slaughterhouse* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1997). I also provide further details in *Taking Animals Seriously*, pp. 281-284 and *Animal Rights*, pp. 67-73.

[3] See *Taking Animals Seriously*, p. 288.

[4] For further details, see *Animal Rights*, pp. 75-76.

[5] Carl Cohen and Tom Regan, *The Animal Rights Debate* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001)

[6] Thus: “Each of us is confident that rational deliberation … supports his conclusion with overwhelming weight,” (*The Animal Rights Debate*, p. vii). The book contains many further statements confirming my attribution. For a fuller discussion of this work, see my review in *Ethics* 113 (April 2003): 692-695.

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The Undead Ghost Of Operation Condor

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When Chilean former minister Orlando Letelier and his U.S. colleague Ronni Moffitt were killed in a powerful car bombing on a Washington D.C. street in September 1976, few realized that the double assassination was the work of Operation Condor. Condor was a Cold War-era covert network of U.S.-backed Latin American military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, later joined by Ecuador and Peru in less central roles. The secret Condor apparatus enabled the militaries to share intelligence–and to seize, torture, and execute political opponents across borders. Condor agents also assassinated key opposition leaders around the world. Today, as shadowy U.S. forces use "disappearance," torture, and illegal cross-border transfers of prisoners in the "war on terror"–practices that evoke Condor in the 1970s–an examination of Operation Condor and its methods is as instructive as it is unsettling.

During the Cold War, when anticommunism often overrode human rights in Washington's policy calculus, U.S. military and intelligence forces worked closely with the Latin American intelligence agencies–such as the SS-like Directorate of National Intelligence (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional, DINA), Chile's secret police–that made up the nucleus of Condor. One of the key organizers of Operation Condor was DINA commander Manuel Contreras. In 2000 the CIA acknowledged that Contreras had been a paid CIA agent between 1974 and 1977, a period when the Condor network was planning and carrying out assassinations in Europe, Latin America, and the United States. The ramifications of state terror have not subsided in Latin America. Indeed, investigations and judicial cases have multiplied in recent years, proving once again that war crimes and crimes against humanity create wounds that cannot be simply forgotten or forgiven, even after generations.

Latin America during the Cold War

At the close of World War II Latin America was (as it still is) the world region with the most unequal distribution of wealth and income, and patterns of land ownership, in the world. Tiny land-owning elites owned vast tracts of land while rural workers and peasants owned only small plots, if anything. Praetorian militaries were common in many countries. Autocratic and elitist governments that remained indifferent to the plight of their poor also contributed to persisting inequality. Millions of people among the rural and urban laboring classes lived in bad housing, in conditions of illiteracy, malnutrition, and high infant mortality, with little opportunity to express grievances politically or effect peaceful reform. Movements for change were often met with repression. Foreign governments also played a role, especially the United States, which had long supported "friendly" dictators in the region and often sent in the Marines to secure expanding U.S. economic and political interests.

Social dissatisfaction grew after World War II, combined with nationalism. Prominent Latin American leaders and intellectuals began to draw links between underdevelopment in their countries and neocolonial practices by the major Western states. Progressives and nationalists called for social, economic, and political reform in the 1940s and 50s, many citing FDR as their inspiration. But U.S. policy-makers, guided by anticommunist Cold War assumptions, increasingly interpreted social mobilization in the developing world as communist-inspired. Control of Third World countries was a key strategic objective in a zero-sum game. The Cold War came to Latin America in 1954, when the CIA organized a coup against progressive Guatemalan president Jacobo Arbenz, who had implemented a land reform in that impoverished country. It was the first CIA destabilization in the region.

Continental Anticommunism

Beginning in the late 1940s, the United States took the lead to establish or reorient hemispheric security structures to advance its anticommunist agenda and to interlink the Latin American militaries with U.S. military and intelligence forces. U.S. policy goals were strategic, economic, and political, and a new Cold War national security doctrine intertwined all three. Internal enemies in Latin America were the key threat, according to the doctrine: local reformers, socialists, or revolutionaries who sought structural change or challenged U.S. interests. The new security doctrine encouraged the hemisphere's military-security forces to view domestic social conflicts through the prism of the East-West struggle, effectively internationalizing them. Washington cultivated anticommunist allies in the region who shared U.S. strategic interests: to prevent nationalist or socialist economic models, promote U.S.-style capitalism, and secure strategic resources and investments. Politically, the U.S. government worked to draw the Latin American armed forces into the orbit of the United States. Particularly after the 1959 Cuban revolution, a major challenge to U.S. hegemony in Latin America, U.S. policy-makers backed leaders who were anticommunist and pro-U.S., qualities that were more highly prized than democratic principles.

In 1960 U.S. military officers organized the first yearly Conference of American Armies, assembling military and intelligence personnel from Latin America and the United States to share tactics and intelligence on the "subversive threat," establish combined intelligence organizations, develop a hemispheric security strategy, and otherwise cooperate with one another to control and repress leftist movements. U.S. military and police training programs combined a political socialization process with instruction in counterinsurgency operations, including ruthless French counterrevolutionary methods honed in Algeria. "Unconventional" counterterror methods such as kidnapping and assassination were considered legitimate tactics in a total war against subversion. In centers such as the Army School of the Americas in the Panama Canal Zone, instructors diffused these methods to thousands of Latin American officers, and the militaries of the hemisphere became more closely interrelated technically, socially, and ideologically under the leadership of the United States. These inter-American relations provided the setting in which the top-secret Condor system was later formed, and declassified U.S. military and intelligence documents from the 1970s reflected implicit approval of Condor as a counterinsurgency organization.

In the 1960s, ’70s, and early ’80s, U.S.-backed armed forces carried out military coups throughout Latin America, moving to obliterate leftist forces and extirpate ideas of progressive social change. Even in the long-standing democracies of Chile and Uruguay, anticommunist zealots–who believed that democracy could not be permitted if leftists or nationalists could gain power– overpowered constitutionalist sectors of the militaries. The armed forces installed a new form of rule, which I have previously termed the national security state, founded on the new security doctrine. Washington, in almost all cases, continued to support and assist the military regimes as partners in the anticommunist crusade.

Origins of Operation Condor

Rightist Bolivian officer Hugo Banzer, a graduate of the U.S. Army School of the Americas, organized a coup in 1971 that ousted nationalist general and president Juan José Torres. Banzer received assistance from Argentine and U.S. forces in planning and executing the coup. In Uruguay, the Brazilian regime secretly intervened in the 1971 election in order to undermine the leftist Frente Amplio coalition. In 1973, with CIA encouragement, the Chilean military overthrew Salvador Allende, the democratic socialist president. Brazilian units participated in the torture of Allende supporters and Brazilian exiles in the Santiago national stadium where thousands of political prisoners were held after the coup.

The Condor prototype began to take shape in 1973, even though it was not code-named and formalized until late 1975. The multinational system fused together special covert intelligence and operations units of the countries of the southern cone of South America. It was the first time that these countries-some of which had been historical adversaries or even enemies-had joined forces in supranational repressive operations. As Condor coalesced, a terrifying new wave of disappearances and murders took place across a vast region of South America. Hundreds of exiles who opposed the military dictatorships in their countries were pursued across borders and eliminated with pitiless effectiveness.

CIA officers had helped to lay the groundwork for Condor in the early 1970s by setting up meetings of right-wing Latin American military and police officers and death squad torturers such as Sergio Fleury of Brazil. U.S. forces encouraged them to coordinate their countersubversive operations and to share repressive techniques with their counterparts. The CIA station chief in Chile helped to organize DINA in 1973-74 and specifically asked his Brazilian military contacts to train DINA operatives in “unconventional” tactics. Brazilians instructed DINA officers in torture techniques, and DINA officers collaborated with Argentine right-wingers, civilian as well as military, to assassinate exiled constitutionalist Chilean general Carlos Prats and Sofía Cuthbert, his wife, in in Buenos Aires in 1974. Pinochet had feared Prats’s influence as an opponent of the Chilean dictatorship. It was an early assassination by the as-yet unnamed Condor prototype.

In 1973 abductions and “disappearances” bearing the mark of Condor collaboration began to occur. A Bolivian named Jorge Ríos Dalenz was detained-disappeared in Santiago in that year in an operation coordinated by Bolivia and Chile. Ríos had been a leader of the Movimiento de

la Izquierda Revolucionaria (Movement of the Revolutionary Left-MIR) in Bolivia (separate from the Chilean organization of the same name) until General Banzer's 1971 coup prompted him to flee to Chile. He lived there quietly until the September 1973 coup, when he was kidnapped by a military commando. In another case in November 1973, four armed men, two in military uniform, abducted the former Bolivian interior minister under Juan José Torres, Jorge Gallardo Losada, from his home in Santiago, where he had lived since the 1971 coup in his country. Gallardo had written a critical book detailing the multinational conspiracy that overthrew Torres. He was transported to Bolivia and then to Argentina, at a time when all air traffic was tightly controlled by the Chilean junta. In another 1973 case, Brazilian police abducted Joaquim Pires Cerveira and João Batista Rita, two Brazilian exiles living in Buenos Aires. These cases indicated that the Condor system was operational long before the 1975 meeting that institutionalized it.

In 1974 the CIA reported to the Nixon administration that DINA and its partners were seeking to establish a covert operations center in Miami to link up with the anticommunist Cuban exile community. It was the nascent Condor organization. State Department officials proposed to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger that the United States formally and directly protest to the military governments involved, but Kissinger rejected that option. Instead, the CIA passed a secret message to DINA through intelligence channels, countering the idea but taking no other action to deter the repressive alliance. The Argentine military dictatorship's Extraterritorial Task Force did set up an intelligence and operations center in Florida later in the 1970s, however, apparently with the assistance of the CIA. It was used for Condor support operations including money laundering, arms shipments, and transfers of funds to Argentine officers engaged in covert counterinsurgency warfare in Latin America.

One key 1975 case illustrated U.S. coordination with the Condor militaries. Paraguayan police seized Chilean Jorge Isaac Fuentes Alarcón as he crossed the border from Argentina to Paraguay. Fuentes Alarcón, a leftist sociologist affiliated with the Chilean revolutionary group MIR, was attempting to make his way to Europe. The Paraguayan police extralegally transferred Fuentes to Chilean military officers, who brought him to Villa Grimaldi, a notorious DINA detention center in Santiago. Survivors last saw him there, savagely tortured.

Chile's Truth and Reconciliation Commission later reported that the capture of Fuentes was a collaborative effort by Argentine intelligence services, personnel of the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires, and Paraguayan police. The legal attaché in the U.S. Embassy informed the Chilean military of Fuentes' interrogation and noted that the FBI was conducting an investigation of three of Fuentes' contacts in the United States. This letter, among others discovered in recent years in Paraguay and elsewhere, confirmed that U.S. officials and agencies were cooperating with the military dictatorships and acting as a link in the Condor network.

The Formal Founding of the Condor System

The Condor prototype was institutionalized and code-named in a November 1975 meeting of

military delegates in Santiago. Documents found in the Paraguayan police archives known as the Archives of Terror, discovered by Paraguayan educator and torture survivor Martín Almada in 1992, provided documentation of the conference. DINA commander Contreras invited General Francisco Britez, chief of the Paraguayan police, to "a Working Meeting of National Intelligence" to be held in Santiago under "strict secrecy." The purpose of the meeting was to formalize "an excellent coordination and improved action to benefit National Security." Contreras noted in the invitation that previous combined operations had taken place on the basis of "gentlemen's agreements" and that more sophisticated structures were needed to confront "the psychopolitical war with subversion." Officers representing Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay signed the closing act of this meeting, dated November 28, 1975: it was, essentially, the secret charter of Operation Condor.

U.S. military and intelligence forces were well informed of Condor operations, and the United States played a key covert role in modernizing and extending the Condor apparatus. An Argentine military source told a U.S. Embassy contact in 1976 that the CIA had been deeply involved in setting up computerized links among the intelligence and operations units of the six Condor states. A former Bolivian Condor agent told a journalist in the early 1990s that an advanced system of communications had been installed in the Ministry of the Interior in La Paz, along with a telex system interlinked with the five other Condor countries. He said that the CIA had made a special machine to encode and decode messages especially for the Condor system.

U.S. forces also gave the Condor organization access to the U.S. continental communications system based in the Panama Canal Zone. A declassified 1978 cable from U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay Robert White to the Secretary of State, uncovered by this author in 2001 among thousands of declassified State Department files, revealed that Condor operatives made use of a U.S. facility in the Canal Zone for secret communications and intelligence coordination. General Alejandro Fretes Dávalos, commander of Paraguay's armed forces, told White that intelligence chiefs from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay used "an encrypted system within the U.S. telecommunications net[work]," which covered all of Latin America, to "coordinate intelligence information." Essentially, U.S. military and/or intelligence forces put the official U.S. communications channel at the disposal of Operation Condor. It was a collaboration reflecting high-level executive approval of Condor. In his cable, White advised the Carter administration to reconsider whether this linkage with Condor was in the U.S. interest. He never received a response.

Condor Assassinations

The most secret level of Condor operations was known as "Phase III": its worldwide program of assassinations of democratic and progressive leaders. Phase III proved that Condor's targets were not only "subversives" or guerrillas, but also progressive leaders contesting military rule and the anticommunist crusade. The Condor prototype murdered Carlos Prats and his wife in 1974 by blowing up their car, and in 1975 attempted the assassination of Chilean Christian Democrat leader Bernardo Leighton and his wife, Ana Fresno, in Rome, Italy. The couple was

severely wounded, but survived. Condor units kidnapped and assassinated exiled Uruguayan legislators Zelmar Michelini and Héctor Gutiérrez Ruiz in Buenos Aires in May 1976, Bolivian ex-president Torres in Buenos Aires in June, and Letelier and Moffitt in September. The assassinations of such prominent democratic figures caused shock waves in the region and the world.

Michelini had been one of the founders of the center-left Frente Amplio in Uruguay, formed in 1970 to seek progressive change through the electoral system. Michelini became a senator representing the Frente. In the Senate, he was a fierce critic of the slow-motion coup in that country and the use of torture by security forces. After dissolving Congress in 1973, the military declared him a seditious subversive. Gutiérrez Ruiz had been a member of the National (or Blanco) Party who had been president of the House of Representatives. Both left Uruguay under death threat in 1973 and moved to Argentina.

Heavily armed men in plain clothes seized both men on the same day in May 1976. Their apartments were ransacked and their families terrorized. The squadrons behaved with military precision, communicated via radios to their superiors, and showed no concern about acting in broad daylight. The Argentine military junta did not respond to repeated requests for help from the legislators' families. The bullet-ridden, tortured bodies of the two men were discovered in a car several days later. Police documents recovered in Argentina and declassified by President Néstor Kirchner in 2004 provided evidence that the Uruguayans had been under surveillance coordinated between the regimes of Argentina and Uruguay.

In June 1976, when Kissinger learned that in May the U.S. Embassy in Argentina had delivered a formal protest to the Argentine junta regarding the human rights situation, he was infuriated. Kissinger strenuously objected to criticism of the pro-U.S. military regimes in the region. "In what way is it compatible with my policy?" he fumed to Harry Schlaudeman, Assistant Secretary for Latin America. "How did it happen?…What do you guys think my policy is?…You better be careful. I want to know who did this and consider having him transferred."[1]

U.S. officials had information through several channels about Condor's targeting of Letelier in Washington D.C. Two Condor assassins, one Chilean and one U.S. expatriate, had approached the U.S. ambassador in Asunción, Paraguay, to obtain U.S. visas to enter the United States. They already had Paraguayan passports falsely depicting them as Paraguayans, provided by the Stroessner dictatorship. It was a routine method of camouflaging the perpetrators of Condor operations. The assassins told the U.S. ambassador that CIA Deputy Director Vernon Walters knew of their secret mission in Washington. The ambassador provided the visas, but then became suspicious and contacted Walters, who denied knowledge of the operation. The ambassador cancelled the visas, but the agents entered the United States a short time later with different documents. Michael Townley, the U.S. expatriate, recruited right-wing Cuban exiles, and the group constructed a bomb and carried out the assassination. It is worth quoting at some length a 1988 interview with former Acting Assistant Secretary of State Hewson Ryan, who discussed this case:

I know of one case, which has never come to public attention, of the fact that we knew fairly early on that the governments of the Southern Cone countries were planning, or at least talking about, some assassinations abroad in the summer of 1976. I was Acting Assistant Secretary at the time and I tried to get a cable cleared with the 7th Floor instructing our ambassadors to go in to the Chiefs of State, or the highest possible level in these governments to let them know that we were aware of these conversations and to warn them that this was a violation of the very basic fundamentals of civilized society. Unfortunately that cable never got out and about a month later former Chilean Ambassador Letelier was assassinated on the streets of Washington. Whether there was a direct relationship or not, I don't know. Whether if we had gone in, we might have prevented this, I don't know. But we didn't. We were extremely reticent about taking a strong forward public posture, and even a private posture in certain cases, as was this case… 2

Ryan was apparently confirming that the State Department had advance warning of this Condor assassination–and raised no objection. In fact, the State Department released this 1976 cable on assassinations, to be conveyed to the Condor militaries, in a recent declassification. The cable was dated a month before Letelier and Moffitt were killed, August 23, 1976, and carried Kissinger's signature. It instructed the U.S. ambassadors of the six Condor countries to communicate Washington's concern to the military regimes regarding "rumors" of assassination plans through Operation Condor.3 None of the ambassadors actually acted on the cable, a very odd way to respond to the secretary of state. According to ambassador White, instructions from a secretary of state cannot be ignored unless there is a countermanding order received via a secret (CIA) backchannel.4 In my book on Condor I raised questions about whether the cable was a sincere attempt to warn the regimes, especially because it was never implemented and was then rescinded in September. In this interview, which I saw afterward, Ryan claimed that the cable was never sent at all. This series of events showed Washington's reluctance to deter the crimes of the military regimes-and Operation Condor.

Conclusion

Why did Washington support the military dictatorships of the Cold War era and lend sustenance to Operation Condor? Clearly, top U.S. decision-makers considered such policies to be in the U.S. interest. U.S. promotion of right-wing forces and counterinsurgency wars in the developing world was more than an anti-Soviet project. Washington acted to retain and advance U.S. hegemony in Latin America and elsewhere, and considered anticommunist forces to be the most reliable allies in preserving U.S. political, economic, and strategic interests. Operation Condor was a top-secret component of a larger inter-American counterinsurgency strategy-led, financed, and overseen by Washington-to prevent and reverse social and political movements in Latin America demanding structural change.

Washington approved covert operations and counterinsurgency campaigns particularly in countries where power seemed to be shifting from elite, pro-capitalist, and pro-U.S. forces to non-elite social sectors with an interest in restructuring political and economic power. As

leftist and nationalist leaders won elections throughout Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, and new revolutionary and progressive movements emerged, U.S. security strategists feared that the informal U.S. economic and political empire in the hemisphere was threatened. Localized elites similarly feared the threat to their traditional dominance. U.S. policy served, in most cases, to strengthen traditional elites and military-security forces, while leftist and progressive social movements and individuals were routed. Counterinsurgency war was a means to demobilize leftist or nationalist movements, terrorize societies, and keep U.S. areas of interest under control.

Operation Condor holds many sobering lessons for the current "war on terror"-which is, again, much more than an antiterrorist project. Washington has promoted a ruthless, "ends-justifies-the-means" strategy to extend U.S. military power and political-economic dominance around the globe. As documented by Seymour Hersh[5] and others, in the "war on terror" U.S. leaders authorized extralegal methods that recalled Condor: the creation of secret units to cross borders surreptitiously in search of suspects; blanket approval for those units to kidnap and imprison suspects, incommunicado; the use of methods of torture and coercive interrogation; and the establishment of secret prisons around the world where prisoners could be "disappeared." In March 2005 Human Rights Watch called on the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to condemn "disappearances, torture and other mistreatment of detainees by the United States." Human Rights First, the American Civil Liberties Union, and military lawyers brought a lawsuit against Donald Rumsfeld in March as well, accusing him of direct responsibility for the torture and abuse of detainees in U.S. custody.

In Latin America numerous Condor officers have been charged and some have been imprisoned in recent years, although many Condor crimes remain shrouded in mystery. The role of the U.S. government in the Condor network remains largely hidden from view, and the undead ghost of Operation Condor still haunts Latin America and the world.

Notes

1 See transcript (TELCON) of Kissinger and Schlaudeman telephone conversation on the State Department web site of declassified documents. TELCON dated 6/30/76. State Department number 347 at http://foia.state.gov/documents/kissinger/0000C08D.pdf.

2 Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Project. Ambassador Hewson Ryan, interviewed by Richard Nethercut, April 27, 1988. Available at web site of National Security Archive, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB125/condor15.pdf

3 U.S. Secretary of State. "Operation Condor." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Secretary of State, August 23, 1976, message number 209192. Available at http://foia.state.gov/documents/Argentina/0000A05B.pdf.

4 Author telephone interview with Robert While, April 8, 2003.

5. Seymour Hersh, Chain of Command (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).

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Animals, Slavery, And The Holocaust

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Where does all the war, racism, terrorism, violence, and cruelty that's so endemic to human civilization come from? Why do humans exploit and massacre each other so regularly? Why is our species so violence-prone? To answer these questions we would do well to think about our exploitation and slaughter of animals and its effect on human civilization. Could it be that we oppress and kill each other so readily because our abuse and slaughter of animals has desensitized us to the suffering and death of others?

The "domestication" of animals–the exploitation of goats, sheep, cattle, and other animals for their meat, milk, hides, and labor that began in the Near East about 11,000 years ago–changed human history. In earlier hunter-gatherer societies there had been some sense of kinship between humans and animals, reflected in totemism and myths which portrayed animals, or part-animal part-human creatures, as creators and progenitors of the human race. However, mankind crossed the Rubicon when Near Eastern herdsmen and farmers started castrating, hobbling, and branding captive animals to control their mobility, diet, growth, and reproductive lives. To distance themselves emotionally from the cruelty they inflicted, they adopted mechanisms of detachment, rationalization, denial, and euphemism, and in the process became a harder, more ruthless lot.

In 1917 Sigmund Freud put the issue in perspective when he wrote: "In the course of his development towards culture man acquired a dominating position over his fellow-creatures in the animal kingdom. Not content with this supremacy, however, he began to place a gulf between his nature and theirs. He denied the possession of reason to them, and to himself he attributed an immortal soul, and made claims to a divine descent which permitted him to annihilate the bond of community between him and the animal kingdom."

The domination, control, and manipulation that characterizes the way humans treat animals who come under their control has set the tone and served as a model for the way humans

treat each other. The enslavement/domestication of animals paved the way for human slavery. As Karl Jacoby writes, slavery was "little more than the extension of domestication to humans."

In the first civilizations that emerged in the river valleys of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, and China, the exploitation of animals for food, milk, hides, and labor was so firmly established that these civilizations sanctified the notion that animals existed solely for their benefit. That allowed humans to use, abuse, and kill them with total impunity. It also led humans to place other humans–captives, enemies, strangers, and those who were different or disliked–on the other side of the great divide where they were vilified as "beasts," "pigs," "dogs," "monkeys," "rats," and "vermin." Designating other people as animals has always been an ominous development because it sets them up for humiliation, exploitation, and murder. As Leo Kuper writes in *Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century*, "the animal world has been a particularly fertile source of metaphors of dehumanization."

From Slaughterhouse to Death Camp

The relationship of animal exploitation to the Holocaust is less apparent than it is in the case of slavery, but there is a connection nonetheless. Take the case of Henry Ford, whose impact on the twentieth century began, metaphorically speaking, at an American slaughterhouse and ended at Auschwitz.

In his autobiography, *My Life and Work* (1922), Ford revealed that his inspiration for assembly-line production came from a visit he made as a young man to a Chicago slaughterhouse. "I believe that this was the first moving line ever installed. The idea [of the assembly line] came in a general way from the overhead trolley that the Chicago packers use in dressing beef." A Swift and Company publication from that time described the division-of-labor principle that so impressed Ford: "The slaughtered animals, suspended head downward from a moving chain, or conveyor, pass from workman to workman, each of whom performs some particular step in the process." It was but one step from the industrialized slaughter of animals to the assembly-line mass murder of people. In J. M. Coetzee's novel, *The Lives of Animals*, the protagonist Elizabeth Costello tells her audience: "Chicago showed us the way; it was from the Chicago stockyards that the Nazis learned how to process bodies."

Most people are not aware of the central role of the slaughterhouse in the history of American industry. "Historians have deprived the packers of their rightful title of mass-production pioneers," writes James Barrett in his study of Chicago's packinghouse workers in the early 1900s, "for it was not Henry Ford but Gustavus Swift and Philip Armour who developed the assembly-line technique that continues to symbolize the rationalized organization of work."

Henry Ford, who was so impressed by the efficient way meat packers slaughtered and dismantled animals in Chicago, made his own unique contribution to the slaughter of people in Europe. Not only did he develop the assembly-line method that Germans used to kill Jews, but he launched a vicious anti-Semitic campaign that helped make the Holocaust happen.

In the early 1920s Ford's weekly newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, published a series of articles based on the text of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, an anti-Semitic tract that had been circulating in Europe. Ford published a book-length compilation of the articles entitled *The International Jew*, which was translated into most of the European languages and was widely disseminated by anti-Semites, chief among them the German publisher Theodor Fritsch, an early supporter of Hitler. Thanks to a well-financed publicity campaign and the

prestige of the Ford name, *The International Jew* was hugely successful both domestically and internationally.

The International Jew found its most receptive audience in Germany where it was known as *The Eternal Jew*. Ford was enormously popular in Germany. When his autobiography went on sale there, it immediately became the country's number one bestseller. In the early 1920s *The Eternal Jew* quickly became the bible of the German anti-Semitism, with Fritsch's publishing house printing six editions between 1920 and 1922.

After Ford's book came to the attention of Hitler in Munich, he used a shortened version of it in the Nazi propaganda war against the Jews of Germany. In 1923 a *Chicago Tribune* correspondent in Germany reported that Hitler's organization in Munich was "sending out Mr. Ford's books by the carload." Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the Hitler Youth movement and the son of an aristocratic German father and American mother, said at the postwar Nuremberg war crimes trial that he became a convinced anti-Semite at age seventeen after reading *The Eternal Jew*. "You have no idea what a great influence this book had on the thinking of German youth. The younger generation looked with envy to symbols of success and prosperity like Henry Ford, and if he said the Jews were to blame, why naturally we believed him."

Hitler regarded Ford as a comrade-in-arms and kept a life-sized portrait of him on the wall next to his desk in his office in Munich. In 1923 when Hitler heard that Ford might run for President of the United States, he told an American reporter, "I wish that I could send some of my shock troops to Chicago and other big American cities to help in the elections. We look to Heinrich Ford as the leader of the growing Fascist movement in America. We have just had his anti-Jewish articles translated and published. The book is being circulated in millions throughout Germany." Hitler praised Ford in *Mein Kampf*, the only American to be singled out. In 1931, when a *Detriot News* reporter asked Hitler what Ford's portrait on the wall meant to him, Hitler said, "I regard Henry Ford as my inspiration."

Although Ford stopped publishing the *Dearborn Independent* in late 1927 and agreed to withdraw *The International Jew* from the book market, copies of *The International Jew* continued to circulate in large numbers throughout Europe and Latin America. In Nazi Germany the influence of *The Eternal Jew* continued to be strong and lasting, with German anti-Semites advertising and distributing it throughout the 1930s, often putting the names of Henry Ford and Adolf Hitler together on the cover. By late 1933, Fritsch had published twenty-nine editions, each with a preface praising Ford for his "great service" to America and the world for his attacks on the Jews.

In 1938, on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday, Henry Ford, the great admirer of the efficient way they slaughtered and cut up animals in America, accepted the Grand Cross of the Supreme Order of the German Eagle, the highest honor Nazi Germany could bestow on a foreigner (Mussolini was one of the three other foreigners to be so honored).

On January 7, 1942–exactly one month after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the United States into the war–Ford wrote a letter to Sigmund Livingston, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League, in which he expressed his disapproval of hatred "against the Jew or any other racial or religious group." By that time, *Einsatzgruppen* (German mobile killing squads) in the East had already murdered hundreds of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children, and the first German extermination camp at Kulmhof (Chelmno) was

already operational.

From Animal Breeding to Genocide

Another American contribution to Nazi Germany's Final Solution–eugenics–was rooted in animal exploitation. The breeding of domesticated animals–breeding the most desirable and castrating and killing the rest–became the model for American and German eugenic efforts to upgrade their populations. America led the way with regard to forced sterilizations, but Nazi Germany quickly caught up and went on to euthanasia killings and genocide.

The desire to improve the hereditary qualities of the human population had had its beginnings in the 1860s when Francis Galton, an English scientist and cousin of Charles Darwin, turned from meteorology to the study of heredity (he coined the term "eugenics" in 1881). By the end of the nineteenth century, genetic theories, founded on the assumption that heredity was based on rigid genetic patterns little influenced by social environment, dominated scientific thought.

The eugenics movement in America began with the creation of the American Breeders' Association (ABA) in 1903. At the second meeting of the ABA in 1905, a series of reports about the great success achieved in the selective breeding of animals and plants prompted delegates to ask why such techniques could not be applied to human beings. The creation of a committee on Human Heredity, or Eugenics, at the third ABA meeting in 1906 launched the American eugenics movement in America.

Its leader was poultry researcher Charles B. Davenport, who served as the director of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) at Cold Spring Harbor on Long Island in New York. Davenport, who described eugenics as "the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding," looked forward to the time when a woman would no more accept a man "without knowing his biologico-genealogical history" than a stockbreeder would take "a sire for his colts or calves who was without pedigree." He believed that "the most progressive revolution in history" could be achieved if "human matings could be placed upon the same high plane as that of horse breeding." Sterilization began in America in 1887, when the superintendent of the Cincinnati Sanitarium published the first public recommendation for the sterilization of criminals, both as a punishment and a way to prevent further crime. Authorities used the same method to sterilize male criminals that farmers used on their male animals not selected for breeding–castration. Castration was the preferred method used to sterilize male criminal offenders until 1899, when vasectomy was adopted because it was more practical.

Indiana passed the first state sterilization law in 1907. By 1930 more than half the American states passed laws that authorized the sterilization of criminals and mentally ill people, with California leading the way with more than sixty percent of the country's forced sterilizations. By the 1930s compulsory sterilization had widespread support in the United States, with college presidents, clergymen, mental health workers, and school principals among its strongest supporters. The United States quickly became the model for other countries that wanted to sterilize their "defectives." Denmark was the first European country to pass such a law in 1929, followed in rapid succession by other European nations.

In Germany, which passed its sterilization law six months after the Nazis came to power, eugenics established deep roots in medical and scientific circles after World War I. In 1920 two respected academics–Karl Binding, a widely published legal scholar, and Alfred Hoche, a professor of psychiatry with a specialty in neuropathology–published *Die Freigabe der*

Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens (Authorization for the Destruction of Life Unworthy of Life). In it they argued that German law should permit the mercy killing of institutionalized patients who were *lebensunwert* ("unworthy of life") and whose lives were "without purpose" and a burden to their relatives and society. Beginning in the 1920s, the Rockefeller Foundation and other American foundations provided extensive financial support for eugenics research in Germany. By the time the Nazis came to power, more than twenty institutes for "racial hygiene" had already been established at German universities.

The Law on Preventing Hereditarily Ill Progeny, which the Nazi government issued on July 14, 1933, required the sterilization of patients suffering from mental and physical disorders in state hospitals and nursing homes. By then, the United States had already sterilized more than 15,000 people, most of them while they were incarcerated in prisons or homes for the mentally ill. America's sterilization laws made such a favorable impression on Hitler and his followers that Nazi Germany looked to the United States for racial leadership. Hitler took a special interest in the progress of eugenics in the United States. "I have studied with great interest the laws of several American states concerning prevention of reproduction by people whose progeny would, in all probability, be of no value or be injurious to the racial stock." However, Nazi Germany's sterilization efforts quickly surpassed those of the United States. Estimates of the total number of Germans sterilized under the Nazis range from 300,000 to 400,000.

The Germans were also impressed by America's immigration laws, which barred people with hereditary diseases and limited people from non-Nordic countries. In 1934 the German race anthropologist Hans F. K. Gunther told an audience at the University of Munich that American immigration laws should serve as a guideline and inspiration for Nazi Germany. German race scientists also admired America's segregation and miscegenation laws. In fact, Nazi theorists complained that German race policies lagged behind America's, pointing out that in certain southern states a person with 1/32 black ancestry was legally black, while in Germany, if somebody was 1/8 Jewish or in many instances 1/4 Jewish, that person was considered legally Aryan.

Americans were the strongest foreign supporters of Nazi race policies. In 1934 *Eugenic News* proclaimed that in "no country of the world is eugenics more active as an applied science than in Germany" and praised the Nazi sterilization law as an historic advance. Scores of American anthropologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and geneticists visited Nazi Germany where they had high-level meetings with Nazi leaders and scientists and visited racial hygiene institutes, public health departments, and hereditary health courts. When the Americans returned and reported on their visits in professional journals and newsletters, they lauded the German sterilization program.

Like the American Charles Davenport, Heinrich Himmler, head of the Nazi SS and a main architect of the Final Solution, began his eugenics education with animal breeding. His agricultural studies and experience breeding chickens convinced him that since all behavioral characteristics are hereditary, the most effective way to shape the future of a population–human or otherwise–was to institute breeding projects that favored the desirable and eliminated the undesirable. Himmler was soon in a position to apply eugenic principles and methods to human beings in a way no American eugenicist was ever able to do.

Rudolf Hoss, the commandant of Auschwitz and another strong supporter of eugenics with a

farming background, wrote in his autobiography after the war that the original plan for Auschwitz had been to make it into a major agricultural research station. “All kinds of stockbreeding was to be pursued there.” However, in the summer of 1941 Himmler summoned him to Berlin to inform him of the fateful order for the mass extermination of the Jews of Europe, an order that soon turned Auschwitz into “the largest human slaughterhouse that history had ever known.” By the summer of 1942 Auschwitz was a vast, full-service eugenics center for the improvement of animal and human populations, complete with stockbreeding centers and the Birkenau extermination camp for the culling of Jews, Gypsies, and other “sub-humans.” Germany’s eugenics campaign entered a new, deadly phase in 1939 when Hitler issued a secret order for the systematic murder of mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, and physically infirm Germans who were an embarrassment to the myth of Aryan supremacy.

Once “defective” children were identified and institutionalized, doctors and nurses either starved them to death, or gave them lethal doses of luminal (a sedative), veronal (sleeping pills), morphine, or scopolamine. The “euthanasia” program–named Operation T4, or simply T4–transported adults to special killing centers outfitted with gas chambers. T4 killed between 70,000 and 90,000 Germans before it was officially stopped in August 1941. In 1942, not long after German psychiatrists had sent the last of their patients to the gas chambers, the *Journal of the American Psychiatric Association* published an article that called for the killing of retarded children (“nature’s mistakes”).

The breeding and culling of animals that was at the center of American and German eugenics produced a number of key T4 personnel, including those sent to Poland to operate the death camps. Victor Brack, T4’s chief manager, received a diploma in agriculture from the Technical University in Munich, while Hans Hefelmann, who headed the office that coordinated the killing of handicapped children, had a doctorate in agricultural economics. Before spending more than two years at the Hartheim euthanasia center in Austria, Bruno Bruckner had worked as a porter in a Linz slaughterhouse. Willi Mentz, an especially sadistic guard at Treblinka, had been in charge of cows and pigs at two T4 killing centers, Grafeneck and Hadamar. Treblinka’s last commandant, Kurt Franz, trained with a master butcher before joining the SS. Karl Frenzel, who worked as a stoker at Hadamar before being posted to the Sobibor death camp, had also been a butcher. For German personnel sent to Poland to exterminate Jews, experience in the exploitation and slaughter of animals proved to be excellent training.

The exploitation and slaughter of animals provides the precedent for the mass murder of people and makes it more likely because it conditions us to withhold empathy, compassion, and respect from others who are different. Isaac Bashevis Singer wrote, “There is only one little step from killing animals to creating gas chambers a la Hitler.” Indeed there is. About the same time the German Jewish philosopher Theodor Adorno made a similar point: “Auschwitz begins whenever someone looks at a slaughterhouse and thinks: they’re only animals.”

Indeed it does.

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A Resurgent Left In Latin America: Implications For The Region And U.s. Policy

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

With the bulk of international news coverage over the past few months focused on Iraq, Sudan, and the Asian Tsunami, it would be easy to miss one of the handful of articles describing the increasingly clear leftward political trend in South America. This trend has serious implications for both the trade and security agenda of the Bush administration. It reflects both a disillusionment with the neo-liberal economic model and the continued rejection of policies which strengthen or support the use of force to solve problems.

