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Re-defining African-american

By | 2007: Vol. 6, No. 3-4

The recent arrival of significant numbers of people of African descent in the United States from Central and South America and the Caribbean as well as the continent of Africa has posed major questions about the definition of African Americans and the relationships that these recent arrivals are having with the indigenous African-American community. How do these recent arrivals fit within the construct and definition of African American? Do the differences in language, culture, ethnicity and nationality that they bring with them limit their ability to be admitted to the African American group? Are they even interested in being thought of or related to as African- American? Are members of the African-American group willing to welcome them into the African-American family? Or are they distrustful because of their differences or resentful of African and African descended people from abroad who are seemingly taking better advantage of the opportunities created by African Americans in their centuries-long struggles for freedom and justice in this land?

These are real questions that the recent migrations of African descended people to the United States have posed for the future development of people of African descent in this country. We should note, however, that these are questions that are faced whenever new immigrants enter a society of established socioeconomic and political formations. We are concerned about redefining the term African American because we are interested in maximizing the potential that a unified African-based population can have rather than having the perceived differences used to divide and exploit us. What's at stake, then is, in the final analysis the future of African descended people in the United States, economically, politically, socially and culturally. Said another way, the challenge before us is to turn our diversity into a strength to advance our collective interests rather than have it become a source of division and weakness.

Three years ago, the Schomburg Center completed and made available to the public a major project on African American migration entitled In Motion: The African American Migration Experience. Comprised of a major on-line website, a companion book, a teacher's kit and an exhibition, the project sought to document the major movements of people of African descent to, within and at times out of the United States. Initially conceptualized as a project revolving around four or five major migrations, it eventually evolved into one that documented 13 distinct major migrations of people of African descent. Five of the 13 dealt with people migrating to the United States, seven documented movements within the United States and one traced the history of African Americans moving from the United States to foreign lands. Significantly, of the 13 migrations, only two were forced – the transatlantic slave trade and the domestic slave trade. All of the other eleven were voluntary.

The centerpiece of the project was the *In Motion* website. Comprised of over 25,000 pages including over 16,000 pages of text and over 8,000 images, it is structured around each of the

13 migrations. In each instance a popular narrative essay based on a scholarly paper by a leading authority in the field traces the history of the migration. An average of 100 captioned photographs and other visual images are used to illustrate the narrative. Primary research documents, original maps, scholarly articles and books on related themes, a bibliography and lesson plans for teachers round out the resources available for documenting and interpreting each migration. A general image archive supplements those used to document each migration.

A brief review of the treatment of the transatlantic slave trade is a useful context for framing the discussion of the contemporary (post 1970's) migrations of African peoples which will be the focus of this presentation.

It is generally acknowledged, based on current scholarship that between 10 and 12 million people of African descent survived the Middle Passage and settled in the Americas. Less well known is the fact that between 1492 and 1776 or roughly the first 300 years of the so-called European colonization of the Americas, 6.5 million people crossed the Atlantic and settled in the so-called New World – North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. Of those 6.5 million pioneer migrants, only 1 million were European. The other 5.5 million were Africans of diverse ethnic, religious and national backgrounds.

Of the 10-12 million transported to the Americas in the transatlantic slave trade, only some 500,000 ended up in the United States. They, too, were of diverse ethnic, religious and national backgrounds – Yoruba, Etik, Fon, Musfin, traditional African religions, etc. By 1860, the original 500,000 enslaved African immigrants had developed into a population of some 4 million people. Significantly, these people of African descent had transformed themselves into a new people, a new African American people. Unable to live traditional African lives as Fon, Etik or Yoruba, they entered into new biological, social and cultural relationships across ethnic or religious lines. Added to their mix were representatives of diverse Native American groups as well as virtually all of the European groups that were part of America's colonial enterprise. The African American group created out of this amalgam of African, Native American and European peoples is likely the most American group in American society. Because all of America's people are part of the African American group.

While the transatlantic slave trade was officially abolished in 1808 in the United States, the illegal slave trade continued to bring enslaved Africans to the United States into the 1860's. After the war, relatively few continentally born Africans migrated to the United States. African-descended people from the Caribbean region continued to find ways of migrating here. Puerto Ricans and Cubans of African descent such as Arturo Alfonso Schomburg came in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. African-descended immigrants from British and French Caribbean islands, though restricted as immigrants of African descent, found loopholes in colonial laws to gain admission as part of British or French immigration quotas. Upwards of 100,000 Caribbean immigrants entered the United States between 1899 and 1932 when move restrictive laws virtually closed the door to Caribbean immigrants. Jamaicans, Barbadians, and Trinidadians, as well as Haitians settled in the States and tried to create new lives for themselves. Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Cubans and Panamanians also headed to the United

States during the first three decades of the 20th century.

Nowhere was the new diversity of the African presence in the United States more pronounced than in New York City, especially during the Harlem Renaissance. New York City, which only had a population of 60,000 people of African descent in 1900, could count some more than 350,000 African-descended people by 1930, the largest in the nation. A significant percentage of them had immigrated from Africa and the Caribbean and come to New York during this period including African dancer, Asadata Dafora, Jamaicans Marcus Garvey and Claude McKay, Trinidadian pilot Hubert Julian, and Virgin Islander J. Raymond Jones. Each of them aligned themselves with African descended peoples from the United States and other parts of the African diaspora for social, political, cultural and at times familial purposes.

Significantly, try as they may to retain their unique ethnic identities, most of these African-descended immigrants also began to become integrated into new African American movements and identities. The Garvey Movement, for instance, was comprised of black folk from throughout the Americas as well as throughout the United States. Other "African American" groups and organizations such as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the Prince Hall Masons and the African Blood Brotherhood included Afro Caribbeans as well as native-born African Americans. The point is that after slavery, like during the era of slavery, immigrating African-descended populations became part of the African-American community even as they struggled to retain ties with their societies of origin. By the second or third generation, however, most had become fully integrated into the African-American community.

Congressman Charles Rangel, for instance, is of Puerto Rican ancestry. Herman "Denny" Farrell is of Panamanian descent as was Dr. Kenneth Clark. Basil and David Paterson trace their roots to Barbados, and Carlos Ledesma, founder of the West Indian Day Carnival, was from Venezuela. All are or have been an acknowledged part of the African-American community in New York and the United States.

Three of the components of the In Motion website deal with the contemporary migrations of people of African descent to the United States since the 1970's: The Contemporary Haitian Migration, The Caribbean Migration and the Contemporary African Migration. These three sites provide considerable information on the socio, economic and cultural backgrounds to the migrations. They tell you where people are migrating from and why. They tell you where they are migrating too. And they tell you some of the impacts of their presence, their laboring activities and their cultural and social practices on their new communities of residence. I will focus the remainder of my remarks on the contemporary African immigrant population in hopes of raising questions that are relevant to the discussion of issues facing all of the new African-descended populations in the United States.

Beginning in the 1970's, significant numbers of continentally born Africans started to migrate to the United States. As former colonial powers – England, France and Portugal – closed their doors to African immigrants, many turned to the United States. Since 1970, more than 1.7 million people claimed sub-Saharan African ancestry. Refugees are counted among this new

African immigration influx – over 40,000 Somalis, close to 21,000 Ethiopians and an estimated 18,500 Sudanese among others. From 1990 to 2001, 100,000 African refugees (10% of all refugees) were admitted to the United States. The overwhelming majority of these immigrants are not refugees, however. In contrast to their slave trade forbears, the new immigrant populations come from throughout sub-Saharan Africa. They are from Southern and East Africa as well as West and Central Africa. Nigerians are the number one sub-Saharan African community followed by Ethiopians and Ghanaians. A highly urban population, more than 95%, live in metropolitan areas usually in close proximity to traditional African American and Caribbean immigrant communities. The Senegalese are concentrated in New York; the Nigerians in Texas, the Somalis in Minneapolis/St. Paul. The new African immigrants are also a highly educated African population. Indeed, they are the most highly educated population in the United States. Almost half of the new African immigrant population holds bachelors degrees or higher whereas only 26% of native-born Americans do. The most substantial part of African immigration is linked to the "brain drain" not poverty.

Many immigrating Africans coming from independent African nations are attempting to retain their ethnic identities within their national groups. Many are retaining strong links with their home communities on the continent and building economic and other bridges between themselves and home. However much they resist transforming themselves and being transformed by their new American environment, however they are being transformed. Ethnic and class barriers that existed among groups within their countries on the continent are being lowered and eradicated in the U.S. Within their national groups they are transforming themselves and being transformed by their new environment as they create new families, new community groups, new religious practices, etc. These transformations are being made more complex by the simultaneous arrivals (since the 1970s) of African peoples from Haiti, the Caribbean and Central and South America. All of these new African immigrant populations like those from the continent are negotiating their relationships with each other and white America as well as the African-American descendants of the pioneer 500,000 enslaved Africans who make up 90% of the more than 35 million people of African descent living in the United States.

How are the new African and African-descended populations getting along with their new neighbors? How are new immigrant African-descended populations relating to one another as well as to African American, white Americans and other new immigrant African groups? We could dwell in the negative reports of frictions, jealousies, resentments and at times outright conflicts that have surfaced between the various groups. We could talk about the

- We could talk about the perceived problem of African and other immigrant populations exploiting job & educational opportunities created for African Americans.
- We could talk about the struggle for jobs & job displacement.
- We could talk about African-American resentment of African entrepreneurial success.
- We could talk about problems of communication that have emerged between these diverse peoples.