In the past six years, left-leaning presidents have taken office in five South American countries, including Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1999, Ricardo Lagos in Chile in 2000, Luis da Silva in Brazil and Néstor Kirchner in Argentina in 2003 and Tabaré Vázquez in Uruguay earlier this year. The inauguration this past March of Tabaré Vázquez of the Frente Amplio, a left-wing coalition of social democrats, socialists and communists founded in the early seventies, is the latest and in some ways, most intriguing case. Some three decades prior the government, which at the time was a military dictatorship, kidnapped and tortured hundreds of people, especially singling out Tupamaro guerrilla leaders. Now, Senator Jose "Pepe" Mujica, a founder of the Tupamaro movement, presided over the swearing in of the president and vice-president during the inauguration ceremonies. During one part of the ceremony, Mujica was presented the flag by the Army's Florida Batallion, the very same Army installation under which he was tortured and kept at the bottom of a well for several years. The left, once repressed and marginalized, is now empowered with the political capital and institutional authority to lead the country along a new path of development. Why has this seemingly 180 degree reversal come to pass in Uruguay and elsewhere in the region?

It is important to note that today's left is not the same left as decades past. While the goals and priorities remain constant, the ways to achieve them have evolved within the context of globalization and with the lessons learned from past unsuccessful development programs. The new left grasps the importance of macroeconomic discipline and regulated market economies as well as the value of the rule of law. Nevertheless, this new left is no longer willing to unconditionally conform to the neoliberal set of policies that urge governments to curb social spending in the pursuit of fiscal discipline.

Neoliberalism, which contends that people act according to self-interest and markets produce the best possible (although not perfect) outcomes, favors free trade, liberalized capital markets and minimal government intervention in the economy. While one could argue that markets

yield the most efficient outcome, they rarely yield an equitable one. Neoliberal economic policies have widened the income inequality gap between developed and developing nations, as well as the inequality within developing nations. It is precisely on this issue of whether the first priority of government should be to increase the economic pie or to redistribute the economic pie that Neoliberalism and the left diverge.

In this context, the" left" is not a new phenomenon in Latin America. For over a century, the values and principles of the left have formed the foundation of Latin American society. Beginning with the contributions of anarchist and socialist Europeans immigrants at the turn of the century, continuing with Jose Batlle's precocious welfare state in Uruguay and the sophisticated Marxist analysis of Jose Mariategui of Peru in the l920's , the role of communist and socialist parties in many countries and the ideal of social justice, today's left is deeply rooted in a strong historical foundation.

However, with the rise of the Cold War and the increasing United States hostility toward anything that was remotely progressive, the left in Latin America was first, mildly, and then severely repressed. The list of casualties is long and includes: The Arbenz regime in Guatemala; Goulart in Brazil; Allende in Chile and democracy in Uruguay and Argentina. The plague of repression that Latin America suffered from the late l960s into the early l980s was a major blow to both the left and the cause of democracy in the region.

The rebirth of the left is a story of both the failure of the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian regimes to find an economic model that resulted in stable growth and the rejection of a non-democratic mode of governance by their citizens. This process was slow and painful but led to a resurgence of democratic values-even by those groups that some might consider revolutionary.

Lessons from Uruguay

Democracy's fragile comeback was buffeted by economic policies and international trends, which moved citizens to take another look at a seemingly demoralized and demonized left. This has especially been the case in Uruguay. Uruguay's European- style welfare state, which was a strong presence throughout most of the twentieth century, gradually eroded in the l960's and l970's, worsened with the debt crisis of the 1980s and the conservative fiscal policies of the 1990s and was under almost unsustainable pressure in the economic crisis of 1999-2002

It is in this context that Tabaré Vázquez took office as the first socialist president of Uruguay on March 2005. Vázquez, who had campaigned on a platform of social change at a time when Uruguay was experiencing unprecedented high levels of income inequality and poverty, was elected with 50.45 percent of the vote- a vote so scrupulously conducted that no one doubted its legitimacy.

Upon assuming office, one of the first measures of the Vázquez government was the passage of an Emergency Social Plan with an initial one year budget of $100 million. The plan is comprised of education, job-training, housing and healthcare programs for the more than one-third of the Uruguayans who now live in poverty. The government expects the plan will

continue into a second year, operating as a model for how a socialist government can thoughtfully steer aid toward targeted development goals.

This cuts to the heart of what socialism means: the government is focusing on giving all of its citizens an equal opportunity to succeed. All the while, the Vázquez administration has pledged to continue to service Uruguay's foreign debt, maintain stable monetary policies, honor international business contracts, and reform the tax system to encourage foreign investment.

Development and Equity in Latin America

In recent years, international aid organizations worked to incorporate the recipient countries' individual development goals and encourage local ownership through a more inclusive planning process. The perceived tradeoff between honoring international obligations and maintaining commitments to the community is gradually being dispelled.

Between the October election and the March inauguration, the World Bank worked with the incoming administration to find Uruguay's sources of growth and to balance the administration's social objectives with its economic goals. In February, the IMF approved the seventh and last stage of its three billion dollar stand-by agreement with Uruguay, which was contingent on prudent macroeconomic and fiscal conditions. Additionally, the United Nations Development Program will help facilitate the implementation of the Emergency

It is now widely understood that development should not be a top-down externally imposed technocratic process but rather an on-the-ground inclusive process. This conclusion was not easily arrived at in the development community; it involved many disappointing experiences with unsuccessful development programs.

The new left's disillusionment with neoliberalism is not simply a difference in values. It is representative of a deeper frustration with how development was managed throughout the twentieth century. During the last decades of the twentieth century, development was approached as a one-size-fits-all science, when it really should be more of a custom-tailored art. The one-size-fits-all approach is akin to a doctor writing a prescription for an individual patient she knows is sick without knowing any of the patient's specific symptoms and assuming that the patient must have the same illness as the other patients in the hospital.

Every few decades, a group of economists put forth a new theory explaining why certain economies are less advanced than others. The economists laid out a set of policy guidelines intended to right the course of these ailing economies. The new theory was force-fed to the developing economies through development aid conditions or by virtue of neglect in international financial markets.

If these theories were the silver bullets their authoring economists held them to be, then conditional aid and international market exclusion might have engendered more positive change. The reasons why they did not range from the limited context and short time horizon in which the theory was conceived and tested to the standardized implementation regardless of

the country's unique characteristics and complex circumstances.

New theories often arise in reaction to the shortcomings of previous theories. A developing economy, upon advice from economists, would increase its social spending to stimulate the economy, only to be told a few years later that it must exercise fiscal discipline and remove all subsidies and tariffs to free the markets. These policy vacillations not only caused economic vertigo but also impeded policymakers from achieving any long-term goals and being accountable to their constituents.

From the 1860s to 1920s, modernization theorists proclaimed that Latin America was just a few decades behind Europe and the United States on the development path, believing that economic progress was only a matter of time. Developing countries were advised to simply sit tight.

Beginning in the 1930s and 1940s, scholars began to view Latin America's economic challenges not as short-term speed bumps on the road to economic progress but as ingrained flaws in the organization of their economies. The state was seen as the only body capable of benevolently and coherently guiding economic development. Theorists prescribed government intervention in the economy.

During the post-war era, Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), which favored protectionist trade policies for local industries, was adopted as a short-term solution to jumpstart the domestic manufacturing sector. It was championed by Raul Prebisch, an Argentine economist who headed the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America.

While ISI produced economic growth in the short term, it failed in the long run to produce sustainable economic growth. The political difficulties of removing subsidies, creating budgetary reform and restructuring labor and financial associations prevented the transition to a post-ISI model. The bloated state sector created ample opportunity for clientelism political payoff and a propensity to print money as elections neared. Additionally, it crowded out private sector competition and stifled an entrepreneurial atmosphere. The culture of protectionism facilitated an incentive system that discouraged domestic manufacturers from making products competitive in international markets.

In the 1960s, dependence theory, in an attempt to explain why advanced industrial economies had higher standards of living than natural resource rich developing economies, posited that a country's economic position and progress depended not on its natural endowments but its position of power (or lack thereof) in the international capitalist arena. Although dependistas held sway with many intellectuals and leftists, their ideals were swept away (along with many of their adherents) in the wave of military dictatorships and plague of repression that swept across Latin America in the late l960s and l970s.

The debt-led development strategy of the 1970's imploded in the early 1980s as interest rates on dollar-denominated debt rose. Fears of currency devaluation led to capital flight, undermining macroeconomic stability and domestic policy makers' ability to direct fiscal and

monetary policy. Latin economies were burdened with fiscal deficits, mounting external debt, trade imbalances and spiraling inflation. However, the dire economic situation generated enough dissatisfaction to incite political change. Ironically, the very same reasons that these dictatorships came to power in the 1970s the failure to develop a sustainable economy and achieve political stability kindled their demise in the 1980s. Latin American nations, told that the liquidity crisis was a result of their debt led ISI development strategy, were advised to reduce the size of their public sector by selling public companies and cutting back on social spending. Hundreds of domestic industries folded, thousands lost jobs and millions more slid into poverty. The 1980s became appropriately known in Latin America as "The Lost Decade."

In 1990, John Williamson set forth 10 policy instruments believed to successfully guide economic policy reform in developing countries in what later became known as "The Washington Consensus".[1] These policy instruments corresponded with the three overarching goals of free-market capitalism, outward economic orientation and prudent macroeconomic policy. Whatever skepticism might have existed in the face of this formula, it could not withstand the exhaustion felt in Latin America after decades of economic crisis, military intervention, wholesale human rights violations the debt crisis and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Washington had the ball, made the rules, and there was no alternative out there. The restored democracies in the region had little choice but to accept the new rules which, while contributing to some positive growth early on, led in most cases to an economic meltdown.

More recently, economist Dani Rodrik laid out a three step approach to formulating economic growth strategies at the Barcelona Forum 2004.[2] The approach begins with a diagnostic analysis that identifies the constraints of economic growth and then targets the constraints with innovative policy program. Most importantly, the diagnostic approach calls for institutionalization of the diagnostic cycle and policy response, to make the development process iterative, responsive and sustainable.

Significant research has been conducted on why certain development programs failed in the past and what a development program should look like for the future. But little research has been done to understand how development programs work within the context of the cultural, political and historical values of a developing country, or rather how development can be tailored to the country's existing values and institutions.

Historically, the method has been to prescribe a set of development policies and let the social and political institutions conform to the policies. Perhaps we have approached development from the wrong angle. The leftward trend in Latin America demonstrates both a rejection of failed policies and an adherence to the historic values and ideals of a significant segment- if not a majority- of the voters. In an era when progress means making things easier for ourselves, it will be hard to return to the perspective that economic development is a challenge riddled with complexity and unknowns for which there is no one precise solution or comprehensive model. Yet the history of development programs demonstrates the necessity of this paradigm shift. The citizens of Latin America have increasingly empowered the left to carry out this task.

As indicated at the beginning of this essay, there is another victim of this resurgence of progressive voices in Latin America. Latin American political leaders have rejected the Bush Administration's "War on Terrorism." The "civilization of fear" the United States is currently promoting strikes too close to the Cold War paradigm that led to so much of the State Terrorism that dominated Latin America in the recent past. Elected and electors alike would rather concentrate on poverty, inequality and truly fair trade while resisting the U.S. attempt to reorder the world around a culture of fear.

Notes

[1] Williamson, John "What Washington Means by Policy Reform" in Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened? ed. John Williamson (Washington DC: Institute for International Economics, 1990): 7-20

[2] Rodrik, Dani "A Practical Guide to Formulating Growth Strategies". Prepared for the Barcelona Forum 2004

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Truth Or Propaganda?

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Stories of Israeli atrocities spread by the media, and Palestinian solidarity organizations have created considerable hostility to Israel. How can we determine if these atrocities stories are truth or propaganda?

Method of Discerning the Truth

The steps I use in this article to evaluate the truth of Middle Eastern allegations are:

> *1) Examine what both sides have to say and if possible what neutral observers have observed*
>
> *2) Isolate statements that are verifiable and verify them.*
>
> *3) Look for contradictions and inconsistencies.*

I. The Allegation of Unfair Academic Closures

One of the allegations leveled against Israel is that Israelis imprison Palestinian students for non-violent dissent. To evaluate this allegation we will consider the report of two neutral organizations, the World University Service (WUS) and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) who sent a mission of enquiry to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to investigate academic freedom there.[i]

According to their report:

> *"The six principal institutions of higher education in the West Bank and Gaza have all been founded, or else upgraded to university status, since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967: indeed, almost all of the expansion of higher education has taken place since about 1972. It is still continuing. The Israeli authorities appear to have given permission, either at the beginning or retrospectively, for all the institutions to open, and have co-operated with them in several ways.*
>
> *The rate of expansion of higher education has indeed been remarkable. In 1967, apart from a few small colleges some of which formed a nucleus for later growth, there was little in the way of higher education inside the West Bank and Gaza. By 1977-78 2,763 students were enrolled at the four main institutions: Birzeit, An Najah, Bethlehem and Hebron. By 1983-84 there were 11,046 at the six we visited,*

and some 14,000 altogether if the smaller colleges are included…"

The authors wrote:

> *"At Birzeit, by chance, we witnessed two events symptomatic of problems in the occupied territories… [O]ur car overtook a stationary bus carrying Birzeit students: the bus had been stopped by Israeli soldiers and all the students had to get out to have their identity cards checked… later that same morning the students organized a demonstration in the street just outside the old buildings of the university: this was to commemorate or rather reassert Palestinian condemnation of, the UN General Assembly Resolution of November 29, 1947 the Partition Resolution that outlined a plan for the partition of Mandated Palestine west of the River Jordan between a Jewish state and an Arab state… The demonstration was peaceful and impressive, and there was no Israeli attempt to stop it. "*

Why demonstrate against the partition plan? That plan was meant to give Israel a state and the Palestinian Arabs a state that would coexist side by side.[ii] This demonstration could only be against the existence of Israel yet the Israelis did nothing to stop it. What the authors personally witnessed was Israel tolerating extreme dissent.

The authors heard second hand about another student demonstration that took place on January 31, 1984 at Birzeit University which was followed by a military ordered closure of the old campus for three months. (Birzeit had both a new and old campus). A statement issued by the Public Relations Office of Birzeit on 4 February said:

> *"On the afternoon of January 31, the army came to the University where a peaceful student gathering was being held inside the campus… "*

Israel in an official announcement issued on 2 February explained their reasons for the closure. as follows:

> *"The Military Government decided today to close the old campus of Birzeit University for a 3 months period, following violent disturbances and grave violations of public order which took place at the campus on January 31st 1984. In the course of these events, some 400 students gathered at the campus, paralyzed the studies, raised PLO flags, rushed into the nearby streets and laid road blocks, set tires on fire and stoned the security forces which came to enforce order at the scene…*
>
> *The IDF and the Civil Administration will not permit students who are motivated by the PLO and activated by hostile elements to exploit the institutes of higher*

education in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district for the purposes of incitement and hostile activities.

Conclusion: The Israeli argument that they closed Birzeit in response to violence is more consistent with the author's observations than the allegation that Israel imprisons students for non-violent dissent.

The Bombing Innocent Palestinians Atrocity Allegation

In October of 2000 a news bulletin interrupted the Arabic music on the Voice of Palestine radio: Israeli jets had just bombed the West Bank town of Bethlehem, the report said.

"The Israeli criminals have fired missiles into the homes of innocent Palestinians," a breathless correspondent said. "Palestinian blood is flowing in the streets! Oh God, God, how can the criminals kill our innocent children?"

An hour earlier, another breathless Voice of Palestine correspondent had reported that the West Bank town of Hebron was "under siege" by armed Jewish settlers who were "shooting Palestinian women and children."

According to the correspondent Israeli troops were also burning homes in the West Bank town of Nablus.

Verification:

An investigative reporter for USA Today, Jack Kelley, decided to investigate these allegations.[iii] Immediately after hearing the broadcast about the Israeli attack on Bethlehem he hurried over and found no evidence of an attack. He went to Hebron to report on the siege by the Jewish settlers and found calm and quiet. He went to Nablus to see the burning buildings and nothing was burning.

Why report false information? Tape editor Mahi Adwan explained.

"With my task here, I feel I complete the work of those who throw the stones."

Soon after she spoke, another bulletin was broadcast by the station. "Palestinian people: Our war is about to begin," yet another breathless commentator said.

"Our brother and liberator in Iraq, President Saddam Hussein, has just phoned us to say that hundreds of jets and helicopters are taking-off from the aircraft carrier

belonging to the criminal occupation force. They are heading this way to destroy our –"

Suddenly, the report came to an end. Perhaps the commentator realized that Israel's navy doesn't have — and never has had — an aircraft carrier as part of its fleet."

The Jenin Massacre Allegation

One of the recent accusations leveled against Israel is that Israeli soldiers [iv] massacred Palestinians civilians at Jenin. Palestinian Authority Minister, Saeb Erekat stated on CNN April 10: "Im afraid to say that the number of Palestinian dead in the Israeli attacks have reached more than 500 now."[v] The director of the hospital in Jenin, Abo Gali, said that Israeli tanks fired 11 missiles at the facility, destroying oxygen bottles, water tubes, sewage pipes, hospital wards, doctors rooms and an infirmary. "The whole of the west wing was destroyed," he testified. "Fighter planes launched their missiles every three minutes." Abo Gali claimed that the Israeli army prevented all ambulances from reaching the hospital, insisting: "They didn't want people to get medical treatment" and " we had no food left." Australian Christian humanitarian volunteer Dalry Jones said that Palestinians displayed photos of bodies, "gouged and pitted, torn. We were told this is from torture from the Israelis."

Verification:

Pierre Rehov a French film maker went to Jenin to investigate the above allegations and created a documentary[vi] about what he found. In that documentary Rehov provides aerial images of the hospital on the last day of the incursion surrounding trees, the roof and floors are all intact. He also shows footage of ambulances unloading casualties by the hospital doors and IDF soldiers assisting children and the elderly to reach treatment. Dr. David Zangen, the army's chief medical officer in Jenin during the incursion, describes how the soldiers even treated Palestinian fighters, including members of Hamas. Rehov even shows a scene of an Israeli authorizing Abo Gali in person to receive anything he'd like for the hospital.

According to the *Washington Times*[vii], international workers investigated the camp and found no evidence of a massacre after which Palestinian officials drastically lowered the death toll to 56, a number consistent with what Israel had estimated.

Pierre Rehov discovered that Palestinians staged scenes for reporter's cameras. On Jan. 25, 2003, Rehov accompanied Palestinian journalist Ali Smoddi of the PA-controlled Jenin television station as he and his crew set out to interview a Palestinian man and his wife whose baby was just delivered by a doctor. At the hospital, Smoddis crew does several "takes" of the fathers account of the birth, each with a different spin. In one version, the father claims that the ambulance they intended to meet was held up at a checkpoint for 15 minutes, and he was forced to deliver his infant son in the car, as the ambulance had not arrived. In another telling, the father says: "The soldiers took me down to the ambulance to check my identification and my wife gave birth in the ambulance and went to the hospital."

Dalry Jones, who had initially been believed the Palestinians regarding allegations of Israeli torture saw a Palestinian child blow up in front of her face, and came to the realization that the ripped apart bodies were the result of human booby traps that the Palestinians used against the Israelis."

Pierre Rehov's accounts of fabricated Palestinian street theater are supported by other sources. An Israel Defense Force drone filmed a funeral procession on April 28, during which the stretcher-bearers dropped the purported corpse. The "dead" man hopped back onto the stretcher, but the next time he was dropped, he walked away in a huff[viii] .

Sami El Soudi, a Palestinian journalist also confirmed the street theater allegations in an article to the Metula News Agency[ix] He wrote:

> *"Almost all Palestinian directors take part more or less voluntarily in these war commissions, under the official pretext that we should use all possible means, including trickery and fabulation, to fight against the tanks and airplanes the enemy has and we don't."*

The staging of atrocities can be very amusing to Palestinian onlookers. Israeli commentator Amnon Lord, a journalist for the Israeli paper, Makor Rishon wrote how he saw

> *"incongruous battle scenes complete with wounded combatants and screeching ambulances played out in front of an audience of laughing onlookers"*

Inconsistencies:

A major problem with the Jenin massacre allegation is it doesn't explain why Israelis sent men into Jenin to fight instead of shelling it from a safe distance. This tactic mystified Thaber Mardawi, an Islamic Jihad fighter in Israeli custody, who said: "I don't know why they [the Israel Defense Forces] sent the infantry [into Jenin]. They knew they would be killed. To see a soldier pass in front of me, I've waited for this many years."[x]

Support For Israeli Atrocity Allegations

One would expect that at least some of the Israeli victims of terrorist attacks would become radicalized. Yitshak Pass became radicalized after he lost his daughter, a 10-month-old baby, Shalhevet. She was killed on a sunny Saturday morning by a Palestinian sniper. He was walking in the street with his wife, pushing a trolley, and a sniper shot the little baby in the head. Dr. Baruch Goldstein became radicalized after he couldn't keep alive victims of Arab terrorist attacks and after he heard mosque worshippers yelling Etbach El Yahud (kill the Jew) The next day he opened fire on the worshippers in that mosque.

Dan Setton wrote a documentary called Israel's Next War and explained the radicalized settler's beliefs in an interview[xi].

> *"When a suicide bomber strikes, they don't think that the army should target the people who sent the suicide bomber. Because that's Israel's policy: to go after the cell, go after the leaders that sent the terrorist, bring them to justice or kill them. They say, "No. The assassin comes from the village next door. You go after the village. They kill our children, we kill theirs. They blow up our buses, we blow up a school." This is their strategic thinking. In the long run, they believe that this is the way that they're going to bring the conflict to a halt.*

Conclusion:

The settlers are critical of Israel's policy because it limits itself to going after the assassins. This in itself is evidence against the allegation that the Israeli army indiscriminately kills women and children. The fact that the Israeli army endangered their own soldiers in Jenin in order to avoid killing civilians is a dramatic testament to the efforts of Israel to avoid hurting civilians.

The Occupation of Palestinian Land Allegation:

An allegation that is often made against Israelis is that they are occupying Muslim land.

One counterargument against this is that the nation of Israel dates back to 1272 BC which is 1800-1900 years before the Muslim faith existed. Although in 70 CE the vast majority were exiled by the Romans those Jews who could, remained.

Verification:

The argument that there was a Jewish presence in Israel, even after the Romans exiled the Jews is supported by the fact that two famous Jewish works, the Mishna and the Jerusalem Talmud were both written around 200 CE. The Shulchan Aruch was written in Safed in the 1500s. An online documentary about Gaza [xii] shows Hebrew stone inscriptions demonstrating a historical presence of Jews there.

Counterargument:

Another counterargument to the claim that these areas are occupied Arab land is that the majority of Arabs living in the "occupied" areas are recent immigrants who immigrated there after the Jews created a thriving economy and made the desert bloom.

Verification:

The argument that most of the Arabs are recent immigrants is supported by the observations of

two neutral observers of the region, Mark Twain and Ladislas Farago. Mark Twain, in a book called *The Innocents Abroad*[xiii] wrote about the emptiness and desolateness of Palestine:

> *"Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies… Nazareth is forlorn; about that ford of Jordan where the hosts of Israel entered the Promised Land with songs of rejoicing, one finds only a squalid camp of fantastic Bedouins of the desert; Jericho the accursed, lies a moldering ruin, to-day, even as Joshua's miracle left it more than three thousand years ago; Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation, have nothing about them now to remind one that they once knew the high honor of the leader's presence; the hallowed spot where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and where the angels sang Peace on earth, good will to men, is untenanted by any living creature, and unblessed by any feature that is pleasant to the eye. .. The noted Sea of Galilee, where Roman fleets once rode at anchor and the disciples of the leader sailed in their ships, was long ago deserted by the devotees of war and commerce, and its borders are a silent wilderness; Capernaum is a shapeless ruin; Magdala is the home of beggared Arabs; Bethsaida and Chorazin have vanished from the earth, and the "desert places" round about them where thousands of men once listened to the leader's voice and ate the miraculous bread, sleep in the hush of a solitude that is inhabited only by birds of prey and skulking foxes."*

Ladislas Farago traveled through Palestine in the 1930s and wrote[xiv]:

> *"One always finds in Palestine Arabs who have been in the country only a few weeks or a few months…Since they are themselves strangers in a strange land, they are the loudest to cry: 'Out with the Jews!'…Amongst them are to be found representatives of every Arab country: Arabs from Transjordan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt, the Sudan and Iraq."*

Counterargument:

Ephraim Karsh in an article titled What Occupation?[xv] wrote:

> *In 1948, no Palestinian state was invaded or destroyed to make way for the establishment of Israel. From biblical times, when this territory was the state of the Jews, to its occupation by the British army at the end of World War I, Palestine had never existed as a distinct political entity but was rather part of one empire after another, from the Romans, to the Arabs, to the Ottomans…*

As is well known, the implementation of the UN's partition plan was aborted by the effort of the Palestinians and of the surrounding Arab states to destroy the Jewish state at birth. What is less well known is that even if the Jews had lost the war, their territory would not have been handed over to the Palestinians. Rather, it would have been divided among the invading Arab forces, for the simple reason that none of the region's Arab regimes viewed the Palestinians as a distinct nation. As the eminent Arab-American historian Philip Hitti described the common Arab view to an Anglo-American commission of inquiry in 1946, "There is no such thing as Palestine in history, absolutely not"…

Verification: Many Arabs agree with Mr. Hitti[xvi], in fact Zuheir Mohsein, then a member of the Supreme Council of the PLO said[xvii]:

"There are no differences between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. We are all part of one nation. It is only for political reasons that we carefully underline our Palestinian identity in contrast to Zionism. Yes, the existence of a separate Palestinian identity is there only for tactical reasons. The establishment of a Palestinian state is a new expedient to continue the fight against Zionism and for Arab unity."

Counterargument 2: Ephraim Karsh wrote that:

[O]n January 20, 1996, elections to the Palestinian Council were held, and shortly afterward both the Israeli civil administration and military government were dissolved…

Since the beginning of 1996, and certainly following the completion of the redeployment from Hebron in January 1997, 99 percent of the Palestinian population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have not lived under Israeli occupation."

Allegation: The Israelis Are Oppressing the Palestinians:

Counterargument: Efraim Karsh[xviii] wrote about this allegation as follows:

"During the three decades of Israel's control, far fewer Palestinians were killed at Jewish hands than by King Hussein of Jordan in the single month of September 1970 when, fighting off an attempt by Yasir Arafat's PLO to destroy his monarchy, he dispatched (according to the Palestinian scholar Yezid Sayigh) between 3,000 and

5,000 Palestinians, among them anywhere from 1,500 to 3,500 civilians. Similarly, the number of innocent Palestinians killed by their Kuwaiti hosts in the winter of 1991, in revenge for the PLO's support for Saddam Hussein's brutal occupation of Kuwait, far exceeds the number of Palestinian rioters and terrorists who lost their lives in the first intifada against Israel during the late 1980's…"

The larger part, still untold in all its detail, is of the astounding social and economic progress made by the Palestinian Arabs under Israeli "oppression." At the inception of the occupation, conditions in the territories were quite dire. Life expectancy was low; malnutrition, infectious diseases, and child mortality were rife; and the level of education was very poor. Prior to the 1967 war, fewer than 60 percent of all male adults had been employed, with unemployment among refugees running as high as 83 percent. Within a brief period after the war, Israeli occupation had led to dramatic improvements in general well-being, placing the population of the territories ahead of most of their Arab neighbors…

During the 1970's, the West Bank and Gaza constituted the fourth fastest-growing economy in the world-ahead of such "wonders" as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Korea, and substantially ahead of Israel itself…

Under Israeli rule, the Palestinians also made vast progress in social welfare. Perhaps most significantly, mortality rates in the West Bank and Gaza fell by more than two-thirds between 1970 and 1990, while life expectancy rose from 48 years in 1967 to 72 in 2000 (compared with an average of 68 years for all the countries of the Middle East and North Africa). Israeli medical programs reduced the infant-mortality rate of 60 per 1,000 live births in 1968 to 15 per 1,000 in 2000 (in Iraq the rate is 64, in Egypt 40, in Jordan 23, in Syria 22). And under a systematic program of inoculation, childhood diseases like polio, whooping cough, tetanus, and measles were eradicated.

Verification: There are many references[xix] that confirm Ephraim Karsh's astonishing statements about the thriving economy of the Palestinians under the Israeli administration, before the Intifada.

Counterargument 2: Menahem Milson wrote an article titled "How not to Occupy the West Bank" about Israeli efforts to make the life of the Palestinians as easy as possible. He wrote:[xx]

"There was no official Israeli document like the U.S. Initial Post-surrender Policy for Japan of September 1945 defining policy in the territories…The nearest thing to such a statement is an article by Shlomo Gazit (who headed the Israeli Military Government (IMG) under Dayan from 1967 to 1974) entitled "The Occupied Territories: Policy and Practice," published in January 1970 in Ma'arachot, the

monthly of the Israeli army…

Gazit wrote:

"Israel did not engage in the Six-Day War because of its expansionist intentions nor from a desire to rule the Arabs. We entered the military campaign because we were faced with a serious problem of defense which we had to solve. The territories which we occupied were occupied as essential defense positions for Israel, not because of [a desire to rule over] the population residing in them…"

For those [residents of the territories] who yearn for independence, for sovereignty, for a flag, a national anthem, and all the other paraphernalia of statehood for those, we cannot offer any practical solution. However, as for the other aspect, that is, to what extent the Israeli Military Government changes or affects the ordinary regular way of life of the Arab residents of the territories here we can do a lot in order to dull the acuteness of the problem…

In order to help "dull the acuteness of the problem," the IMG intends to abide by three principles. The first is "non-presence": the removal of any sign of Israeli rule the Israeli flag, a military patrol, visible military headquarters. The second is the principle of nonintervention: that the population should administer itself as it wishes. The third, finally, is the principle of open bridges," which makes it possible for the Arab residents of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (as well as visitors from all over the Arab world) to move freely into and out of the area…

It is the undisputed right of every Arab to continue to be a nationalist Arab with national awareness, to retain his traditions, religion, and language, to be proud of his past and of his national history…"

Milson explains:

"The meaning of such an approach becomes clearer when we contrast the Israeli policy in the territories with that of the United States in occupied Japan. The United States openly aimed at changing the political culture of Japan. To this end it instituted a general censorship of all Japanese media, a comprehensive revision of educational curricula and school texts, and a "purge" of public figures…

As for education: although Jordanian school texts were replete with anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish materials, nonetheless, according to Dayan's biographer Shabtain Teveth, the IMG decided "not to censor…"

"As the Israeli military presence was reduced in accordance with this principle [non-

intervention], armed PLO forces became active. "By the end of 1970," writes one observer, "the fida'iyin controlled the camps and, at night, the towns. Grenades were lobbed into marketplaces to disrupt commerce, and at places where people congregated who worked inside Israel, such as post offices, banks, and buses... Most of the victims were Arabs..."

Verification:

Gazit's argument that Israel needs to be in the territories for its own security is supported by a Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense by the Joint Chiefs Of Staff of he United States which can be viewed online[xxi]. According to the memorandum Israel needs:

"Control of the prominent high ground running north-south through the middle of West Jordan generally east of the main north-south highway along the axis Jennin-Nablus-Bira-Jerusalem and then southeast to a junction with the Dead Sea at the Wadi el Daraja"

You don't need to be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to realize the importance of Judea and Samaria for Israel's security. One quick look at a topographic map makes it obvious. I've included such a map below which I obtained from a political advertisement[xxii] from the Hatikvah Educational Foundation[xxiii]. The mountainous regions are Judea and Samaria otherwise known as the West Bank.

Israel's need to control it's border with Egypt becomes clear when one considers the massive amount of weapons smuggling that is now taking place as a result of Israel ceding control of the border between Gaza and Egypt to the Egyptians.[xxiv] These weapons include anti-aircraft missiles that could be used to shoot down Israeli passenger planes.

Conclusion:

Palestinians confabulate accusations against Israel in order to prevail in the propaganda war against her. Readers are invited to post their comments about this article at http://misheshoel.tripod.com where I will post a response to the rebuttal to my article that follows.

Notes

[i] Roberts, A, Joergensen B., Newman F., Academic Freedom Under Israeli Military Occupation, Report of WUS/ICJ Mission fo Enquiry into Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza

[ii] U.N. Partition Plan of 1947 for Palestine, http://www.mideastweb.org/unpartition.htm

[iii] Kelley, J. "All the News That Fits the Cause, USA Today 10/25/2000 pg 21A

[v] See CAMERA On Campus Fall 2002 for an in-depth review of PA misinformation.

[vi] Rehov, P., The Road to Jenin, http://www.pierrerehov.com/jenin.htm

[vii] Washington Times May 1 2002, "Jenin massacre' reduced to death toll of 56′ May 1 2002

[viii] The Jewish Week 5/20/02

[ix] Soudi, S.E., Metula News Agency Oct. 9, 2002 and "Probe: Famous martyrdom' of Palestinian boy staged", Kupelian, D., Worldnetdaily 4/26/03 http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=32137

[x] Rehov, P. The Road to Jenin

[xi] Frontline 3/24/05 http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/israel/etc/setton.html

[xii] Stop the Deportation, a documentary by Yedidim of Israel and Ariel Center for Policy Research http://www.acpr.org.il/films/stop_deportation_katif.wmv

[xiii] http://www.shechem.org/machon/mtwain/53.htm

[xiv] Ladislas Farago, *Palestine at the Crossroads,* New York: Putnam 1937 p17

[xv] Karsh E, "What Occupation" Commentary Jul/Aug 2002

[xvi] http://www.afsi.org/MEDIA/newsLinks/shockers/m100.htm

[xvii] Trouw (Dutch newspaper) March 31, 1977

[xviii] Karsh E, "What Occupation" Commentary Jul/Aug 2002

[xix] The annual yearbooks of Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstracts of Israel* and the annual reports of the Administrator of Activities in the Territories: *The Administered Territories – Data on Civilian Activity in Judea and Samaria, the Gaza Strip, and North Sinai*. Other valuable sources include the regular reports of World Bank (e.g., "World Development Indicators," "West Bank & Gaza at a Glance"), as well as various UN reports: United Nations Statistics Division (e.g., "Indicators on Income and Economic Activity" "Indicators on Literacy,"); World Health Organization (e.g., "The World Health Report") etc.

[xx] Milson, M, "How not to Occupy the West Bank" Commentary, April 1986

[xxi] http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/US-Israel/jt.html JCSM-373-67

[xxii] http://www.acpr.org.il/hatikvah/09-english-ad.pdf

[xxiii] http://www.acpr.org.il/hatikvah/

[xxiv] Harel, A, Haaretz, “Egypt Source of Huge Quantities of Weapons”, April 2005, www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/568935.html

The Zionist Worldview And The Pitfalls Of Confirmation Bias: A Rebuttal To Gamaliel Isaac

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Among the fallacies that get in the way of clear thinking there is one that is known as "confirmation bias." Here is a common definition for this type of one dimensional thinking, "confirmation bias refers to a form of selective thinking that focuses on evidence that supports what the believers already believe while ignoring evidence that refutes their beliefs. Confirmation bias plays a stronger role when people base their beliefs upon faith, tradition and prejudice." Actually, this is a quite common practice that seems to have all but taken over the thinking of Zionists, neo-conservatives, and the holy rollers of the religious right. Its most dangerous recent manifestation is the creation of the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans (OSP) by the Bush administration. The job of the OSP is to search high and low for selective evidence that might support the hypotheses of those now in charge of our country. The OSP has worked hard to confirm our leaders a priori beliefs and, as a result, has given us such deadly bloopers as Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and alleged partnership with Al Qaeda. Gamaliel Isaac is not in the same league as the OSP, but he certainly uses the same flawed thinking process.

Dr. Isaac is trying to demonstrate that charges of misconduct on the part of the Israelis in the Occupied Territories are false and malicious. Just like the neo-conservatives in the Bush administration, he so firmly hold this belief that he just knows it has to be true. Thus, in his hunt for supporting proof, he inevitably sees what he wants to see. As a result he ends up with mostly selective, particularistic evidence, which then allows him to conclude that Israeli policies have not produced an occupation that has harmed the Palestinian people.

In addition Isaac steps forth with what sounds like a sensible and fair method for discerning the truth of his claims. He tells us that he will examine what both sides say and compare it to what "neutral observers have observed." And, he speaks of the importance of verifying evidence and looking for contradictions and inconsistencies. Well, these are all nice words and I quite agree with his methodological goals. The problem is that he does not do what he says he is going to do in a convincing and satisfactory way. Indeed, his examination of the evidence is superficial and incomplete.

To put it simply, Dr. Isaac ignores the countervailing evidence that renders his particular cases either exceptions to a rule or possible examples of misinformation. His ideological commitment to Zionism apparently prevents him from recognizing that *weight of the evidence against his claims is so great* that it does not matter if one or more of his examples are true. They simply do not add up to a body of data that outweighs contrary evidence. Therefore, they do not

warrant the kind of definitive conclusions he draws from them. Alas, one must conclude that he has been led astray by "confirmation bias."

The Examples

1. Dr. Isaac begins with an attempt to disprove "the allegation that Israelis imprison Palestinian students for non-violent dissent." To accomplish this he refers to two incidents of Palestinian protest from 1984, the details of which can be found in his article. The Israeli response to these Palestinian demonstrations was allegedly restrained and considerate of civilian life and property. To verify this he cites a report on these incidents by observers (who witnessed only one of the incidents first hand) from two organizations, The World University Service and the International Commission of Jurists. Based on this scant evidence, Isaac draws the general conclusion that statements coming from the Israeli military about how they approach peaceful demonstrations in the Occupied Territories are more reliable than allegations of brutality and unwarranted arrests made by Palestinians.

I do not know who told the truth about the two particular incidents cited by Dr. Isaac. However, I do know that *the great weight of evidence* tells us that the Israeli government and its occupation forces not only often imprison and mistreat Palestinians, but they also imprison and mistreat internationals and Israeli citizens engaged in non-violent dissent. The Israeli military and police have repeatedly attacked, often without provocation, peaceful demonstrators (be they students or otherwise) particularly as relates to demonstrations around the Wall. Injuries are commonplace, as are arrests. Sometimes undercover police mingle with the protestors and, acting as agents provocateur, provoke violence. Reports of such police and army brutality come from eye witnesses, many of whom are Israelis. Reports of these attacks can be found in the Israeli press (the latest report came on April 29, 2005 in *Ha'aretz* in reference to the attack on demonstrators the previous day at Bil'in on the West Bank. Video of this incident, specifically addressing the issue of the Israeli use of agents provocateur, can be found at http://gush-shalom.org/video/bilin4-5-05.html) as well as by such organizations as Gush Shalom (which has recently documented the use of "painful plastic bullets covered with salt" used against peaceful demonstrations), Ta'yush, Women in Black, Machsom Watch and Israel's own human rights organization B'tselem (which has repeatedly asserted that "Israeli security forces use of excessive force…against unarmed demonstrators.") Finally, it should be noted that on the website of International Commission of Jurists, on whose judgment Isaac relies in this instance, can be found repeated condemnations of Israel's "widespread and gross violations of human rights and international law."

One should *weigh the cumulative evidence* supplied by these and other organizations, that have been observers of Israeli behavior in the Occupied Territories for years, with the scant and selective evidence provided by Dr. Isaac. *The massive nature of that evidence*, put forth by many organizations (many of them Israeli) that are considered to be reliable observers by all but the Zionist right and its supporters, successfully undermines Isaac's assertion that the Israeli forces do not arrest and otherwise mistreat Palestinian (and other) non-violent protesters in the Occupied Territories.

Of course, I suspect that Dr. Isaac and other Zionists will argue that such sources are unreliable or that the literally hundreds of reports critical of Israeli behavior coming in fast and furious over many years are just the product of some anti-Semitic conspiracy. This is their "confirmation bias" surfacing. Counter evidence to their a priori beliefs, no matter how overwhelming and consistent it may be, is to be ignored or rationalized away. However, reasonable observers confronted with a pattern of evidence reported by multiple, independent and reliable sources over an extended period of time will agree that such proof has to be taken seriously.

2. Dr. Isaac's second example has to do with the allegations that innocent Palestinians in Bethlehem have been bombed by the Israeli military, lethally attacked by armed settles in Hebron, and had their homes burned in the town of Nablus. According to the author these charges were made by the Voice of Palestine in October 2000. All three reports were supposedly investigated by a reporter for USA Today and found to be untrue.

I do not know if the particular incidents in Bethlehem, Hebron and Nablus ever took place. However, it should be noted that the time in question marked the beginning of the second intifada during which, according to Human Rights Watch and B'tselem, Israeli forces used indiscriminate and lethal force against unarmed Palestinian demonstrators. Where then does *the weight of evidence* take us?

> ***A)*** *In the case of home demolitions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has concluded in a January 24, 2004 report that "more than 10,000 houses were demolished since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967." Amnesty International, in a report issued on May 18, 2004 documented the facts that "more than 3,000 homes, vast areas of agricultural land, and hundreds of other properties have been destroyed by the Israeli army and security forces in the Occupied Territories in the past three and a half years."*

> ***B)*** *As to the Israeli bombings of civilian targets. This has been going on since the creation of the state. Following the precedents laid down by the British and French in their own suppression of Arab revolts in Palestine and Syria, David Ben Gurion ordered "retaliatory" air strikes against refugee camps as early as 1953. Almost every prime minister since then has followed his example. Perhaps the best known recent incident of this sort of barbaric behavior is the dropping of a one ton bomb on a residential neighborhood in Gaza City in July of 2002. The Israelis were going after Salah Shehade, a resistance leader. In the process they managed to kill not only Shehade, but also 14 innocent people including nine children. This was no mistake, the Israelis knew the nature of their target area. It was rather the product of a conscious policy that discounts the death, injury and destruction of Arab civilian lives and property. As a consequence of such callousness 30 Israeli air force pilots now refuse to fly combat missions against Palestinian population centers. As one of*

them has put it, "we are air force pilots, not mafia." Dr. Isaac might claim that such Israeli bombings are a response to Palestinian terrorism (the Palestinians claim their violence is a response to Israeli terrorism), or made necessary because Palestinian resistence fighters hide out among the civilian population, but taking such positions would negate his suggestion that stories of Israeli atrocities of this sort are false.

***C)** And finally, In the case of attacks by armed Israeli settlers, Z Net, the web site of Z Magazine, has put together a revealing article on Israeli settler violence. It is by John Petrovato and is dated April 3, 2005. However, if this source is suspect to Zionists and their supporters we can go to an Israeli source. B'Tselem characterizes the problem this way, "over the years settler attacks on Palestinians in the Occupied Territories have become routine….from the beginning of the intifada, in late September 2000, to the end of 2004, Israeli civilians have killed thirty four Palestinians in the Occupied Territories." B'Tselem goes on to comment that "all law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities demonstrate little interest in uncovering the substantial violence that Israeli civilians commit against Palestinians in the Occupied Territories."*

On the topic of settler violence, it seems uncertain if Dr. Isaac really finds this behavior repulsive or criminal. In his essay he appears to justify the atrocity committed by Baruch Goldstein on the 25th of February 1994. On that date Goldstein walked into a Hebron mosque and shot dead 29 innocent worshipers. Isaac tries to explain Goldstein's criminal act by telling us he was "radicalized" by Jewish deaths caused by terrorist acts and the anti-Israeli shouts of Palestinians. This sounds very much like the Hamas supporters who justify suicide bombings by pointing to the deaths of innocent Palestinians at the hands of Israeli soldiers and the racist treatment many of them have experienced at the checkpoints.

Additional evidence speaking to Israel's behavior in all of the above three categories can be had from organizations such as Rabbis for Human Rights, the American Friends Service Committee, and even the State Department's yearly Country Reports. Once more *the cumulative evidence undermining the positions taken by Dr. Isaac is overwhelming*. One can ignore it or deny it only through a willful act of self-deception.

3. Dr. Isaac's third example of alleged misrepresentation of Israel's policies and behavior has to do with Israel's assault on the town of Jenin and its refugee camp. This attack began on April 9, 2002 and lasted nine days. 23 Israeli soldiers died and anywhere between 52 and 500 Palestinians. The latter number is hard to ascertain for reasons we will come to shortly.

The Palestinians claim that Israel massacred people in Jenin, and it is this claim that Dr. Isaac seeks to refute. Once more, however, he makes the mistake of relying on overly specific and

thin evidence. He calls into question the statements of Palestinians about damage done to the Jenin hospital and allegations of Israeli torture. He cites a French documentary that was made a full nine months after the invasion. He cites as evidence aerial images allegedly taken on the last day of the Israeli incursion and pictures from Israeli drones. He accuses the Palestinians of staging scenes for reporters' cameras and manufacturing atrocity stories.

It is, of course, possible that some Palestinians exaggerated or misled when reporting about what happened in Jenin. Just so, it is possible that the Israelis understated or misled when describing the consequences of their actions. As to the French documentary, it may be accurate or itself a piece of propaganda. In a long and drawn out conflict, with deep hatred felt on both sides, one can no doubt find any number of lies and exaggerations coming from all quarters. However, this once more misses the point. *The real question is, what does the weight of evidence indicate about the nature of Israeli behavior in Jenin?* In the case of Jenin that evidence comes from recognized and respected international sources, as well as Israeli newspapers. Reports by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and UN Middle East Envoy Terje Roed-Larsen (who described Israel's invasion as "horrifying beyond belief" and "morally repugnant.") indict Israel for its inhuman behavior in Jenin, whatever the final death count. Nor does one have to rely on these sources for verification of this behavior. One can turn to the Israeli press, such as the reports in Israel's largest selling daily, *Yedioth Ahronot*, about the widespread use of armed bulldozers (manufactured by Caterpillar here in the United States) to demolish large numbers of houses with their occupants still inside. In reporting this the paper does not rely on Palestinian or UN sources but rather interviews the drivers of the bulldozers.

Israel's government claimed that it had nothing to hide when it came to Jenin, but nonetheless it refused to let the United Nations come and investigate. When the UN Security Council

unanimously adopted a resolution calling for a fact-finding mission to be sent to Jenin to determine just who was telling the truth, the Israeli government prevented the mission from proceeding by demanding endless changes and adjustments to its personnel and mandate. It was a transparent and successful use of bureaucratic obstructionism to prevent what most neutral observers would agree was an attempt to objectively ascertain the truth. The short and incomplete report that was issued by the UN declared that there had been no massacre and only 52 Palestinians had died, but then added that its conclusions were based on mostly second hand information because UN investigators could not go to Jenin to see for themselves or directly interview the people there.

On the subject of Jenin, Dr. Isaac goes on to assert that the Israeli army staged an invasion of the town, rather than bombarding it from the air or from distant artillery, just because of Israel's humanitarian concerns. "The fact that the Israeli army endangered their own soldiers in Jenin in order to avoid killing civilians is a dramatic testament to the efforts of Israel to avoid hurting civilians." I guess that Isaac actually believes this. You can convince yourself of just about anything by concentrating very hard on selective evidence, by cultivating a kind of tunnel vision that renders suspect or invisible any evidence that does not fit your set world view.

Fortunately, there are many Israelis who are breaking through this mold and their testimonies are the best antidote to baseless claims such as this one. I recommend that Dr. Isaac consult a recently published (2003) collection of interviews with Israeli soldiers entitled, Breaking Ranks, edited by Ronit Chacham. It lays to rest the myth that Israel's military constitutes a humanitarian force. To relate just one of the many condemnatory descriptions of Israeli military behavior related by these soldiers, "I refuse to be a terrorist in my tribe's name. That is what this [Israeli action in the Occupied Territories] is, not a war against terror' as our propaganda machine tries to persuade us. This is a war of terror." Of course, Dr. Isaac might claim that these Israeli soldiers, all of whom have served in Gaza or the West Bank, are traitors and thus not to be trusted. Yet, their

numbers are growing. There are now over 1650 Israelis who openly refuse to serve in the Occupied Territories.

Flights of Fantasy

From this point on the Isaac's claims become ever more bizarre. For instance, he denies that any Israeli occupation exists. (Some may conclude that occupation denial has the same bad odor as holocaust denial). What he wants us to believe is that the Jews ancient connection with Palestine justifies their modern displacement of the indigenous population. But then Dr. Isaac would object to the notion of displacement because he is sure that such a thing never took place. After all, he tells us, "the majority of Arabs living in the occupied' areas are recent immigrants who immigrated there after the Jews created a thriving economy and made the desert bloom." As evidence he uses statements from Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad* as well as Ephraim Karsh and others. Mixed into this assertion of recent immigration, Isaac claims that the pre-Israel Palestinian population who were resident in the area did not have a sense of Palestinian national identity but saw themselves as part of a greater Arab nation.

The claim that a good part of the Palestinian population are recent immigrants is a far fetched myth produced by Joan Peters in a now discredited 1984 work entitled *From Time Immemorial*. The evidence she used to support this claim has been refuted by Norman Finkelstein in his book *Image and Reality of the Israeli-Palestine Conflict* (second edition 2003). Finkelstein has shown that Peter's assertion in this regard constitutes an extravagant exaggeration of the movement of seasonal migrant labor. If Dr. Isaac will take the time to read Finkelstein (specifically chapter 2), and do so with the open mind he demands from others, he will see that, the immigration argument is completely bogus. I am sure Isaac will complain that Finkelstein is a self-hating Jew and traitor to his people, but never mind. Finkelstein's destruction of the immigration argument is quite definitive.

For more evidence that there was a thriving Palestinian community and culture before 1948 one can consult the visual and other evidence available at www.Palestineremembered.com and Walid Khalidi's massive collection of photos in *Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians, 1876-1948.*

The assertion that, because nomadic tribes of monotheistic persuasion were roaming about the Palestine area thousands of years ago, twentieth century Jews have the right to ethnically cleanse the same region of its Arab population is ludicrous on the face of it. If Jews claim that God is somehow making them do this or sanctioning it all, then what are we to make of the values espoused by the Jewish religion? Nor, is the fact that Palestinian nationalism is a relatively recent development (largely arising in conjunction with modern Jewish nationalism) any excuse for the brutal behavior of Zionists. A certain moral blindness is needed to take these sort of arguments seriously. Even if these myths and biblical fables were true (and there is no hard evidence they are) is he actually trying to tell us that they excuse the destruction of a society and its way of life?

Dr. Isaac can get away (at least in his own eyes) with this perversity because he simply does not believe that Zionists are devastating an entire people and its culture. Indeed, using the selective and questionable data of hard line Zionists like Efraim Karsh, the author asserts that, up until the outbreak of the intifadas, Israel had actually turned at least the West Bank into a prosperous economic community–much better off then they were under Jordan. (If the Israelis had improved the lives of Palestinians so dramatically, one wonders why they have so energetically rebelled?) In addition, he quotes Menahem Milson, who was once the civil administrator of the West Bank, to the effect that Israeli occupation (the same occupation that Isaac suggests does not to exist) is more culturally benign than the American occupation of Japan. Switching over to Shlomo Gazit, who was head of the Israeli Military Government in the Occupied Territories from 1967 to 1974, Isaac cites the old argument that Israel is in the West Bank and Gaza Strip only because it has been forced to be there for its own security. To back this claim he quotes a few lines from "a memorandum for the Secretary of Defense by the Joint Chiefs of Staff" that concurs with this judgment.

Karsh and Gazit are hardly the "neutral observers" that the author promised us at the beginning of his essay. And, I will leave it to the readers to figure out whose side the Joint Chiefs are on. As to the economic situation in the Occupied Territories, *the weight of evidence from observers considered reliable by most*, tell a different story than Isaac and his selective sources**.** Prior to the intifadas there was employment improvement due to the Israeli economic policy of using the Palestinians as a cheap labor pool. But this did not result in economic development and hardly created "a thriving economy." Why not? Here is how Shlomo Avineri, past Director General of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs explains it, "Israeli GNP per capita is 20 times as high as that in the Palestinian territories….A common Israeli-Palestinian economic space cannot be based on equal…cooperation, but only on a…hierarchical relationship which at best would make the Palestinian state a virtual Bantustan on Israel's doorstop. One can see why Israeli industrialists were eager to have a cheap, non-unionized, docile Palestinian labor force at their disposal." What is true for a prospective Palestinian state was certainly true for occupied territories. In 1985 then Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin described Israel's economic policy toward the Palestinians this way, "There will be no development in the Occupied Territories initiated by the Israeli government, and no permits given for expanding agriculture or industry which may compete with the State of Israel." The result was the cessation of what little Palestinian economic growth had been allowed up until that time.

For post intifada years we can look at the seven World Bank reports on poverty in the West Bank and Gaza issued between 2001 and 2004 which tell us demonstrate that "an estimated two million Palestinians live in poverty, dependent on aid agencies, with 60% living on less than $2 per day and 22% of children under five suffering acute or chronic malnutrition." The accuracy of this picture is confirmed by reports of the UN Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories; the International Monetary Fund comprehensive reports on the economy in the West Bank and Gaza; the reports of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN on the "rapidly deteriorating food situation" in the Occupied Territories; and additional information provided by US AID, Johns Hopkins University's Center for International Emergency, Disaster,

and Refugee Studies, and the well respected organization CARE. All of these show without question that the economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is bad and getting worse every year, and that this situation is due in large part to Israeli policies.

Finally, is it really security that has brought the Israelis into the Occupied Territories and kept them there for the past 38 years? Most Israelis and their diaspora supporters will reply to this question with a simple formulaic answer: all Palestinians are potential terrorists seeking the destruction of Israel. Terrorists come from the Occupied Territories and so Israel must control these areas. This simplistic analysis completely ignores the repeated Palestinian efforts to secure a compromise peace with Israel leading to a two state solution based on Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 Green Line. Such a withdrawal would end the occupation and remove the major cause of violence against Israel. Even Hamas' leaders have suggested that this is the case. To this end, in 1988, the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist within its 1967 borders (which negated its charter statement seeking a Palestinian state in all of Palestine), subsequently it has accepted most of the international and American overtures for negotiations, signed the Oslo and Geneva agreements, and still knocks on the door of the Israeli leadership whose desire for peace is much more suspect than that of the Palestinians.

These efforts on the part of the Palestinians are rationalized away by Zionists who prefer to live with their myths (such as Barak's "generous offer") and fantasies (such as the notion that Palestinians are latter day Nazis). They ring their hands over the threats from Hamas as if that organization, or any other group of Palestinians even be they allied with Israel's Arab neighbors, could actually muster the power to "kick the Jews into the sea." There is no intelligence service outside of Jerusalem which really believes this can happen. No military engagement (including those of 1948) has ever come close to suggesting this scenario was or is possible. And, let us keep in mind, that thanks to enormous and continuous US military aid, Israel is ranked somewhere between the fourth and seventh strongest power on the globe. Indeed, it is the Palestinians who are being slowly but surely kicked out of their land, not the Israelis. *The truth is that the occupation does not make Israel secure, it is in fact the source of the country's insecurity.*

If Israelis want peace and security they must allow peace and security for the Palestinians within a viable state. But they won't do this because many of them, and that includes both the Labor Party and the Zionist right (to say nothing of the settler lunatic fringe) do not want peace at all. They want the land. That is why Israeli governments have spent 38 years making the lives of millions of Palestinians miserable while dancing around most of the international peace initiatives (as well as violating the spirit of those few they have engaged in). That is why they have illegally moved hundreds of thousands of colonists into the Occupied Territories. No rational and independent observer would conclude that the placement of over 200,000 colonists in hostile territory amidst millions of Palestinians is a sane policy for the promotion of Israeli national security.

Since the Zionists have seen fit to colonize the Occupied Territories in a manner that threatens the indigenous population with, at best ghettoization and an apartheid existence, and at worst

forced expulsion, it is sheer hypocrisy for them to cry foul when suffering the consequences of the inevitable resistance of their victims. For, despite Dr. Isaac's blindness to this fact, *occupied people have a right to resist*. One may debate the wisdom of some of their tactics, but the inherent right of resistance is only denied by oppressors and their supporters. It is the Palestinians who are the victims of Zionist expansionism and not the other way around. And, in the process the Israelis have terrorized the Palestinian population. That they are now terrorized in turn is but a reflection of the sorry truth that the violence of the oppressed usually rises to the level of the violence of the oppressor.

Conclusion

I began this rebuttal by explaining that one can affirm one's a priori beliefs by concentrating on the selective evidence that supports them. This is what all ideologues do whether they are driven by political, religious, or ethnic obsessions. When such people gain power their policies usually lead to oppression, violence, destruction, and death. Democracy is not a sure remedy for this problem because, as we saw in US election of November of 2004, it is often possible to fool most of the people most of the time.

In the 20th century two world wars were fought by leaders with one or another form of obsession supported by selective evidence. The second war almost wiped out European Jewry. So traumatic were these wars that they resulted in a series of rules for the behavior of nations in war and in peace. These are incorporated into international treaties such as the Geneva conventions and Hague conventions. Such treaties represent rare moments of international sanity. Most of Israel's activities in the Occupied Territories (the colonization, the vast majority of the house demolitions, the destruction of fields and wells, violence against civilians, the building of a ghetto/apartheid wall, and most of all the insatiable stealing of land) are illegal under these treaties. Israel and the United States, having taken on the role of 21st century Prussians, might now disparage these agreements. However, to throw them over in favor of policies driven by ideology, religion or ethnicity is criminal folly that recasts the world stage for future decades of death and destruction.

Dr. Isaac seems not to understand any of this. His world appears to be one-dimensional and the defining parameters of that world are the rigid, ethnocentric, and all inconclusive demands of Zionist ideology. To justify that small and closed world he has resorted to believing only the selective evidence that confirms his biases. I recommend that, if possible, he step back from that practice and consider the possibility that Zionism has not saved the Jews, but rather brought them to the edge of moral disaster. From this point the Jews can go one of two ways: continue on the present Zionist-inspired path into a future of insecurity, fear, paranoia, and increasingly brutal violence where might makes right and ends justify means. Or, they can harken to that old Talmudic saying, "By three things is the world sustained: by truth, by judgement, and by peace." That requires the vision to see the truth of one's own sins as well as others, the objectivity to judge when compromise is needed, and a sincere desire for peace for all who reside in Israel/Palestine. Which path has Dr. Isaac chosen?

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In Search Of Freedom; Against Reason Fallen Ill And Religion Abused

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

On the 6th of June, 1944, when the landing of the allied troops in German-occupied France commenced, a signal of hope was given to people throughout the world, and also to many in Germany itself, of imminent peace and freedom in Europe. What had happened? A criminal and his party faithful had succeeded in usurping the power of the German state. In consequence of such party rule, law and injustice became intertwined, and often indistinguishable. The legal system itself, which continued, in some respects, still to function in an everyday context, had, at the same time, become a force destructive of law and right. This rule of lies served a system of fear, in which no one could trust another, since each person had somehow to shield himself behind a mask of lies, which, on the one hand, functioned as self defense, while, in equal measure, it served to consolidate the power of evil. And so it was that the whole world had to intervene to force open this ring of crime, so that freedom, law and justice might be restored.

We give thanks at this hour that this deliverance, in fact, took place. And not just those nations that suffered occupation by German troops, and were thus delivered over to Nazi terror, give thanks. We Germans, too, give thanks that by this action, freedom, law and justice would be restored to us. If nowhere else in history, here clearly is a case where, in the form of the Allied invasion, a *justum bellum* worked, ultimately, for the benefit of the very country against which it was waged.

To Europe was given, after 1945, a period of peace of such duration as our continent had never seen in its entire history. To no small degree, this was the accomplishment of the first generation of post-war politicians — Churchill, Adenauer, Schuman, De Gasperi – whom we have to thank at this hour: We are to give thanks that it was not punishment that was fixed upon, nor again revenge and the humiliation of the defeated, but rather that all should be accorded their rights.

Let us say it openly: These politicians took their moral ideas of state and right, peace and responsibility, from their Christian faith, a faith that had undergone the tests of the Enlightenment, and in opposing the perversion of justice and morality of the party-states, had emerged re-purified. They did not want to found a state upon religious faith, but rather a state informed by moral reason, yet it was their faith that helped them to raise up again a reason once distorted by, and held in thrall to ideological tyranny.

Across Europe ran a frontier, and not just across our continent, but dividing the entire world. A great part of Central Europe and Eastern Europe came under the domination of an ideology

that subjected state to party, in the end, effacing the difference. Here, again, the result was the rule of lies. Visible after the collapse of these dictatorships, was the enormous destruction – economic, ideological, and psychological – which followed from this rule. In the Balkans, there were the entanglements of belligerency, bringing, along with the admittedly ancient burdens of history, new explosions of violence.

If Europe, since 1945 was permitted to experience a period of peace (the complications in the Balkans to one side), the state of the world taken as a whole was surely far from peaceful. From Korea, through Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Algeria, the Congo, Biafra-Nigeria, to the conflicts in Sudan, in Rwanda-Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, and on to Afghanistan and Chechnya, stretches a bloody arc of armed conflict, to which may be added the struggles in and concerning the Holy Land, and in Iraq. This is not the place to undertake a typology of theses wars. But two, in some ways new phenomena, I would like to examine more closely.

In the first, the cohesiveness of the law, and the capacity of diverse communities to live together, seem suddenly to break apart. Somalia, it seems to me, presents a typical example of the breakdown of the sustaining power of law, and with it, the collapse into chaos and anarchy. The reasons for this dissolution of law and the capacity for reconciliation are many fold. We can list a few. In all these realms, the cynicism of ideology has benighted conscience. Side by side with the cynicism of ideology, and often closely bound together with it, is the cynicism of the interests and of big business, the ruthless exploitation of the earth's reserves. Here also is the good shoved aside by the expedient, and might setup in the place of right.

The other new phenomenon is terror. The threat that terror's network, (and/or that of common-garden organized crime) growing ever stronger and widespread, might gain access to atomic weapons and to biological weapons, constitutes an increasingly frightening danger. For as long as these destructive capabilities remained exclusively in the hands of the great powers, one could always hope that reason, and knowledge of the danger that their use would pose to their own people and state, would preclude their employment of these weapons systems.

Terror cannot be overcome by force alone. Granted that the defense of right and law against a violence that would destroy them, may and must, for its own part, according to circumstances, have recourse to carefully calibrated force, for the protection of law and right. But in order that force in the defense of law and right shall not be itself do wrong, it must subject itself to stringent measures. It must pay heed to the causes of terror, which so often has its source in standing injustice, not addressed by effective measures. It must thus, by every means, address the elimination of that antecedent injustice. Above all is it important to vouchsafe forgiveness in advance, in order that the circle of violence may be broken. Where a merciless eye-for-an-eye obtains, there is no way to break free of violence. Acts of humanity, which have the power to break the circle of violence, which seek the human in the other and call out to his humanity, are essential, though they seem, at first glance, a waste of effort.

In all these cases it is important that no one particular power act as the champion of justice. All too easily can interest interfere with action, and contaminate one's view of what is just. Most urgent is a genuine *jus genitum*, free from hegemonic predominance and action which follows from it: only thus can it remain clear that what is at stake is the defense of collective law and right, and those also of them who stand, so to speak, on the other side. But in the contemporary clash between the great democracies and an Islamic-motivated terror, deeper questions come into play. Two great cultural systems with very different forms of power and moral orientation appear to be I conflict – the "West" and Islam.

But what is it, the West? And what is Islam? Both are multi-layered worlds with great internal differences – worlds that, in many ways, also intersect. In this respect, the crude antithesis West-Islam, does not apply. Some incline toward a greater deepening of opposition: Enlightened reason is set up against a fundamentalist-fanatical form of religion. Truly, the relationship between reason and religion is of the first importance in this situation, and the struggle for the right relationship belongs at the heart of our concern for the cause of peace. There are pathologies of religion – we see this; and there are pathologies of reason – we see this, too, and both pathologies are life threatening for peace – indeed, in an age of global power structures, for humanity as a whole.

God or the divine can make for the absolutizing of one's own power, one's own interests. But there are pathologies of reason totally disconnected from God. One would probably denominate Hitler as irrational. But the great explicators and executors of Marxism understood themselves very much as construction engineers, redesigning the world in accordance with reason. Perhaps the most dramatic expression of this pathology of reason is Pol Pot, where the barbarity of such a reconstruction of the world makes its most direct appearance. But the evolution of intellect in the West, also, inclines ever more toward the destructive pathologies of reason. Was not the atom bomb already an overstepping of the frontier, where reason instead of being a constructive power, sought its potency in its capacity to destroy?

When reason, now with the investigation into the genetic code, snatches at the roots of life, ever more does it tend to see human being, not any longer as the gift of God (or of Nature), but as a product to be made. Man is "made," and what man can make, he can also destroy. In all this is the concept of reason made ever flatter. Only what is verifiable, or to be more exact, falsifiable, counts as rational; reason reduces itself to what can be confirmed by an experiment. The entire domain of the moral and the religious, belongs then to the realm of the "subjective" – it falls outside of common reason altogether. One no longer sees that as tragic for religion – each one finds his own – which means that religion is seen as a kind of subjective ornament, providing a possibly useful kind of motivation. But in the domain of the moral, one seeks to be better.

Reason fallen ill and religion abused, meet in the same result. To a reason fallen ill, all recognition of definitively valid values, all that stands on the truth capacity of reason, appears finally as fundamentalism. All that remains is reason's dissolution, its deconstruction, as, for

example, Jacques Derrida has set it out for us. He has “deconstructed” hospitality, democracy, the state and finally, the concept of terrorism, only to stand in horror in the face of the events of September 11th. A form of reason that can acknowledge only itself and the empirical conscience paralyzes and dismembers itself.

A form of reason that wholly detaches itself from God, and wants simply to resettle Him in the zone of subjectivity, has lost its compass, and has opened the door to the powers of destruction. It is the duty, in these times, of us Christians to direct our concept of God to the struggle for humanity. God himself is Logos, the rational first cause of all reality, the creative reason out of which the world came to be, and which is reflected in the world. God is Logos – Meaning, Reason, Word, and so it is through the way of reason that man encounters God, through the espousal of a reason that is not blind to the moral dimension of Being.

There is a second point. It belongs, as well, to a Christian belief in God, that God – eternal reason – is Love. It follows, too, that He does not represent a relationless, self-orbiting Being. Precisely because He is sovereign, because he is the Creator, because He embraces everything, He is Relation and He is Love. Belief in the God who became human in Jesus Christ, and in his suffering and death for humanity, is the highest expression of this conviction: that the heart and hinge of all morality, the heart and hinge of Being itself, and its inmost source is Love. This declaration represents the strongest repudiation of any ideology of violence whatsoever; it is the true apologia of humankind and of God. But let us not forget that the God of Reason and Love, is also the Judge of the world – the guarantor of justice – before whom all men must make account. There is a justice love will not annul.

There is yet a third element of Christian tradition that I wish to mention, that, in the afflictions of our time, is of fundamental importance. Christian belief – following in the way of Jesus – has negated the idea of political theocracy. It has – to express it in modern terms – produced the worldliness of states, wherein Christians along with the adherents of other convictions live together in peace. Thus is distinguished the Christian belief that the Kingdom of God does not exist as a political reality, and cannot so exist, but rather, through faith, hope and love is it attained, and the world transformed from within. But under the conditions of temporality, the Kingdom of God is no worldly empire, but rather, a call for the freedom of humanity and a support for reason that it may fulfill its own mission. The temptations of Jesus were ultimately about this distinction, about the rejection of political theocracy, about the relativity of states and reason’s own law, as well as about the freedom to choose, which is meant for every person. In this sense, the secular state follows from of a fundamental Christian decision, even if it required a long struggle to understand this in all its consequences. This worldly, “secular” state incorporates, in its essence, the balance between reason and religion, which I have tried here to present. However, it stands against secularism as an ideology, which would, as it were, construct the state from pure reason, released from all historical roots, and which can thus recognize no moral foundations that are not discernable to reason. All that is left it, in the end, is the positivism of the greatest number, and with it the abasement of right; ultimately, it is to be governed by a statistic. If the countries of the West were to commit wholly to this path, they could not indefinitely withstand the press of the ideologues and political theocrats. Even a

secular state may – indeed, must – find its support in the formative roots from which it grew, it may and must acknowledge the foundational values without which, it would not have come to be, and without which, it cannot survive. Upon an abstract, an a-historical reason, a state cannot endure.

**Written as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger on the 60th anniversary of the Allied landing in Normandy. It was initially published in the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and was* translated from the German by Jeffrey Craig Miller.

Of Reason And Faith: A Reply To His Holiness Pope Benedict Xvi

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As the reign of Pope Benedict XVI begins the world looks for indications of his intentions and policies. He has already reached out in a small way to Muslims, Jews, and even unbelievers. But the new pontiff has also expressed his desire to re-affirm the "Christian roots" of Europe and build a more doctrinally unified Catholic Church. His concerns mirror those of many conservative and fundamentalist religious leaders of all faiths and "In Pursuit of Peace," an article that appeared in 2004 when the Pope was still Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger,[1] provides an exceptional insight into this general worldview. Taking his ideas seriously is particularly necessary at a time of religious upsurge in the United States and many parts of the world. That is the rationale for this critical commentary.

"In Pursuit of Peace" begins with the Pontiff's reflections on D-Day and the subsequent liberation of Europe from the Nazis. What resulted was an unparalleled period of peace and prosperity whose framers, somewhat arbitrarily chosen, are seen by him as deriving their political motivations from their Christian beliefs. With the help of the Marshall Plan, and the military backing of the United States, Western Europe squared off against the Communist bloc. Pope Benedict XVI is right when he notes that the lie born of "ideological tyranny" predominated under the Communists as surely as it had predominated under the Nazis. Nevertheless, the world looks different depending upon the side of the North/South divide that one is standing.

Leaders of all the "great powers" who built the postwar compact were complicit, some perhaps more and others perhaps less than their predecessors and successors, in shaping the nightmare of poverty and instability that still hovers over the once colonized world. Even the greatest figures of the struggle against totalitarianism Churchill, Roosevelt, and Truman had supported crass imperialist exploits, compromised with tyrants, and justified the creation or use of nuclear weapons. None have the same aura in India, Latin America, and Asia that they have in the West: it is instructive that, — with the agreement of Roosevelt — Churchill specifically exempted British colonial possessions from the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

Pope Benedict XVI views the problems of the non-western world as deriving from its inability to maintain the rule of law, which would enable different groups to live together, and its mixture of cynical interests with various forms of misusing, or abusing, "faith" that inhibit the exercise of conscience. Recourse to the terror unleashed on the 11thof September 2001 is a logical consequence and, according to the Pontiff, its devastating potential has grown worse since biological and nuclear weapons no longer are the preserve of western nations alone. But that the Pope chose not to mention the devastating impact of imperialism or the bombing of

Hiroshima and Nagasaki seems a terrible omission. His Holiness also evidences little sense of the bitter irony generated by the United States lecturing the once colonized world about the dangers of nuclear proliferation while leading all other nations in the sale of weapons and reserving for itself alone the right to engage in a "pre-emptive strike" whenever its leaders feel the necessity exists to do so.

Ultimately, however, it is not the "clash of civilizations" between the West and Islam that is the Pontiff's primary focus. It is instead the growing "pathological" embrace of either "reason" or "religion," and the need to restore a proper balance between the two: more secular reason in the Orient and more religious faith in the Occident. On first blush, therefore, his article exhibits a reasonableness that is difficult to deny. What results, however, is an abstract stance that considers the existence of too much fanaticism and repression as essentially equivalent with the existence of too much tolerance and freedom. The fear of the Pontiff is that in the West the "good" is becoming subordinated to the "useful" and that the more truth becomes identified with objectivity, and the testability of scientific claims, the more morality and religion will turn into matters of purely "subjective" belief or opinion. Such is the legacy of scientific rationality or, better, a form of uncritical positivism that has often been conflated with Enlightenment philosophy. Thus, while His Holiness does not explicitly use the term, he sees "enlightenment fundamentalism" as the principal danger to western societies.

The argument of the Pope shows an impressive debt to the thinking of contrasting philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Max Horkheimer. No less than they, however, the Pontiff forgets the way in which the unfettered ability of science to question authority was historically intertwined with the emergence of political democracy. No less than they, he is also mistaken in suggesting that (neo-) positivism, which now teaches the importance of falsifiability, implies merely the rule of the majority (Mehrheitsprinzip) rather than precisely because truth is deemed provisional the rights of the minority to contest received opinions. For just this reason, most major positivist philosophers were political liberals while the attack on positivism became a telling characteristic of all totalitarian regimes.[2] Also, in the same vein, it is interesting that the nineteenth century socialist parties formally identified with a "positivistic," "deterministic," and "scientific" Marxism should have produced the first mass democratic organizations in Europe, the most enthusiastic supporters of the interwar republics, and the most principled opponents of communist and fascist totalitarianism. [3]

There is, by the same token, something profoundly exaggerated about the claim that "Christian belief" produced the worldly states wherein all could live in peace: the ghetto was not exactly a Jewish invention and "the white man's burden," which promoted Christian missionary activity, did not exactly help foster peace in Africa. The Church opposed the democratic revolutions and consistently sought to block republican attempts to integrate Jews and Muslims into the everyday life of European civil society. What makes the preamble about D-Day so relevant to the actual purpose of the Pope's article is, ironically, that the Church only made peace with democracy and the civil rights of non-Christians — to the extent that it has — after the Second World War. Whether during the Dreyfus Affair, the rise of Mussolini, the Weimar Republic, the Spanish Civil War, the triumph of Hitler, or the fall of Salvador Allende, its lot was mostly cast

with the authoritarian right. That was also mostly the case in Latin America and other colonial territories though those identified with “liberation theology,” which the Pontiff has always criticized, put forth a valiant resistance against authoritarian dictators and their imperialist allies. To be sure, the Church played an important role in the struggle against communist totalitarianism and Pope John Paul II stood tall in his condemnation of the Iraqi War. But the dominant right wing and anti-secular legacy of the Church is not easily forgotten.