- We could talk about territorial/turf residency struggles.
- We could talk about the perceived disrespect that immigrants have for African American traditions of struggle.

All of these issues have arisen from time to time whenever immigrants, regardless of race, interact with older residents. And they are issues that arise whenever immigrant populations arrive in places where established African-American communities exist. Media coverage of these encounters tend to focus on the conflicts frequently at the expense of the new transformation and integration experiences that are taking place between old and new African communities and across ethnic and national boundaries, and cultural and class lines that are part of these new political, economic, cultural and social group formations.

Migrants' intentions of returning to their homelands notwithstanding, the social situations in which they find themselves dictate that they will, willingly or not, enter into new relationships and new processes of social and cultural transformation not unlike what occurred with their forbears during slavery. Nowhere is this more evident in the United States today than in New York City. And in New York City, the most complex laboratory of African and African Diasporan social and cultural transformation is in the Borough of Brooklyn. New York has the largest African immigrant population in the United States. In addition, large new Caribbean and Haitian immigrant populations have moved there adding to the mix of new immigrants of African descent who have taken up residence in close proximity to each other and to older African-American communities in New York City. Ethnic and national enclaves of immigrant populations have frequently formed in these communities, but equally significant, immigrants have crossed ethnic and national boundaries to create new family lives, business relationships, etc. Nigerians are marrying Jamaicans, African Americans are marrying Trinidadians, etc. and creating New World African families. Immigrant musicians from Africa, the Caribbean and/or Haiti are hooking up with African-American musicians and creating new African diasporan musics. Immigrants are forming ethnic or nationally based organizations among themselves but they are also actively participating in established and newly formed organizations and institutions that address their needs and support their objectives.

It is in times of racial crisis in the city, however, that the blurring of lines between the African-American community and the new immigrant populations is most prevalent. When Senegalese immigrant, Amadou Diallo, was killed in a hail of police fire, people of African descent, irrespective of their status, ethnic or national backgrounds, joined in the protests against this latest instance of police brutality. When Haitian communities demonstrated in protest against the ouster of their Pres. Jean Baptist Aristide, Caribbean immigrants and African Americans joined in. When hurricanes devastated communities in the Caribbean, African American and Africans have joined in the relief effort. These types of mobilizations across ethnic and national boundaries signal the forging of new pan-African or African diasporan bonds among these diverse African people. These emerging alliances bode well for the future of African and African Diasporan transformations in the United States in the future. African peoples of the slavery era transformed themselves into one people – African American people – during slavery. The stage has been set for still another transformation in the twenty-first century.

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***Howard Dodson**, Chief of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of The New York Public Library since 1984, is a specialist in African-American history and a noted lecturer, educator and consultant. He has been awarded Honorary Doctorates of Humane Letters by: Widener University (1987); Adelphi University (May 2004); West Chester University of Pennsylvania (June 2005); The City College of New York (June 2006), and an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Villanova University (May 2007). Prior to assuming his position at the Schomburg Center, Dodson served as a consultant in the Office of the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, D.C. (1979-82). He also served in a number of capacities from 1970-79 at the Institute of the Black World in Atlanta, G.A., including Executive Director from 1974-79.*

Retribution Against Heads Of State And Prime Ministers

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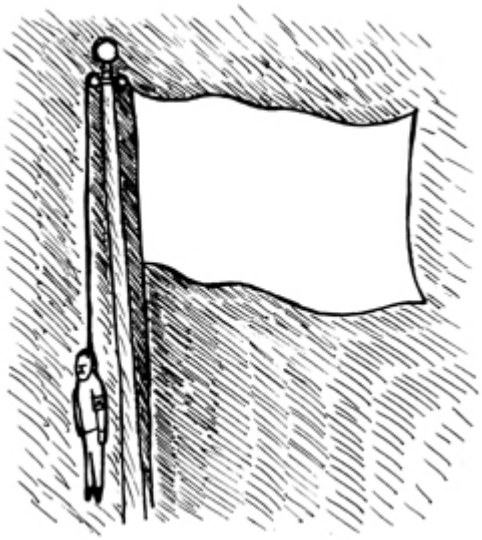

The subject of retribution after WWII has fascinated me for a long time; I can even confess to making snail's progress in writing a book on collaboration, resistance and retribution in Europe during and after WWII. The origin of the fascination is that, back in 1946, I witnessed some of the court proceedings and even the execution of a few war criminals. The particular topic of this lecture came to me while pondering one of the more dramatic aspects of retribution. Why were so many statesmen assassinated in Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, at least up to 1939, and why so many European statesmen were tried in a court, imprisoned, or even hanged during and after WWII. Why again has it become nearly impossible to try and punish a Communist political leader following the fall of Communism and of the Soviet Empire.

Clearly, WWII engendered a great innovation, namely the idea that leading statesmen can be held legally responsible for the defeat and ruin of their country as well as for war crimes committed by the country's citizens at the orders of their government. The effect of this innovation was, however, temporary. Soon Europe returned to the pre-1939 situation when statesmen were practically immune to prosecution.

The first point I want to make is that no matter how terrible the wars they had fought and lost; how heinous the crimes they had committed, to the best of my knowledge no European head of state or head of government, except one, was tried and executed between the beheading of Louis XVI in 1793 and World War II. The single exception was the Hungarian Prime Minister Count Lajos Batthyány whom an Austrian firing squad executed in 1849. Napoleon I and Napoleon III were never tried, only exiled, although they had been responsible for terrible destruction and the utter defeat of France. The victorious Allied Powers made vague attempts to have the Kaiser arrested and tried for war crimes but were relieved when the Dutch refused to surrender him to a yet to be constituted international court of justice. As for the German people, despite the fact that they suffered horribly as a result of the lost war, they would rather have re-started hostilities than allow their wartime leaders to be tried by either an international or a national court. Nor was Emperor-King Charles of Austria-Hungary called to justice for having sacrificed the lives of thousands and for losing an empire.

Instead of a trial, a devastating number of rulers and prime ministers were assassinated by anarchists or killed by secret governmental order during the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century: a president of France; a king and a prime minister of Portugal; a prime minister of Spain; a king of Italy, an empress and a crown prince of Austria-Hungary; a prime minister and a chancellor of Austria ; a former chancellor of Germany; a president and a king of Greece, two kings of Serbia; a king of Yugoslavia; a prime minister of Bulgaria; two prime ministers of Romania; a former prime minister of Hungary, a prime minister of Poland, and three tsars of Russia fell to the bullets of conspirators or to the bombs and daggers of assassins. Undoubtedly, it was a very dangerous occupation to lead a state in Europe during those years but we can say that, at least, these statesmen were spared the public humiliation of a trial and the horrors of the gallows. In Europe of the period it was nearly inconceivable for a legitimate statesman to be tried and executed by his underlings.

Everything changed with the coming of World War II and, even more, with the defeat of Nazi Germany. The idea that a statesman ought to be tried for the defeat of his country caught on first in Vichy France where, at the so-called Riom trial which opened in 1942, three former prime ministers, among them Léon Blum, several ministers and a commanding general were made to stand trial, charged with having "betrayed their duties" toward France, that is they had lost the war against Nazi Germany.

Remarkably, the accused were allowed to defend themselves eloquently and to use the services of outstanding lawyers. The proceedings were suspended in the following year, but the Germans later transported two prime ministers to the Buchenwald concentration camps, and French fascists assassinated another high-ranking defendant.

This was only a beginning: during the war, both radical Nazi collaborators and left-wing anti-Nazi resisters developed the notion that those responsible for the sufferings of the nation ought to be made to account for their deeds as part of a great national catharsis. This *épuration,* as the French resisters called it, would rid the nation of the residues of the old regime and allow for the creation of a new society led by an elite that had grown out of wartime developments. In one version, the new leadership would emerge from the right-radical camp, in the other version, from the left-wing resistance movements, quite especially from among the Communists.

Only the more moderate among the collaborators and among the resisters hoped for a return to a status quo ante, although even such conservative monarchists as the commanders of Milak, the Norwegian military resistance organization, and the Cetnik commander General Draza Mihailović of Serbia envisaged a rather different country from that before the German invasion. Milak, for instance, foresaw a more centralized Norway, and the Cetniks projected the end of Yugoslavia and the rise of an independent Greater Serbia. Or, to take another example, what tied the pro-Nazi Prime Minister General Milan Nedić of Serbia to the anti-Nazi Hungarian ex-Prime Minister Count István Bethlen was that they were equally terrified of Bolshevism and the Soviet Union. One trusted German victory until it was too late, and the other hoped against hope that the Anglo-American troops would arrive in his country before the Soviet Red Army

troops. Not surprisingly, the collaborator Nedić ended in a prison of the Titoist regime while the anti-Nazi resister Bethlen died in a Moscow jail.

Before we proceed any further let us remind ourselves that, in the first four years of the war, almost the entire continent of Europe was allied to Germany, the so-called neutrals included. Even the countries defeated by Germany were generally allowed a government or an administration that was friendly to the Nazi regime. With the exception of Poland in which underground resistance arose immediately, the majority of Europeans supported the German-friendly governments, at least until after the battle of Stalingrad. Therefore, such leaders who were tried after the war for collaboration, could look back to years when they had been celebrated by a population that was now asking for their blood. The popular French greeting addressed to Marshal Philippe Pétain at public assemblies: "Maréchal nous voila" — Marshal we are ready for you — was repeated in various forms in other countries, all the way from Belgium, where the collaborationist King Leopold III was hailed as the savior of his nation, to Greece where Prime Ministers Ioannis Rallis was perceived by many as a defender of national interests and a bulwark against the native Communist threat.