Secularism is a complex phenomenon that, ultimately, speaks to the possibility of understanding human development without reference to God or some force external to humanity itself. This project fundamentally contests the thinking of the faithful and it crystallized during the Enlightenment. Science explored the internal workings of nature and human experimentation produced technology. New theories of neo-classical economics and, ultimately, the labor theory of value showed how wealth is generated through human effort while liberal social contract theory highlighted the rational individual, civil liberties, the right of resistance, and the accountability of public institutions. All of this, in concert, led to what Max Weber termed “the disenchantment of the world.” The difficulty for critics of secularism is to articulate a corrective to the existing production process, a meaningful alternative to liberal notions of freedom and accountability, or anything other than what Ernst Cassirer termed “mytho-poetic” thinking to counter the claims and rationality of science.

Secular liberalism always threatened the absolute claims of religious institutions and the provincial disposition generated by organic societies with pre-modern economic arrangements. And religious institutions always knew it. The liberal secular state and liberal secular ideology together serve freedom by allowing people to make up their minds on the issues of faith and religious observance. The suggestion of Pope Benedict XVI that the liberal state should be recognized as a secular institution even while liberal secularism should be opposed as an ideology simply dissociates power from legitimacy. It begs concrete questions: Should the church act as a controlling mechanism on the liberal state or should the strictures of the liberal state be privileged in political matters? Has the Church ever been willing to regulate itself, without external pressure, on issues like child abuse? Should rabbinical tribunals decide who is a citizen of Israel? Is it legitimate for an Ayatollah to issue a fatwa that contravenes the rule of law? Is the religious belief in democracy real or is it real only when the interests of the Church or Synagogue or Mosque are not involved?

Breaking with any sort of dogma is impossible without distinguishing between “faith” and “knowledge.” Every attempt to blend reason and faith or offer “fundamental” or grounding values through some form of “civic religion”– even when God was placed at the center — resulted in authoritarian disaster. The point about “grounding,” “foundational,” or “pre-political” values is precisely that they are pre-political. They remain unconnected with rights or liberties precisely because rights and liberties receive their definition only in political society. The Bible, the Koran, or any number of other holy texts from other religions alone can serve as the source of “grounding” and “pre-political” values. But the possible interpretations of these texts are infinite in number precisely because they all speak to religiosity or the personal experience of faith. How is one interpretation to be privileged over another?

Other than respect for the basic values underpinning the liberal political order, moreover, it would also seem that “foundational values” are not quite as self-evident as the Pope would care to believe. Women, gays, and those of other religions will surely differ with regard to their character and, with all due respect, not everyone would even agree that the death of Jesus embodies the “highest expression” of love. The Church itself caused rivers of blood to flow during the Crusades, the witch burnings, the inquisitions, the pogroms, and endless internecine wars, in a host of failed attempts to ascertain what is “basic” to its own faith. Every interpretation of any holy text has the possibility of taking on absolute pretensions once the private “faith” informing it is identified with the public interests of any religious institution intent upon “secular” power. That is why only the respectful indifference of the secular democratic state to religious values and the like what the Pontiff terms a “reason fallen ill” can provide the antidote to the “abuse of religion.”

The will to know about stem cell research, about genomes, about DNA, and about the atom may not guarantee the ability to make proper use of that knowledge. But that it illuminates how the world and the human being are “made” need not inevitably lead to destruction. New scientific developments can also improve the mental and physical health, the quality of life, enjoyed by people everywhere. The same warnings that are now heard with respect to stem cell research and genomes and DNA could also be heard when Galileo, Ben Franklin, and Einstein introduced their discoveries. Fearful stalwarts of the old regime have always warned against tampering with “nature” and interfering with the design of God. But what then is the alternative? Should “we” or, better, some institution arbitrarily prevent that knowledge from coming about?

Democracy has never had anything to fear from reason or experimentation. The most durable democratic societies were created by nations that most self-consciously divided church from state and that refused to identify any private belief with the public good. Nations like England and the United States retained their moral “compass” in spite of their strong affinity for empiricism, positivism, and pragmatism. Their political arrangements left morality and faith in the province of the subject. That is the despair of Pope Benedict XVI who wants religion to be more than a kind of “subjective ornament providing a possibly useful kind of motivation.”

But the fact is that morality and faith must be treated this way in a genuinely liberal and democratic political order. That is because it must prize behavior more than belief and insist, building upon John Locke, that the individual is free to do what the law of the state does not explicitly prohibit. If the Pope believes that Enlightenment political thought leads to anarchy then he is seriously mistaken. Postmodernists have been so critical of the enlightenment legacy, in fact, precisely because its partisans differentiated clearly between freedom and license. The Enlightenment was ultimately directed against religious fanatics and what today would be considered the arbitrary exercise of institutional power. The majority of the philosophes were never concerned with abolishing religion. They were instead concerned with securing the right of each not merely to believe, or not, in his or her own way, but to decide upon what is worthy of belief in his or her private existence without having that belief turned into an imperative for the public at large.

What then becomes of the common good? The multiplication of individual interests, experiences, and opinions is the common good. Or, to put it another way, the common good is the enlargement of freedom and the possibilities for expanding individual experience. Freedom is not a word that has much currency in the Pontiff's article. But it remains decisive: "moral reason" is an oxymoron if it does not speak to a conviction in freedom whose "foundational values" include respect for the liberal rule of law, an elementary sense of fairness, the accountability of institutions, and the extension of reciprocal rights and obligations equally to all members of the community. Not some abstract "grounding" but freedom is the foundation for human self-understanding. That is essentially what the best of the philosophes sought in political terms. Enlightenment fundamentalism, if there is such a thing, is ultimately predicated not on scientific truth but on privileging individual autonomy and the critical exercise of reason over the claims of unyielding traditions and unaccountable institutions.

Reducing people to things can be undertaken by a variety of institutions and justified by a variety of religions and ideologies. Perhaps a complementary learning process is necessary for the partisans of knowledge as well as the partisans of faith. But if such an encounter were to take place then its goal can only be to confront the chains that bind. It must begin by assuming the need for not less but more freedom: more education, more research, more information, more participation, and more accountability of institutions. The real clash is not between "civilizations," or what has been termed the "West and the rest," but between supporters of a secular liberal state with a pluralistic public realm and others intent upon imposing their religious convictions on disbelievers.

Faith, myth, and dogma lie at the core of servitude and authoritarianism. Critique, science, and tolerance by contrast — incarnate what little hope that there is for the hopeless. Not religion but reason, moreover, is on the ropes. The idea that "reason" is somehow the problem today for western societies is simply to blame the victim. In this world of managed misinformation, communitarian backlash, religious fanaticism, and self-righteous ignorance, it is perhaps useful for all of us including the Pontiff and his followers to consider the anguished words of his countryman, Thomas Mann, which echo from an even darker time: "As if there was ever too much intellect in the world!"

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[1] This article has a history. It essentially summarizes the position taken by the Pontiff in his debate with the pre-eminent philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, which was held before a small invited audience on January 1, 2004 at the Catholic Academy in Munich. Cardinal Ratzinger argued the importance of "pre-political" foundations for a liberal secular state and a universal notion of common law derived from "nature"– though what the former actually implies and what the latter concretely can contribute to the liberal state remains unclear. As for Habermas, in accepting the Peace Prize of the Deutschen Buchhandels in October 2001, his speech emphasized the need to reconnect "faith" (Glauben) and "knowledge" (Wissen) and "translate"

the “religious content” of moral concepts into a “secular language.” It became for him a matter of salvaging the “original religious meaning” of existence that modernity was eroding or ignoring. Thus, in spite of his belief that reason must still control religious faith, his position ultimately reflects the shift from a “post-metaphysical” to a “post-secular” theory. For more on this see: http://theodor-frey.de/dialog.htm; http://religion.orf.at/projekt02/news/0401/ne040120-_harbermas_ratzinger.htm; http://www.sbg.ac.at/sot/ texte/2004-01-22-zsf-merkur.htm; and, in English, http://marston.blogspot.com/ 2005/05/habermas-ratzinger.html.

[2] Norberto Bobbio, Ideological Profile of Twentieth-Century Italy trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[3] Looking back upon totalitarianism, to make his point about the dangers of embracing either faith or reason, the Pope contrasts the irrationalism of Hitler with the ultra-rationality of Marxism. But the fact is that communism jettisoned the historical logic, the rationality, and the “science” of Marxism. Willing to seize power in an underdeveloped nation, where the proletariat was a tiny minority, Leninism rested on a thoroughly romantic politics of the will and it makes sense why Antonio Gramsci a stalwart of Leninism and a founder of the Italian Communist Party should have called the Russian Revolution a “revolution against Das Kapital.” Unconcerned with accountable institutions, insistent that any historical constraint can be overcome, arbitrary in its designation of enemies, the unqualified “faith” in the party soon turned into an unqualified “faith” in its leader. What became the left totalitarian trajectory, which developed from Lenin to Stalin, perfectly reflected the right totalitarian development from Mussolini to Hitler. It is, in short, not as if the right was romantic and irrational while the left was overly scientific and rational. The Pope is also mistaken about Pol Pot who might well have exemplified the most extreme version of romantic left-wing irrationalism with his willingness to sacrifice roughly a third of his people in the insane desire to recreate an agricultural golden age supposedly lost in the mists of time. There is a reason for the title of what remains perhaps the most telling explanation concerning the appeal of communism. Note the reprint of the anthology The God that Failed ed. Richard Crossman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

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Some Unheroic Thoughts About Heroes

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Unglücklich das Land, das Helden nötig hat. ("Unhappy the Land that needs heroes.")

–Galileo in Brecht's *Leben des Galilei*

Dislike of the Subject

As poet Marianne Moore once said about Poetry, "I too dislike it." Apparently Brecht disliked it as well. I can't say that I'm crazy about it either.

In these post-9/11 days, the word "hero" has been bandied about so recklessly that it's lost all its juice, and has come to mean virtually anyone in a combat situation. But not very long ago, it had a more grandiose ring. In fact, to anyone who clings to the belief in the fragile, imperfect core idea of democracy-that a group of one's "peers" can be more or less trusted to make decisions that will further the interests of society as a whole-the notion of heroes is guaranteed to make one squirm. It smacks of older, more hierarchical social systems; it's redolent with blood and gore instead of peaceful compromise; it undercuts the democratic citizen's sense of his own worth in favor of a vague, generic being who by definition is superior to him. I don't like heroes, mutters the democratic citizen under his breath. I'll be my own hero.

And yet, like it or not, pre- and post 9/11, we live with heroes from the day we're born: our shadowy parents, a benevolent teacher, a character in a nursery rhyme or children's book, a sports star-all fairly remote figures who give way to the taller, more socially gifted, prettier, more competent of our schoolmates. (And this doesn't even include the inflated superheroes of cartoons and TV that dull the genuine pain of admiration and propel us into a world of solipsistic fantasy.) Though sometimes the envy engendered by childhood hero-worship is almost too much to bear, if one doesn't end up paralyzed one learns from childhood heroes, one tries on their skins to see what parts fit, what parts don't.

Hopefully, there's a qualitative difference between the heroes of childhood and adulthood that lends a little credence to the cliché that age brings wisdom. As we get older, we don't simply admire power, wealth, beauty, strength. If we've achieved a level of self-love by, say, the age of 25, the nature of our heroes changes. Just as we've discovered that life will involve a struggle to get what we want, and that a great part of the struggle will be in finding the balance between doing what we feel like and what we have to do in order to survive, our heroes take on a more nuanced, perhaps humbler shape. We begin to admire qualities like fortitude, rectitude, idealism, and especially persistence, the ability to persevere against difficult odds. Our heroes more closely resemble ourselves.

All of this, however, is about personal heroes; it doesn't speak to Brecht's note of caution. We all recognize the despotic types that Brecht was thinking of when he put those words into his protagonist's mouth, and, like him, we know that we should approach the question of national heroes very, very carefully. Yet when we look around at the present political scene, the view is pretty different from Brecht's. Instead of having powerful, savage leaders like the ones that he worried about, we're for the most part led by figures who are more or less adept at managing government or playing politics or rabble-rousing, but who lack what used to be called *vision.* Our technical ability to transfer someone's face onto millions of tee-shirts hasn't produced any new public heroes: neither George W. Bush nor Osama bin Laden has achieved the status of a Che.

Actually, the question of national heroes may be very different from the one Brecht's Galilei implicitly posed. Given the Byzantine complexity of present-day democratic institutions, is it possible-forget desirable– to have leaders who are more than slightly drunken captains of runaway ocean liners? Can there *be* national heroes in a time when the ships of state, or more accurately the juggernaut of international capitalism, is out of anyone's control?

The Hero As Myth and Bad Dancer

A stab at a distinction between heroes and leaders might be useful at this point. (A distinction especially called for in German, given the loaded connotations of the word "Führer.")

When we try to describe a pattern of heroic behavior, we generally come up with a picture of heroes as solitary fellows who face a series of "tests," both simple and complex. In the course of going through these tests they realize that they have a particular gift or message to pass on, and they spend most of the rest of their lives struggling to convince others of the rightness of their cause. In general, heroes are more comfortable in the world of myth than of "reality." When they overstep their limits and become, for instance, statesmen like Nelson Mandela or Vaclav Havel, they may encounter problems that they hadn't bargained for. Though occasionally a leader- Lincoln is probably the best example-finds himself being put through a series of tests that make him an unwilling hero, taking him from a relatively safe life into a world of great loneliness and power, the hero/leader is very rare. Most heroes don't make very

good leaders-at least not in the long term– and most leaders don't come close to being heroes. In a sense, it's easier to talk about heroes than leaders, because heroes tend to be interchangeable, while whether or not someone makes a good leader depends on whom he has to lead, and when.

In his classic 1953 work, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces,* the mythologist Joseph Campbell breaks down the heroic journey even further:

Initially unwilling to heed his peculiar "call," the hero is coaxed along, according to Campbell, by various gatekeeper figures until he enters a world of darkness and danger. He grapples with malevolent male and female gods until he absorbs their power and sees their more benevolent sides. By facing danger squarely, the psyche of the hero frees itself of childhood fears and dependencies, and he emerges as an adult with a sense of mission. But his ordeal isn't over. Equipped with new-found self-confidence, he's required to return to a world that is either indifferent or hostile, or he finds that the bliss of his enlightenment may have made the "real" world distasteful. If he gets over this depression and sense of rejection, he has the potential to pass on his message to a society that can use it to restore a sense of newness and purpose.

Even if overly schematic, this paradigm helps us see the connections between the classic heroes-the Christs, Moseses, Buddhas, Odysseuses. Campbell and his Jungian colleagues make a convincing case, it seems to me, that the pattern is archetypal, and that if not everyone lives a life in which he feels that he has a higher destiny, all of us feel it *sometimes,* and strive, however unconsciously, to get in touch with the parameters of that destiny.

For all his enthusiasm with mythology, Campbell is pretty discouraged about its relevance to contemporary life:

> *Today all of these mysteries have lost their force; their symbols no longer interest our psyche. The notion of a cosmic law, which all existence serves and to which man himself must bend, has long since passed through the preliminary mystical stages represented in the old astrology, and is now accepted in mechanical terms as a matter of course. The descent of the Occidental sciences from the heavens to the earth (from seventeenth century astrology to nineteenth century biology), and their concentration today, at last, on man himself (in twentieth century anthropology and psychology), mark the path of a prodigious transfer of the focal point of human wonder. Not the animal world, not the plant world, not the miracle of the spheres, but man himself is now the crucial mystery. Man is that alien presence with whom the forces of egoism must come to terms, through whom the ego is to be crucified and resurrected, and in whose image society is to be reformed.*

If one considers slightly more recent literary incarnations of the hero or anti-hero-I'm thinking of *Don Quixote* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra*-Campbell's quiet pessimism rings true. Next to the fleshy myths of earlier heroes, these anemic figures show us the hoops that an author has to jump through to find a way to refresh the concept of the hero. Don Quixote and Zarathustra might look so unheroic to Homer or the writers of the Gospels that they couldn't be blamed for missing the similarities between their iconic figures and these weird modern spin-offs.

Cervantes himself has been chastised by literary critics for being too hard on his "hero." In a 1998 essay in *The New York Review of Books*, the Belgian writer Simon Leys described Cervantes's attempt to write a best seller by debunking the literature of Chivalry popular in his time, and how critics from Montherlant to Unamuno to Nabokov criticized him for dwelling on Quixote's absurdity at the expense of his humanity. If not for Quixote's lovability, how does one account for the staying power of the book, which is really just an endless series of variations on the theme of Quixote's foolishness?

I think that part of *Don Quixote*'s continued appeal lies in the added value of "sincerity" as a heroic virtue in modern times. However "deluded" Quixote is-and one can make a good case that Cervantes actually proves what he sets out to disprove, namely, that Chivalry exists-Don Quixote not only believes in the principles that he sets forth but acts on them. It isn't by success that we judge the Good Don but by the sincerity of his efforts; and it may even be the futility of his actions (think of Beckett's line: "I don't care about success. I only care about failure.") that makes us love and identify with him.

This suggests another aspect to the hero that's become more obvious in modern times as our attitude toward strength and power has shifted, and many of us consider these qualities evil by definition. Leys identifies Quixote as a "loser," saying that "the successful man adapts to the world. The loser persists in trying to adapt the world to him. Therefore all progress depends on the loser." If we think of Christ on the Cross, the loneliness of the Buddha, or the many times that Odysseus escapes certain death only by the whim of a bored god or goddess, it's true that the the "loser" aspect of the hero accounts for a great part of his attractiveness, and that in our success-driven atmosphere originality and clear-sightedness may be even more unpopular than they were in Plato's cave.

But what are we to make of the blustering windbag of a puppet with the odd name of Zarathustra, whose creator-puppeteer, plagued by physical ailments and horrible shyness, is hardly anyone's model of a hero-maker?

First of all, Nietzsche's master work shows us how impoverished our ability to think up heroic myths has become. Though Nietzsche attempts to invest his "story" with some of the trappings of myth (the old man who initiates Zarathustra into the Mysteries, the animals that surround and support him, his period of isolation and wish to rejoin the world, his sense of a "higher destiny"), the book as fiction rattles like an old suit of armor, and some of its pithier statements read today like, God help us, the worst of pop psychology. Who can avoid in the following paragraph picturing a bunch of privileged Americans of the 1960's cavorting around an Esalen

campfire?

> *Zarathustra the dancer, Zarathustra the light, waves with his wings, ready for flight, waving at all birds, ready and heady, happily lightheaded; Zarathustra the soothsayer, Zarathustra the sooth-laugher, not impatient, not unconditional, one who loves leaps and side-leaps: I myself have put on this crown! (Part IV, Chapter 13, section 18)*

And yet one is moved by *Zarathustra* just as much as by *Quixote*, I think because the author's yearning behind his character is so palpable. If Don Quixote reeks of sincerity while his creator reeks of irony, something of the opposite is true in *Zarathustra.* While Zarathustra often speaks in what must be considered at least a quasi-ironic mode-"'Man must become better and more evil'-this *I* teach… It may have been good for that preacher of the little people that he suffered and tried to bear man's sin. But I rejoice over great sin as my great consolation" (IV, 13, 5)-there's nothing ironic about the sensibility behind Zarathustra's voice. Nietzsche rages against organized religion, rationality, all that he considers standing in the way of a freer, more impulsive existence-for, if not everyone, then at least for Nietzsche himself and a few select friends. We feel his rage, and we feel his sincerity: both are so intense that they become inspiring. This man with all his physical and psychosomatic ills, his long periods of isolation, his struggles with female figures that Campbell might call "Temptresses," and most of all the boldness of his conviction, actually has the earmarks of the classic hero. Yet it's doubtful that Nietzsche would have wanted to be seen as a hero; more likely, he'd have regarded idolizing himself as worshiping yet another false God, and kicked his statue over.

It appears that in modern or post-modern times if people can no longer invent heroic myths, some of us can still live heroic lives.

Looking for a Good Leader: A Glance at *Plutarch's Lives*

Whatever else he may be, the hero seems to be He Who Thinks for Himself. This paradigm probably emerged around the time when society consisted of more than one person, and it has persisted as an ideal right up to the most hackneyed of contemporary American advertising slogans about "thinking outside the box," "marching to the beat of a different drummer," etc. etc. ad nauseam. It's remarkable how each era finds a way to express a yearning for heroism, and that it remains as rare as ever.

In part this is because of the suffering that accompanies the heroic quest. Most of us sense this early, whether it's in the tedium of practicing violin or the fear of going against our parents' wishes to take over the family business and become an actor or hip-hop singer instead. It's

understandable that we prefer to please and be comfortable rather than to suffer for our ideals, and so for many of us, having a "calling"-the heroic urge to do something with passion-is fought down until it atrophies and dies. Others substitute conventional ideas of ambition and success for the pain of heroic loneliness, and tend to regard those few among us who resemble heroes with suspicion and disdain. It's not easy being a hero: as much as we may idealize them in stories, we're not very comfortable with them as our next-door neighbors.

However, we're still stuck with the more immediate question of good and bad leaders, and what if anything they have to do with heroes. I thought that it would be instructive to take a look at the work of one of history's great students of leaders, Plutarch, especially his Lives of the Greeks. (Though he matched Greek biographies with Roman ones, Plutarch's heart, it seems to me, was with his own countrymen-apparently his Latin was far from fluent-and he's much more relaxed and perceptive about the hedonistic, mercurial Greeks than the clay-footed Romans.)

After having been away from *Plutarch's Lives* for years, one forgets how much of it is about power, blood, fighting, war. (Of course, as we've seen, a hero fights too, but his struggles are more idiosyncratic, and may be just as distinguished in losing as in winning.) But to be a good leader in Plutarch's or anyone else's estimation, one must win, and so the greater part of *Plutarch's Lives* is taken up with military tactics, intrigue, preparation for battle, finding the right balance between inspiring loyalty in one's troops and placating the polis, and personal bravery.

But if one reads the *Lives* with a little care, one finds that the figures whom Plutarch admires most-people like Lycurgus, Solon, Cimon, Pericles-are not only victorious generals but are all characterized by self-control, restraint– the cardinal virtue of Greek philosophy. Solon earns Plutarch's praise when, as the first great leader of Athens, he resists becoming a despot, supposedly saying to his friends "that while tyranny may be a delightful spot, there is no way back from it" (Solon, 14).Cimon is praised for his "calmness," and the general atmosphere of civilized politeness between him and Pericles "just goes to show how in those days quarrels were conducted with civility, feelings were moderate, and people had no difficulty restraining them if the public good was at stake; even ambition, which is the most powerful and dominant human emotion, used to be subordinate to human emergencies" (Cimon, 17). Even Pericles's appearance reflects perfect composure:

> *... the tranquility of his features that never broke into laughter, his self-possessed gait, the way his clothing was arranged in such a way that it was never distorted by any emotion while he was speaking, and his calm tone of voice, all of which made a remarkable impression on everyone. (Pericles, 5)*

It’s clear that Plutarch’s main reason for admiring restraint is that he and his countrymen worried a good deal about their leaders becoming too powerful; they knew how easily democracy could shade into despotism. One of the most striking details of Greek political life that emerges in reading the *Lives* is how many times a leader might actually be sent into exile for becoming too popular, only to be called back in a time of crisis.

But however much Plutarch admired restraint, he, like Cervantes or any other good writer, sometimes conveys the opposite of what he intended. As admirable as conscientiousness and forbearance may be in theory, Plutarch never succeeds in making them more than mildly interesting. The two leaders who stand out among his biographies are the controversial Alcibiades and Alexander-Alcibiades, you may remember, being the handsome young trouble-maker whom Socrates flirts with in *The Symposium*, who defaced the herms in the Athenian agora, encouraged the disastrous Sicilian campaign and changed loyalties between Athens and Sparta as often as a tennis player changes tee-shirts; and Alexander the young conqueror who died at 32, bringing glory but also despotism and chaos to the Macedonians.

That these figures are more *attractive* than the others brings us to a problem that we know from our personal lives but don’t often apply to democracy: namely, that what we need and what we want may be two different things. Who would disagree that virtues like generosity (*megalophrosynē*), kindness (*philanthropia*), ambition (*philotimia*), brilliance (*lamprotēs*), and self-possession (*praotēs*)-qualities that as Philip Stadter points out in the Oxford edition of *Plutarch*-are found on inscriptions in hundreds of public sites in ancient Greece and Romeare exactly what any society would value in its leaders? Given the bureaucratic nature of government, we may need these modest, attainable virtues much more than heroic ones, and our best leaders, at least in peaceful times, may simply be people who understand the bureaucratic machinery and administer it with compassion and intelligence.

But what we want-and at certain crisis times may in fact need-can run more along the lines of an Alexander or Alcibiades than a Solon or Pericles. Charismatic types bordering on despots. Napoleon. Bolivar. Roosevelt. Castro. Men filled with a gigantic sense of self-importance, even megalomania, but also boundless energy. Men (and in the future women) who create grand systems that only function well under their leadership and then collapse after they’re gone, but who move history a few steps “forward.” In short, people with heroic vision- but who also threaten the checks and balances of democracy. Which brings us right back around to Campbell, at least to that aspect of the hero who knows something that no one else knows, and insists on selling it to the rest of the world.

The problem is that there’s a fine line between heroes and demagogues, and this is what gets us into trouble. Do we *really* want demagogues as leaders? Unfortunately, like it or not, that seems to be where we’re heading in the present phase of history. Le Pen, Haider, Bin Laden, the forces behind George Bush-all suggest a lessening of democratic participation and a wish on the part of large segments of the population for despots.

No doubt this has to do with a pervasive sense of instability, precariousness, in the world. Both

our economic and political systems seem frayed at the edges, maybe even riddled by organic flaws. We also feel threatened by a somewhat vague but palpable Enemy- people to the East who've been neglected by us and abused by their own leaders-gathered outside our gates. No one knows exactly who should lead us against this Enemy, and how much of the Enemy's menace is of our own making. Won't someone please tell us what to do?

It may be that in the short term, the best that we can hope for in a leader is a compromise figure, someone *in between* the corporate manager and the despot-the tyrant with compassion, the visionary who's also a nice guy. Again, Lincoln comes to mind: apparently a sweet, entertaining man with a tragic private life, in wartime he discovered inner resources of forcefulness and an ability to plot military strategy far better than that of his indecisive generals.

In more recent times, one might look for partial inspiration, partial hope, to Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. Though more heroes than leaders, they come close to combining the suffering and vision of the Campbellian hero with the restraint and self-awareness of Plutarch's leaders. Their stories are already a combination of fact and legend: their long periods in jail, their ability to extend their personal visions into universal ones, their remarkable blend of compromise and unwillingness to compromise-a place, you might say, where Machiavelli meets Achilles: these qualities among many others make them divine accidents, products of rare moments when a just cause finds its champion. Not exactly heroes, not exactly saints, as leaders (in Mandela's case anyway) only adequate, on second thought maybe they aren't to be admired or emulated as much as to be put on postage stamps-examples of the ability of human beings to occasionally get something right.

The Everyday Hero: A Personal Reminiscence

If heroes as Campbell describes them are almost extinct, and modern societies can't figure out who they want to lead them, whom can we admire beyond CEO's and basketball players with obscene salaries, or movie stars with less than 1% body fat?

I suspect that at some point it comes down to everyday heroes-people whom we as individuals both want and need to admire.

Several years ago, during a particularly self-pitying psychoanalytic hour, my therapist asked me whom I admired most.

He gave me a moment and then said, "I'll bet that this person wasn't born with a silver spoon in his mouth. I'll bet that he had to struggle through some rough times before he became the person you admire."

It was Seymour Krim! I'd had no idea that he was the person I admired most. I knew his bad sides-his sharp tongue, his wide streak of misogyny-so could it be true that he was my hero?

But my Unconscious had spoken, and I had to listen.

You may never have heard of the New York writer Seymour Krim. Fifteen years after his death he's virtually forgotten, and even during his lifetime his work was overshadowed by more famous contemporaries like Norman Mailer and Tom Wolfe. Yet there's a case to be made that Krim was the father of the American New Journalism (what these days college English departments call "creative nonfiction"), and that his view of mid-century New York City was authentic and enduring.

I met him-no, I knew him before I met him, I knew him even before I *read* him. I knew him the minute I saw the cover of his 1961 book, *Views of a Near-sighted Cannoneer*-the oddest title coupled with an equally odd picture of a youngish, curly-haired man with thick glasses crouching behind an old cannon, and running along the edge of the cover a list of the sexiest topics of the time: Sex, Suicide, Homosexuality, Sportswriting, Jazz, Jews, Negroes, Genius, Insanity, New York: the Literary Lower Depths. Who could resist the hip, confessional tone of the very first page:

> *Let me say straight out that my point of view has developed since these [essays] were first written, that I could not write them the same way today, that I think their stabs of truth are at times slanted in subtle or obvious part by personal frustration, exaggeration, defensiveness-by the fanatical ego-hunger of the man I then was. I can't undo these mistakes. I am proud that I was able to do what I could. But I have faith that this is only the beginning of a stand.*

What followed was a mixture of clear observation and energetic prose by a man who wanted to an author and a ladies' man-but who had to struggle through shyness, depression, a stretch of time in a mental hospital after a suicide attempt, to become a little of what he wanted to be. Some of the autobiographical essays were written in a semi-Beat jargon (Krim edited the first anthology of Beat writing) that was destined to become dated, but underneath the over-wrought prose was a sincerity as raw as anything I'd ever encountered. Reading a few paragraphs of Krim seemed to make it possible for me to be a writer, too.

I met him a few years later, spent evenings in his tiny East 10th Street studio apartment (once he proudly pointed out a piece of worn carpet on which the young Elizabeth Taylor had sat), and much later watched him bear up without self-pity under the onset of congestive heart disease that at the end made it impossible for him to write. Though he published relatively little during his lifetime, he lived to write-he had a string of girlfriends, no wife, had no contact with his daughter, was the world's worst dresser: in short, the perfect picture of the Bohemian-so when his ability to write was taken away, he told a few close friends of his plan, took sleeping pills and left us. There must have been 300 people at his memorial service.

Everyone who spoke said the same thing: when they were with him, they felt that he was speaking directly, intimately, just to them. He had the same gift in life that he had in writing-to make one feel that he was speaking from his heart.

I want to tell a story about Krim and me that is really a story about stories, the only way that we can know our heroes.

At some point in the early 80's, Krim told me that he was having trouble deciding which prescription of glasses to wear. He recognized that it was the outward sign of some deeper malaise that he couldn't get in touch with. Since I'd once made a cocky remark about being in psychoanalysis so long that I'd make a good analyst, he stared at me with a steady, slightly mischievous look, his lips puckering into a nervous smile, and asked me if I'd be his analyst. Twenty years my senior, he was really inviting me to be the Sorcerer's Apprentice.

When I told my shrink about it, he lost it completely. "What, are you crazy!?"

But sometimes you have to do crazy things if you want to be a hero.

Krim and I met once a week. I was just sane enough to make a deal with him which stipulated that if after six weeks either of us wanted to stop, we could, no questions asked. Instead of paying me, he put aside an amount of money each week for an indigent writer-friend. We met in his apartment or mine, and we followed all the rules of therapy-that is, as well as I knew them. He revealed no great secrets, that much I can say. By any standards he was in a hell of a lot better shape than I was, which didn't mean that I couldn't help him. And he felt from the beginning that I was helping him, and was sweetly pleased and grateful. But I was terrified. I didn't want the responsibility of this man putting his life in my hands. I sensed enough about the concept of "transference" to see that I had to encourage him to get angry at me, and I didn't want to do it: I wanted my mentor back, I still wanted to be his student. When the six weeks were over, I called it quits. For a while he was angry and hurt, and wouldn't talk to me. But as the years went by he and I found a new relationship, one more equal than the previous one.

Today it's easy for me to see why Krim was my hero. In many ways, he fit the heroic mold: the isolation, the suffering, the conviction that hearing his personal voice and using it honestly was what his life was about. But my role in the story is less clear. Why did I do such a silly thing?

It occurs to me that I might have been doing what Campbell describes as "atonement with the Father." At the darkest stage of the hero's life, according to Campbell, he confronts all the maleness of the Oedipal father. In mythology it can take the form of monsters, dragons, anything that the hero is doubtful that he can cope with. But rather than brute force, what is required of the hero is "an abandonment of the attachment to ego itself, and that is what is difficult. One must have a faith that the father is merciful, and then a reliance on that mercy." Strangely enough, I think that was what I was doing: grappling with, and submitting to, the scary father.

For I remember sitting listening to Krim, both scared and thrilled, as if I were looking danger squarely in the eye. With each session I grew a little more secure, until by the end I was relaxed enough to see that he, like all of us, was just a vulnerable person doing the best he could. This didn't make me respect him less, on the contrary–but it did make him more accessible and perhaps less formidable. Maybe at the end I could afford to be merciful too, when I admitted that I wasn't the right person to help him-not because I was incompetent, but because I was playing with fire.

It's possible that I have it all wrong, and that I was behaving like a naughty boy. But I ended up feeling that because of those six "sessions," I'd taken a little of Krim inside me. In the long run, heroes may just be figures in our lives or imaginations who make it possible for us to come a little closer to being heroes.

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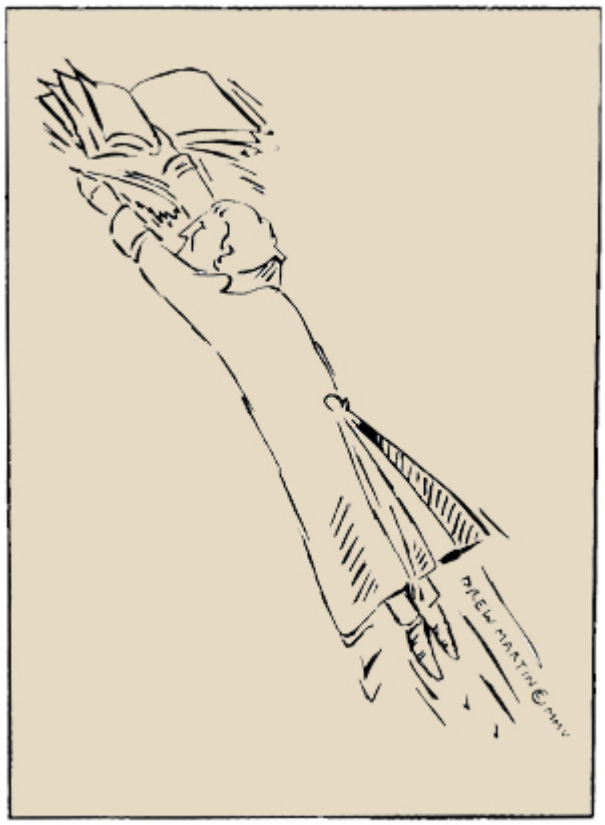
Schiller's Relevance For Us And For All Times: A Tribute To Friedrich Schiller To Commemorate The 200th Anniversary Of His Death

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805) is best known and remembered as a leading lyric poet, the foremost dramatist in the German language and, with Goethe, a top representative of the Classical German national literature.



His versatility is indeed astonishing considering his foray into philosophy as master essayist influenced by Kant, and into history, with a brief tenure as a professor of history at the University of Jena. As a historiographer he covered two major events, the Revolt of the Netherlands, and the History of the Thirty-Years' War. The plots of a number of operas are based on historical dramas by Schiller, e.g., *Don Carlos; Luisa Miller; Maria Stuart; Turandot; Wilhelm Tell.* His Ode to Joy has become the choral portion of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and, more recently, the unofficial anthem of Europe. His dramas and some of his fascinating short stories reflect his extraordinary skill in creating three-dimensional characters, and his interest in the criminal element. He was labeled alternately a "philosophizing poet," or a "politicizing philosopher," the "poet of freedom" with an impassioned mission and an indomitable creative drive, a sound political instinct, and an unparalleled sense for dramatic representation. Later he referred to theater as a moralistic institution.

Whenever contemplating the past, even of historically significant persons or events, the issue of relevance to our time arises: what is the salience and meaningfulness of Schiller for our contemporary culture and society, and why should we read Schiller today? Even in a good translation, some readers might shy away from language which seems antiquated and difficult to understand. Some are repelled by the vocabulary of Kantian criticism.[i] If, however, one

realizes that Schiller himself has profitably drawn on the past (to include antiquity, in his case), and come to terms with the present, the modern reader will acknowledge him as a man for all seasons and all times.

It must be remembered that in Schiller's time, Germany was not a unified country, but consisted of a myriad of small, more or less independent states, mostly monarchies, with little or no reciprocity among them; consequently there were no uniform national standards in laws, medicine, education, or many other aspects of public life. It should also be noted that in the atmosphere leading to the French Revolution, the European struggle against political injustice and tyranny, social inequality, and moral corruption, rebellion against moral restrictions, conflict between generations, and related socio-political phenomena coincided with the brief, but powerful German literary movement of the Storm and Stress (Sturm und Drang). Both the young Goethe and Schiller were leading representatives of this naturalistic school until they outgrew it. Understanding Schiller's youthful, rebellious penchant should help to illuminate his artistic development.

Schiller came to his reputation by a circuitous route. His early ambition to take a degree in theology at the University of Tübingen and to settle down as a Protestant pastor met with intervention: he had come to the attention of his sovereign, Karl Eugen, Duke of Württemberg (Schiller's home state), and founder of a military academy near the regional capital. Schiller's father, himself a deserving military officer, greatly honored and delighted as this son's special recognition, tuition free, prestigious education, and promising career, readily accepted the scholarship. Less so his son, who immediately perceived in this offer a guided, guarded, uniformed effort with limited choices, theology not being an option. Indeed, the cadets were assigned academic disciplines according to the discretion of the academy. After an unsuccessful run in jurisprudence Schiller was transferred to the discipline of medicine in 1776, which was apparently more compatible with his ideological and temperamental leaning, especially since it allowed him closer acquaintance with concomitant subjects and promised a wider radius of intellectual satisfaction. During his student years he found solace in younger mentors who were able to communicate to him the study of philosophy as a discipline most likely to advance abstract reasoning applicable to all academic pursuits-considering that eighteenth-century state of the art medicine still placed the emphasis on generalized speculation and experimentation rather than scientific investigation. The convergence of physiology and psychology was being practiced in Schiller's medical training, as was "humoral pathology," based on a Greco-Roman foundation. He was, however, particularly interested in mind-body relationships, which by modern standards would fall into the categories of psychological medicine, abnormal psychology, or neuropsychiatry.[ii]

This predilection points to Schiller's extraordinary proclivity in his later career of creating three-dimensional characters. He devoted all his spare time indulging his interests in the study of literature-poetry and drama–, along with some studies in physiognomy,[iii] as well as writing himself. Frequently volunteering for night duty at the Academy's sickbay, the only locale where light was permitted to burn, gave him the opportunity to progress in his first drama, *Die Räuber (The Robbers).* Such activity, however, was not in keeping with the

institution's regulations and Schiller was strictly ordered to cease and desist, but managed to complete the play, without being able to find a publisher, and seeing himself obliged to pay for the printing of the work (1781) at his own expense while preparing a stage version.

Contact with Wolfgang H. von Dalberg, the impresario of the "National Theater" at Mannheim, put Schiller on the road to a new career, albeit haltingly: numerous changes in content and language had to be made before the drama-a piece in the manner of the *Sturm und Drang*-was performed, attended by Schiller, absent from duty without leave, and a resounding success with the audience. Subsequent performances in Hamburg, Leipzig and Berlin also earned enthusiastic acclaim. A further surreptitious attendance of the play drew a two-week prison sentence for the author, who was already crafting his next stage work, *Fiesco.*

At the conclusion of his formal studies, on December 15, 1780, Schiller was discharged from the Ducal Academy, but not from military service. A "utilization tour" of duty as uniformed Regimental Physician was to follow. The dim promise of a rewarding career at a meager salary-hopes for a private practice requiring additional qualifications for which he had no support had been dashed–social isolation and, chiefly the suppression to write, drove Schiller to the desperate act of desertion. On September 23, 1782, he and a friend, under assumed names, managed to evade the guards, leaving Stuttgart and more: his parental ties, his fatherland, his piece of mind, a regular albeit modest source of income, with a likelihood of prosecution looming which, however, never occurred. This ended the "medical phase," comprising approximately one-quarter of his adult life; it also initiated a series of itinerant years, which eventually led to his fame.

Following the acclaim of his first play, Schiller was offered "asylum" by a circle of admirers, which helped him through years of exile, with some felicity and lots of adversity. His temporary employment as dramatist in Mannheim carried with it an agreement that he produce three plays per year, until non-renewal of his contract. His theater periodical *Rheinische Thalia,* enabled him to establish contact with the literary world of prominence. One fortuitous event was his meeting Karl August, Duke of Weimar, on the occasion of presenting the first act of his play, *Don Carlos,* and the resulting appointment as Councillor of Weimar. Leipzig and Dresden were stations of Schiller's professional and social progress, including re-acquaintance with Goethe whom he had met fleetingly while a student at the Ducal Academy. He also met his future wife, Charlotte von Lengefeld, daughter of a Lady in Waiting at the Court of Weimar. In a rural setting, Schiller was fully occupied producing reviews, translations, and various literary works interrupted by occasional respiratory indisposition accompanied by fever. A regular contributor to the important periodical *Der Teutsche Merkur* improved his pecuniary situation.

Thanks to Goethe's influence Schiller obtained a position as professor of history at the University of Jena in May 1789, followed by his engagement, his appointment as Privy Counselor, and marriage. Hardly ever was Schiller from physical affliction-at times, spasmodic coughs, asthma, and inability to speak, among other complaints-or the need of asking for an advance from his publishers.

Even with frequent bouts of illness he staunchly pressed on with his literary production, his "itching pen," and work on an intellectually demanding journal, *Die Horen,* edited by Schiller from January 1795. One of the most important influences in his intellectual development was provided by Kantian philosophy which fascinated him. His ill health, however, abrogated his lecturing at the University, also causing another appointment to the University of Tübingen to be rejected. Yet, as Wilhelm von Humboldt stated in the preface of his correspondence with Schiller, while stimulating him, Kant "could not mold him."

During the "years of fame" hardly a day passed without seeing Goethe, his senior friend and mentor, for mutual profit, for exchange of ideas, critical appraisal of their respective work, or socially, often in the company of others, with frequent invitations to the court at Weimar.

1802 was an eventful year-and only three years left to go. Schiller was finally in the position to purchase a house in Weimar, after selling his home in Jena in order to be closer to the "scene of action." It was the property owned by the Englishman, Joseph Charles Mellison, who was to translate Schiller's *Maria Stuart* into English. In the same year a revised version of his important essay on theater seen as a moralistic institution was published. Schiller was elevated to the ranks of the aristocracy under date of September 7, 1802. In 1803 Schiller fleetingly experienced impatience with his residency in Weimar and he articulated the desire to "look about the world for another domain and sphere of activity."[iv] Occasional frustration is understandable even in the "rarified" circle of lesser and higher aristocracy. He made an attempt to approach Queen Luise of Prussia, who invited his move to Berlin, to consider him for a position in the theater or as the Crown Prince's tutor in history. Still, breakfast in Sans Souci with the royal couple, followed by discussions of an eventual lucrative pension for Schiller let him postpone his decision on return to Weimar. Ultimately, he opted to remain in Weimar.

The above biographical sketch reflects Schiller's adult life in two major segments, the first ending with the epilogue to his aborted medical studies, which comprised one-quarter of his life span, and which became a "prologue" to the second, far more illustrious part, eventually leading to immortality. While his "first love"-literature-prevailed, there is no doubt that his years at the Ducal Academy prepared him in the discipline of physiology, along with early psychology, which proved to be invaluable preparatory training for dramatically casting characters and scenes to best advantage. Schiller is known also for taking liberties with history, such as ameliorating characters if the issue was to demonstrate where his sympathies lay and if such maneuvers behooved the drama, to invent characters for the purpose of advancing the plot, or to "bend" history when he deemed such a distortion indicated for stage effect.

Given his precarious constitution and his early medical training he displayed a lifelong familiar if uneasy relationship with death, whose manifestations he was prone to vary: in accordance with dramatic demands, death could be glorified, cast as a sacrificial act for an idea or an ideal, or an act of atonement. In keeping with his theory of sublimity and tragic dignity (1790) he shifted the scene of death from the stake to the more honorable field of battle, and even dedicated his *Anthology for the Year 1782* to "his master, Death." Death as a "hunter of

mankind" and terminator may, on the other hand, be able to spare mankind untold suffering.

The plots of his poems repeatedly reveal-often in the guise of antiquity or in medieval costume-timeless themes of friendship, loyalty, praise of noble acts performed by persons from any social stratum, and likewise condemnation of evil characters and acts of which tyrants of whatever description are capable. The reader is presented convincingly a veritable catalog of misdeeds from minor infractions to the seven deadly sins, with which modern man can identify. Generation after generation of Gymnasium (University prep schools) students in German speaking countries "grew to their maturity" to the lyrics of Schiller-memorizing, analyzing, freely quoting within the context even of informal conversation as he appealed to the younger generation, especially in the development of German idealism. Even if Schiller's reception has fluctuated over the years as mentioned earlier, his position in intellectual history is secure in spite of the mixed aspect accorded the force of his creativity by critics of literature and historians of philosophy.

By reading some of Schiller's profound messages in verse and his philosophical essays and letters we will appreciate the ethical and aesthetic concepts which pervade his dramatic masterpieces. On the topic of "virtue" and what constitutes a moral act, Schiller came to grips with the issue, transcending Kant's rigorous moral philosophy with respect to the idea of all too strict conformity to duty. In his essays *Űber Anmut und Würde* (On Grace and Dignity) Schiller seeks to mellow Kant's position by pointing to the desirable duality of inclination and obligation, which renders duty more acceptable. Virtue, then, is understood as a favorable inclination to duty. He describes the character of the "schöne Seele" ("beautiful soul"), an "ideal" person in whom sensuousness, rationality, obligation and inclination are harmonized through man's *Spieltrieb* (play-instinct).

Schiller's principal contribution to aesthetic philosophy[v] is his essay *Űber die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen* (*On the Aesthetic Education of Man, in a Series of Letters*) (1795). In twenty-seven letters he elucidates his concept of aesthetic education-the refinement of the instinctive element of man achievable through the beauty of art. The process of playing, creating, and enjoying the beautiful will help man to develop ethically.

This fusion of aesthetics and ethics brings Schiller to the notion of the aesthetic *Schein* (realm

of beautiful semblance, which does not seek to replace reality nor imperil the truth of moral law. The beautiful is the source of reconciliation between the citizen and society.[vi] He concludes his essays by citing the metaphor of a harmonious political state founded on individuality having recovered humanity through beauty. Schiller allows that this theory was only an ideal, but that in this realm "no one is a mere instrument, no one a serf."[vii] The progression had led to conclusion not through violence, but through the mind by aesthetic education. This is a valuable lesson for our and all times.

Notes

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[i] Lesley Sharpe. *Schiller's Aesthetics Essays: Two Centuries of Criticism* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995) 35.

[ii] Kenneth Dewhurst and Nigel Reeves. *Friedrich Schiller. Medicine, Psychology and Medicine* (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987) 89. Hereafter cited as Dewhurst.

[iii] Andreas and Andreas, eds. *Die Grossen Klassiker. Friedrich Schille* (Salzburg: Verlagsbuchhandel. 1997) 27.

[iv] Gero von Wilpert. *Schiller-Chronik. Sein Leben und Schaffen* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1958) 282.

[v] *Schillers Werke.* Nationalausgabe, Vol. 20, ed. Benno von Wiese (Weimar: Böhlau, 1962) 287-288.

[vi] *German Essays III. Schiller,* eds. Max Dufner and Valentine C. Hubbs (New York: Macmillan, 1964) 4.

[vii] Dewhurst 360.

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Globalization And Terminal Illness In Goodbye Lenin! And The Barbarian Invasions

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Denys Arcand's The Barbarian Invasions and Wolfgang Becker's Good Bye Lenin! were internationally recognized as among the best films of 2003. They share a concern with the decline and demise of dominant ideologies of the twentieth century in the face of globalization, and also use a remarkably similar plot device to convey this theme: a son's efforts to ease the death of his idealistic and terminally ill parent.

Good Bye Lenin! is most explicit in highlighting the demise of ideologies, from its title onward. Alex, a young East Berliner, cares for his mother, Christiane, who entered a coma in late 1989 at the beginning of anti-government protests and recovered several months later, after the collapse of communism and German reunification. "Mother slept through the relentless triumph of capitalism," Alex tells us. She is thus oblivious to the transformation of her East Berlin world, and to the eradication of the socialist ideals she cherishes.

Alex determines to keep his mother from learning the truth. "It's better this way," Alex reflects, "Everything she believed in disappeared." Indeed, his mother's coma followed a heart attack brought on by seeing the East German police brutalize Alex during a demonstration against the Communist system to which she has dedicated her life. Christiane wakes, but given her vulnerable health, the shock of learning of the end of communism would prove fatal.

In The Barbarian Invasions, Sébastien returns to Canada to visit his father, Rémy, a history professor whose cancer has been diagnosed as terminal. Along with the friends who gather to say goodbye to him, Rémy looks back in amazement at the many ideologies the group took up and then abandoned in the 1960s and 1970s: "Is there an Ism' we haven't worshipped?" they ask, after ticking off existentialism, anti-colonialism, Marxism, Marxist-Leninism, Trotskyism, Maoism, structuralism, situationism, feminism, and deconstruction. With age, the group has also grown more ambivalent about hedonism, the prioritization of personal happiness which was the subject of Arcand's The Decline of the American Empire (1986), to which The Barbarian Invasions is a sequel.

Sébastien's fiancée, Gaëlle, who works for an art auction house, is invited by the Montreal archdiocese to view a warehouse full of disused votive sculpture and chalices. "At one time everyone was a Catholic," a church official explains. "Then in 1966 the churches emptied out." Now the Church leaders want to know whether the dusty pieces have any value. "Commercial value?" Gaëlle asks. "Yes," he replies sadly. "Is there anything we can sell on the

world market?" Arcand excoriates the Church hierarchy for its moral failures, but is respectful of the Catholic nurse who ministers to Rémy with compassion and humility.

However, it is the ideology of the Enlightenment whose decline most concerns Arcand. Rémy and his historian friends despair of the lack of intellectual life and disinterest in reading among their children and students. To these academics, humanity seems on the verge of losing the intellectual heritage of ancient Greece, Renaissance Italy, and the Revolutionary United States. ("And now Philadelphia votes for Bush!" Rémy's colleague exclaims-a factual inaccuracy that perhaps does not invalidate Arcand's overall point.) America's founders were "the finest collection of minds every assembled in one place," declares Pierre, Rémy's fellow historian and bon vivant.

As the incandescence of the Enlightenment dims to the flicker of the video screen, barbarism intrudes in the form of unfettered capitalism, the 9/11 attacks, and drug cartels. In one of the film's culminating scenes, Rémy, who has taken heroin as a painkiller, imagines barbarians destroying the manuscripts containing civilization's intellectual heritage. At this moment Sébastien emerges from some nearby shadows, the seeming embodiment of the barbaric threat. Rémy's children have escaped Montreal, a "backwater" of the global economy, and globalized themselves: Sébastien and his French fiancée live in London, and his sister delivers yachts from one continent to another. When we first meet Sébastien he is at work in a pulsating office of commodities traders. During his stay in Montreal Sébastien stays linked to the global market by cell phone and laptop.

Globalization appears in both films most ubiquitously through video images and advertising. In Rémy's hospital the patients and workers watch television constantly. Of the few patients who still take Communion, one swallows his wafer while staring fixedly at a televised mini-golf tournament. Sébastien is himself a devotee of video games and his sister sends her parting messages to Rémy from the middle of the ocean by video phone. Globalization is also made manifest as global terrorism through video footage of the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Video images of the Berlin Wall's collapse in Good Bye Lenin! evoke the impossibility of barricading the capitalist influx from the West. Alex's first use of freedom after the Wall falls is a trip to a video store in the West to watch his first porn film. His buddy Denis, an aspiring video producer, concocts fake videotapes of communism's triumphs that Alex can pass off as news broadcasts to his credulous mother. Alex's first job under capitalism is selling satellite dishes, which soon sprout all over Berlin's apartment blocks, whose residents yearn for international soccer broadcasts. Since boyhood, Alex has loved satellites and rockets, but outer space, along with virtually everything else, has been commercialized and Alex's cosmonaut idol, a former socialist hero, now makes due by driving an earthbound taxi. Commercialization renders quaintly anachronistic Christiane's socialist ideals and her humane ethos.

When Christiane accidentally sees an enormous red banner advertising Coca Cola on a nearby

building, her illusion of communism's continuity and progressive triumph is nearly disrupted. (Besides Coca Cola, both films reference Ikea, the Swedish home furnishings supplier, itself emblematic of globalized domestic style.) Alex tries to find Christiane's favorite East German pickles but discovers that Berlin's shiny post-Communist supermarkets carry only pickles from Holland, so Alex decants these into discarded jars of Communist vintage to preserve Christiane's illusions. Capitalism's triumph renders worthless the East German currency that his mother saved. Alex can only tear up his mother's savings and watch the shreds float across the Berlin skyline, illuminated by the glowing displays of multinational banks.

Although governed by reactionary enemies of Enlightenment values, the U.S. still has high-tech medical treatment inaccessible through Canada's system. When Sébastien and Rémy arrive in Vermont, a nurse chirps, "Welcome to America, guys!" "Hallelujah," they reply caustically, "Praise the Lord!" Good Bye Lenin! likewise satirizes the witless conflation of God and capital with a character exclaiming "Hallelujah for the [Deutsch]mark!"

Sébastien takes for granted the monetization of medical care and matter-of-factly handles the public hospital system's corrupt bureaucrats and thuggish union officials, as if he were structuring yet another deal in Norwegian oil futures. "This is not a Third-World country!" the hospital director insists, but her acceptance of Sébastien's bribe makes clear that the distinction is overstated. While Sébastien's money procures a private suite for his father, those with fewer resources are laid out in gurneys along infernal hospital corridors, with year-long waits for cancer care and surgery, and frazzled doctors and nurses who can hardly distinguish one patient from another. Canada's national health care system, which Rémy voted for, seems in dire need of restructuring and will perhaps face privatization. Both films show doctors leaving their countries for more lucrative jobs in the U.S. and in the West, while in the post-reunification East Berlin of Good Bye Lenin!, those too old to change are left to scrounge for survival amidst depressed living standards.

By contrast with their video-age offspring, the parents in the films are teachers, self-consciously imbued with a system of values that they, in turn, attempt to pass on to their students. Despite cavalier treatment by the university bureaucracy and his own "illiterate" students, Rémy remains committed to intellectual inquiry. Nor is Christiane, a primary school teacher, disillusioned by her shabby treatment at the hands of her principal, who concludes that "her idealism was problematic in the daily running of the school."

While the sons, Alex and Sébastien, adapt to the world of globalized capital, their parents cannot, and their deaths at the end of each film echo the end of the ideological eras they represent. Yet Alex and Sébastien recognize that their parents' outmoded ideals sustain them, and each son purposefully insulates his parent from the sort of disillusion that, at least in Christiane's case, might be fatal. The heart of these efforts is an identical gesture that each son performs for his parent's sake: Alex and Sébastien each bribe a group of their parent's former students to make a bedside show of concern and gratitude that seems to justify the parent's efforts and ideals. "Everyone wonders how you are," the students lie to Rémy, before surreptitiously collecting the fee with which Sébastien has enticed them to visit the hospital.

("At this price we'll come anytime!") At a flea market, Alex finds some cast-off uniforms of the Young Pioneers, East Germany's socialist version of the Boy Scouts, and pays a pair of boys to wear them while serenading his mother with nearly forgotten inspirational songs.

Besides meretricious students, each son recruits friends and former colleagues to assuage his dying parent's sense of isolation and futility. In each case, filial obligation and affection motivate the son to go to fantastic lengths to comfort the parent. When Christiane unexpectedly wanders out of the apartment in which Alex has isolated her and becomes confused by signs that the border with the West has disappeared, Alex has Denis fabricate a news broadcast "explaining" that with capitalism's collapse, East Germany has removed the Wall so that anti-materialist West Berliners can finally escape to the classless and prosperous East.

Despite their lack of ideological, historical, or cultural consciousness, the children are nonetheless impressively self-reliant, a quality attributed to their parents' prioritization of ideology over child-raising: After Alex's mother chose not to follow her husband when he defected to the West, she retreated into silence and then, "married herself to the Party." Rémy's infidelities and broken marriage have made his children paragons of self-reliance. While rejecting their parents' ideals, Alex and Sébastien and a few of their peers have, somehow, inherited humane values from them. In The Barbarian Invasions, one of the students whom Sébastien bribes refuses to take the money. At the end of the film the daughter of one of Rémy's friends moves into the house where Rémy worked, and Arcand suggests that she will read her way through his library, and its inquiries into human nature by Primo Levi, Solzhenitsyn, Pepys, and other unblinking humanists. Rémy, their ardent admirer, aware of his own failings, remains committed to ideals of truth-seeking: "I haven't found a meaning," he says as he faces death. "I have to keep on searching."

Intellectual integrity cannot be monetized; indeed it lacks, or surpasses, commercial value. By contrast, New Age versions of eastern religions are part of the commercial tide ("Your body's in your head," a colleague's celebrity-fixated trophy wife advises Rémy). The Barbarian Invasions leaves us with this, and with nature, to value. "I'd like to see the lake," Rémy requests, and finally derives a measure of tranquility there amid Arcand's austere panoramas of open sky, migrating birds, and boreal forest. More than any ideology, even liberal humanism, this is what endures and what Arcand upholds at the end. In the scene at the country dacha, Good Bye Lenin! also shows us nature as a refuge from the freneticism and transience of commercial transactions and other human activity. At the end of the films, Christiane and Rémy die peacefully with their sons and ex-spouses nearby.

Why did these thematically kindred films emerge where and when they did? Even as the global marketplace pervades and transforms their societies, Quebec and the former East Germany, situated on the geographic and cultural margins of the globalizing West, near to and yet not wholly of it, seek to define themselves in opposition to global capitalism. This marginal position of these societies is reflected in the ideological ambivalence of the two films: their disappointment in socialism in practice, and disdain for the materialism, amorality, and loss of

meaning imported with globalization. Good Bye Lenin! and The Barbarian Invasions record the passing of ideological allegiances and illusions. They attempt to fathom the effects of globalization's inexorable intensification and whether individuals' efforts to uphold humane values, and to create a better quality of life and death for those they care about, may yet mitigate the destructive powers of the market.

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“Deborah,” A Radioplay

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

“Deborah”
A Radioplay

by
Carmen Francesca Banciu

https://logosjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/banciu_radioplay.mp3

with
Megan Pearson as Theresa
and
Bari Hyman as Deborah

Translated from the German by Elena Mancini

Directed by Sascha Just

recording engineer Vinit Parmat
mixed by Jeff Baker

A Conversation With Saad Eddin Ibrahim

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Saad Eddin Ibrahim was arrested on June 30, 2000 and was convicted in 2001 on false charges that he embezzled funds and disseminated false information harmful to the interests of Egypt. Although sentenced to seven years, he was acquitted by Egypt's high court in 2003. Described as the Andrei Sakharov of the Middle East, Ibrahim has been a tireless human rights and pro-democracy activist not only for his native Egypt, but throughout the region as well. He is also a scholar who has deepened the understanding of Islamic thought and its relationship to democracy, modernity and liberalism. A staunch critic of the notion of "Arab exceptionalism" prevalent in the West and the clash of civilizations thesis, he advocates a universalist conception of democracy and human rights.

Ibrahim is the founder and director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies and is currently a scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington. He is also a candidate for president in Egypt. This interview was held in March 2005 in New York City.

Q: Hosni Mubarak has announced that there will be open elections in Egypt. I was wondering how you'd characterize these elections? Do they signal any kind of authentic political change in Egypt?

A: They do, they signal at least a new direction and I am personally grateful this has happened and while it is a baby step on a thousand mile journey, it is an important step. As much as I criticize Mubarak, I have to give him credit when he does well and this is one of the rare good things that he's done, after long protracted resistance. Until a month before his announcement he was saying there was no way that they would change the constitution to allow for contested elections. I don't know how familiar you are with all this, but Egypt has had a constitution since 1971-which can actually be traced back 20 years earlier-which filled the office of the presidency not by contested election but with something called a "referendum" where only one name appears on the ballot and the citizens, if they care at all to participate, vote either "yes" or "no." Of course, often people stay away and don't even bother voting, and the ones who do

go will usually vote “yes.”

That is why the state can always announce that Mubarak was elected by 99%, and of course in some cases 100%, of the voting population. Of course this was the same thing with Saddam Hussein. In Egypt, those who do vote have to provide their name and sign their ballot as well as provide their address.

So to allow at least some means to shape the process by which elections take place, by moving away from the referendum vote and toward contested elections, is, to me, a very important step, even though by any democratic standard it is a baby step.

Q: What do you think the reasons are for Mubarak suddenly changing his position and allowing contested elections?

A: Since I was released from prison I openly challenged the man. That challenge escalated about 5 months ago when I said if he dares, if he thinks he is popular, then let him run in a free and open election. I repeated that over and over and three other public figures followed me and declared that they would also run and they demanded that Mubarak debate with them.

So the four of us applied pressure and then the Parliament ratified the a draft of the amendment to allow contested elections. But you see, the idea is to break that barrier of fear that is ingrained in the Middle East-not unlike the way it was ingrained in Eastern Europe, in the Soviet Union, under totalitarian, authoritarian regimes-in which people live in fear and think that there is no alternative and that they have to subject themselves to a continuous system of oppression.

Now a few of us have dared to challenge that and to break that pattern, and some of us have paid the price for it. But we continue and I think I must say that over the last ten years it was a very confrontational struggle, the last half of which I was in prison, but it paid off and I think it was to signal to other Arab countries and other Third World. You can look at us as another Ukraine, another Czechoslovakia, another Georgia, another Poland, because these countries

have gone through similar regimes of communism, even longer, for longer periods and have undergone even harsher political systems. So I am hopeful as an activist and I never will give up. And I see hope not only for Egypt but for the entire region.

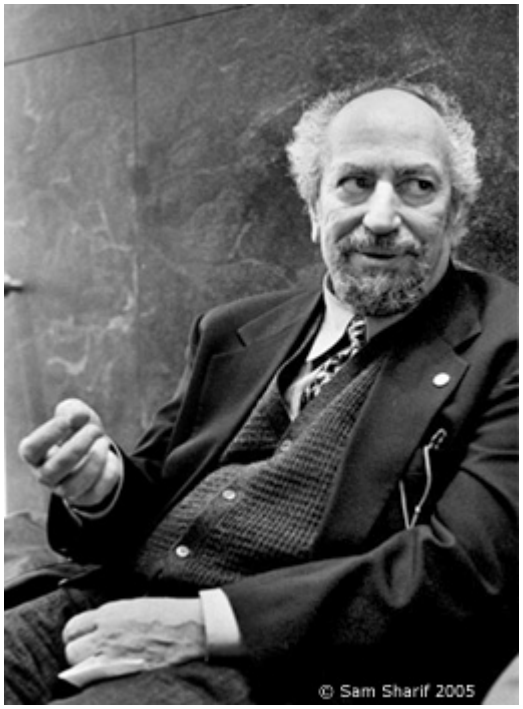
Q: Does this mean a kind of expansion or a rebirth or even a birth of a kind of public sphere in Egypt? I mean will this lead to the level of newspapers, journals, the university system, the education system. Will this continue to spread?

A: It will. It is happening very slowly, but very steadily. I organized four rallies before I left Egypt and I think the first rally started with 100 people and the fourth one had a thousand people and now there are others organizing rallies and protests. This would have been unheard of two or three years ago, even one year ago, but now it is not. The first time there was a direct challenge to the regime happened only one year ago. The only kind of rallies that were allowed by the regime were anti-American and anti-Israeli rallies.

Q: And Mubarak has also opened new relations with Israel.

A: Yes, he did this when the US and Europe began making some noise about democracy in the Middle East. Mubarak thinks that if he defines his role in the Arab-Israeli conflict and if he mediates an Israeli-Palestinian deal, that somehow this will endear him to the West and get him off the hook and ward off the rising tide of resistance that is growing in Egypt.

Q: So should are we witnessing the beginnings of an authentic change in the region?



A: Well you have the Orientalists or some so-called Arabists, or area specialists who talk a lot about "Arab exceptionalism": this idea that democracy cannot exist in the Arab world. Somehow the democratic changes that spread throughout the Third World starting in Portugal back in 1974, and then moved to Spain, and then to Greece, then to Latin America and back to East Asia and then to Eastern and Central Europe and what we social scientists called the third wave of democracy has not rooted itself in the Middle East. Of course, this third wave is now 31 years old and people wonder why has the wave not yet broken at the Arab shores? And some people have said well, it's Arab exceptionalism: that there is something about our culture, or Islam, which somehow defies democracy. And of course a few of us who have been fighting for democracy in the region have taken issue with this kind of proposition. Arab exceptionalism? We are human beings like everybody else, and we can have democracy too.

Many people do not realize that Egypt, for example, had its first constitution and its first

elected political party back in 1866-very few people recognize this or remember it. And we have had a liberal age from the middle of the 19th Century to the middle of the 20th century, but because of the last 30 years, peoples' memories-at least outside the region-have become tuned or conditioned to thinking that the problems in the Middle East must be a chronic condition, not that they are only 30 years old, and not realizing that the reason for the current state of the Middle East was first, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and two, the Cold War.

The Cold War made the United States and other western democracies look the other way when it came to political oppression and allowed them to deal with tyrants and dictators. But even President Bush, with his limited reading of world history, or whoever writes his speeches for him, engaged in some courtesy of United States foreign policy in his big speech a year and three months ago. He said that for 60 years the United States and other western countries, sacrificed democracy for the sake of stability and for Cold War constituents. It was a big mistake, it was a policy that produced, in the long run, over 60 years, a lot of anomalies, including so-called Islamic militancy because religion became the only way to fight the tyrants and getting away with it. The state could not control hundreds of thousands of mosques and so the mosque became a platform. In as much as it was the case with the Catholic Church in Poland, it became a platform for dissidents who wanted to get away with opposition to Communism.

In the Middle East, the mosque has played that role. And of course the outcome of this was, among other things, 9/11. That the 19 people who perpetrated the attacks on 9/11 came from Saudi Arabia and Egypt–two countries that the United States has befriended-Saudi Arabia for the last 33 years and Egypt for the last 40 years is very telling. These are countries that the United States befriended and supported, backing tyrannical regimes. At the end of the day this produces human beings who are angry and hostile, not only to their own regimes, but also to the West which for so long has backed and supported these regimes.

Q: One of the other claims of the Bush Administration is the role that the Iraq War has played in transforming the Middle East, that it has served as a catalyst for democratic change. What is your take on this?

A: Well, of course, the Bush administration-having failed to produce weapons of mass destruction or to establish a sort of a linkage between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda or 9/11-had to find something else to legitimize their invasion of Iraq, which, happily for me, is democracy. And I have to say that part of it, even though it is the wrong pretext for war, is the right thing for us: the democracy activists.

Removing Saddam Hussein has definitely helped the democratic forces in the region to feel that history is on their side and when I am asked about the role of Bush in this regard I see his role are more like a midwife for democracy. Remember, thousands, not hundreds, thousands, have been working for democracy for the last 40 years in this region of the world, and Bush comes into this game-and I am happy that he came-and his role is not unlike a midwife for a region that was already pregnant with the yearning for democracy and he helped to deliver it,

although by caesarean.

That is probably the closest, the most vivid of analogies that we have to use. Am I grateful to him? I am. Should we give credit to him for democratic change in the region? No. That would be unfair to people who died and people who went to prison and sacrificed for human rights and for democracy.

You have to remember, Radio Free America helped deliver democracy and freedom to Eastern Europe and ultimately to the Soviet Union. And this has to be acknowledged that there is a role for the West and in the same way we have to give credit to the Bush administration and to the Europeans who have been really working hard for democracy in the Middle East.

Q: You've also done a lot of work on Islamic thought and you mentioned before that the history of democratic and liberal ideas in the Arab world stretches back to the 19th century. What do you see as the relationship or the affinity between these progressive ideas in Islamic thought, and those from western thought like the Enlightenment?

A: Like all relationships, you would find, in Islam, a lot of strain and at a defense of the alignment of political and intellectual forces anywhere, you can push the freedom which goes back to the Mutazillites in Islam. Most people don't realize these were free thinkers, many of them were persecuted by Caliphs and they had to flee. People like Ibn Khaldun himself, moving from one country to the other. So there is a conservative, reactionary strain in Islam that has always favored people in power. They will propagate a version of Islam that they push as the status quo, fueled with tradition, if you knew Arabic I could really say what phrase they use, and that is "to put up with a tyrant, is better than division." So they call it in Arab tradition fitma the would rather put up with a tyrant that allows tradition (inaudible). And that would be the model of that strained conservatism. Don't stand up to resist rulers because they may create division in tradition and they'll set the Muslim nation, or the umma, back.

Q: But there is also a skepticism of reason, if one thinks of al-Ghazali for instance, of reason itself, a critique of the falsafa tradition which was promulgating rational interpretation of Islam and Islamic culture.

A: There were the three strains in Islamic thought, and now I will over-simplify. There were the free-thinkers, or the Mutazillites; a conservative religious strain that was favored by the

Sultans; and there were the escapists or the Sufis and figures like al-Ghazali. These three strains have been preserved, and of course by the time you come to the 20th century you find again an attempt to revive the rationalist school with people such as al-Afghani and others. But very quickly they were marginalized.

Q: Why were they marginalized?

A: Because they were pushing for reform of Islam.

Q: It was political…

A: Yes. And this fits into what we are trying to do now at the Ibn Khaldun Center. We have one person there who is more of a Mutazillite, a free thinker-and he is now leading the movement for Islamic reformation. He has been influenced by many of the older thinkers from Islamic philosophy, that older current, but also from a more recent current, by thinkers such as Afghani and Muhammed Abdul.

The big discussion now is that Islam has not undergone a reformation.

Q: So there are these two philosophical strains: reason on the one hand and conservative reaction, fundamentalism, on the other. We could see a figure like Sayyid Qutb as a figure of reaction. What is balance of power in terms of influence in the Islamic world between the two?

A: We are the weakest. Those that are calling for an Islamic reformation are by far the weakest. However, our call is gaining in strength and there is a realization now that there is a need for an Islamic reformation. Right now we have 30 Islamic thinkers who are meeting regularly, from Indonesia to Morocco. Our last meeting was in October, in fact. The meeting was broken into by some reactionaries as well as state security thugs and was disrupted. They accused us of being heretics and that we had no business talking about an Islamic reformation, that Islam had no need of reform. The very idea that Islam needs change or correction is an affront to them.

There is now one outfit in Washington called the Joint Symposium on Islam and Democracy, there is also the Ibn Khaldun Center in Cairo, and there are others as well. And we are trying to bring these people together into a network. So there is a movement which is gaining in strength. But compared to the other two forces of reaction, we don't have the backing of the state and we have no access to mass media. The radicals can use thousands of mosques to

preach, and the state can use the mass media, but we have neither so it's a problem.

Q: So according to this network of scholars-what exactly would a reformed Islam look like with respect to politics? In the west this began with the push for the separation of Church and State…

A: That is exactly what the Islamic reformers have enunciated. One cannot simply take from the west; the reinterpretation of Islam that is happening with this group of reformist scholars is also important. They are good Muslim scholars and can debate any technicality of religious law. They have come up with one important proposition: that freedom is a central Quranic value. From this, they are able to elaborate other values like equality, gender equality, human rights, democracy; for the separation between religion and the state. At the core of this is the idea that religion and the state corrupt one another-hence, their separation is vital for the survival of both.

Q: This was Luther's argument as well…

A: Of course.

Q: One last question. What do you think America's role in future should be in Middle East?

A: They should be concerned, but from a distance. If they move too close, then they will discredit us, the reformers and the human rights activists and those pushing for democracy. What we need for the United States to do now is to weaken their support for the tyrants: for the Mubaraks, for the Abdullahs. We can do battle with them on our own terms if they do not have the backing and support of the United States or other western powers.

Look at Egypt: they get $4 billion a year, $2 billion from the United States and another $2 billion from Europe and Japan. This creates a rentier state where there is no accountability for the state to its people since it is supported from abroad. And they can get away with more. Of course, there should not be sanctions which only end up hurt the people. But the United States should condition its financial support for different countries on a timetable for genuine political and social change. Enable democratic forces to have at least a stable footing against the dictators. I don't have access to a newspaper, the maximum number of people I can get in my Center is maybe 100 per week. So we need more support.

But things are moving. Not as quickly as I would like, but gradually, and peacefully. And that's important: we don't want violent change-like what happened in Romania and Ceaucescu. The region has had enough bloodshed. So we want to fight our battles peacefully, and the United States and western powers can aid in this reform for greater freedom and political reform. And I think within five to ten years there will be major reform.

Hans Sahl: A Profile

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Hans Sahl (1902-1993) masterfully balances the personal and the historical. “If not you,” runs the question that spurred his *Memoirs of a Moralist* (1989), “who else is still alive who can report how Brecht spat and Thomas Mann cleared his throat? If not you, who, then, can claim he was present before Nineveh fell, and Berlin was not yet a legend, but a city?”