Devotion to their leader was particularly keen in those countries that were allies of Germany and therefore those leaders enjoyed considerable liberty of action in domestic affairs and even in military policy. This was the case in Italy, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Finland. Moreover, the population nearly idolized the leaders of such countries that owed their existence to Nazi Germany, namely Slovakia and Croatia; Ante Pavelić and Msgr. Jósef Tiso were seen as liberators of their nation. In the first years of the war, the idea of trying and even executing these men was only a faint hope on the part of such an embittered exile as Czechoslovakia's Edvard Bene.

After Stalingrad, everything changed. Former collaborators gradually transformed themselves into resisters or, as was more often the case, they began to play both sides. Hungary's Regent Miklós Horthy was proud of his soldiers fighting shoulder to shoulder with the German *Kamaraden* but after Stalingrad, and especially following the surrender of Italy to the Allies in September 1943, he sought contact with the Western Allies in the hope of a negotiated surrender. Even such a staunch admirer of the Führer as Marshal Ion Antonescu rightly claimed before his judges in the people's court of post-war Romania that he had sought contact with the Allies behind the back of Hitler.

Because practically all heads of states and government ministers in Hitler's Europe had enjoyed some popularity in the first few years of the war, and because they felt that, during the war, they had acted as shields of their country against German exactions, they bitterly resented their arrest and trial after the war. Only such off-beat creatures as Norway's Vidkun Quisling and Hungary's Arrow Cross leader Ferenc Szálasi claimed, when in court, that fighting alongside the Nazis had been a good thing for which their nation should be grateful. For them, the court was simply a representative of their temporarily triumphant mortal enemies. Most other defendants expected the court to appreciate the services they had rendered in defense of the nation.

Agitation for the punishment of collaborators, traitors, and war criminals arose fairly early during the war, spearheaded by the exile European governments in London. It was at their prompting that the Great Allies decided to try the major German war criminals as well as to order the new governments in the defeated countries to try their guilty leaders. Trials of collaborators in underground courts actually began under the German occupation, especially in Poland, Italy, and France. Following liberation, the task of judging the war criminals generally fell to so-called people's courts. These revolutionary institutions were meant to substitute for, or at least to complement, the undermanned, often Nazified, and ossified regular courts. The proceedings at these courts were under the supervision of the now ruling anti-fascist parties which tried to combine the need to purify society with that of respecting at least a minimum of legitimacy. Except in the Soviet Union, these were no show trials.

Those investigated and tried numbered in the hundreds of thousands with every country in Hitler's Europe arresting and trying proportionally similar number of suspects. The defendants were mostly adult males, the proportion of those being sentenced in court or punished administratively, including expulsion from the country, amounted to perhaps five percent of those in this group. Only in West Germany and Finland were far fewer people investigated and tried, whereas in such countries as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and the Soviet Union, the proportion was probably larger but statistics and studies on this subject are hard to come by.

The most dramatic of all were the trials of heads of states and prime ministers. In Italy, Mussolini was tried and hanged by a kangaroo court made up of anti-fascist partisans but in most other places some kind of decorum was respected. The number of highest-ranking defendants is staggering: Hungary, for instance, executed one head of state and four prime ministers; in Bulgaria, virtually the entire old political elite was wiped out either through court action or arbitrary killings. Hungary and Slovakia executed their heads of state; Norway, France, Romania, and Bulgaria executed their prime ministers. One head of state of France; two prime ministers of Greece, and the prime minister of Serbia perished in prison. President Emil Hácha of the Czech Protectorate was lucky enough to die in a prison hospital a few weeks after the end of the war.

True, not all the wartime leaders considered guilty shared the fate of Quisling, Pierre Laval, Tiso, Antonescu , and others. Ante Pavelić, the head of the Croatian fascist state, escaped punishment by fleeing abroad with the help of the Vatican; Hungary's Regent Miklós Horthy was protected from extradition to Yugoslavia by his American captors in Germany, and the assistance of Stalin who apparently appreciated the old admiral's effort to surrender to him in October 1944. Occupied Belgium and the Netherlands had in lieu of constituted governments only heads of administration during the war, and the Danes whose king and government had stayed put during the German occupation, successfully cultivated the legend of the king and his government having been heroic resisters. In reality, Danish economic assistance to Germany had been invaluable. In Finland, under Soviet pressure, President Risto Ryti was sentenced to ten years in prison but was pardoned in 1949, and when he died, a few years later, he was buried with full honors. All in all then, escaping the death penalty for a wartime head of state or prime minister was a question of luck or of having been able to maintain a great degree of

political autonomy and thus also a parliamentary regime during the war; this was the case especially of Denmark and Finland.

As is well-known, Hitler preferred well-established, conservative statesmen in the non-German countries to fascists and other radicals who might not be disciplined enough to mobilize their nation for the German war effort. The fascists were only the last resort, hence the appearance in the post-war courts of such non-Nazi conservatives as Marshal Pétain of France, Prime Ministers László Bárdossy and Döme Sztójay of Hungary, Marshal Antonescu of Romania, General Nedić of Serbia, and Prime Ministers Tsolakoglou and Rallis of Greece. With the exception of Bárdossy and Rallis, these were military men. All defended themselves with dignity, although Pétain, who had volunteered to return to France from Switzerland, refused to recognize the court and kept silent. László Bárdossy, who was accused, among other things, of having illegally started the war against the Soviet Union in 1941, dazzled the audience with quotations in Latin and English; he also proved both polite and contemptuous of his opponents. His popularity soared during the proceedings even though he adamantly refused the prosecutor's suggestion that he shoulder the blame for Hungary's fatal alliance with Nazi Germany. It was believed that Bárdossy's confession might shift the burden of guilt from the Hungarian people, especially in view of the coming peace treaty with Hungary. Perhaps in appreciation of his dignified behavior and his popularity, Bárdossy was sentenced to facing a firing squad; nearly all other main defendants were hanged.

Every member of the late-war Arrow Cross government in Hungary was held to be guilty until proven innocent; meanwhile, members of the Horthy regime were often acquitted; many were not even tried but, rather, acted as witnesses for the prosecution. Yet it was under Horthy that Hungary entered the disastrous war against the Allies, and it was under him that nearly half a million Jews were deported to Auschwitz. Let us note here that in Romania, too, conservatives and the regular administration were far more guilty of murder than the wild and violent Iron Guard. It was Marsal Antonescu who ordered the massacre of at least 300,000 thousand Romanian and Ukrainian Jews whereas the fascist Iron Guard was responsible for pogroms which claimed the lives of "only" a few thousand victims.

The National Socialist former Prime Minister Béla Imrédy tried in court to embellish his sorry wartime record but the Arrow-Cross National Leader Ferenc Szálasi behaved in court as though he were one of the great world leaders asked to present to the public his political views and his plans for a future. This fanatic, whom many judged to be demented, actually behaved with even more dignity than Bárdossy did. Assaulted by invectives not only by the prosecutor but also by the presiding judge and the audience made up mainly of Jewish survivors, Szálasi insisted that he was still the head of the nation whom he would guide to world-historical greatness in partnership with Germany and Japan.

The sentences of the major defendants were decided everywhere by the political party leaders and not really by the courts. The question must be asked whether the trials achieved their purpose which was, first, to punish the guilty, second, to warn all statesmen that they may be held personally accountable for actions undertaken by their government and, third, to make

way in the centers of power for members of the anti-fascist parties. The judgment is still out on all this, but it is clear that, despite their great shortcomings and biases, the courts succeeded in punishing most of those who had been responsible for the ruin of their country. Never mind such delicate problems as, for instance, whether heads of state can legally be punished at all, and whether it was right to punish people on the basis of ex-post-facto laws.

Nearly everywhere the new leaders hoped that the trials, especially of the highest-ranking traitors, would serve the purpose of educating the public. In this respect, it is difficult to talk of success; immediately after the trials, which were held roughly between 1944 and 1946, the more radical former resisters judged the process of purification totally inadequate (*épuration manquée; epurazione mancata)* while the more moderate and conservative anti-Nazis considered the judgments too drastic. Wartime collaborators considered all trials illegal. Some defendants, such as Bárdossy, and Prime Minister Pierre Laval in France, earned some popularity with their courageous behavior and the cravenness of some of their accusers.

There is no evidence of the trial proceedings having penetrated public consciousness in a way planned by the anti-fascist parties. Little if any of the proceedings were ever taught in schools. On the other hand, the great fear of the post-war governments, namely that new right-wing politics would arise from the legacy of the "martyrs," did not materialize either. Despite the efforts of Slovak, Romanian, Croatian, and Hungarian right-wingers, to create a cult of their wartime radical leaders, only a small minority honors Tiso, Antonescu, Pavelić and Szálasi in their country.

The final question is how to explain the execution, imprisonment and a myriad of other forms of punishment meted out in their countries to a nearly unbelievable number of fellow-citizens and, especially, to pre-war and wartime leaders. After all, World War I had not been less bloody, and yet it was followed by virtually no charges and no punishment. The explanation I suggest is that the extent of European collaboration with Nazi Germany had been so extensive and so spontaneous, that it was felt to be necessary to sacrifice a great number of fellow-citizens, and especially the country's leaders, in order to clear the conscience of the others. There was also the perceived need to project the entirely false image of one's country having been that of heroic resistance fighters and of only a small number of dastardly traitors.