Born into a wealthy and assimilated Jewish family in 1902, and raised in Berlin, Hans Sahl quickly became one of Weimar Germany’s most successful young critics. His pioneering film criticism ranks with that of Siegfried Kracauer (*From Caligari to Hitler*]. In his literary essays, he was the early promoter of Thornton Wilder and Ernest Hemingway. But when the Nazis seized power, Sahl fled Germany. Via Czechoslovakia and Switzerland, he arrived in France where he was interned for a time with Walter Benjamin. In Marseilles, Sahl assisted Varian Fry, the young American classicist known as “the artists’ Schindler” who rescued thousands from the Nazis including Marc Chagall, Hannah Arendt, Franz Werfel and Alma Mahler-Werfel, Heinrich Mann and Wanda Landowska.

Hans Sahl himself escaped to the United States in 1942. In New York City, he started a second career as an outstanding translator, bringing Arthur Miller, Eugene O’Neill, Thornton Wilder and Tennessee Williams to German audiences.

Told with sharp-eyed humor, Sahl’s *Memoirs of a Moralist* narrates the adventures, romantic and literary, of a young man in the heady whirl of Weimar Germany, against the backdrop of the final efflorescence of German Jewry.

Hans Sahl: Memoir

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Oh, how familiar, these encouragements, these appeals to the conscience, that you should write something you no longer wish to write; the flattering comment intended to persuade, dropped between the appetizer and the main course, in which you stretch and luxuriate as in a champagne bath: If you don't, who will? Yes, if not you, who else is still alive who can report how Brecht spat and Thomas Mann cleared his throat? If not you, who, then, can claim he was present before Nineveh fell and Berlin was not yet a legend, but a city? If not you, who, then, could be more qualified to tell the young ones who their fathers were — not so different from themselves, only a little older and not yet so adept in handling freedom as the sons who enjoy it as they might wish their fathers could have. You only appreciates freedom once you've has lost it, and then it's usually too late. Granted. And yet, who is not tired of having to hear that this past, as they say, no longer has a future which, by the way, applies to every past and that one ought just to get over it?

If not me, then who?

No, I have no wish to write my memoirs. I am no retired general to shed an iron tear over battles lost, no ageing actress who, for lack of work, recalls the time when dramatic performances took place principally in the bedroom. Moreover, I have already written "a novel of its time," which containing, scrambled, the facts of my life and the events that they determined, was about me, yet not about me alone: an "I-novel," and at the same time a "You-" and a "He-novel"; I used the autobiographical as raw material only. I wished to show, as Arthur Koestler would have it, the avalanche and, too, the individual crystals of which it is composed. I had it in mind to take an inventory of that time while it still hung freshly about our clothing. It did not occur to me to name names and make identifiable; the example stood for many: only compounded in the avalanche is the crystal's destiny fulfilled.

Now, as many of the people whom I have encountered are no longer living, their names forgotten or reduced to footnotes in some daunting and unwieldy reference work of the dead and the missing, an opposite longing compels me to free them from their pastness, to return to them their identities, to bring them back intact out of the agglomeration. In the past, when many of them were still alive, I believed my self permitted in view of the willfulness of the creative process to borrow the head of one, another's hand gesture or particular way of speaking. Some characters were wholly invented, some were drawn from life, still others were cobbled together from disparate elements. The woman who accompanies the man Kobbe into exile comprised many women whom the writer had encountered in his life; the communist Krana was a contraction of various official types. Of course, the reader was free to recognize this or that personage, just as, with a caricature, from behind all the flourishes, the original shines through.

What had seemed important to me was to represent the behavior of certain persons in certain situations, victims of History, which erased their proper features and cast their names to the four winds.

Today, so it seems to me, each of them has the right to be addressed by name, and to be revealed in his uniqueness and his unrepeatable singularity. Thus, I shall name names, as many as possible. They shall escort me through this book. The great and the small. The battle elephants of Literature and Art, as well as the literary foot soldiers who marched off with them into exile. Many fell by the wayside. Others survived. I am one of them.

I

A city map of Dresden on which there sits a fly. He sits precisely there, where I was born. Waisenhausstrasse. He has the entire city map at his disposal, but he sits on Waisenhausstrasse, and waits for me to brush him off. I close my eyes. Green shoots are growing through a sack. Someone had left a sack of oats in the garden over night, and it had rained, and the oats were growing through the sack. There was a swing in the garden, and green butterflies were fluttering around the swing. The doctor opines, I must have an operation. Green butterflies before the eyes betokens nothing good. “Since when have you been seeing green butterflies?” he asks, and sharpens his pencil. I explain to him that green is my favorite color; perhaps because, by chance, I happened to be born in Dresden. My eyes are green. Green were the oats that grew through the sack; green was the patina of the arches and domes of the city; green were the faces of the mass murderers in the wax museum on the Vogelwiese ; green was the velvet dress of the dressmaker who came to our house twice a week and did sewing for my mother.

The dressmaker came twice a week to our house on Waisenhausstrasse, where a fly is currently sitting, and sewed a dress for my mother. The talk was all of patterns, hems, frills and dress shields. My mother and the dressmaker had their mouths full of straight pins when they spoke, and from the dressmaker emanated a peculiar odor, which excited me. She sat, with lips compressed, her mouth full of straight pins, in a dress of green — already somewhat shabby — velour, and worked the sewing machine. I crouched in the next room, on the floor, and watched the dressmaker through the open door pedal the sewing machine, first slowly, then faster, and I saw how the cast iron treadle, which she worked, moved back and forth, the long leg of the dressmaker moving with it up to the hip, under the dress of green velour. She had hitched up her skirts like a cyclist, and pedaled, pedaled, pedaled the sewing machine in place. Finally, she stood up, came over to me and gave me a kiss on the mouth. She was breathing hard, and I saw dark, moist stains under her armpits in the green velour.

I had an operation once. The doctor in North Carolina was a German. He leaned over me and said: “The operation went well, but we’re neither of us happy.” Then I was discharged, and the butterflies began again to flutter.

On hot summer evenings, we often sat on the Bruehlschen Terrace, where waiters

dismembered a goose with servile deftness, and distributed the pieces among the various plates like votive offerings. Wine from delicate, tall glasses; starched, snow-white table linens that smelled of chlorine; a violin playing to the chestnut puree.

We belonged to the propertied classes. But more than the opulence that already at this early date I sensed would not last, and which I would not be entitled to enjoy; more even than the heavy silver-plated restaurant cutlery and the exaggerated dispatch and officiousness of the waiters; what interested me were the mosquitos which, above my head, circled the lanterns and incinerated themselves. The milk-white globes of the arc lamps were almost halfway filled with dead mosquitos, generations of dead mosquitos.

Somehow, this had a connection with the sewing machine-pedaling dressmaker.

The mystery of death, and the mystery of sex.

I was five years old when we moved to Berlin. I see before me the quiet street, through which came no horse-drawn conveyances. It was a cul-de-sac. It was called Friedrich-Willhelm-Privatstrasse. One could play ball and ride a bicycle without the risk of being run over by a hackney-coach or a horse-drawn omnibus. At that time, the first automobiles were making their appearance on the streets of Berlin, and I recollect how the inhabitants of the cul-de-sac came out of their houses when, one day, before our door, an automobile stood, which my father had hired, along with chauffeur, for an excursion in the Grunewald.

For the Sunday drive, my father wore a checkered motoring-cap and blue goggles; and my mother, heavily veiled in the open car, and otherwise covered up to the point of indistinguishability, cried out at frequent intervals: “Hold on tight, children! We’re coming to a curve!”

The memory of my parents stands under the sign of Corpulence, which they both suffered from, and against which they struggled in vain. They watched each other suspiciously at meals, checked their weights with furrowed brows, and greeted each register of weight loss with jubilation. They stuffed their mouths full when the other wasn’t looking, and forwent, with ostentation, their beloved potatoes. The psychological background was only made known to me many years later, after the death of my father, when my mother confessed to me that her husband hadn’t touched her again after I was born. The consumption of food had to compensate for the dearth of love.

With my mother I associate the notion that, as a child, I had to scale her like an Alpine landscape, like a mountain rich in rocky outcroppings by which one could clamber up, and in mounds and elevations, which offered shelter to the whimpering child when he had a fever, and the lamp on the night table, like a blazing red head with a glowing wire, shone down upon him. The mountain held and enclosed me and lay an ice bag on my infected ear drum and stroked my damp hair and used me as a pawn vis-a-vis the man who was my father, and who loved my sister, and bought her clothing and sweets and items of jewelry, and regarded her with laughing eyes; and wrinkled his brow when he looked at me. Indeed the transition, by the turn

of the head, from utmost confidentiality with her, to noninvolvement, even apathy toward me, from partisan love to rank indifference, often kept me up whole nights. What use was it if the mountain, my mother, protected me from the storm, hid me perforce in her hollows where it was warm and smelled sourish at the same time. I didn't want her love; it was only a substitute for that love which my father gave to her daughter and withheld from her. I wanted my father, I wanted his love, I fought for it, I wanted to throw my arms around his neck, while the mountain, with mighty mother-arms, held me back; I wanted to convince him, I wanted to have him all for myself alone, and I think sometimes that my relationships with women have been determined by this early experience. It was often the case that I ignored, was even bored by someone who loved me, while I fought for the love of another who loved me not. Love was for me a missionary enterprise, a struggle against indifference, against coldness, against lovelessness. Love that was offered me had something self-evident about it; I didn't have to struggle for it; it was simply given to me, as the ice bag once would be placed on my forehead when I had a fever. I am reminded of the time that my mother, at the table, said to my father: "Why don't talk to your son? What do you have against him? Come here, my darling boy, give me a kiss." How she further distanced me from my father with this kiss! How she made the unattainable that much more unattainable! I didn't want to be loved out of pity, I didn't want to be kissed because the other one, whom I loved, cared nothing for me, didn't speak to me, shoved me aside, smiling on my sister but not on me.

Friends maintain that I was always falling in love with the wrong women; they believed they detected something masochistic in me. But this is incorrect.

Something in me bristled at the domestication of love. Love is the continuation of poetry by other means. Trepidation would overcome me at the sight of heavy oaken marriage-beds so dominating the chambers in which they stand, and would have done so even if there were no elaborated theory of neurosis, or if such a site of secret lusts and vices could produce a piece of furniture just like any other. What indeed might be unfolding under yon floral comforter? Endless love or endless hate? How can one, I have often asked myself, make, from the attempt to realize a dream of youth, an institution, a life insurance policy, an old age pension, insurance against fire and theft, when actually all is so doubtful, so fragile, so naked under the floral comforter. One false word, and the bed of oak goes up in flames.

If I had not a genius of a guardian angel, a flying domestic altar at which I could pray even at 10,000 meters above the Atlantic, a Mistress of the Grotesque who parodied my moves and laughed off my sufferings at the hands of man- and womankind, I would have despaired of the Love of Heaven.

The festivities of Earthly Love now past, I live with L.G. in a happy telephonic union that bridges over oceans, wars and civil insurrections, and through the medium of the sudden laughter at her irresistible humor, irrepressible even in these circumstances, which will forever convulse me, .

My father had a weakness for antiques, which he would bring home from his business trips:

Baroque cabinets, Baroque chests, Baroque angels, Baroque chairs. Beefy men lugged them up, shoved them here and there, until the proper corner could be found. Outcries from the mother over the "unnecessary expenditure." Patient lecture by the father on the utility of certain capital investments. Reconciliation behind closed doors in the but-seldom-used Biedermeier Room, which was completely fitted out with a spinet, from which two strings were missing, so that the two corresponding keys would be struck in vain, giving us children particular joy; and with a quantity of useless lace doilies dispersed over chairs and tables; pearl-studded boxes, pearl-studded evening bags, even a pearl-studded bell-pull on the wall. The salon, done up in the Empire style, contained the Bechstein grand piano on which my mother accompanied herself when she would sing Schubert's "Wanderer" or the "Liebestod" from "Tristan und Isolde." Copies of old masters which only connoisseurs could tell from the originals, invited verification, as befitted a businessman who knows what is owed to his visitors. On an old chest, in a state of conspicuously authentic dilapidation, stood a suit of armor, only half a meter high, mounted on a pedestal. "Nuremberg. Late Middle Ages," my father took care to explain to the visitor. "The gift of a knight to his little son. Every detail accurately modeled after the original. The visor can be opened up. See for yourself." One did so.

The way to school ran along the Tiergarten, past the monument of the marble, yellow-veined, almost always leaf-bedecked Queen Luise; past the noble horsemen, and the less saddle-sure bank directors, out for their morning ride before the board meeting; past the villas and government houses with immaculately washed glass doors and window panes which mirrored back, faultlessly, the morning sun; up to the Royal Wilhelm Gymnasium, which my father had appointed for me. For a man of his stamp, who was proud to be known as a member of "The Society of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith."

It was simply a given that his children be vouchsafed the best education that his circumstances made possible. Baron von Bleichroeder was the model for an already almost fully-assimilated Jewish patriciate, which thought in German and prayed in German, and with a powerfully-monied devotion to the Kaiser, strove to rise in Society, and endowed hospitals and maternity wards, museums, libraries, public baths. There was no limit set to beneficence, the more so as one reciprocated at the highest level; for example, with the bestowal of the title of Councillor of Commerce, or of the Order of the Crown, Fourth Class, which latter was, one day at the Royal Palace in Berlin, appended to my father's breast.

Among my classmates was the son of August Scherl, the powerful newspaper publisher, who put out the Lokal-Anzeiger and Die Woche, and who, every morning, my father maintained, allowed himself to be instructed as to publishing policy by his barber while he lathered him up. The Lokal-Anzeiger was the Voice of the People, and lay out in all the barbershops and served their clientele with patriotic sentiment and miscellaneous news of traffic accidents, break-ins, fires, and the latest Court gossip. My father made me promise to invite young Scherl to dinner; I believe he wanted to enter into a business alliance with the father; but young Scherl evinced no inclination toward befriending me; Probably the father considered a rapprochement between the right-wing Lokal-Anziger and the liberal Berliner Tageblatt to be inopportune.

Allegedly, Kurt Tucholsky was supposed to be at our school. I expect he felt out of place, the same as I, at a "lacquer-boot" gymnasium, as they were called at the time. In any event, I was happy when, after three years, my father took me out of the school. We had moved. The migration from the old west end to the new had begun, from the Tiergarten and Luetzow-Ufer to the Kurfuerstendamm, thenceforth the grand boulevard of the exalted middle class of two denominations, whose landmarks were then, as in the Middle Ages, Church and Synagogue.

The Kaiser Friedrich School, where I would spend the next years, was situated on the Savigny-Plaz. A lifetime later, in a house on the other side of the Savigny-Plaz, opposite the Kaiser Friedrich School, one of the greatest artists of our time, George Grosz, would be found dead one morning in the entry hall. Four weeks earlier, in New York, we had brought him to the ship. He stood lurching, champagne glass in hand, at the railing, holding tight to the rigging. We made a date to meet again in Berlin. He'll soon be dead, the thought hit me, as I came down the gangplank toward land. I must actually have said out loud, for the woman in front turned around toward me in shock. Where did I get this? I don't have second-sight. I couldn't have told the police where the murderer had buried the corpse. But sometimes I have presentiments. Four weeks after I had bade farewell to George Grosz on the Hanseatic, I read in the New York Times that he was dead.

In 1956, I was in Berlin with Thornton Wilder for the German premiere of his "Matchmaker" at the Theater am Kurfuerstendamm. I was walking with Thornton Wilder toward the Savigny-Platz. "Here's where I used to go to school," I said. "I must have been nine or ten years old." He stood still. "You don't say!" he said, amazed. The school had been converted into a government building. It was just quitting time: clerks with brief cases and the hurried bearing of people wanting to get home fast, came out of the entry gate.

"So here is where you began to learn English," Thornton Wilder said. "And now you are translating my plays and writing books and showing me your school. Meanwhile, there were two world wars, several revolutions, millions of dead. Not to forget your escape from Berlin and from occupied France to America. How do you feel about it?"

"We escaped by the skin of our teeth," I said. "There, in the house on Savigny-Platz, corner of Carmerstrasse, George Grosz died. They found him lying in the stairwell early one morning around seven. He must have died while they were carrying him upstairs. Some days ago, I photographed the spot on the floor where he must have lain. There was a star composed of little mosaic tiles, washed out and colorless though the action of time and cleaning agents, a fleck which feet have passed back and forth upon, a fleck in the entry hall of a house somewhere in Berlin…"

I had first gotten to know Grosz in New York. I did not belong to the friends of his dadaistic combat period; I was much younger than he. But we had something in common: Exile. He was a wonderful friend. We understood each other so well; we had fun together; we resonated with each other. He had a house in Huntington and taught every Tuesday at the Art Students League on 57th Street, after which he'd meet up with friends at the Carnegie Tavern and stand

them rounds. Sometimes we went to a movie theater in Yorkville where they played German films. “The Girl from Niederrhein,” or “The Head Forester’s Daughter” and “Annegret, Come Up to My Schloss,” and we wept buckets. We wiped the tears from our eyes and staggered, arm in arm, through the streets of Manhattan, and went and “had another.” Grosz was a drinker, and drank his quota with a kind of drunken-sober desperation. He died from alcohol, and knew, as Joseph Roth knew, that he would die from alcohol. Only thus could one endure Hitler.

At an annual event of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, they presented George Grosz with their gold medal. He was expected to give a speech in acknowledgment, and unsteadily mounted the podium. He was totally drunk, and he greeted the illustrious members of the Academy with his hands raised like a boxer who had just delivered the k.o. punch to his adversary. He had to hold on tight to the lectern, and he stammered some incomprehensible words. This was taken as a surrealistic demonstration, and applauded ironically. Afterwards there was a reception under a tent, and punch made of gin, whisky and peaches was served, and tasted like glowing fire-water. It was very hot out. Grosz took off his jacket, and let Marilyn Monroe, who was also present, autograph his exposed forearm with her lipstick. As a result, I found myself pressed up against the helpless sex symbol by a surging crowd of Nobel Prize winners, bearers of honorary doctorates, recipients of gold and silver medals, all seeking her autograph. I felt her body, which the world admired and desired, under her thin satin dress, as she braced herself against me to avoid getting squashed. And I thought: Millions of men and women all over the world would envy me at this instant. But I wanted out; I didn’t wish to be squashed, not even with Marilyn Monroe, although that might make it a wilder, more beautiful death.

Before his return to Germany, I wrote some verses for George Grosz in a book, which I gave him as a farewell present:

Boss ups and goes, we’re left alone
On Fifty Seventh Street;
He packs up the entire shop
As he’s moving to Berlin.

Who now will buy us drinks
On Fifty Seventh Street.
Boss says, I can’t paint here
So I’m moving to Berlin.

George, we’ll sorely miss you
On Fifty Seventh Street;
Write us soon and let us know
When you’re moving to New York.

The Kaiser Friedrich School was a red brick building, and the schoolyard abutted the municipal railway wall. When it was spring, we would open the windows and hear the trains clattering by and the hissing sound of the wheels. Then the teacher closed the windows, because otherwise nobody could hear what he was saying. And besides, he didn't like the Spring.

We loved the spring because one could wear knee-socks again, and the first one who wore knee-socks was the envy of all the others. "Spring's Beginning" was the title of a school composition that we had to write then. I will try to reconstruct mine from memory:

"The tender trees in the school yard are planted far apart from one another. They give scarcely any shade, which anyway is not needed at this time, for it is the first spring day of the year. Lissner is the first to wear kneesocks, and we avoid him, and envy him, and let him win at schlag-ball. Lissner's parents are entirely different from other parents. They let him wear kneesocks even though it looks like it might rain in the afternoon. They don't threaten to revoke permission to ride the train or his bicycle if he wears kneesocks after they have forbidden them. They knew it would give him pleasure to wear kneesocks, so they didn't actually forbid them. Lissner's parents don't pamper him, don't call the family doctor, if has the sniffles or he coughs, and they don't take his temperature every other hour. They only stick him in bed and give him an aspirin or two. That's all. Lissner's mother suffers quite a lot from migraines or insomnia, and prefers to stay at home instead of going out into society with Lissner's father. Lissner's father doesn't bring his son right up to the school entrance because he knows that Lissner doesn't like it when the others see that he was brought to school. Incidently, Lissner does not do at all well at school, but Lissner's parents act as if they don't notice, and when Lissner brings home a bad report card, he isn't sent to his room to eat by himself; rather, his father lays his hand on his shoulder and says: Don't take so hard, Son. Sunshine follows the rain.' Or: It's not the end of the world.' Or something similar. Lissner's parents don't worry about what other parents do or say. They leave it up to their son to decide when he can and when he can't wear knee-socks, even if it looks like rain on this first Spring day of the year."

I wanted to remain at the Kaiser Friedrich School. I liked it, if one could actually like a school. But my father had other plans. He was a practical person, and practical people believed, in those days, that Latin and Greek were out of date. One should learn physics and chemistry, for the future belonged to technology. I would be sent to a school that better answered to my father's notions, namely the Leibniz School, which seems worth mentioning insofar as there was a teacher there, Herr Bleich, who characterized Heine's lyrics as "chamber pot poetry."

One of my school mates was Hermann Budzislawski, who later in exile, would publish the Neue Weltbuehne, and in America worked as secretary to the journalist Dorothy Thompson. After the war, he went back to East Berlin. Budzislawski wore scholarly rimless glasses which he looked over the top of, as if he had no more need of them, knowing everything already without them. He was what we then called a "grind," and he was always the first to pipe up, and read books we didn't know, for example, Marx and Engels, whose names meant nothing to us. But the way he enunciated them with raised index finger, made us prick up our ears. I liked

Budzislawski: he seemed already at the time an old man who through some mistake had remained young, and he distinguished himself, especially vis-a-vis the teachers, by a precocious superiority which impressed me. I myself was not a good student, but I also did not push myself to the fore. Strange to say, I always got a D in German, probably because I said things unexpected from a boy my age, which Herr Bleich would therefore annotate in the margin with a "Why?" or "How so?" or even "Incomprehensible." I recall, for example, that once in a school essay I wrote: "…and so as Poor Heinrich was redeemed by a pure virgin…" Herr Bleich placed a question mark after the word "virgin." What Herr Bleich had taken me to mean, remains unclear to me to this day.

I was twelve years old when the war broke out, and the memory of the war reflects itself principally in two experiences which awakened in me something of a social conscience, a feeling which I now sought to rationalize, a premonition already adumbrated on the Bruehlschen Terrace in relation to the darting waiters and the dead mosquitoes.

My father sat on the board of a company, which, during the war, manufactured grenades. He once took me with him when he paid a visit to a factory. We were lead into a vast hall where workers, naked to the waist and covered with sweat, their faces smeared with soot and carbon as in a carnival procession, stood before blazing fires and poked around in the blast furnaces with long iron rods. One of the foremen approached my father, pulled off his cap, and explained what all was going on. My father, in fur coat and silk hat, drew out his gold cigarette case and offered him a cigarette. "Kindly take one, or two," he said, "Just grab away, don't be embarrassed!" I saw how two black fingers reached clumsily into the gold cigarette case and pulled out one cigarette. "Thank you, Herr Direktor! Very kind of you, Herr Direktor! Many thanks!" I was ashamed of my father, and I was ashamed of the worker, and I thought that something wasn't right, and I saw how my father, satisfied, snapped shut the gold cigarette case and gave the worker a parting pat on the shoulder. Certainly, there was in me by no means yet any question of revolution or even conscious social critique, just simply unease and shame and the fear that they' but who were "they"? God? or Herr Bleich, who had called Heine a chamber pot poet? that "they" would someday discover this something and avenge themselves on my father and me. This same fear as one would feel before the Last Judgment, that the smallest offenses — for example, if one had lied at school — would be, on the Day of Reckoning, trumpeted in the truest sense of the word; the scarcely-describable feeling of guilt, born on the day of one's birth that enmeshed one, helplessly, in things one is not accountable for; the feeling of being responsible for the sins of others — for example, for my father, or for the war that killed so many people; these feelings ripened into agonizing certainty when I was sent to work as an orderly in a department of the War Ministry that issued the casualty lists. My assignment consisted of looking up the soldiers whose names and regiments were written on a slip of paper and handing over the slip of paper, annotated with a "fallen," "missing" or "wounded," to the family member who will have been waiting anxiously on the other side of the counter. I will never forget the face of the woman who stared at me, open mouthed, after her eyes fell on the death report I had handed to her over the counter. She grabbed my hand, and nearly pulled me over, so heavy was she as she fell.

I felt a kind of guilt the strange guilt just of being alive.

In the camp at Nevers, while German planes were already circling Paris, Walter Benjamin lectured behind barbed wire me on the concept of guilt, which he rejected.

We had instituted a literary matinee, to show the commandant who we were, and among others, I had recited two poems of mine “Elegy on the Year 39” and “The Wooden Crosses.” At the close of “The Wooden Crosses,” viewing a soldier’s cemetery from the First World War, I speak of the guilt of those who had failed to use the brief interval, for which these soldiers had died, to prevent a second World War. Benjamin, rocking his head to and fro, as he had a mind to, when he paced and lectured, remarked that since Freud, one could no longer speak of guilt. I objected that he would invalidate an entire literature from the Bible down to Kafka. Anyway, I had only meant it metaphorically. Does not one feel automatically guilty when someone near to one dies? Why him and not me? Couldn’t I have done something to prevent his death? I recounted to Benjamin an experience from my youth. Was I guilty that my friend Otto C. had died? No, of course not. But when suddenly he was no longer there, I asked myself why I had deserved to outlive him. “Look here,” said Benjamin, “this is what I think,” and he vigorously rocked his head. “We have to jettison the theological ballast of innocence in order to reclaim our freedom. You’re in over your head.”

Otto C. had died of pneumonia. His father, proprietor of a blouse shop for elegant women, had given him a motor bike, and while I hung onto him, we drove through the already autumnal landscape toward Potsdam and the lakes of the Brandenburg Mark until Summer was ended and the days grew colder; and we felt innocent and free. His father had advised him to dress warmly, but Otto C. put on his beret, and drove the motorbike through the Winter without a windshield. While I held him around the waist, and could feel on my hands how cold it must have been for him out front, Otto C. started coughing. Then they brought him to the hospital, where he slowly coughed himself to death. Of course it was not my fault that he had died, but I had sat there behind him, and he had shielded me. Why had I allowed his carelessness, which we had both enjoyed? Why had I allowed him to protect me with his body, and not protect himself?

The same year that he died, we had both reported for agricultural war service, and the summer we had spent on the land belonging to Herr Baechler near Schneidemuehl was the last before his death. Otto C. and I labored in the fields and learned, supposedly, to make hay, while Herr Baechler and his farm hands not without furtive sneers and open derision kept an eye on us. Allusions to our big city — not to say Hebraic — origins, which Herr Baechler made an effort to make with a smile, were couched in the customary hushed manner of the time. It was meant to be jocular, but at bottom, it was hostile.

Herr Baechler was a powerful man with a full beard, Loden jacket, hunting hat and a shotgun: the model of a German giant. Even his spouse Lieselotte so denominated him, and the unqualified “Ja” which he expected, she would instead complete as “Ja, my giant.”

Sometimes Otto C. and I would sneak into the stable and let Jankel, the Polish prisoner of war who worked as stableman on the land of Herr Baechler, enlighten us concerning the love life of the horses. We were at that age when one is about to uncover a mystery, and nature is full of naked mysteries, naked and exciting, like the breasts of the Polish maid with whom we rolled around in the hay like puppies who do not really know what they should do next.

I love horses. They ennoble him who rides them, and make him better than he is; and I confess that even today, I take my hat off, mentally, before an equestrian statue whether it be of a Gneisenau or a Buffalo Bill or some general from the American civil war.

My father made it a point to ride every morning in the Tiergarten before he went to the office. He had served a year as a volunteer first in the Hussars and then in the Dragoons, as witness the ornately framed photograph on my mother's night table. But the horse did not ennoble him; it suited him not. Generals may ride, Indians, policemen, jockeys; but a businessman does not belong on a horse. He belongs in a hackney cab; all the more so a man of my father's build: rather too small, rather too short in the legs, rather too corpulent. One can't expect the animal to carry a man whose mind is on the stock market and the letters to be dictated to his secretary at the office, all the while riding a Mystery, one of the noblest of creatures, a living Myth which stretches back to the time when man and beast were one as in the centaur. A horse without a rider is like an empty chair. Pegasus was a winged horse, and sealed for all time the marriage of Spirit and Body under the sign of Poetry. I love the sculptures of the Italian Marino Marini, whose images of mounted naked youths restore a long-lost unity. Certainly, one can ride elephants, donkeys, dromedaries, and so reduce them to mere modes of transportation. A man on a camel, a donkey or an elephant has for me something unnatural about it; it offends my sense of proportion; the animal is either too small or too big for the human. Since the Creation, there has appeared an accord between man and horse. Tame me, says the horse, I am yours. I will raise you above all other animals. You will be greater than you are. You will look down upon them, and with you face, you will graze the branches of trees, which now you cannot reach. You will be faster than the others and mightier, and on my back, you will leap over graves and walls. You will enter into cities which I will conquer for you.

My grandfather was the director of a brewery in north Berlin, a neighborhood we but seldom frequented, and then only to visit our grandparents. In the room where my sister and I slept, hung a poster that frightened us when the light of a passing truck would reveal a grinning billy goat toasting us with glass of bock beer.

The brewery smelled of beer and malt and horse urine. We climbed all over the hand carts which stood in the courtyard of the brewery, and watched the thick, shaggy brewery horses with their wild manes, charging up the steep entry ramp under the crack of the whip, foaming at the naked bit, striking sparks as they bounced the now-empty barrels over the cobblestones. I could not bear to wait until the tussling, mighty beasts were unharnessed, dried off and lead into the stables. I would lift myself up onto one of the nags and imagine, while the coachman poured oats into the trough, that I was the last of the Mohicans riding silently over the prairie, or Leatherstocking, or Don Quixote on his Rosinante.

The horses in Herr Baechler's stables resembled my grandfathers': They pulled plows and heavy farm equipment behind them, and in the evening stood tired in their stalls. Some slept standing, and aroused our curiosity, especially the mares. We touched them, and were afraid, and spoke long about it in the hay until, still restive, we fell asleep. From time to time, Herr Baechler drove, with hunting hat and shotgun, to Schneidemuehl to purchase grain or a garden hose, or whatever else he needed. He stayed away usually two or three days, and Frau Lieselotte would sit musing at the window, sighing "Ach, my giant," while she grabbed for her knitting, or took the pants of the absentee into her lap for mending and lovingly stroked them. Something seemed to be oppressing her, and Otto C. and I thought we knew what it was. Lieselotte, the voluptuous, high-bosomed Brunhilde of Upper Silesia, was addicted to her husband, who was betraying her. She was his slave, the giant's, who crushed her with his weight and mounted her like the stallion who we saw in the stall mounting a mare. Life was rough in the country, the farmers in the tavern were rough, rough was the grip of the giant to whom she only all too willingly submitted. And it seemed to us a confirmation of our theory when she drew us to her and with hot breath whispered in our ears: "Ach, you still have so much in front of you. Take advantage! The world is full of prospects, Soon you will be men. Men!" Then she looked again out the window and waited for the giant.

There were stags and deer in the surrounding woods, and Herr Baechler insisted that we should accompany him on a hunt. "You're not allowed to shoot," he said, "we'll take care of that. But you can watch." When the time came, Liselotte attacked the preparations with housewifely diligence. Provisions were crammed into knapsacks; guns were cleaned; hunting knives honed. At ten in the evening we were off. Before the door stood three men in heavy hunting gear, farmers from the surrounding area.

We went in a long line over the fields towards the woods. The giant smoked a stogie and smelled hungry for action and thirsty for blood. When we had reached the woods, the men split off in different directions. The giant ordered us to follow him. We climbed over boulders and the roots of trees, jumped over a brook, where the giant nearly fell in the water, and came, finally, to a clearing. "You wait here until it's all over," said the giant. "Don't budge from this spot!" Then he disappeared. We lay on the forest floor and waited. After we had waited about an hour, Otto C. said: "I never imagined a hunt to be so boring. I'm tired. I'm going to lie down and get some sleep. Wake me when something happens." Nothing happened. From far and wide, no stag stepped majestically out of the forest, no deer, not even a rabbit. I didn't dare stand up because I was afraid I'd be mistaken for a wild boar or a rabbit. Gradually, it grew lighter. "I'm hungry," said Otto C. who had woken up in the meantime. "Eat something," I said. "We certainly have enough." "I believe fishing is even more boring," said Otto C. Suddenly we heard a shot — many shots, accompanied by the sound of men calling to one another. Bellowing, shooting, cursing issued from the underbrush, but we didn't see anything. It was as if we had bad seats at the theater, behind a column where one could see nothing; but one could hear. Cries. The cracking of twigs underfoot. The dull fall of heavy bodies. When it was over, three bleeding animals lay on the ground: two stags and a wild boar.

The giant stuck a stogie in his mouth and puffed away; the farmers drew their hunting knives,

cut the animals in various places, got themselves long thin tree trunks out of the forest and bound the animals securely to them. Then we formed up for the way back. Otto C. and I carried a pole on which the wild boar hung. I walked behind Otto C., and saw how the blood dropped from the animal's snout to the ground. I was revolted. I wanted to become a vegetarian, never to eat meat again — unless it arrived in a form that did not recall the living animal. Nothing brings me closer to retching than the sight of a roasted pig's head with a lemon stuck in its mouth.

Shortly afterwards, something happened that would cause me to reflect on my otherness. A Jewish holiday was approaching, and Jankel, the Polish prisoner of war who worked in Herr Baechler's stables, had asked if he could go to Krojanke where there was a synagogue and a rabbi who had invited him to share a meal. For Herr Baechler, this was a welcome opportunity to display his generosity toward the man of foreign origin. We received the assignment to accompany Jankel to Krojanke and to stand surety with our persons that he would return again and not attempt, in the course of the journey, to escape. Each of us received a rifle, which however was not loaded, as well as a white armband and an officially authenticated identification card.

And so we went with Jankel to Krojanke. It was a merry trip. We laughed and sang the whole time, and Otto C. and I conjured him not to get us in trouble. "No," said Jankel, and slapped us on the knee. "I not escape, I not escape." In Krojanke, we delivered him directly to the synagogue, where the services had already begun. I entered a world for which I was not prepared. Too many people in a far too little space; too much mystery about a God, who hadn't called for this mystery. I felt like interrupting, but this was just a fancy, of course. What alienated me the most was the fact that people came in and went out while the service was going on, or formed little groups and conversed loudly, while others, in particular those in the front rows, were deep in prayer, rocking their heads, in accordance with the ancient Jewish ritual. We told Jankel that we'd be back in an hour, and went out into the fresh air. We walked through the streets of the little town, while we attempted to conceal our weapons. We sat by a wayside and ate the provisions Frau Liselotte had given us to take along. When, an hour later, we went back, the synagogue was empty. An employee of the community, who was in the process of rearranging the chairs, gave us the address of the rabbi, where we would probably find Jankel. As a matter of fact, there he sat, happily banqueting in festive company, a believer among believers. "Kindly come back in an hour," said the rabbi after we had identified ourselves, "the meal is not yet ended." "I not escape! I not escape!" Jankel called out laughing and he raised his wine glass in salute. He was happy; he had been taken in by his own; he was being fed and fortified; while us they showed the door. Us, the apostates; we who carried rifles on our shoulders, who did not honor the Sabbath and keep it holy, and who understood not a word of Hebrew.

When we sat again with Jankel in the train, darkness had already fallen over the landscape. I stared out. I heard the glasses clinking in the rabbi's house and the lively conversation of the guests while they broke bread with one another, and the clapping of hands as they danced around the laden table. Where did I belong? Neither with the wild boar hunters nor with the

worthy patriarchs who rocked their heads in prayer. I believed in God, but in which language was I supposed to pray to Him?

Translated by Jeffrey Craig Miller and Karina von Tippelskirch.

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Wartime Kitchen

I think of Yannis Ritsos’s women
marching to the kitchen at the first sound of war
I think of the bulk of Grandma in Jersey City,
a bulk I could never duplicate as I pad across
the floor to grind the sweet basil grown
last season, to brush the cat, to chop garlic
for salad dressing

Deliberately quiet tasks, though I could start
throwing pots around like my mother, I can tell you
make such a ruckus you would wonder who had
gone insane, and it’s the world
in the photos I will not bring home,
in the leering sneering posture of an imposter
president, put in charge by corporate fists

I could show you how weeping has worn a hole
in my heart as deep as the slippers
she thrust her feet in cold Polish mornings,
I’ve become that babushka woman
witnessing carnage, all wisecracks are out
of place, no jokes for broken children or screaming
mothers, dead soldiers are children themselves

No jokes for the children, everybody's children
I do not forgive their slaughter
the oil the arms the gold piled high as this house
cannot buy their laughter, cannot bury their shrieks
in the night, I accuse the old white men drowned in greed
of their murder, I will bang every pot and pan
I own for a world free from their hands.

Mean Ol' Badger Blues

Used to be a mountain climber, highest passes on the earth,
Said I used to be a climber, highest mountains on the earth
Lucky now to get my boots on, half a mile all I'm worth.

Badger moves in fast as lightning, takes up lodgings
in my shoes,
Said he moves in just like lightning through my gloves,
and in my shoes
Ugly name is Arthur Eyetis, I got the mean ol' badger blues.

Badger shot me in the elbow, in the wrists and, on a roll,
ran over all my fingers like a bus over my soul.
Seems my life's some kinda funnel, all ease movin'
down a hole

I got them mean ol' badger blues.

Plan ahead is not my forte, but I can't stand last minute mess,
Don't know where that badger strike me next, or when,
in what distress,
Feel caught up in regulation, like a rat pressed in a dress.

I got them mean ol' badger blues.

If you see me on the highway, sorta hobbling sorta stiff,
Badger kicked me in the shoulders, in the knees or in the hips,
I'd just love to punch his lights out, but I cannot make a fist.

I got them mean ol' badger blues.

Janine Pommy Vega *is the author of twenty volumes of poetry and prose, including* Poems to Fernando, Tracking the Serpent: Journeys to Four Continents, *and* Mad Dogs of Trieste: New & Selected Poems. *Since 1987, she has been the director of Incisions/Arts, which brings writers into prisons to perform, teach, and lead poetry workshops. The two poems included here appear in her new collection,* The Green Piano *(A Black Sparrow Book, 2005, published by*

David R. Godine, www.blacksparrowbooks.com).

SIMIN BEHBAHANI

It's Time to Mow the Flowers

It's time to mow the flowers,
don't procrastinate.
Fetch the sickles, come,
don't spare a single tulip in the fields.
The meadows are in bloom:
who has ever seen such insolence?
The grass is growing again:
step nowhere else but on its head.
Blossoms are opening on every branch,
exposing the happiness in their hearts:
such colorful exhibitions must be stopped.
Bring your scalpels to the meadow
to cut out the eyes of flowers.
So that none may see or desire,
let not a seeing eye remain.
I fear the narcissus is spreading its corruption:
stop its displays in a golden bowl
on a six-sided tray.
What is the use of your ax,
if not to chop down the elm tree?
In the maple's branches
allow not a single bird a moment's rest.
My poems and the wild mint
bear messages and perfumes.
Don't let them create a riot with their wild singing.
My heart is greener than green,
flowers sprout from the mud and water of my being.
Don't let me stand, if you are the enemies of Spring.

–Translated by Farzaneh Milani and Kaveh Safa

Simin Behbahani was born in Tehran in 1927. She published her first ghazal, a short lyrical genre in Persian poetry, when she was fourteen. She studied to become a mid-wife, but because she was suspected of belonging to the Tudeh, or Communist Party, initially she was not admitted to Tehran University. After that, Behbahani wrote in A Cup of Sin: Selected Poems of Simin Behbahani *(Syracuse University Press), "the purpose of my poetry has been to fight injustice." She has published fifteen volumes of poetry. This English translation of "It's Time to Mow the Flowers" appears in the newly published volume,* Strange Times, My Dear: The PEN

Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Literature*, Edited by Nahid Mozaffari, Poetry Editor: Ahmad Karimi Hakkak (NY: Arcade Publishing, 2005). It is reprinted here by permission of Arcade Publishing (www.arcadepub.com), copyright © 1999 by Syracuse University Press.*

ABBAS SAFFARI

Saturday Night Dinner

The onion, I will grate
to keep my stream of tears from drying.
The potato, you peel
for your sleight of hand with skin.

Let Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan, the Sufi minstrel, play
for he opens us a window to Konya,*
a window adorned with narcissus, sleepy-eyed and languorous,
and a handful of homing pigeons.

If they call
from MasterCard
or the Internal I-don't-have-any-Revenue Service,
tell them he's gone to Kashmir
looking for the long-lost polo ball of King Aurangzeeb of India,
and it's unclear when he'll be back.

Don't laugh, my darling!
Cultural misunderstandings
dismiss the disturber
quicker than hollow conversation.

Now, while this aged Indian rice ripens,
put two glasses, lip to lip, near our hands
of our oldest vintage, four years old
and a reminder of a century past.
A sip of good wine
is enough to erase an entire
century from one's memory.
Sip after sip
we can backtrack so far
that after dinner
we can find ourselves in the moonlit
palm groves of Mesopotamia,
and around midnight
in a primordial place naked
and boundless.

–Translated by Nilufar Talebi

*Konya is the resting place of Rumi.

Abbas Saffari was born in 1951 in Yazd, Iran, and moved to the United States in 1979. He was one of the first to write avant-garde, surrealist lyrics in Iran for the singer, Farhad. He is the author of several books of poetry, including Twilight of Presence *and* Old Camera and Other Poems*, and has been poetry editor of Iranian literary magazines in exile such as* Sang *and* Cactus*. He lives in Long Beach, California with his wife and two daughters and is one of the few Iranian poets living outside of Iran whose work is published and read in Iran. This English translation of "Saturday Night Dinner" appears in the newly published volume,* Strange Times, My Dear: The PEN Anthology of Contemporary Iranian Literature, *Edited by Nahid Mozaffari, Poetry Editor: Ahmad Karimi Hakkak (NY: Arcade Publishing, 2005). It is reprinted here by permission of Arcade Publishing (www.arcadepub.com).*

Logos would like to thank Dick Seaver, editor in chief of Arcade Publishing for permission to include the poems of Simin Behbahani and Abbas Saffari in this issue. Arcade's new anthology of Iranian literature, *Strange Times, My Dear*, was published following an important First Amendment lawsuit filed by Arcade, PEN American Center, the Association of American Publishers, and the Association of American University Presses challenging recent U.S. Treasury Department restrictions prohibiting U.S. publishers from editing work by authors from countries that are subject to U.S. trade embargoes (such as Cuba, Iran, Sudan, etc.) without applying for a special permit.

Arcade was unwilling to apply for this permit, in the belief that the Treasury Department Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) restrictions were a clear violation of freedom of the press and the First Amendment. Following the largely successful lawsuit, OFAC issued a "general license" that allows American publishers to engage in most ordinary publishing activities in regard to authors from these embargoed countries. The Treasury Department did not, however, completely eliminate all regulations in this area, and advocates for free expression remain concerned that OFAC's revised regulations may still require publishers to apply for a permit to do work that may fall outside of what OFAC considers ordinary publishing activities. Advocates are also concerned that a department which feels it has the right to issue a "general license" to grant what ought to be viewed as a basic constitutional right could potentially at some point in the future revoke that license. For more information about the lawsuit and the free-expression issues involved, visit www.pen.org/page.php/prmID/412

Milton Resnick

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Milton Resnick
1917-2004

The painter, Milton Resnick, died one year ago on March 12th, 2004. A memorial was held on the anniversary of his death at St. Marks On the Bowery. Two brief remarks from critics:

"… He really was a major force at a crucial moment in the history of recent American art…a giant of a legendary period." – Karen Wilkin.

"There aren't many painters like him left, so in love with painting, so uncompromising, so disconcertingly truthful. I admired him and his work greatly. It was the passing of an age." – Lily Wei

Resnick was also an artist who could talk extemporaneously for hours on what mattered to him. As became apparent at the memorial, his audiences remembered his remarks over many decades. Excerpts here have been culled from the book, "Out Of the Picture: Milton Resnick and the New York School," published by Midmarch Arts Press in 2003. This book, transcribed, compiled and edited by Geoffrey Dorfman, consists of interviews, talks at the Studio School in New York (often in the form of meditations,) a portfolio of selected paintings, and pointed debates with Ad Reinhardt and the art historian, Leo Steinberg, among others. Midmarch Arts Press is located at 300 Riverside Drive, N.Y., N.Y., 10025, phone:212-666-6990: midmarcharts@highstream.net.

Out Of the Picture: Milton Resnick and the New York School

{Excerpts}

I'd fallen asleep thinking I was much too tired to go on working and if I went on working, I'd lose it. I'd get a better hold of it in the morning; feel stronger. But I looked and looked at it and it seemed to me there was nothing to do.

I spent all morning getting very sad about it all, feeling that something very important happened last night and that now it's there but I can't find it somehow so my life is always going to be a kind of failure. I'll never get anywhere.

Someone came up the stairs – Ruth Hageman, and I let her in and she said, "You look very gloomy," and I explained how I felt and she said, "Well, I understand why you can't work anymore on that painting," and I asked, "Why?" She said, "You just painted yourself out of your

picture." …So I went around telling people, "You know, I did something very important; I painted myself out of my painting." (laughter) Well, it took somewhere; it got repeated; as a matter of fact de Kooning said it somehow and got it written about.

***

Milton Resnick in his Broadway studio

At any rate, nobody listened to me very much. Or if they did they would say I was poetic and that was perfectly all right with them. I never really took to that…I didn't feel like a lunatic – I wasn't that disconnected; I felt that if I could reach out, I could touch. It seemed to me that in taking the miracle out of it, in taking away the experience of it being strange – not thinking of it as a peculiar experience that I had about geography and my room and the floor and all that – that what I had to do in order to reach my painting was to ascend. I had to go up…Whether it was lifting myself or lifting what I saw in the painting, didn't seem quite clear at that time. In order to find a way to be more sure about these things, I began to try lifting what I saw. Being that I never really could convince myself that I could have wings, I could at least convince myself that I could try lifting what I saw. Of course, you can do anything with what you see. But if you give yourself the task of seeing in the way of lifting or ascending, you somehow begin to think about seeing itself. You see in a way that you would not normally be required to see. Although these things were all failures, there was a series of paintings that clued me about some things. Finally it reached the point, about ten years later, I painted a few paintings and with one of them – not a very large painting, I called it Upstairs Landing – I almost felt that I did climb. I made it seem very ordinary and I said to myself that all I really did was reach an upstairs landing. I didn't want to say anything more ridiculous than that.

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What you have to do is disavow yourself from any sense other than ascendancy. That's the only direction you could possibly have towards painting. There's no other direction at all. There's no

other space in art. There's no other way in which you can find yourself except in somehow feeling it. And by holding to this feeling you can once again reach out and guess and miss – and sometimes hit. And this contact you make when you hit is all-important. If that contact holds, and you hold, then you are washed by that and all the technological shit that's in your mind gets thrown out. You have a chance. And it takes everything – every pore – every molecule within you to hold – and you don't know if you're going to live or die; I mean things happen to you then. And you must refrain from trying to grasp for the outcome of it. Certainly not who's going to review you or something. It's got to be out of your mind; you've got to refuse it. That's quite something to do.

***

…A lot of things have been going on a long time.

You want to bring it to an end?

No, I just want an answer as to what the quality of this virtue is.

Just that it exists. Just that the feeling of virtue is an upward feeling; a feeling of ascendancy. Painting, when it has this ascendancy – this lift – is better painting; it has that virtue. It has some meaning if you want to speak about it as something higher, something overcoming death in some way; maybe that would be its virtue; that anything, as long as it ascends, overcomes death. But anything on a line, on the horizon, dies.

Are you saying that the process is more important than the product? That it's more important that people do it than that what happens to it after it's done?

Yes. …But you have some confidence that I don't have. That something that becomes my experience stays with me is something I'm not sure of. I don't have this confidence that you have. You think if you kiss somebody that this experience will last you forever.

You mean you have to keep regaining it?

Yes.

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Mound

About three years went by and I had become exhausted – really at the end of my rope almost and I thought I couldn't last much longer… and at the very end when I thought of giving it all up, suddenly I thought it was good. I knew that I now understood something about it and I painted it as easily as you can imagine. I just had no trouble painting it and it became a very important painting. I called it Mound – I don't know why.

With Mound, a new experience became very important to me and the reason that I felt that I should have known it from the first – when I said that I painted myself out – is that it was always there for me to see; that the way a picture works, it's not so much how you put a picture together as how the picture puts you together…In fact I discovered something very important; that if you change paint from what it is, you destroy something very important about paint but more important than that is that you don't change. As long as you can change paint, you don't change. For you to change – for paint to do something to you – paint must stay constant. The act, the doing, the taking up of paint and putting it down – the immediate impact upon your psyche or soul that occurs when you do that – has so much danger in it. It's such a magical important act in your life. Why it is so important and how it does act upon you has to be realized. You have to cope with it. You have to make a point of understanding that. Much more important than anything else about art is what happens when you do that, and what happens to you. And nobody, of course, talks about that.

It's absolutely irrelevant what galleries and critics and people who buy your paintings think. They just don't have any possible idea of what happens to you and they're really not that interested. As a matter of fact, they hate the idea that anything really happens to you. They want you to be a genius and that's it. They don't want anything to have happened; they want you to be born and be that special person with that brand on you – "genius," and that's it. You have to be wonderful and that's all there is to it. Then, anything that you happen to do gets to be part of that wonderful thing that you are. But what is of a great deal of importance to you is what do you do when you paint? How does it change you? What does it make of you? Because you are certainly not the person who should be painting a painting. None of you are. None of us

are. We cannot live without our place in the things and the place in which we live does not make room for painting. We are doing something contrary to our place and time and as long as we remain what we are all we can do is indicate our opinion. In other words, art becomes our opinion about ourselves, our times, our place; and that, of course, is not really painting.

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Botany

Painting has to become what you really are doing and not what you are reacting to outside of it. And to do that, a great deal of changes have to happen to you. The only way I can tell you what the most important change is, is that the unity, the thing that you say makes the painting "work," – if you still say things like that, I don't know – but it has to happen to you. You have to become complete in some way; a universe, a complete thing in yourself in order to reach across and breathe some unity upon this thing that you're faced with. If you intentionally avoid that unity within yourself, then you will intentionally avoid doing that in your work. You can say that if there's no unity in your work, then you have deliberately made yourself into that kind of a person. You don't want that unity in your work. You've made some kind of satisfactory arrangement with your culture. You stand guard with your culture. Your culture demands that you bring some kind of crisis to your work and therefore you cannot bring any unity to it. In order to bring crisis into your work you have to bring it to a state of expectancy. In other words, you have to leave your work in the state of mind of being a question. Nothing in the world excites the culture today so much as a question. A question seems very appropriate to whatever you have in mind. Allowing your work to remain questionable is a way of satisfying your cultural condition.

***

There is some other form that you contain within yourself that is not will or purpose, and when

applied to art serves you best. If you systematically apply to the art that you create, the aggression of the world that turned you towards art in the first place; if you, in turn, become the aggressor towards your canvas, the thing that you're doing; if you, in turn, work your will upon this thing that you want – you will then cause a dissatisfaction in this life that you create.

So now; how did God produce this world? Did he do it with will? With his intention? How did he do it? The fable is that he breathed upon us. In his breath, his wind, came moisture and things began to grow. The moisture of God is all that is needed to set the thing going. An interaction of youth. A message of hope. Nothing physical.

How do you intend for your breath to become a work of art? The only way I can see it is that you prevent your breath from becoming a structure. As soon as your breath takes on the form of a room, you are a carpenter; you're not God. You're committing a structure, an aggression… the only thing that has any importance is that your being, your breath, your life, lends to this thing a timelessness; a feeling that you see it as it will be and can't be in any other way. It doesn't change; it doesn't move.

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Roswell #14

… If you see a glass of water and drink it, it's like an understanding between you and what you see. It was water, it was beneficial, and it won't do you any harm. If someone mentions to you that this harmless looking transparent liquid is a deadly poison you see it very differently. It doesn't look like water to you anymore… But if you see something and you don't even know what it is, then you see it…What condition brings that on? How is it possible to do something in such a way that you see it all at once, at the same time, and you see it as if you never saw it before, and you see it as if you will never see it again? …And the most difficult thing to do is to remove the idea of the job from what you're doing. To be able to see what you're doing means to remove this impossible job; its one intent and purpose…You are not really in a position to reach out and touch this timeless place. Your brush doesn't reach there; your paint doesn't go there. As soon as you set yourself up in the position of transferring paint from one place to another, your whole culture

invades you. It tells you all about the history of art…

***

If you take the case of the fable, “Jack the Giant Killer,” …your sympathies would naturally arise in favor of Jack instead of the giant… Jack, after all, did it to please his mother. The giant really was doing it to please himself. What makes you sympathetic to the idea that Jack is a more worthy person than the giant, I don’t know. I think the giant is more like the artist than Jack is, don’t you? Now, that’s a very simple case. I’m really trying to get at what’s truthful about the most ordinary things…

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There is no release from the uncertainty within you unless there is a collaboration, a correspondence between other people and you; that there is some relevance; that there is some truth in what you do…How do you do anything like art unless you learn something? And of course the first thing you learn really, without anyone telling you, just as in the case of “Jack and the Giant,” is that you can’t learn anything – that art is not a learning process. It is the very reverse of learning. It is the unhinging of your soul from your sight.

…It would be as if you were walking down Eighth Street and you came to Sixth Avenue and you turned the corner and suddenly the world is rushing three times as fast as it was on Eighth Street…

***

Saturn

Painting is – when you are together in an internal sense – a correspondence between what you are and what you see. It's a moment when something is holding together in such a way that it is a universe in itself. It approaches as much completion as it possibly can. Within this is a test and also a judgment upon yourself, your capabilities, your promises, and the part that you play in the world. And nobody else can test that for you. Certainly not the Museum of Modern Art. (pause)

…From the very beginning art meant something very important to the people who made it. It was a correspondence of the emotions to what you saw; it wasn't knowledge. You were being at one with something eternal; something outside of yourself. And no matter how many fake things have been brought in to suit other conditions, it doesn't mean that that isn't true. That is still true. And just because a lot of shit's been put in the way of truth doesn't mean that truth is not in that way of seeing. The trouble is that every time there's something good in this world, the shit comes first. It gets there right away.

***

Do you think that art creates some kind of order, in any sense? When you talk about structure; I mean, do you favor order or disorder?

Disorder. But completeness… Well, I wouldn't call it [a Jackson Pollock} accidental, which people do tend to say. So I would agree that, in that sense, they [Pollock's] are not accidental but that they are part of painting. Whether you want to bring that to some idea of "order," for some purpose that I don't understand, it's all right with me.

I think, in the beginning, painting was meant to do something that was very difficult to do – to retain, in some form, what the mind keeps thinking exists but doesn't see. I don't think that it's ever changed from that idea. The idea that you actually can only paint what you see is a very irreligious idea. It's like overcoming what painting has always been. And the reason it's irreligious is that it came about as an academy. It became a State thing. The religions never wanted an art where you paint only what you see. It's only with the academy in France that

they said, “You paint exactly what you see.” It’s irreligious art. It’s meant to be that what you believe in is what you see.

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Milton Resnick with “Swan”

It seems to me, you come very close to saying that you suspend your associations or symbolisms with anything that you see or hear, in order to get to the nature of what is.

No, because I don’t believe I’ve come to that. If I did, I may not try for it. Because I wouldn’t really be that interested in it. What I brought up to begin with… is very simple. It has nothing to do with the nature of things. It’s the tampering with this nature, and what it’s doing to me. I’m tampering with this nature. I don’t have to understand this nature. What I’ve done is touched this nature so that it’s touched me. It’s changed me; it’s done me in. That’s what’s interesting to me. That’s why I’m really doing it; because that excites me.

There’s a marvelous story that I once read about two Chinese friends. One of them became very ill and hunchbacked and dwarfed with shriveled arms. It was terrible looking at him and his friend couldn’t stand it but never spoke to him about it. He thought it would be offensive to mention that he was looking so terrible. At the same time he found it very puzzling that his friend seemed so cheerful and never felt very unhappy about his condition. So one day he finally did speak. He said, “My poor friend, you look so terrible,” and all that, and his friend said, “Yes, and someday my arm might become a butterfly.” That’s really marvelous; don’t you see it? It’s the changes that occur in you that are marvelous, not what happens to Matisse.

David Held, Global Covenant: The Social Democratic Alternative To The Washington Consensus.

By | 2005: Vol. 4, No. 2

Reviewed by
Anand Bertrand Commissiong

In the wake of the 2001 attacks on the United States and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the world faces two deadlocked forces. The spreading menace of worldwide terror networks represents one side of this dilemma. On the other is the mindset behind the response of the most powerful superpower in history. The reactionary logic of both means that unless some viable alternative emerges we will remain in the grip of this so-called war on terror for years, perhaps generations, to come. In this context David Held intervenes by defending cosmopolitan principles as an alternative to the stalemate. Because our contemporary world is constituted by what Held calls “overlapping communities of fate,” (p. x; 168) the solution cannot come in the form of a new bipolar conflict. The challenge then is to discredit the strategy the United States has so far pursued in its recent wars, which Held sees as the military front of the neoliberal Washington consensus that fuels the contemporary phase of globalization. At the same time, the ultimate inhumanity of terrorism as a viable form of action must also be delegitimized. It is the latter objective that poses the most significant problems for Held’s approach.

While global security concerns once again seized much of the world’s attention, understanding the legal, economic and political institutions underpinning the globalization phenomenon is critical to any analysis. The conservative Washington consensus emerged after the developmental policies of the 1960s and 70s failed. In the old scheme, the United Nations proclaimed that every state could “develop’…if only [they] would implement appropriate policies….” In so doing, all states could become “more or less equally wealthy.” (Wallerstein 123) The new globalization according to the Washington consensus maintains that open markets are key to raising all ships. Yet after two decades of this approach, the world faces deepening economic disparities as wealth increasingly concentrates in fewer and fewer hands even as the proportion of people living in extreme poverty appears on the decline. (p. 357) Held also sites evidence that the open market imperative may actually do more harm than good if executed too hastily. Emerging economies may actually need a period of protectionism before exposure to global free markets. Held rightly notes this should come as no surprise “since nearly all of today’s developed countries initiated their growth behind tariff barriers, and only lowered these once their economies were relatively robust.” (pp. 512) Furthermore, national political mechanisms that supposedly represent constituent interests are in many ways being undermined by the international and intergovernmental regulatory agencies purportedly set up

to benefit all. These agencies largely escape accountability to popularly generated national will. And in many regards Held argues, the state of international law faces fundamental crises of authority and enforcement. (p. 12532)

Much of this alarming evidence presented here has been raised by many others. (Sassen; Stiglitz) This includes Held's own recent collaborative works. (Held and McGrew *Governing Globalization;* Held et al.; Held; Held and McGrew *Globalization/Anti-Globalization*) In this regard, Held once again provides a highly comprehensible and balanced interpretation of a great deal of complex data. What then is the alternative to the Washington consensus? What is novel in this work is that Held offers an answers to the question posed in the title of his well-known article, "Democracy: From City-State to Cosmopolitan Order?" There he suggested connections could be drawn from the dawn of democracy in the West to the modern inter-state system. In the current work, Held argues against the status-quo, and its grass-roots opposite-the radical arm of the anti-globalization movement. The neoliberal position "simply perpetuates existing economic and political systems and offers no substantial policies to deal with the problem of market failure." On the other hand, the anti-globalization alternative Held calls "deeply naive about the potential for locally based action to resolve, or engage with, the governance agenda generated by the forces of globalization." (p. 162)

In short, our current course will only exacerbate the already obscene inequalities while refusing to address the root causes of terror beyond a dangerously simplistic neoliberal claim that "they" hate our freedom. Held's response to the radical anti-globalization movement is that for the foreseeable future, globalization is here to stay and any progressive strategies seeking to counter its invidious effects must involve the appropriation and transformation of existing transnational agencies so that accountability may be increased and dispersed. But this is not all. In order to increase the legitimacy and responsiveness of international law by which all of these institutions operate, international courts themselves must be fortified through the realization of cosmopolitan principles throughout the entire post-national constellation. Chief among these is the role of international law and the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

For Held, "[p]opular support against terrorism, as well as against political violence and exclusionary politics of all kinds, depends on convincing people that there is a legal, responsive and specific way of addressing their grievances." (p. 169) Held's prescriptions, therefore, seek to ensure that institutions will actually respond in legal, responsive and specific ways to these grievances. But this is indeed the difficulty. Because of the logic of the stalemate, neither side is willing to compromise first. For Held's argument, both changes have to occur simultaneously. Another way of seeing the problem is to appreciate the following critical question. Is it anti-Westernism or anti-modernism that terrorists condemn? In fact, this may be what distinguishes the terrorist faction of the Palestinian movement from those who planned the September attacks and their co-conspirators in Iraq and elsewhere. Palestinian terrorism was never particularly anti-modern or anti-Western although it often expressed anti-American sentiments.

But the web of terrorist organizations that attacked the United States and that represent the most vicious aspects of the insurgency in Iraq, despite their diffuse connections, have been quite explicit in their anti-modernism. Held observes briefly in his conclusion that in the Muslim world, there seems to be an ongoing debate about how to deal with the terrorists while attempting to figure out how to encounter modernity without necessarily Westernizing. What are generally called Western values are a particular set of responses to the challenges of modernity. They are by no means uniform and this is why the disputes within Europe itself and between the United States and the more powerful states in Europe render fears of monolithic Western domination simplistic. Indeed, as Held maintains, Western Europe does offer an alternative to the Washington consensus in the particular forms of social democracy that arose there. (p. 167) But Muslim countries, like all other nation-states, have to come to terms with modernity's political and economic forms in their own way. And they have every right to try to do so without necessarily adopting entirely western European or North American solutions. Western Europe's experiences show that modernity poses potentially destructive challenges to traditional ways of life, but it also opens new possibilities as well. Since globalization makes isolation virtually impossible, every community will have to process globalization's double-edged character. It is this dual aspect of the phenomenon that Held's prescriptions do not fully appreciate. Dialogue and coalition-building are certainly important. Unfortunately, despite the recent wooing of European allies by United States administration officials, the religious hue of President Bush's pre-modern messianism does not seem to lend itself to much of either. This current in American policy is one many beholders legitimately fear.

The challenges the authority and execution of international legal regimes face in controlling these forces illustrate further the complexities of the stalemate. As Tocqueville noted, courts in a democracy represent an un-democratic strain essential to the system's proper functioning. The relation between natural law and democratic will, a key component of modernity, was accomplished over several hundred years partly through the compromise of political negotiation in successful national formation processes in Europe and North America. But this process in many cases also violently ruled out effectively dissolutionary elements that sought to establish smaller, autonomous units. (Tilly) Even in some Western countries these forces were not entirely pacified and still simmer. Are similar processes being repeated globally? The cosmopolitan principles Held enumerates represent a critical approach to establishing a system of reciprocity. But as Meinecke suggested, the cosmopolitan spirit of the 18th and 19th centuries could only come to rest at the national level. This was the largest form of association in which the universal, humanist values of the Enlightenment could be institutionalized. But the nation-state in this formulation is an organization that focuses political power in geographical and ideological centers. Of course, there were nay-sayers, for instance, in the American colonies, who argued an authentic, just political community could not long endure in this large, centralized form. This sentiment remains in the United States among those who oppose the ICC. Thus without the will of the United States behind it, and without American submission to its rulings, the latter will surely be no more than Hobbes's "covenants without swords."

The absence of an effective and legitimate enforcer of either the will of the global many or international law is the most important difference between the nation-state and the inter-state

system. Held suggests Europe could develop its own rapid-reaction force as an alternative source of power to the United States. (p. 166) But distance, both physical and philosophical, also poses serious challenges to any coordinated efforts at appropriating the system of international regulatory institutions. The system is comparatively looser than the national counterparts it challenges. Held offers a multilateral vision of world order that could be instrumental in more equitably distributing any benefits that may be derived from world trade and association. This vision of dispersed, yet accountable rule is also essential in avoiding many of the violent outcomes of centralization that plagued emerging nation-states. But this vision can only be realized if some sense of world-wide solidarity, or covenant if you will, develops to take shared control of these networks. Perhaps it is the case that rapid communication and travel may serve the same function the mass communication media did in Western nation-state building. (Anderson) But if these networks are dominated by commercial interests can they be used to get the word out? Will they be yet more instruments by which Philip Bobbit's emerging "market state" permanently cements its grip on the interstate system? (Bobbit) Held obviously holds out hope of the possibility of mitigating growing inequalities. Towards this end**,** his suggestions provide a valuable contribution to the task of charting a cooperative rather than coercive course.

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Hobsbawm’s Hidden Self

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As I read Eric Hobsbawm’s autobiography* I found myself sometimes puzzled, sometimes irritated, and eventually saddened. Over the years I have appreciated the works that brought him his reputation as a left historian. Unfortunately, his autobiography does not enhance that reputation.

Hobsbawm’s has certainly been a life crowded with incident. There cannot be many whose political life spans participating in the last legal Communist demonstration in Berlin on 25 January 1933 (p. 73) and watching the build-up to the 2002 invasion of Iraq from a London hospital bed (p. 412. But with so much to tell, the telling of it obviously posed problems of form and content as well as of aesthetic and moral judgement that in my estimation Hobsbawm has failed to come to grips with.

Autobiography must satisfy certain expectations while observing certain limits. The account of anyone’s life cannot merely be a collection of facts, for the facts attaching to anyone’s life are, roughly, infinite in number. Second, the revelation of even the most intimate minutiae of anyone’s life are likely to seem boring or in poor taste unless carefully chosen for their significance. An account of even an eventful life must, therefore, be artfully crafted if it is to be judged praiseworthy. And if the autobiographer claims to be contributing to our understanding of his era, we should be able to detect that which would encourage us to believe that we are engaging with someone thinking carefully and critically about his encounters with people and events.

Hobsbawm’s autobiography is problematical in these respects. It is in three parts: a “roughly chronological” account of his life, a section on his scholarly career, and a concluding section on his visits to countries other than his “native Mitteleuropa and England” (p. xiv). Thus, he covers sections of his life several times over, each time with a different focus. The somewhat arbitrary way in which Hobsbawm does so raises the question, whether he has actually sought to arrive at a coherent understanding of his own development as a person and as an intellectual. His Mitteleuropean/English self has always been somewhat separate from his French/Spanish/American selves, and these selves seem to have had little to do with his historian self. Such a division of himself is hardly satisfying, especially from one we would expect to be inclined to self-reflection and responsive to the experiences that make the world an interesting puzzle. An attempt to interweave these selves together would have been welcome, not least because that would have helped us appreciate his understanding of history.

An autobiography must surely also convey to those acquainted with its subject a recognizable likeness–or else suggest how the one they thought they knew came to wear a mask. [Incidentally, Hobsbawm notes just such a case. His boyhood acquaintance Rudolf Leder–aka

Stephan Hermlin, the East German poet–who recruited him into a Communist student organization, may have invented an entire autobiography for himself, only to be exposed by a vengeful West German literary bloodhound (pp. 62-65).] To those of us unacquainted with its subject, it must connect with our notions of humanity, or instruct us how our notions ought to be modified. Beyond this, since an autobiography is necessarily a work of selection and presentation, it will prove praiseworthy if it suggests to all of us more about the author than he has specifically chosen to tell. But such windows into his life and character must be born of his artistry and his willingness to reveal himself. We must beware of mistaking for windows what are actually accidental gaps in the wall within which he has sought to conceal himself. If he intimates things about himself he has asserted he would conceal, this would constitute a flaw in his artistry-perhaps even flaws in his personality.

Hobsbawm confesses he has sought to keep much concealed, even much that those closest to him deemed important (p. xiv). Even so, his courage in revealing what he does deserves our respect. For autobiography is surely among the most dangerous of the literary arts. To undertake one is to undertake to reveal something of oneself and one's circumstances during various stages of one's life with considerable honesty, requiring one to explore in public one's thoughts, goals and emotions. It may also bring one face to face with thoughts and emotions one has resisted acknowledging even to oneself. And even if one chooses not put it all down, can one be sure traces of these self-discoveries will not find their way into the finished work? Just such traces are, I believe, to be found in Hobsbawm's self-portrait. And his failure to address what these traces intimate about his engagement with life vitiate what he has presented to us.

It would also be a very odd autobiography that excluded interactions with other people. For human interaction is crucial to our becoming fully human. So we would expect to learn how others significantly affected the author. Moreover, we need to be told something about these others as people in their own right, for how otherwise are we to gauge the autobiographer's connection with them. In the case of the autobiography of an intellectual–this is how Hobsbawm delimits his project (pp. xii-xiv)–we expect to learn something about the formation of his intellect through his engagement with teachers and scholars and their works; mere mention of them tells us nothing. Also, even an intellectual autobiography must, I think, tell us something about the human side of the "public man," for the furniture of our minds surely comes to us through informal as well as formal educational channels. Also, we surely want to learn about the larger horizons within which he thinks, about what really matters to him and why. Otherwise, why attend to anything other than his scholarly works?

Hobsbawm's intentions are not at odds with these expectations:

To write an autobiography is to think of oneself as one has never really done before. In my case it is to strip the geological deposits of three-quarters of a century away and to recover or to discover and reconstruct a buried stranger. As I look back and try to understand this remote and unfamiliar child, I come to the conclusion that, had he lived in other historical circumstances, nobody would have forecast for him a future of passionate commitment to

politics, though almost every observer would have predicted a future as some kind of intellectual (p. 56).

But consider Hobsbawm's "historical circumstances." They are most specific:

> [I]f I were to make the mental experiment of transposing the boy I was then into another time and/or place–say, into the England of the 1950s or the USA of the 1980s–I cannot easily see him plunging, as I did, into the passionate commitment to world revolution (p. 57).

Is it his passion or his politics he is trying to explain here? In either case, is it only one's own immediate experiences that count? Certainly, many individualistic autobiographers have undertaken just such a recovery and presentation of their selves. But surely some additional expectations attach to the autobiography of a self-avowed Marxist? Yet despite the fact that class society long predated his entry into the world and will long survive him and that its injustices still require to be denounced and fought (pp, 410, 418), Hobsbawm seems to believe his own politics could only have sprung from that Berlin of 1931-3. Had he been young in another place or time he would not have become a Communist? Can this be the self-understanding of an internationalist Marxist? It certainly does not seem to provide much of a basis for solidarity with anyone whose formative experiences were different. Were such an explanation of political commitment to be generalized, the revolutionary movement to which Hobsbawm belonged would never have coalesced into anything more coherent than, say, the variously instigated and rooted Movement of the Sixties, a movement which Hobsbawm viewed negatively because the participants "did not seem much interested in a social ideal, communist or otherwise, as distinct from the individualist ideal of getting rid of anything that claimed the right or power to stop you doing whatever your ego and id felt like doing" (p. 250)–in other words, in Hobsbawm's estimation, rooted only in themselves and their unique experiences, their politics lacked any common foundation. But even if so, did they then differ from Hobsbawm and his politics?

But to resume my point: surely, given his politics, Hobsbawm must believe that he has been significantly shaped and reshaped by the weightiest, most widely prevailing features of the world system he still believes he inhabits as well as by that system's most cutting local variations upon a particular person? Indeed, he almost asserts as much in his Preface:

[T]here is a more profound way in which the interweaving of one person's life and times, and the observations of both, helped to shape a historical analysis which, I hope, makes itself independent of both.

That is what an autobiography can do. In one sense this book is the flip side of The Age of Extremes: not world history illustrated by experiences of an individual, but world history shaping that experience, or rather offering a shifting but always limited set of choices from which, to adapt Karl Marx's phrase, 'men make [their lives], but they do not make [them] just as they please, they do not make [them] under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under

circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past' and, one might add, by the world around them (p. xiii; brackets in the text).

That is to say, Hobsbawm envisages his autobiography as providing an account of how Hobsbawm became Hobsbawm. It is also, it seems, an explanation of the self-awareness he brought to his scholarly work and is intended to augment that (pp. xiii-xiv). It is "about his ideas, attitudes and actions," it is not a piece of advocacy or an apologia (p. xii).

But is it carping to note that Hobsbawm indicates that it is only the historical analysis (independent, he hopes, of experience in a particular social context) that has been so shaped? Even the most committed Marxist must surely know that he still, despite all his efforts, bears within himself the contradictions that mark the society he inhabits. And would not such an autobiographer have to explore and then convey how he has always had to struggle to extirpate from himself and his scholarship those bourgeois characteristics the dominant society shoveled into him via the family, the educational system, the job, etc. Given what Hobsbawm tells us about himself it is at least questionable whether he has ever subjected himself to such self-criticism; further, he seems to have been frozen in time, out of touch with and analytically unresponsive to the developments of and responses to capitalism after 1956.

What more ought its readers expect of the autobiography of a lifelong Marxist (p. xii)? Whatever else, surely it would be intended to affect the future of the world, if only by teaching us the ways of a left intellectual and warning us of the difficulties in trying to live such a life even while encouraging us to make the attempt. More ambitiously, it might constitute a political intervention in its own right, as did, for example, Trotsky's autobiography. The closing sentences of Hobsbawm's book suggest that he, too, conceived of his autobiography as part of the struggle to make the world of tomorrow (p. 418). Unfortunately, he has just revealed that he only hopes his book will help him pass "the test of a historian's life" (p. 417).