The post-World War II purges might well have been a unique phenomenon with no effect on later generations; witness the failure of "lustration" in post-Communist Central- and Eastern Europe. The few statesmen tried and imprisoned for crimes committed in the name of Marx and Lenin were released almost immediately. One reason for his is that, by the time the Communist regimes fell, Stalinist excesses were part of history. Unlike Nazism, Communism was able to experiment with a post-radical, more relaxed, more liberal phase. After 1989, very few Stalinist mass murderers were available for trial.

Secondly, there was little political reason for engaging in purges. After World War II, the former anti-fascists resisters now in power needed to get rid of the representatives of both the war-time collaborationists and the pre-war régimes. So they engaged in what they called a

great purification heralding the rejuvenation of society. By the 1990s, however, Europe appeared to have exhausted its retributionist energy: the nations had been rehabilitated and collective punishment was no longer fashionable. In brief, the time for reconciliation had arrived in a peaceful and almost completely united Europe. Whether it would have been better for the morale and self-respect of the newly feed peoples in Eastern Europe to engage in mass purges, is still an open question.

Appendix 1: European heads of state and prime ministers murdered between 1793 and 1939

France: President Marie-Francois Sadi-Carnot (1894)

Portugal: King Carlos I (1908) and Prime Minister General Sidonio Paes (1918)

Spain: Prime Minister José Canalejas (1912)

Italy: King Umberto (1900)

Austria-Hungary: Empress Elisabeth (1898) and Crown Prince Francis Ferdinand (1914)

The Austrian Empire: Prime Minister Karl Stürgkh (1916)

The Austrian Republic: Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss (1932)

Germany: Former Chancellor General Kurt von Schleicher (1934)

Greece: President Giovanni Kapodistria (1831) and King George (1913)

Romania: Prime Ministers Armand Calinescu (1939) and Nikolae Iorga (1940)

Serbia: Kings Michael (1868) and Alexander (1903)

Yugoslavia: King Alexander II (1934)

Bulgaria: Prime Minister Alexander Stamboliski (1923)

Hungary: Prime Minister Count István Tisza (1918)

Poland: Prime Minister Gabriel Narutowicz (1922)

Russia: Prime Minister Peter Stolypin (1911); Tsars Paul I (1801), Alexander II (1881) and Nicholas II (1918) fell to the bullets of conspirators or to the bombs and daggers of assassins.

Appendix 2: European heads of state and prime ministers tried and executed between 1793 and 1939

France: King Louis XVI (1793)

Hungary: Prime Minister Lajos Batthyány (1849)

The Soviet Union: Prime Minister Aleksei Rykov (1939)

Appendix 3: European heads of state and prime ministers tried and executed during, at the end, or soon after the end of World War II

Note that some of these statesmen died in prison.

Elia of the Czech Protectorate was executed by the Germans and Bethlen of Hungary was an anti-Nazi seized by the Soviets. All others were tried and sentenced for treason and collaboration with Nazi Germany.

(PM stands for prime minister)

Bulgaria: PM Bogdan Filov as well as 24 ministers and 68 parliamentary deputies

Czechoslovakia/Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia: President Emil Hácha (died in prison); PM General Alois Elia (tried and shot by the Germans in 1942)

France: Chef d'Etat (head of state) Marshal Philippe Pétain (died in prison); PM Pierre Laval

Greece: PM General Georgios Tsolakoglou and PM Ioannis Rallis {both died in prison)

Hungary: Nemzetvezető (national leader) Ferenc Szálasi; PM István Bethlen (died in prison in Moscow in 1946?), PM Béla Imrédy, PM László Bárdossy, PM General Döme Sztójay, Deputy PM Jenő Szöllősy,.

Italy: PM (Il Duce) Benito Mussolini (shot by Italian partisans after a mock trial in May 1945)

Norway: PM Vidkun Quisling

Romania: Conducator (leader) PM Marshal Ion Antonescu

Serbia: PM General Milan Nedić

Slovakia: President Monsignor Józef Tiso, PM Vojtech Tuka

Appendix 4: Leading politicians tried following the fall of Communism

Bulgaria: Todor Zhivkov, 1st Secretary CC of the BCP and chairman of the State Council. Arrested in 1990 and sentenced in 1992 for two tears in prison for embezzlement, he served under house arrest and was acquitted by the Bulgarian Supreme Court in 1996. Died in 1998.

Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic: Milou Jake, general secretary of the CP of Czechoslovakia. Tried in 1993 for his role in the events of August 1968, he was acquitted of the charge of

treason.

Germany/GDR: Erich Honecker, general secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (SED), chairman of the Council of State of the GDR. Accused of the death of 192 East Germans who tried to escape from East Germany, Honecker's trial opened in January 1993 but he was released due to ill health and was allowed to move to Chile where he died in 1994.

Germany/GDR: Erich Mielke, head of the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Stasi). Sentenced in October 1993 to six years for the murder, on August 9, 1931, that is during the Weimar Republic, of police captains Paul Anlauf and Franz Lenck. Paroled in 1995, Mielke died in a nursing home in 2000.

Romania: Nicolae Ceausescu, general secretary of the RCP, president of the Socialist Republic of Romania. Overthrown in December 1989, Nicolae and his wife Elena were sentenced to death by a military court and executed by a firing squad at Targoviste on Christmas Day. .

István Deák*, who is Seth Low Professor Emeritus at Columbia University, was born in 1926 in Hungary. His publications include,* Weimar Germany's Left-wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the "Weltbuhne" and Its Circle *(The University of California Press, 1968);* The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848-1849 *(Columbia University Press, 1979), for which he received the Lionel Trilling Book Award of Columbia College, and which also appeared in German and Hungarian, as well as* Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848-1918 *(Oxford University Press, 1990), which received, among other things, the Wayne S. Vucinich Book Prize of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, and which also appeared in German, Hungarian, and Italian. His most recent publication is* Essays on Hitler's Europe *(University of Nebraska Press, 2001), which appeared also in Hungarian. He edited and partly wrote, together with Jan T. Gross and Tony Judt,* The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and Its Aftermath *(Princeton University Press, 2000).*

The Academic Boycott Of Israel: Objections And Defense

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Introductory Comments and a General Defense

Boycotts are historically common and popular forms of protest. Unlike sanctions, which are enforced by governments and sometimes destroy the lives of millions of ordinary people (as in the case of the 12-years of sanctions against Iraq, and the on-going Western sanctions against Hamas and the Gaza Strip), boycotts can be a grassroots means of protest against the policies of governments. They can be undertaken by ordinary people to defend fellow human beings who are oppressed and designed in such a way as to cause as little damage as possible to the lives of innocent people. Boycotts have historically been undertaken at many levels: they have been carried out against companies or industries (for instance, the American California grape boycott of the 1970s); and against states (for instance the boycott of apartheid South Africa). Thus, from an historical point of view, there is plenty of precedents for the tactic of boycott. And, as in the case of South Africa, public pressure through boycotts can eventually encourage governments and organizations such as the United Nations to take action against particularly oppressive regime.

Nonetheless, the boycott against Israel, and in particular that aspect of it directed against academic institutions, has drawn a great amount of criticism. Much of this has come from people who are partisans of Israel. But some of it has its origins among those who have genuine concerns that innocent Israelis are being unnecessarily hurt, or that the boycott is undermining valued principles such as academic freedom and the free flow of ideas. It is to this latter group that the following arguments are addressed in the hope of taking up their concerns and, if not putting them to rest, at least putting them in a context that makes understandable the historical trade-offs inevitably involved in any struggle for justice.

First of all, the academic boycott of Israel is part of a broader boycott and divestment effort which involves economic, cultural and sports agendas. The academic boycott specifically is based on several premises. One is that, to date, all but a very small number of Israeli academics remain quiescent in the face of the violent colonial war their government wages against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories. As a group they have had nothing to say about Israeli violations of scores of United Nations resolutions and the transgression of international law in the form of the Fourth Geneva Convention. This includes not only human rights violations of a general nature, but also, specifically, the systematic destruction of Palestinian education and academic freedoms. Nor, as a group, have they come to the defense of their few fellow Israeli academics who have been spoken of as traitors for publically criticizing Israeli policies against the Palestinians.

A second, and related premise, though one that is often unnoted, is the fact that educational institutions are principal agents for shaping the perceptions of whole generations. If, in the midst of extreme practices leading to oppression such as we have been witnessing in the Occupied Territories, these institutions lend their active or passive support to aggressive colonialist practices, then others may legitimately criticize them and, if the situation persists, boycott them.

Third, I would point out that the boycott against Israel is whole heartedly supported by Palestinian civil society. In 2003 and again in 2005 Palestinians teachers and a wide range of other professionals called for the boycott of Israel, including Israeli academia. Today over 60 Palestinian federations and NGOs have signed on to this call. In every case these groups, as well, organizers of the boycott outside of Palestine, view this tactic as the best *non-violent* way by which non-Israelis the world over can express their concern for what is now *the world's longest post-Second World War occupation* and one which presents us with very dangerous ethnic and racial issues.