Turning to some more detailed aspects of his work, how Hobsbawm has written about those who populate his pages is particularly striking. Be they family, friends, colleagues or comrades, they are for the most part merely briefly, coldly sketched. A good caricaturist can, of course, suggest much with a few strokes of the pen. But Hobsbawm does not seem to possess that skill. He provides little more than a list of notable academic and political personalities he has met in the course of his long life. The distant stance is even evident in the first and perhaps most important instance in the case of his parents. Of his father, who died when Hobsbawm was only eleven, he has, he says, almost no memories (p. 28). His mother, who died when Hobsbawm was fourteen, did make a lasting moral impression on him. He particularly remembers her telling him, "You must never do anything, or seem to do anything that might suggest that you are ashamed of being a Jew" (p. 24)–an injunction he has always sought to honor, although he regards himself as a "non-Jewish Jew" (p. 24). Her approval is something Hobsbawm has always sought: "[I]f somewhere across the Styx we were to meet . . . I would expect her to ask me what I had done with my life . . ." (p. 40). Hobsbawm's summing up of the dissolution of his family is particularly telling:

In retrospect the years between my parents' deaths appear a period of tragedy, trauma, loss and insecurity, which was bound to leave deep traces on the lives of two children who passed through it. . . I have no doubt at all that I must also bear the emotional scars of those sombre years somewhere on me. And yet I do not think I was conscious of them as such. That may be the illusion of someone who, like a computer, has a 'trash' facility for deleting unpleasant or unacceptable data. . . However, I do not believe that this is the only explanation why, though not particularly happy, I did not experience these years as specially distressing. Perhaps the realities of the situation passed me by because I lived most of the time at some remove from the real world . . . (p. 41).

–then he quickly hurries on to mention building a radio set, only to return a moment later to acknowledge his embarrassment over his mother's last birthday present to him: "a very cheap second-hand bike" (p. 42) which would cause him shame when he had to ride it across Berlin to school (p. 60), and which he would manage to lose when he had to leave Berlin for London (p. 77). Clearly, that bicycle and what it stands for still agitates him. Yet he does not begin to explore that. Other family relationships receive even terser acknowledgement. In the very little he tells us about his sister there seems to be a strong urge to protect her, yet the way she lived her life seems not to have interested him much (pp. 59-60, 79). About his first and, especially, his second wife, he is even less forthcoming–it is almost as if they did indeed occupy an entirely separate sphere of existence from the one Hobsbawm is determined to tell us about. Only in one other place does Hobsbawm indicate that he experienced anguish:

> The darkest period of public anti-communism . . . coincided with a dark moment in my own life. In the summer of 1950 my first marriage, rocky for some time, broke up in circumstances which left me wounded and for some years acutely unhappy (p. 185).

But here too the mask of imperturbability, barely lowered, is quickly resumed.

That we have no right to be made privy to his pain is not what is at issue here. But if Hobsbawm has indeed throughout his life tended to bracket off in the manner he does here the emotional dimensions of his engagements with others, that is surely relevant to understanding him as a person and as a historian. For his intellectual engagements have surely also incorporated emotional aspects. He is certainly aware that the emotions of others are intimately linked to their political–and their chess-playing–judgement (p. 207). Yet he repeatedly seeks to suggest his intellect and his passions are disconnected.

Perhaps it is stretching matters to detect in his accounts of his most intimate familial relationships clues to Hobsbawm's impersonal autobiographical style? To be sure, his rejection of what he terms the "confessional mode" is explicit (p. xii). But what he does tell us about the traumatically pivotal moments in his early life does suggest that his detachment may not be something over which he exercises much control. (His "trash facility" is not so much an explanation as an excuse.) One can infer deep, unresolved pain that may well render certain sorts of self-reflection difficult.

This brings us to another, related problem so far as an intellectual autobiography is concerned. For whom did Hobsbawm encounter on his intellectual and political journey? Certainly a very great many. But what do we learn of them? Their names; a brief physical description; an ethnic identification; the identification of their political or scholarly role. But we do not learn how they and Hobsbawm interacted, we do not learn how they contributed to Hobsbawm's political or intellectual development. This oddity is highlighted by the fact that the only person other than members of his family who is described quite fully–and with affection-is the Welsh landowner and architect, Clough Williams-Ellis (pp. 233-43). There is, less fully, the economic historian, M. M. Postan, who figures as one of the few Cambridge scholars whose lectures Hobsbawm bothered to attend (pp. 110-111), described as something of a friend (pp. 183-4), but also, like Williams-Ellis, as something of a character (pp. 282-5). Moreover, Hobsbawm is at pains to emphasize that Postan was not his teacher (p. 283). Even more briefly, there is the school teacher who "pressed a volume of the philosopher Immanuel Kant"–which one? to what effect?–into Hobsbawm's hands (p. 93). In sum, then, we are led to believe that in his scholarly as in his personal life no one really touched him, that Hobsbawm is a self-made man. Or if anyone did help shape him, personally, politically or intellectually, it is too private a thing to be discussed.

Ordinary people, working-class people fare even worse. Most of them are unnamed and undescribed.–Did not Raymond Williams observe that "there are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses?"–Those that do emerge from the mass are, for the most part, those whom Hobsbawm encountered during his wartime service. Of them Hobsbawm writes,

> By and large in my days as a Sapper I lived among workers–overwhelmingly English workers–and in doing so acquired a permanent, if often exasperated, admiration for their uprightess, their distrust of bullshit, their sense of class, comradeship and mutual help. They were good people. I know that communists are supposed to believe in the virtues of the proletariat, but I was relieved to find myself doing so in practice as well as in theory (p. 159).

"They were good people?" Who is Hobsbawm writing for? Who needs such reassurances? Why do I find myself remembering Robert Graves' anecdote in Goodbye To All That of a British military officer expressing his surprise that the skins of his working-class troops were so white? Hobsbawm does not depict himself as having learned anything from what he terms his "proletarian experience" (p. 158), though the lads did amaze him with their "instinctive sense or tradition of collective action" (p. 158)–my god, there really was a working class! And then there was the named, described Bert Thirtle, with whom he had to share a room, who even "lacked the social reflexes which I found so striking in my otherwise politically disappointing mates, and which explains so much about British trade unionism" (p. 157). It is, it seems, not only the poor stockinger who needs to be rescued from condescension.

With the War's end, despite having been made aware that he had lived in only marginal contact with the great majority his fellow citizens (p. 157), working class people disappear from

Hobsbawm's recorded life. The parade of names of scholars, intellectuals and Party notables resumes, signaling his re-immersion in the British and international academic and left elites. But since no one seems to have affected his political or historical understanding, such isolation from those his politics was intended to benefit was perhaps of little consequence?

Hobsbawm's disinclination to explore his relationships in any depth has another, awkward, consequence which would be of no relevance if it did not unfortunately emphasize his lapses into gossipy prurience in places. For instance, should not one who rejects the confessional mode (p. xii) have exercised more care when writing of his comrade James Klugmann? Initially, his remarks are unexceptionable, but then for no apparent reason he remarks,

> As far as I know he continued a monastic existence as an unattached man for the rest of his life, surrounded, when the occasion arose, by admiring juniors I am told he made sexual jokes in the company of intimates–of whom I was never one–and since he had been at Gresham's School, the nursery of more than one eminent homosexual of his day, he may very well have been queer (p. 123)

Neither is this the only occurrence of gratuitous sexual speculation. Does it convey anything of substance to note (parenthetically) that Paul Baran's connections with San Francisco's longshoremen came about because for a time he was the lover of a Californian Japanese woman (pp. 391-2)? Do we really need to be told that 'Peter Bratt' was not only a "wonderfully cultured, soft faced, . . . relative of Bismarck" but also homosexual (p. 168)? I suppose it is de rigueur to mention the "atmosphere of cultured homosexuality" of pre-War Cambridge, But I fail to see how it advances our understanding of the historian and his analyses to be told that in passing or to be told that the post-War Cambridge students had other sexual inclinations. If, on the other hand, the sexual orientations of his acquaintances were really relevant to his life and thought, Hobsbawm fails to explain how.

To be fair, Hobsbawm is occasionally personally indiscrete (pp. 221, 315). But Hobsbawm's comments on sexuality strike me as of a piece with his seeming disinclination to explore his family traumas. It would have been better had he left these things unmentioned given that the mention he does make of them only serves to suggest that he has never applied himself to understanding such matters, or at least that he has never been able to talk comfortably about them. As it is, these traces running through his bowdlerized autobiography suggest that there may be much more than discomfort involved.

Let me now turn to Hobsbawm's politics, which are not, it turns out, so remote from the matters just discussed. Indeed, given what he does say about the passionate foundations of his political activism, his determination to exclude intimacies from his autobiography seems even more peculiar. Seventy years after that 1933 demonstration in Berlin, he describes that and similar events thus:

Next to sex, the activity combining bodily experience and intense emotion to the highest degree is the participation in a mass demonstration at a time of great public exaltation. Unlike

sex, which is essentially individual [sic], it is by its nature collective, and unlike the sexual climax, at any rate for men, it can be prolonged for hours. On the other hand, like sex it implies some physical action . . . through which the merger of the individual in the mass, which is the essence of the collective experience, finds expression (p. 73)

Later, in Britain, he came to see that that sense of "mass ecstasy" was one of the things that led him to Communism (p. 74). What else led Hobsbawm to his political commitment? "Pity for the exploited, the aesthetic appeal of a perfect and comprehensive intellectual system, . . . a little bit of the Blakean vision of the new Jerusalem and a good deal of intellectual anti-philistinism" (p. 74). Despite his desperately insecure childhood he did not see himself as one of the exploited? Had he done so he might have confessed to anger, not pity. Or is it that he could not admit his own vulnerability and so projected his sense of victimization onto others in order to be able to engage with it? That from 1935 on he considered dialectical materialism to be perfect and comprehensive may have provided him an unconquerable defense against a personally traumatic world (p. 420, n. 5.6). No wonder, then, that he was not swayed by 1956, that he held true (p. 218). A moment later, however, he adds that his adherence to the Party after 1956 may have been motivated by egotism (p. 218). After 1956, he became rather disengaged from political activity (p. 263). So perhaps he was more affected than he lets on by the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. As to the more general reaction of the British Communists to the revelations of that conference, Hobsbawm's summary conclusion mirrors that dismissive stance towards things British as compared with things continental for which Edward Thompson took Anderson et al. to task (pp. 210, 217-8).

After 1956, his personal and professional life also began to change for the better. He remarried and his immediate world became much more domestically oriented (pp. 220, 222). He found life more pleasant than he'd imagined possible; at least for those like him who had a "career" "postwar life was an escalator which, without any special effort, took us higher than we had ever expected to be"; it was "a Golden Age" (pp. 222-3). But even if we accept that the very great many who only had jobs, not careers, also generally found their standard of living improving over the longer term, shouldn't a Marxist economic historian have viewed these changes more critically? After all, had not his comrade Edward Thompson argued quite convincingly that there had been another painful side to a previous over-all advance in the British standard of living?

Perhaps his newfound sense of well-being made him rather complacent in the face of new occurrences of inhumanity and injustice? I do not mean that he ignored them, for he did not. But he seems not to have been moved to try to understand what was going on in all its ramifications. To be sure, he does say that for leftists of his generation the Sixties were enormously welcome, if enormously puzzling (p. 249). But he doubted those in movement knew "how to achieve their political objectives" (p. 250) or,even if they had any politics (p. 248). So where, in Hobsbawm's estimation, did it all lead?

In politics, nowhere much. Since a revolution was not on the cards [sic], the European revolutionaries of 1968 had to join the political mainstream of the left, unless, being very

bright young intellectuals, as so many of them were, they escaped from real politics into the academy, where revolutionary ideas could survive without much political practice. Politically, the 1968 generation has done well enough, especially if one includes those recruited into civil services and think tanks and the burgeoning numbers of advisers in politicians' private offices . . . (p. 261).

Twas ever thus for the lucky some, I suppose; even for the lucky some among those of Hobsbawm's generation, as his own career trajectory suggests. But–to introduce here Hobsbawm's treatment of things American– he simply does not attend to the right-wing reaction against the Sixties which began even before the Sixties were over and which continues down to the present day. Admittedly, Hobsbawm writes from a European perspective. But he has been a regular visitor to the United States since 1960 (pp. 391, 402), and he has taught at a number of American universities. So surely he is aware of the efforts of a series of administrations to roll back the Sixties? And surely he has encountered the culture wars and the political correctness campaign designed to curb those of a progressive persuasion who did find refuge in the American academy? Again, oddly, although he acknowledges the once-Communist historians of slavery (p. 289), the Civil Rights Movement and the subsequent reactions against it go unremarked, Hobsbawm's great interest in jazz notwithstanding (e.g., pp. 389, 391, 394-402).

But let me leave it to Hobsbawm himself to illuminate the limits of his engagement with and understanding of the United States during one of the most conflicted eras in its history:

> Looking back on forty years of visiting and living in the United States, I think I learned as much about the country in the first summer I spent there as in the course of the next decades. With one exception: to know New York, or even Manhattan, one has to live there (p. 403)

–perhaps New York chauvinists would agree with him; as a Briton who has resided in several different regions of the United States, I find Hobsbawm's dismissiveness too familiar an expression of a certain sort of European superciliousness. Since the United States has constituted such a significant place in Hobsbawm's life story, it is unfortunate that he has not chosen to engage with it in a more reflective, comprehensive fashion. Again he seems to have opted to remain frozen in his own particular past with its own limiting prejudices.

What is most puzzling is that he seems content to be baffled by the Sixties. He seems not to have been moved to try to understand what was going on. While he himself would appear to have been politically sustained throughout the rest of his life by his ecstatic moment of collective action in 1933, all he seems to feel for those whose moment came a generation later (many of whom have remained politically sustained by their experiences) is satisfaction that they were at last forced to face up to the dominant reality:

[A]s soon as the dense clouds of maximalist rhetoric and cosmic expectation turned into the rain of every day, the distinction between ecstasy and politics, real power and flower power,

between voice and action, became visible once more. Jericho had not fallen to the sound of Joshua's collective trumpets. The political young had to consider what action was needed to capture it (p. 259).

What they should have learned was the need for "disciplined vanguard organizations" and the necessity of contemplating what Marxist parties "should do, indeed what their function could be, in non-revolutionary countries" (p. 259).

Political discipline would in fact appear to be Hobsbawm's watchword. His most notable intervention in actually existing politics began with his 1978 Marx Memorial Lecture. His message, that the British Labour Party should behave as a disciplined broad-based organization to accommodate to socio-economic and cultural change, led to his involvement in a strident debate (p. 263-4). Broadly, the question was, how to challenge the emerging forms of conservative politics–a question that assumed pressing significance once Thatcher and her colleagues captured the Conservative Party. At risk of overly simplifying Hobsbawm's position in the late 1970s and thereafter, his advocacy of a broad alliance approach, to include all those from the traditional right to the far left in a coordinated effort to block the radical right, will sound familiar to those contemplating the anyone but Bush' campaign. Labour was to become a catch-all party–wasn't it always that?–rather than a socialist party. But just who were those "sectarians"–the term occurs frequently in this part of his autobiography (pp. 263-277)–Hobsbawm was arguing against? Those driven from the Party in 1956, those who had come to left politics in the Sixties, militant workers, left-wing union leaders, hard-line Communists, and those others who saw that all that glittered in the Golden Age was not gold; in short, all those Hobsbawm's autobiography suggests he had always been distant from.

While he hopes his arguments influenced the Labour Party to become a party of "the political realists and the technicians of government," who "must operate in a market economy and fit in with its requirements" (pp.276-7), Hobsbawm is nevertheless eager to dissociate himself from New Labour: New Labour has erred by going beyond accepting the realities of living in a capitalist society to "accepting too much of the ideological assumptions of the prevailing free market economic theology" (p. 277)–"We wanted," he complains, "a reformed Labour, not Thatcher in trousers" (p. 276). Too bad. William Morris, or Morris's biographer, Hobsbawm's former comrade, Edward Thompson, could have warned him that the struggle to change things often followed just this pattern, and that the struggle had to be renewed again and again. Of course, they were advocating efforts to undo capitalism, not to get along with it while merely repudiating its ideological aspects.

In conclusion, it seems fitting to quote back at Hobsbawm his own words concerning Klugmann, "What did one know of him? He gave nothing away" (p. 123). Hobsbawm, I have urged, does give some things away. But what he does inadvertently reveal about himself raises the question, does Hobsbawm himself know or dare to know how he became Hobsbawm? Perhaps. But he certainly does not want to reveal it to his readers.

*Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times: A Twentieth-Century Life* (New York: Pantheon, 2002;

first published London: Allen Lane, 2002).

Requiem For Communism & History After Apartheid: Visual Culture And Public Memory In A Democratic South Africa

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Requiem for Communism, by Charity Scribner

History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa, by Annie B. Coombes

Charity Scribner's Requiem for Communism analyzes the extremely tricky politics of memory in Europe after the fall of communism while Annie Coombes' History After Apartheid examines the politics of visual culture and memory in post-Apartheid South Africa. Scribner describes her inquiry into post-Soviet life thus: "The aesthetic response to this socialist crisis disclosed cross-cultural bridges that linked the otherwise disparate societies of Eastern and Western Europe" and her goal "is to illuminate these transcontinental' formations in literary and visual culture" (RFC, p. 5). In a similar highly abstract vein Coombes explores "how various forms of visual and material culture dramatized the tensions involved in such a momentous shift while at the same time contributing to the process of transformation itself" (HAA, p. 1). So, the operative metaphors are bridges, gulfs, and the tensions between the distant shores. Both writers, fortunately, mine these metaphors with delicacy and insight.

One key difference between these two fraught cases is that within academia (presumably the intended audience) there still exist people committed to socialism, but none who are openly committed to apartheid. This difference shapes the ways in which visual cultures changed and developed after both regrettable regimes fell. So certain forms of nostalgia and mourning are required of and available to people of post-communist Europe which are not permitted citizens of post-Apartheid South Africa. This divergence allows Scribner to remark that "although many Europeans considered the project to build a workers' state to be a failure, that have proceeded to mourn its collapse, nonetheless" (RFC, p. 3).

Both books begin with the obvious but often neglected premise that we need to recognize the forces that have largely determined our lives. First, there are practical reasons for remembering. Monuments and other elements of visual culture from the old regimes exist, and apt historical significance needs to be assigned to them. Second, there are vital psychological reasons for needing to remember, such as the "never again" refrain that accompanies the humanitarian impetus for history. But this "never again" is invoked by collectivities such as the nation or the culture at large and not by the individual. So, third, there are individual psychological reasons for remembering the past and these can be boiled down to each

individual's intrinsic need for a consistent and affirming life story.

People need to know that, after noxious regimes have crumbled, their lives were indeed spent meaningfully. This is why sites of "unproductive and demoralizing labor" (HAA, 76) such as the lime quarry on Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned) are so awful. The prisoners were not allowed useful labor, as part of a punishment that intentionally denied any scrap of meaning to their lives under Apartheid. Referring to detainees in a prison camp on the South Lebanese border who fashioned miniaturized artifacts, Coombes observes that these subversive items were "a means of countering the destructive effects of detention both by marking time (productive time) in a context designed to eradicate it and by witnessing not the terrible conditions under which they were made but their makers' ability to transcend such conditions against all odds" (HAA, 9).

Being human means that it is important to remember ourselves as productive beings who have some choices. Coombes writes, "the act of making and objects themselves can become an insurance against forgetting and thus against the loss of personhood through reinstating-particularly in the case of whimsical manufactures – the capacity for fantasy (HAA, 9). This insight fits perfectly with Marx who wrote that "[b]y producing their means of subsistence, men are indirectly producing their actual material life" (HAA, 164). In a very vivid sense, then, the act of making enables us to remember and in turn, this remembering is a form of making.

Coombes and Scribner both dig a bit deeper into the problematics of remembering. These problems include not being able to remember because the past was too frightful, because you are not allowed explicitly to remember, and because you are swayed by nostalgia. Not recalling (or avoiding memory of) an event because it is too traumatic raises the perennial question of difficulties in reliably representing any traumatic experience, as recently seen in the false memory syndrome" controversies.

Remembering involves the often errant ability to represent the past. The core problem is usually phrased in terms of the inadequacy of representing many-layered or ghastly events in art or memorials. One immediate difficulty of representing the holocaust is that the "crime was of such a stupendous proportions that any work of art must be on an appropriate scale" (HAA, 91). Coombes analyzes memorials of terrible times (such as, for the Vietnam War and the holocaust), but then brings the treatment back to the abiding problem of memory.

Another major obstacle to a valid "working memory" is not being allowed to remember. One way in which people are not allowed to remember is through temporal and spatial disordering of pertinent events. To illustrate, Scribner cites the prose poem Factory Excess by Leslie Kaplan. In this poem the "factory invades space and dissolves the limit between inside and outside" (RFC, 70). For Kaplan "industrialized labor depletes the worker's agency" (RFC, 70) without which a person, thus crippled, is unable to discern through remembrance the discord between the subjective and the objective, between factory and nature.

By far the most interesting issue of memory is the problem of distortive nostalgia. Nostalgia "is the longing for return to an idealized 'home' or nostos (Gr.). As historian Svetlana Boym noted, outbreaks of nostalgia always follow revolutions, as was the case in France after 1789 and in Eastern Europe two centuries later. The 'velvet revolution' that terminated Soviet-style socialism made its twilight years seem, on one hand, like 'stagnation,' on the other, like a 'golden age of stability, strength, and 'normalcy'" (RFC, 64). Scribner turns to is "ostalgie" which means "nostalgia for the East' – see, for example, the ambivalent and charming 2003 film Goodbye, Berlin."

Examples of "retrograde romance," however, include how "activists in Berlin saved the 'Little Traffic light Guy' who flashed on corners in the former East Zone (and won)," a "new version of the game 'Memory,' whose cards depict supposedly treasured products from the 'people's own industries,' and the new "Die DDR Show," on which graying guests fondly remember good old days while mouldering propaganda videos run in the background. This tinselly form of nostalgia blocks the sort of critical memory which helps people cope intelligently, and to move on, with their lives. Scribner judges, "This never-never land of the proletariat was charted on the cognitive map of left intellectuals but existed nowhere in reality" (RFC, 63).

Yet Coombes argues that there are positive uses of nostalgia. In South Africa bulldozed District Six was a multiethnic port community where 60,000 people were removed to barren outlying areas aptly known as the Cape Flats. The point about District Six and memory is that "there are inevitably problems with any reminiscing that tends toward an idealistic nostalgia, reproducing the experience of living in District Six as an idyllic, harmonious environment immune to political tensions and personal antagonisms"(HAA, 124).

In a purely nostalgic view antagonisms and conflicts are smoothed to the point that critical thinking is no longer possible. But remembering the past is not just a recreational activity, it can be a sort of seditious work too. As Coombes writes, "Nostalgia has been theorized by some as the search for an 'impossible object'" (HAA, 124) because it is not objectively present. By contrast, the working out of memory takes into account that the remembered object is remembered and is not present. This form of nostalgia has beneficial political uses since it has a sense of future- for an experience, however imaginary, of possessing the means of controlling the future – may function as a powerful force for social reconnection" (HAA, 125). Coombes contendss that people believing in the possibility of controlling the future (in spite of the fact that they currently do not) can regenerate themselves through a common purpose. But what will happen down the road for a culture that takes part in this sort of exercise? In fact, especially these days, the idea of America itself seems a nostalgic concept that has been grossly misused.

Scribner and Coombes both believe that once we know how to proceed with memory we will be able to figure out how visual culture should progress (i.e. which narratives should it support, which should it deny). Coombes distinguishes two types of relevant history. First there is the "tradition of historical writing from the left that prioritized a 'history from below,' as history of 'the people,' as a strategy for redressing the absences and structural violences of the official

‘national’ histories” (HAA, 10). This is the Howard Zinn model. But the other type of history, which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC offered, was “based on an appeal to individual experience as the foundation of a new national history post-apartheid” (HAA, 10). This version is prey to retrograde purposes.

This distinction brings Coombes to ask “how one might embody new national histories in the public sphere that engaged larger structural narratives and material conditions and individual lived experiences without reducing their
public expression to either some monolithic representation of ‘the struggle’ or some unlocated and ahistorical notion of individualized experience and that might adequately signal (if not represent) the compromised, complicated texture of living under and fighting against apartheid” (HAA, 10). Coombes seeks a reconciliation of these two nodes.

Scribner similarly writes: “A radical gaze backward . . . promises redemptive hope” (RFC, 123) and that authentic memory “reawakens antagonisms that thwart the resolution of – and in – any narrative” (RFC, 165). This radical gaze is attained through a judicious connecting of subjective with the objective. About Christa Wolf Scribner writes that that the novelist’s ideal text would show a person ‘without distortion but not stripped bare.’ This precarious balance could only be achieved within a collective of readers and writers yet his model privileges the writer as the one who can scribble without distortion. Scribner believes such writings point to an “uncharted public sphere, which lies adjacent to the field of communicative exchange that both union leaders and new media visionaries have envisaged but never fully actualized” (RFC, 163).

So the ultimate question is, how can this space be actualized? Scribner says that “the left can resign itself to … incorporate as a new melancholy object the stubborn bond between literature, art, and the market. Or writers and artists can activate the collective, cultural forms which would deny that same obstinacy to be uttered as protest” (RFC, 164). Both volumes contribute to realizing this second possibility.

Edward Teller: The Real Doctor Strangelove, By Peter Goodchild

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The Real Edward Teller?

As someone who worked on the development of the first British atomic bomb, on early ideas for a thermonuclear weapon, and on nuclear reactors for research and power production from 1949 through 1964, I have always been gripped by stories of the early nuclear pioneers in the United States: Hans Bethe, Enrico Fermi, Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard, Edward Teller and John von Neumann, among them. But I must confess I turned to Peter Goodchild's biography of Edward Teller with reservations, even before I opened the cover. It was the subtitle that put me off: The Real Dr Strangelove. No question mark. No doubt about it. Teller is the real Dr Strangelove. Or is he?

It seems strange that a work that purports to show us one of the most powerful scientists of the twentieth century in all his enigmatic humility,' and succeeds in doing so in many places, should begin by comparing him with a fictional character who appears in an admittedly brilliant, highly satirical, and hugely funny film, for a brief six minutes forty seconds. Kubrick's film, Dr Strangelove (1965), tells the story of a US Air Force Commander, Jack D Ripper, who, convinced that the Commies are contaminating his bodily fluids, orders a nuclear strike on Russia. He seals off his base and cuts all communications. There is, it seems, no way of calling the aircraft back. The President gathers his advisors around him in the war room to deal with the crisis. His advisors include Air Force General Buck Turgidson, and a scientist, Dr Strangelove, a Kraut', confined to a wheelchair, whose right arm, as the tension mounts, involuntarily rises to a Nazi salute, and he addresses the President as Mein Fuhrer'. He is a mad scientist' in the Frankenstein mould. In the introduction to his book, Goodchild considers a number of candidates for the most likely inspiration behind the character. Edward Teller, he says, was Hungarian, but spent nearly a decade studying at German universities. Unlike the others, he had an obvious disability, he was father' of the H-bomb as well as a nuclear strategist who had both advised and opposed presidents. And, he adds, Teller's life can be seen as a rich variation on the theme of manic obsession, which lies at the heart of Kubrick's film and was personalized in the character of Dr Strangelove.'

This is not good enough. Teller hated Nazis and Communists. His disability, though noticeable when he walked he lost his foot in an accident and wore a prosthesis was quite minor compared to that of Strangelove, and although manic obsession is a theme of Kubrick's film it is evidenced much more in the characters of Jack D Ripper and General Turgidson, and certainly for longer periods of time, than in the mad scientist. Nor would Teller have reacted with such uncontrolled passion when advising a president: even his detractors praised the

charm and diffident manner which won him many favors in the political arena. After putting forward points in favor of Teller as Dr Strangelove, Goodchild backs off. I have highlighted those elements that create a match with Kubrick's fictional obsessive,' he writes, but there are many other elements in Edward Teller's life that complicate, confuse and even confound this picture.' And he ends the introduction rather lamely by saying that he hopes the book will provide a better understanding of one of the most powerful scientists of the twentieth century a real Dr Strangelove.'

I have dealt with this topic at some length because it is symptomatic of the way in which the author himself sometimes complicates and confuses the issues. It would have been best if he kept things simple. His grasp of nuclear physics is shaky, and his occasional attempts to explain the science behind nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons are not only unnecessary in a biography but unwise. In describing the role of the moderator in slowing down neutrons in a nuclear reactor he confuses absorption, which is to be avoided, with elastic scattering, which is the prime requirement. A reactor built on his lines would simply not work.

Teller died less than two years ago. He will be remembered not for his contribution to the wartime fission bombs he made important calculations on the compression of plutonium but refused to oversee the follow-up work but for his unforgivable testimony against Oppenheimer in the security hearings in 1954; his uncompromising promotion of full-scale development of thermonuclear weapons; his opposition to attempts to contain the nuclear arms race; and his advocacy of the Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars").

These issues have been aired and debated at length in previous books, but Goodchild makes use of material which has only recently become available: Teller's Memoirs, published in 2001 when Teller was 93 years old, and his letters to his fellow scientist and confidante, Maria Gopperts Mayer. While the memoirs are largely self-justifying, they do provide a remarkable account of his early years in Hungary and Germany and do much to explain his later fears and obsessions. His letters to Mayer reveal the state of Teller's mind at critical moments in his life in America. I am really convinced that whoever is really nice to me must be crazy…,' he wrote to her in 1946, when on the point of leaving Los Alamos for the University of Chicago.

Edward Teller was born in Budapest in 1908, the son of a prosperous Jewish lawyer, and brought up at a time of great political unrest and violence. With the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, Hungary became an independent state and was for a brief period in 1919 a communist republic under Bela Kun which was quickly overthrown and replaced by an oppressive fascist regime, headed by Admiral Horthy. As members of the bourgeoisie, the Teller family suffered severe deprivation under the Kun regime, Edward's father no longer being allowed to practice law. As Jews, they found themselves ostracized under the rule of Horthy. In 1920, Horthy restricted the admission of Jews to the universities and in order to study science, Edward Teller left this doomed society' in 1926 to enter the Technical Institute at Karlsruhe. He studied chemistry for two years but then went to Leipzig where, under the supervision of Heisenberg, he took his PhD in physics in 1930. He ended his student days a year later when he was appointed Assistant Professor at Göttingen at the age of just twenty-

three

This world came to end in 1933 when Hitler rose to power in Germany and Nazi propaganda was directed against Jewish scientists. With aid from the British scientific community, Teller was given a base in London which allowed him take up a Rockefeller Grant to study for a year under Niels Bohr in Copenhagen. In 1934, he left London to take up a full professorship at George Washington University in Washington DC offered to him by an old friend George Gamov. He was now financially secure and entering a wonderful quiet period' in his life. In 1940, when German troops were moving across Europe, and both America and Britain were exploring the feasibility of atomic bombs based on nuclear fission, Teller felt an obligation to do whatever I could' to protect the freedom of his adopted country. In 1941 he moved to the University of Columbia in New York to join Fermi and Szilard in their work on an embryonic uranium reactor.

On December 6, one day before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States embarked on a crash program to develop an atomic bomb. The task of coordinating uranium research at the universities of Columbia, Princeton, Chicago and California, was given to Arthur Compton, chairman of the physics department at Chicago. He decided that scientists under his supervision at Columbia and Princeton should be transferred to the euphemistically named Metallurgical Laboratory at Chicago. Fermi moved in at the end of April 1942 and the construction of a nuclear reactor (Chicago Pile 1) began. Teller was left behind, because, he was told, the theoretical problems of nuclear reactions had already been solved, but the real reason was a delay in securing clearance for secret work. Two months later he was called to Chicago, though no role had been assigned to him. While at Columbia, Fermi had raised with him the question of whether a fission bomb might be used to produce a thermonuclear reaction using deuterium as a fuel, and with no other task assigned to him at Chicago, Teller began to explore the possibilities of designing such a thermonuclear weapon, often referred to as a Super, or an H-bomb. It became an obsession.

In early 1943 a new research laboratory under the supervision of Robert Oppenheimer was built at Los Alamos, New Mexico to work on the actual design of the atomic bomb. Teller moved there in April confident that he was the best person to direct the theoretical division, but his hopes were soon dashed. Oppenheimer appointed instead Teller's friend Hans Bethe to head the division with Teller as one of his team. Teller was deeply hurt and never fully cooperated in the development of the fission bomb. He was taken off the work and given a small team to look at theoretical aspects of his pet project, the Super, which by then had been relegated to a distant second place behind the work on fission in the allocation of resources. Bette had no alternative. Teller,' he said later, wanted to see the project run like a theoretical physics seminar and spent a great deal of time talking and very little time doing solid work on the main line of the Laboratory.' The solid work' at the Laboratory led to the successful development of two different types of atomic weapons: a U-235 bomb called Little Boy and a plutonium bomb called Fat Man.

On August 6 1945 a uranium bomb was dropped on Hiroshima; three days later a plutonium

bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Japan surrendered. Within a month, half the staff of Los Alamos had dispersed. Oppenheimer resumed his academic career in California but in 1947 became director of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. When the Atomic Energy Commission took over the task of running the nuclear programs from the military in 1947, Oppenheimer became part-time chairman of its General Advisory Council. Bethe returned to Cornell. Norris Bradbury took over from Oppenheimer as director of Los Alamos and tried to stem the loss of senior staff. Teller was invited to stay as director of a much reduced theoretical division but demanded as a condition that the Laboratory should mount a large scale program to develop the Super or plan twelve tests a year on fission bombs. Given the staff and resources available the demand was quite unrealistic and Teller returned to a chair of physics at Chicago. Convinced that Russia was now a threat to America, he continued to urge the need for a Super and made periodical visits to Los Alamos, as consultant, with suggestions for a possible design, called the classical Super'. In the early summer of 1949 Teller was persuaded to return to Los Alamos full-time. Bethe also returned. The first Soviet atomic bomb was exploded on August 29 and, after frantic discussions on how to respond, President Truman authorized preparations for the quantity production of thermonuclear weapons. This was a victory for Teller and for the equally committed Ernest Lawrence and Luis Alvarez of Berkeley, who had lobbied vigorously for it in Washington.

Despite Truman's words, there was no thermonuclear weapon to produce. Calculations showed that Teller's classical Super was far from promising. Stanislaw Ulam suggested a possible solution using a primary fission bomb to compress thermonuclear materials in a secondary assembly. Teller took it up and turned it into what became known as the Teller-Ulam experiment. The configuration is still secret and the exact contributions of Ulam and Teller may never be revealed. Teller was reluctant to share the credit although he did later acknowledge that it was the work of many people. An experimental version of the Teller-Ulam configuration (Mike) was successfully exploded on November 1 1952 and a deliverable version (Bravo) on March 1 1954. The yield of Bravo was nearly 15 megatons, more than 1,000 times that of the Hiroshima bomb. The Soviet exploded a low yield thermonuclear weapon on August 12 1953, and a second with a yield well in the megaton range on November 23 1955. A thermonuclear arms race had begun.

But even before the Mike shot, Teller had left Los Alamos, again falling out with top managers over the direction of the program. He lobbied for the establishment of a second weapons laboratory and was allowed to brief the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense. He succeeded in overcoming opposition from the AEC and in September 1952 a new Laboratory opened at Livermore in California, with Teller on the Scientific Steering Committee, but with no formal management authority. After a unpromising start its first tests were a failure – Livermore contributed greatly to weapon development.

All this is well covered by Goodchild, but the book really comes to life with the "Star Wars" program. Buoyed up by his successes in Washington, Teller turned from active science to politics. He had learned that direct access to Presidential advisors was far more effective than using formal channels. He also knew that extravagant promises and wildly optimistic

timescales gained support for his cause. Believing that Russians could not be trusted he bitterly opposed the nuclear test moratorium of 1958-1961 to the chagrin of Eisenhower, who came to regard Teller as a high-pressure super salesman. Teller also did much to secure the failure of the 1963 Test Ban Treaty. It was with Ronald Reagan that he had his greatest success. Livermore had been experimenting with X-Ray lasers with the power to knock out incoming Soviet ballistic missiles. Teller sold the idea to a receptive Reagan as a means of obtaining assured survival' though his descriptions of its capability were well ahead of anything being thought of at Livermore. On March 23 1982 the President announced the Strategic Defense Initiative SDI or "Star Wars" But the X-Ray laser program was plagued with difficulties and promising trials were shown to be flawed. Undeterred, Teller came up with another entirely different system Brilliant Pebbles' which was backed by Reagan and, more reluctantly, by his successor, George Bush despite technical difficulties. SDI came to end with the Clinton administration, by which time Teller had retired.

[In my pantheon of nuclear greats', there would be places for the Nobel Prize-winners Fermi and Bethe for their contribution to physics, and Oppenheimer for his achievements in science management. All three were respected by their colleagues. There would be no place for Teller.] Opinions of Edward Teller were, and are, sharply divided. The scientist Isidor Rabi described him as an enemy of humanity; Reagan was captivated. Somewhere between the two extremes is a real Edward Teller but, as Goodchild discovered, he is hard to find.