There has been a great hew and cry against the violent tactics of resistence to Israeli occupation evolved by the Palestinians. Though the first Intifada started with little more than rock throwing it was condemned in the West as a "dangerous escalation" of the Middle East crisis. It also brought the Palestinians no relief. The Second Intifada is certainly much more violent in its nature and has included the infamous tactic of suicide bombing. The organizers of the boycott condemn this tactic even while understanding that it is a product of despair and desperation that the occupation itself has created. Many have asked themselves what people outside of Israel and the Occupied Territories can do to put non-violent pressure on Israel to end the occupation. The boycott is one of their answers.

Consideration of General Objections

Objections to the Academic Boycott of Israel have not been consistent. They have tended to shift over time. For instance, at the beginning of the boycott (circa 2002) there was **the demand that academia, and particularly scientific fields, be kept out of politics.** While as an ideal this may be an admirable, in reality the bulk of higher education and its academicians never escape politics. As we found in the United States during the Vietnam War, various government agencies quickly recruited an array of academic departments and individuals, ranging from chemists to sociologists, to support their war effort. The intimidation and bribery directed at the rest of academia to remain quiet (and therefore passively supportive of government policy) was effective until the war itself became vastly unpopular. Israeli educational institutions have been similarly co-opted. Various academic departments, professors and administrators have developed for profit and non-profit links with the military, corporate, media and political institutions that support and sustain occupation.

Normally, states do not support academic freedom or the free flow of ideas in cases that impact government policies, particularly when the government has committed itself to military action. Through various means of bribery and pressure they attempt to enforce only two

alternatives, quiescence or active support. In times of stress, opposition comes to equal disloyalty and threatens academic funding and careers. The academy, then, is not a neutral arena on matters important to government. As Lisa Taraki, who is a professor at Birzeit University on the West Bank has argued, the academy can easily become "a haven for many scholars either in the outright service of repressive states, or for those who have rewritten history in defense of colonial projects."[2]

In the current context, there are numerous examples of the direct involvement of Israeli academia and academic related professions in promoting and sustaining the oppressive measures of the Israeli government. In general terms, almost all Israeli academics find themselves actively or passively supporting the occupation by virtue of Israel's policy of universal Jewish conscription. (This is a policy that does not democratize the Israeli army, so much as it militarizes Israeli civilian society). Thus, the majority of Israeli academics are military veterans and many will do reserve duty in the Territories. If they wish to resist serving as part of the occupation forces they can do so by joining the Refusnik organizations. Very few choose to do so. More concretely, the Israeli government has turned to academia for occupation administrators (the first "civilian" administrator of the West Bank was Menahem Milson of Hebrew University) and it has used academic demographers, architects, communications experts, medical experts and others to make and carry out policy that sustains occupation. Then there is the active role taken by Bar-Ilan University in validating courses given by colleges now being established in illegal settlements

The argument for isolating academia from politics was later augmented with **the assertion that "in the end the best way to resolve issues is to pursue dialogue, not boycotts."** *However, one of the reasons the boycott has become necessary is precisely because "dialogue" on the Palestinian issue has been historically stifled.* For decades Zionists had a near monopoly on the information flow in the West concerning the Palestinian situation. One can still see this in the fact that the vast majority of coverage in the press and on televison, particularly in the United States, gives mostly the Israeli side of the story. To the extent that this is breaking down, those offering the Palestinian point of view are now consistently labeled anti-Semites and supporters of terrorism. Indeed, the Zionists in the United States go so far as to threaten the careers of those who vocally challenge them. Such a libelous approach hardly qualifies the Zionist leadership as defenders of academic freedom. In truth, what they seek is to maintain a monopoly on the information flow about Israel and Palestine. This is an environment that discourages dialogue and makes necessary other, more direct and effective tactics seeking justice for the Palestinians.[3]

Moreover, intellectual exchanges' have been going on between Israelis and the rest of the world since 1948 and with Zionists for longer than that. It has made not a bit of difference to the oppressive and colonialist policies of successive Israeli governments. Given this history, even if the Zionists were now to engage in honest "dialogue," it is unlikely to achieve anything in the future unless, simultaneously, other sorts of pressure are applied.

As noted, one of the earliest tactics to silence and discredit advocates of the boycott has been

use of the red herring label of anti-Semitism. We are told that **the boycott of Israel, including the academic boycott, is inherently anti-Semitic** in effect if not in intent.' This argument is based on *a dishonest equating of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism* and conveniently ignores the mounting crescendo of Jewish voices against Zionist and Israeli colonialist practices.[4] It also ignores the fact that not only was the boycott call started by Jewish scholars in the United Kingdom (Professors Hilary and Steven Rose), but also that many of the supporters of the boycott are Jewish, a few are even Israeli Jews. Indeed, as many non-Zionist Jews have argued, it is not the pursuit of legitimate means of protest against violations of human rights by Israel that feeds anti-Semitic discourse. Rather it is the current Israeli practices and the Zionist colonial project that does so.

Finally, there was the short lived argument that **the issues involved in the conflict between Israel and Palestine are very complex, and a boycott reduces them to overly simplistic dueling camps of good and evil.** This assertion could not be sustained in the light of UN resolutions and the widely documented Israeli violations of international law by Human Rights organizations. These published findings suggest that the confiscation of land, the destruction of homes and businesses, the act of ethnic cleansing, all relentlessly pursued over the last 60 years, is not "complicated." Indeed, it is all horribly simple. And, because more and more people have come to understand this, the argument based on complexity is now rarely heard.

Let us now turn to serious issues concerning the objectives, scope and potential effectiveness of the boycott.

Consideration of Specific Objections

Argument 1: Futility. The academic boycott is ineffective, it cannot influence the policies of the Israeli government, and will only harden positions due to resentment over outside pressure.

If the first part of this argument were really true, the Zionist response to the boycott effort would not be so strenuous. The Israeli government would not be starting up high powered commissions to counter the boycott, in the U.S. Zionist organizations and spokespersons would not be extending time, energy and money, to label the academic boycott effort as the "hijacking of academic freedom," and rushing to launch a number of anti-boycott petitions. The near hysterical outcry coming from Zionists indicates a high level of insecurity and fear. Some Israelis have already acknowledged the potential of the boycott. Senior Israeli economist Yoram Gabai was quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle, 8 August 2002, as saying: "Faster than expected, we will find ourselves in the time warp of (white-dominated) Rhodesia in the 1970s and South Africa in the 1980s: enforced isolation from without and an isolationism from within….The enormous price of isolation will drag us into withdrawing from the [occupied] territories, either in the context of a peace treaty or without one as a unilateral act."[5] This is not mere speculation on his part. The power of national isolation, including that of academic isolation, was recently attested to by Frederik de Klerk, the former President of South Africa

who initiated the move away from apartheid and toward democracy. "Suddenly the doors of the universities and libraries [of the world] were closed to our bright students, which stimulated and motivated advocates of change."[6]

As Gabai's prediction suggests, the academic boycott does not work in a vacuum. It is but one component in a broader boycott program that seeks to put pressure on all aspects of Israeli society. Historically, such a broad approach can be most effective when directed toward democracies, a club to which Israel claims membership. Here individuals can be encouraged to pressure their governments for changes in behavior. But even so, it takes sustained effort to alter public opinion. In the case of Israel, this is because internally generated perceptions, much like white South Africa under apartheid, are so inbred that the ability of Israeli citizens to understand the consequences of their national policies on the Palestinians is limited. As the self-defeating results of the last several Israeli elections point out, a majority of Israelis are literally stuck in a self-reinforcing and distorting information environment where positions cannot get any "harder." As in the case of South Africa, external pressure is the only non-violent way to move the Israelis to a realization that something is terribly wrong with their outlook and behavior and that there is a need to change both leadership and direction.

Even if one is skeptical of the ability of Israelis to break out of their perceptual straitjacket, an international boycott targeting all aspects of Israeli society has strong and beneficial symbolic value. Such a boycott raises international consciousness over inhumane and unjust behavior, lets ordinary citizens the world over know that there is a way they can get involved and do something to promote human rights and justice, and serves as a warning for other would be oppressors that it is not only other governments that they need to worry about. In the end, economic and cultural isolation has its own dynamic and, as Gabai fears, can wear away at the resolve of those Israeli elites that fancy themselves players on an international level.

Finally, the academic boycott has obviously been quite effective in generating heated discussion in many venues (mainstream newspapers, television, student publications, internet discussion lists and blogs). In this way the negative details of the Zionist enterprise have inevitably forced themselves onto the consciousness of many people, within and outside academia. Thus, even the Zionist efforts to discredit those who support the boycott, and de-legitimize the boycott as a strategy of protest, have unintentionally helped provide a superb forum for debating the facts about Palestine and the occupation. If the boycott achieves nothing more than this it will have achieved a great deal.

Argument 2: Misguided – The academic boycott targets the wrong people and hurts Palestinians as well as Israelis. It harms collaborative efforts between Israeli and Palestinian universities.

The assertions that the academic boycott hurts Palestinians and harms collaborative efforts are dubious at best. While in the past there have been minor collaborations between Israeli and Palestinian academic institutions in the Occupied Territories, these have now all but ceased. This is due to inevitable estrangement and suspicion that has come along with the continuing

colonization and military domination of the Occupied Territories. Also, Israeli policies forbid the travel of Israeli citizens into the Occupied Territories (except if they are going to and from colonies illegal under international law) and make it extremely onerous for Palestinians in those regions to enter Israel. If the Israelis claim that these policies have been made necessary by the Palestinian uprising, supporters of the boycott answer that the uprising has been made necessary and inevitable by the Israeli occupation and its brutal nature. *Part of that brutal nature has been the employment of tactics designed to prevent Palestinian colleges and universities from functioning in any normal manner*. These tactics include prolonged shut downs, military raids and travel restrictions that impede students and faculty from reaching campuses.

No organized protest or resistence to this consistent and prolonged attack on Palestinian academia has come from Israeli academic groups, colleges, or universities. As the late Tanya Reinhart, who served for many years as a Professor of Linguistics at Tel Aviv University, and was one of the few Israeli academics to publically stand against Israeli occupation policies, has observed, "Never in its history did the senate of any Israeli university pass a resolution protesting the frequent closure of Palestinian universities, let alone voice protest over the devastation sowed there during the last uprising. It is not that a motion in that direction failed to gather a majority, there was no such motion anywhere in Israeli academia."[7] Even with the qualitative increase in the level of violence used by the Israeli army in the second intifada, Israeli academia continues to do practically nothing to pressure their government.[8] *There is something markedly hypocritical in the fact that many of those individuals and organizations (Israeli or otherwise) which have so vocally attacked the boycott, have not raised their voices against the destruction of Palestinian academia and society in general.*[9]

The claim that the boycott "targets the wrong people" is a more complicated one and deserves close consideration. Almost all of the complaints registered against the boycott of Israel, academic or otherwise, put forth examples of humane, well intentioned, Israeli *individuals* (whose existence we certainly acknowledge) who are allegedly being punished unfairly by the boycott (see also discussion of the category of Academic Freedom below). It is to be noted that the academic boycott's main targets are Israel's educational institutions and not individuals per se. Nonetheless, there are scholars attached to those institutions who now find it more difficult to place publishable material, particularly in European journals, there are Israeli doctors who now find it more difficult to receive research assistance from abroad, there are Israeli academics who have been asked to leave the boards of scholarly journals, etc. Taken as individual cases, there is no doubt that such situations result in frustration, inconvenience, the disruption of research agendas for a range of individuals, some of whom may not be *active* supporters of the occupation. Unfortunately this is unavoidable and, given the continuing complicity of Israeli academia in general with the occupation, necessary. Shahid Alam has put forth this point accurately and succinctly: "I believe it is reasonable and moral to impose temporary and partial limits on the academic freedom of a few Israelis if this can help to restore the fundamental rights of millions of Palestinians."10

When it comes to hurting the "wrong people," the most notable cases are those relatively few

heroic Israeli academics who have put their careers on the line to stand up against the injustice of their country's colonial policies. For example, there is Ilan Pappe. Pappe is a well published instructor who, until recently, was attached to Department of Political Science at Haifa University. He is strong and vocal supporter of justice for the Palestinians and advocate for political reform in Israel. Here is what Professor Pappe says about the need for a boycott of Israel: "It is a call from *the inside to the outside* to exert economic and cultural pressure on the Jewish state so as to bring home the message that there is a price tag attached to the continuation of the occupation." The academic boycott makes sense to Pappe as "part of the overall campaign for external pressure." He continues, "Within such a call, it makes no sense for an activist like myself to call on sanctions or pressure on business, factories, cultural festivals, etc. while demanding immunity for my own peers and sphere of activity – academia."11 Professor Pappe understands that he may also be hurt by such a boycott, but he recognizes that the sacrifice is necessary given the horrible situation we now find ourselves in.

In the end, the anti-boycott focus on individuals just creates a red-herring that deflects attention away from the larger, and more important, issue. As Pappe indicates, individual Israelis (and their academic institutions) simply cannot abstract themselves from that larger issue. Israel is their country. Olmert, Sharon, Natanyahu, Barak, Begin, Shamir, etc. were and are their Prime Ministers. The only Prime Minister to take tentative steps in the direction of a just peace, Yitzhak Rabin, was assassinated. Clearly, the Occupation is their collective sin. Those, on the outside who support the boycott, understand present day Israel for what it really is – a society that has institutionalized discriminatory policies, created de facto first, second, and third class citizenship categories and has, for forty years now, maintained policies of occupation and colonization that have systematically destroyed Palestinian society. As a consequence, Israeli academic, cultural and sports institutions (and their employees) will now themselves become relatively more isolated. If they find this uncomfortable, there is always an escape route: pay heed to Professors Pappe, Rinehart and others who point to the horror Israel is causing others and act to change the situation.

Argument 3: Academic Freedom – The boycott violates the principle of academic freedom and as such is unacceptable.

The boycott's impingement on the academic freedom of Israeli scholars has been repeatedly condemned. It has been called "contemptible," " hypocritical," and "an unacceptable breakdown in the norms of intellectual freedom" (these terms have not been applied by these same critics to the destruction of Palestinian academic freedom). For simplicity sake, let us work from the statement of Dena S. Davis, a law professor at Cleveland State University, published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on April 18, 2003. Davis writes that "Academic boycotts undermine the basic premise of intellectual life that ideas make a difference, and the corollary that intellectual exchanges across cultures can open minds."12 Unfortunately, there is nothing necessary about the assumption that the "difference" ideas make results in a more humane world or more humane outlooks. Thus, *it is not only positive ideas that can make a difference.* As noted above, Israeli Zionists (be they academics or politicians, cultural leaders, businessmen, etc.), have been interacting with the world outside of Israel since 1948. This

sharing of ideas with the outside has made no *positive difference* in the evolution of Zionist oppression against both Palestinians inside and outside of Israel proper. However, it may very well have made a *negative difference* and prolonged and deepened Israeli injustice in this regard. Free communication on the part of Zionists has allowed them to build solid support within the American population and its politicians based on racist stereotyping of Arabs generally and Palestinians in particular, as well as the correspondingly gross over-idealization of the Zionist movement and its results. Thus, historically, unimpaired 'intellectual life' and 'exchanges across cultures' have not only failed to lead to the humanization of Zionism or its policies but have led to the corruption of the political establishment in Washington, D.C.13

This makes problematic the claim that academic freedom somehow operates in a vacuum and, in and of itself, always leads to the good, or the betterment of the world. *Nonetheless, supporters of the boycott agree that its opposite, the obstruction of the "free flow of ideas" ought to be undertaken only in extreme circumstances. Unfortunately, that is exactly the situation successive Israeli governments have brought about.* Keeping to the realm of academia, proof of the severity of the situation (and the hypocrisy of anti-boycott critics in their failure to face up to it) can be found in the condition of academic life in the Occupied Territories.14 Here, Israel's illegal occupation *has destroyed intellectual life* for the Palestinians. The practice of "exchanging visits" and "talking to each other," such as it has been over the last 40 years, on the part of Israeli academics have not produced the courage or insight to stand up and protest this destruction. If Israeli academics are truly interested in academic freedom as a valuable principle they should be claiming for the Palestinians the same rights of academic freedom they claim for themselves. Their pointed failure to do so makes them subject to the general boycott of Israel that is now evolving as a consequence of Israeli policies.

Not taking Israelis policies into consideration is one of the more obvious weak links in the hew and cry over the boycott coming from a wide range of well placed Israelis and Europeans, ranging from politicians to university presidents.15 Like the vast majority of Israeli academics, none of them has ever raised their voices over the destruction of Palestinian academic freedom at the hands of the Israeli occupation. Only when it is Israeli academics who are under threat of boycott do these academic knights mount their horses and take up their shields. As Margaret Pappano of Queens University in Ontario has observed, "you cannot let decades of gross injustices to one side pass and then suddenly leap to the defense of the other side without implicating yourself in a political position."16 Those who now want to make an issue over academic freedom for Israelis have got to explain where they have been for the past forty years of attacks on Palestinian education in the Occupied Territories.

Argument 4: Inconsistency – The boycott adherents unfairly single out Israel while ignoring all other military occupations in places such as Tibet, Chechnya, etc.

How do those who claim that boycott supporters are 'picking' on Israel know that they also ignore the behavior of the Chinese in Tibet, Russians in Chechnya, Americans in Iraq, and so on? Boycott supporters are generally not one issue people and many of us do support well

intentioned efforts to isolate other oppressive regimes beyond that of Israel. However, for a good number of those who support this boycott the struggle against Israeli occupation is a high priority. There are a number of reasons for this.

First, many of us, Jews, Muslims, Christians, or non-denominational Americans, Europeans, and others, feel a special affinity for Israeli/Palestine. We all have emotional, cultural, or religious ties to the Holy Land, even the non-religious among us. What the Zionists refuse to acknowledge is that the place their mythology makes special for them, is also special to a lot of other folks based on other interpretations of the same myth and other forms of oral and written tradition as well.

Second, one can argue that just because other nations behave badly does not let the Israelis off the hook. After all, the Israelis now have the dubious distinction of running *the longest post-WWII occupation in the world*. There is no reason why boycott supporters should not start with the problem that has persisted longest and then work backwards.

Third, and most importantly, the Israeli-Palestinian crisis can be seen as more *politically* important for citizens of the Western nations than other contemporary crises and examples of oppression. This is because *Zionist influence spreads far beyond Israel's area of dominion, and now negatively influences the formulation of Middle East foreign policy in the West.* In other words, unlike the Chinese, Russians, and other oppressive regimes, the Israelis and their supporters directly influence (in what we feel is a corrupting way) the policy makers of our own countries. Thus their actions have import beyond the Occupied Territories and potentially affect the lives of ordinary citizens of most Western nations. This particularly obvious in the case of United States where for the last sixty years the American treasury has been utilized as a bottomless well of "charity" for the Zionist state. In the United States Zionist lobbies are extremely powerful with both political parties, Congress and the media. George W. Bush's his neo-conservative advisers actually see Israel and its illegal, aggressive behavior as a model for their own policies.17

Argument 5: Giving Comfort to Terrorists – The boycott of Israel ignores the (alleged) facts that (A) the Israeli army is in the Occupied Territories as an act of self-defense against suicide bombers and other terrorists and (B) boycott efforts only encourage and lend comfort to these terrorists.

(A) It is highly questionable whether the Israeli army is in the Occupied Territories to protect Israel from terrorists. Much more likely is the proposition that the IDF is in the Occupied Territories to protect Israel's colonial settlers who, in turn, are in the Occupied Territories to **possess** "Judea," "Samaria." To this end, the IDF is also in the Occupied Territories to **prevent** the creation of a viable Palestinian state. It is these acts of possession and prevention which produce Palestinian resistence in all its forms.

It should be obvious to anyone not ideologically blinded or misled by a self-censoring Western press that forty years of land confiscation, destruction of crops, houses, and other Palestinian

property, the destruction of Palestinian civil society to a point that now approaches cultural genocide, the construction of illegal colonies, and the importation of 100,000s of illegal settlers **are not "acts of self-defense."** On the other hand, one can reasonably define resistence to these actions on the part of the Palestinians (the major part of which has been relatively non-violent but unreported) as in fact acts of self-defense. The international community through the actions of the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and the testimony of respected world leaders, has made it quite clear that Israeli occupation constitutes an on-going case of severe injustice. To cite but one example, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a man who certainly knows injustice when he sees it, recently declared, "I have been very deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa. I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks, suffering like us when young white police officers prevented us from moving about." He goes on to condemn the general dispossession of the Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line.18 And then Jimmy Carter's latest book on the Middle East has demonstrated that what stands in the way of peace is Israeli apartheid.

(B) The charge that boycott efforts encourage or lend comfort to terrorists is entirely ad hoc. How do those who make these claims know that they are true? In fact, it is quite possible that, as Shahid Alam has suggested, the boycott, functioning as a manifestation of "world conscience," can "mitigate the Palestinian's deep despair"and hopefully lead to a reduction of violence of both the "colonizer and the colonized."19 In any case, it bears repeating that the boycott represents a non-violent alternative route to oppose a regime which many people outside of Israel see as itself terrorist.

Conclusion

Israeli goals in the occupied territories have always aimed at possession and absorption of these lands. Israeli behavior, colonialist and oppressive, follows from this fact. One can verify this for oneself by going to any of the human rights organizations that document Israeli policy in the territories, including Israeli organizations, and simply trace the actions of the occupier from 1967 onward. With the advent of the Sharon government and its successors the scale of destruction and brutality has risen to new and shocking levels. As Ilan Pappe has observed, under the leadership of Israel's most recent Prime Ministers the occupation has become "a horror story of abuse and callousness ….The trend is for worse to come, with a sense of an Israeli government that feels it has a green light' from the United States to do whatever it wishes in the occupied territories."

These Israeli leaders have been put into power by an overwhelming majority of Israelis. For instance, in the election of February 2001 Ariel Sharon received 62% of ballots cast. In the January 2003 election the Israeli public reconfirmed their allegiance to radical right wing parties, by once more putting these forces in command of the government. After Sharon's unexpected death the Israeli citizenry chose as their leaders the close associates of Sharon. What this electoral history indicates is that the majority of Israelis are either unwilling or unable to understand the real origins of their own insecurity and the nature of the occupation.

It is under these circumstances that outside pressure becomes the only viable way of encouraging change in Israel. Under normal circumstances one would look to the government of the United States, Israel's ally and patron, to apply the necessary pressure. However, we all know that American leaders are operating under the same delusions as those of Israel as to the nature of and reasons for the occupation. For instance, the prospect of changing the perceptions of the U.S. Congress on this issue is even less likely than dislodging the expansionists form power in Jerusalem.

This leaves us with the strategy of a grassroots, international movement to boycott Israel at all possible levels: economic, cultural, and academic. Those of us who support this effort are proud of our stand and convinced of its just nature and necessity. And, as this detailed article attests, we are willing to defend it against all who would question its validity or the motives of its participants.

Notes

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2. Http://www.pjpo.org?letter_taraki.html

3. Taking just the year 2003 we find that American Zionist groups have launched their own targeted boycotts of the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, San Francisco Chronicle, and Los Angeles Times, when they believed that those newspapers gave too much attention to the Palestinians.

http://www.jewishpeacethread.com/http://www.jfjfp.org/http://www.jewsagainsttheoccupation.org./

5. "Israelis Feel The Boycott Sting: Creeping Sense of Isolation as Culture, Economy takes hits"

http://www.sfgate.com/cgi_bin/article.cgi?file=chronile/archive/2002/08/06/mn33709.dtl

6. Ha'aretz supplement in English, 16 May 2003
http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/shart.jhtml?itemno=293793

7. Z net, 4 February 2003
http://www.Zmag.org/content/print_article.cfm?itemID=2961&sectionID=22

8. Making reference to the boycott, Tim Shallice, professor at the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, University College, London observed, "Are mainstream [academic and] science organizations in Israel sponsoring fact-finding commissions over Jenin? Are they publishing detailed analyses of what has been happening over the last 18 months in the Occupied Territories? Are they making clear the long-term dangers of colonist policies? If the answer to these questions is Yes, then I am wrong to sign [on]." Http://www.pjpo.org/letter_Shallice.html

9. "No one has of course mention anything about Palestinian freedom of inquiry and the sanctity of the Palestinian academy in this raging debate. What I have to say about this is particularly relevant to Israeli academics, since the vast majority of them have been carrying on their business as usual for the past 35 years oblivious to what is happening to their Palestinian counterparts, not to mention to the Palestinian nation as a whole." Lisa Taraki, Lecturer at Birzeit University in the West Bank. Http://www.pjpo.org/letter_taraki.html

10. M. Shahid Alam, "The Academic Boycott of Israel," http://www.counterpunch.org/alam0731.html

11. Ilan Pappe, "Arguments in Favor of the Boycott," http://www.solidarite-palestine.org/rdp-int-030131-html

12. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 18 April 2003, p. B13

13. It is to be noted that those few very brave Israelis, both academic and non-academic, who have taken a stand against such policies have not done so because they had access to foreign academics or foreigners per se.

14. These conditions are well documented at Birzeit University's Right To Education website,

http://right2edu.birzeit.edu

15. A partial list of university presidents who have recently raised their voices against the boycott includes Gilles Patry, University in Ottawa; Amy Guttman, University of Pennsylvania; John Casteen, University of Virginia; Lee Bollinger, Columbia University; Karen Hitchcock, Queens University in Ontario; Chancellor Robert Birgeneau, University of California at Berkeley; Principle Heather Munroe-Blum, McGill University in Montreal; and David Skorton, Cornell University.

16. "The Ivory Tower Behind the Apartheid Wall," posted at http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article7124.shtml

17. This position is convincingly argued by Melani McAlister in her book Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and U.S. Interests in the Middle East 1945-2000 (University of California Press, 2001). See also Michael Lind, "The Weird Men Behind George Bush" (New Statesman, 7 April 2003)

18. *The Guardian*, 29 April 2003

19. Shahid Alam, ibid.

An Arab View Of The Neocons And The Oil Lobby

By | 2007: Vol. 6, No. 3-4

An intellectually formidable friend and I were discussing everything under the sun at a qahwa (coffee shop) in Cairo, fairly late at night and dead in the middle of winter. I brought up Greg Palast's account of the Iraq war and the squabbles between the two main advocates of the war – the neo-cons and the oil lobby – and speculated as to who in the West we Arabs can work with, how and on what issues. This hooked into a long-running debate I'd been having with my friend over one of his major contributions to the whole debate about the 'debate' between civilizations. That is, who exactly is supposed to be talking to whom?

Our conversation continued late into the night by telephone with my friend filling me in on the cultural details of the otherwise dry political, economic and institutional thrust of my argument. He would offer an intriguing idea or a sentence, usually in Arabic, and I'd rush over to my laptop and type it up, leaving him with an oversized phone bill while I had the electricity charges to worry about.

Taking Stock: The Banality of Evil

But first things first. Greg Palast's *Armed Madhouse* revealed through documents and taped interviews, that the neo-conservatives and the oil lobby had very different military, administrative and even economic plans, with the neo-con plan taking ultimate precedence in the invasion and occupation, except when it came to the sensitive topic of oil. Both plans predate September 11 and represent diverging agendas, interests and conceptions of 'the' national interest and how the Arabs, Muslims and Israelis fit into it. The pathetic story of post-war Iraq and US foreign policy in the region since the fall of Saddam is really a grisly comedy of errors driven by an endless push and pull between the oil lobby and the neo-cons, jockeying between their respective power centers in the Bush administration and the new Iraqi power structure.

In the process Iraqi society and, crucially, the economy have been torn apart, aggravating the violence, which was bad enough to begin with. Regarding Sunni resistance it is true that the cannon fodder are religious fanatics, but their commanders, who are ultimately steering the civil war, are remnants of the Saddamist 'secular' Arab nationalist regime. They only turned into resistance fighters when the neo-con ideologues took up the mantle of de-Ba'athification, suggested to them by the likes of Ahmed Chalabi, to pave the way for democratization. Under the rather biased guidance of America's Shiite and Kurdish 'allies' this process began, and apparently ended, with de-Sunnification. Many people targeted ironically were the very same Iraqi Army and Republican Guard commanders who had been recruited by the CIA to order

their troops to stand down in the face of the invaders. To avoid capture and possible execution they turned to their sectarian next of kin, the Iraqi Sunni extremists and the Arab volunteers.

Even the Qaeda-related terrorists among the wider Sunni resistance are really quite an economically motivated and rational bunch. A confidential National Security Council report, leaked to the New York Times, discovered that the Iraqi resistance is financially self-sustaining, raising tens of millions of dollars without any foreign help from the caves of the Hindu Kush or the coffers of puritanical Gulf oil sheikhs.[1] They make anywhere between $70 to $200 million by smuggling Iraqi oil and, in 2005, made an estimated $30 million from ransom money alone. The Islamic radicals, in this regard, fit the same mold as nominally Marxist rebels of south America who fund their revolutionary activities through kidnapping foreigners (tourists, executives, investors) and via drugs trafficking.

As for the Iraqi attacks on oil pipelines, they usually aren't religious fanatics or diehard patriots but, like their counterparts in Nigeria, disgruntled ex-oil employees striking at their former source of livelihood in the 'good old days' of Baathism. Where did this economic desperation come from? The neo-cons, in their attempt to make Iraq into a (neo-)liberal democratic example for the Middle East, relied on corporate lobbyists to devise the economic core of their plans for Iraq. One of the most prominent, Grover Norquist, explained that the economic agenda was modeled on Pinochet's experience in Chile that involved a prioritization of free market economics over democratization: "The right to trade, property rights, these things are not to be determined by some democratic election."

The upshot is that all these property rights were 'determined' undemocratically, by the Coalition Provisional Authority, under the unelected Paul Bremer who enacted numerous orders in this regard. Worse than mere privatization and copyright laws that bestowed royalties on foreign products of up to 50 years (Order 83), was the application of complete free trade, an absolute ban on tariff and non-tariff barriers – 'Order 12' – even in the face of foreign 'dumping'.[2] As a result Iraq is awash with Chinese goods, more than any other (non-occupied, non-decimated) country in the Middle East. Iraqi agriculture was crippled too as US grain suppliers took advantage of the presence of corporate-friendly officials in the occupation authority. Businesses going bust means unemployment and desperation, which means, in a country like Iraq, political violence. And with Order 37, which forbids any future Iraqi government from reversing any of these laws, this chaos seems set to go on indefinitely.

But none of this had to happen or was even meant to in the early days of planning the war. The original heir apparent for post-Saddam Iraq, General Jay Garner, placed political concerns before economic ones. The order of the day for Garner was getting essential services back on track immediately and getting the various ethnic and sectarian factions to sit together and agree on holding elections as soon as possible, and that meant letting the Iraqis decide their own economic policy. That didn't set well with the neo-cons so they got then Defence Secretary Rumsfeld to have him removed and bring Bremer in. Another sticking point with Garner concerned privatizing Iraqi oil fields, which he rightly saw as a controversial issue that would insult and inflame the Iraqis. But even though Garner vacated the premises the oil lobby made

sure that Bremer couldn't privatize this strategic asset.

The oil lobby quite literally shipped in a firefighter to put out the neo-cons' raging free market plans in the form of Shell Oil USA's ex-CEO, Philip Carroll, flown into Baghdad on a C-17, and from Houston no less.[3] Not that the oil lobby was any less neo-colonial than the neo-cons. Their alternative scheme involved locking a state-owned Iraqi oil company into profit-sharing agreements' with IOCs (International Oil Companies).*

I will go into the exact nature of the standoff between the neo-cons and oil lobby over privatizing Iraqi oil later but the point to be made here is that there is nothing technically conspiratorial about most of this. The neo-cons have been advocating the unseating of Saddam as the key to remaking the Middle East since the early 1990s, and done so quite openly as anyone who has visited their many, many websites will attest. As for the oil lobby, they're a shadier bunch, but the secrecy only really resulted because they had only got their act together in the early days of the Bush administration, with news leaking out soon after. The only real crime we detect here is the Arab weakness that has opened the Arab world to violation. The only real conspiracy lies among the various Arab parties that were complicit in these violations, with the self-interested suggestions of Arab parties garnishing many of these foreign plans.

The Arab Angle

Now this diagnosis links up with the implicit agenda contained in Dr Hazem's widely circulated works on the Arab condition: describing how the Arab masses are enslaved culturally – alienated', as he puts it – by the Arab elites.[4] The Arab Self is alienated and the agent of alienation is none other the Arab Other that uses culture and religion to maintain its stranglehold on the Arab Self.

This view goes beyond strict economic and political conceptualizations of class conflict and elite-mass relations and antagonisms because it puts the onus on culture – portraying Arabs as not just any normal group of oppressed Third Worlders. They belong to an extended family that they identity with – the Arab nation' and Muslim umma – and their elites use these abstract notions as political tools to deny them their cultural and intellectual rights. That is, the rights to avail of Western modernity and allow them to think for themselves, decide what their opinion is on matters as diverse and critical as Islam, constitutions, human and women's rights, Arab sovereignty and human rights supervision, cultural globalization, capitalism, republics vs. monarchies, etc. etc.

It was the Arab Other who aided and abetted the Americans, whether the neo-cons or the oil lobby, to the detriment of the Arab Self. More to the point, what Palast's work makes clear is that Arab reformers and revolutionaries, the genuine ones, are stuck between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand the neo-cons actually want to liberate them from their oppressive regimes (for whatever reasons) yet are the same people who will certainly wreck their economies. On the other hand, the oil lobby, which is comfortable enough with oppressive regimes, is willing to share the economic cake with the common-folk, even bolstering the anti-American ideological cushion that helps prop up these regimes, giving the masses some sense

of identity and authenticity in a world awash with American-dominated cultural signifiers.

As Rose documents in Israel: The Hijack State (1986), the US government has always been torn between supporting Israel as its most reliable ally in the region and supporting the Saudi Kingdom for its oil: "that stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history."[5] The existence of one key point of US strategy, Israel, created problems for the other, the religious props upon which the Saudi kingdom rests, its status as the supposed custodian of (Sunni) Islam. The eventual answer was not to bother to reconcile these two conflictual aspects of American national security. Whether the Saudis understood this is unclear but the Israelis, more reliable allies, certainly did, as came to light in declassifled State Department documents

As Rose explains, the American government left its oil companies to their own devices in the Saudi context. The US-dominated consortium ARAMCO "was left deliberately 'free' to be as 'pro-Arab' as it wished." This meant supporting the brand of religious conservatism used to legitimize the regime in Saudi desert nomad eyes, namely, Wahabbism. And given the porous nature of the American decision-making process, this schizophrenic stance fed backwards into the US power setup itself with two uneasy power centers collecting round these divergent policies: namely, the oil lobby vis-à-vis the Israel lobby – and the rest is history.

The oil lobby, then, is the dominant US contingent of what former Indian ambassador K Gajendra Singh calls the 'US-Saud-Wahab nexus'. US oil interests, and their allies in the US government, are directly locked into an alliance with the Ibn Saud family which has its own alliance with the Wahabis. (They run the Ministry of Religious Endowments, the mosques – which they also police – and are in charge of religious missions abroad, including the infamous madrassas). The oil lobby's pro-Arab stance has translated itself, in the long-run, into an unholy alliance between the US and Muslims extremists stretching from the Saudi regime to bin Laden and the Taliban. As Gajendra Singh also reveals, it was the persistence of these links that blunted efforts to apprehend bin Laden in the 1990s, when in Sudan then Afghanistan, because there was active cooperation with Islamist, Al-Qaeda-affiliated groups in Bosnia.[6]

Bush Jr.'s forays with the Taliban in the early days of his presidency for the sake of Unicol's Central Asian/Capsien oil pipeline are now the stuff of legend, and according to Greg Palast's sources there was active cooperation with Islamists in Central Asia to stave off Russian domination and Iranian penetration. Wahabbbism is anti-everything unIslamic and anti-many things that are Islamic in an unWahabi way but, since the first Afghani war and the collapse of Communism, this puritanical hostility has been increasingly directed towards the US and its chief ally in the region, Israel. The neo-cons, being utterly pro-Israeli, can't stand this and, more generally, in the post-9/11 context have been trying to stamp out the legitimization strategies of the Arab regimes that all depend on some measure of anti-Americanism.[7]

'America', deliberately, is used to vent people's frustrations, as is Israel – the 'external threat', the 'foreign conspiracy', 'imperialist intervention' in domestic affairs, etc.[8] And this is precisely why the neo-cons advocated the privatization of Iraqi oil as the centerpiece of their

plan – targeting the 'Arab' oil weapon. Their plan for Iraq called for the privatization of oil with the express intent of pushing Iraqi oil production way above OPEC quotas to push oil prices down and so destroy the OPEC cartel's ability to determine production and prices once and for all. Apart from using the oil weapon against its very originators it was meant more specifically to dislodge Saudi Arabia from the economic foundation of its power. That was the Heritage Foundation's – Ariel Cohen specifically – take on the plan, pushing up Iraqi production to six million barrels a day to drive a permanent wedge between OPEC members and deny Saudi Arabia its 'swing producer' status.

What they didn't acknowledge was that the Arab oil weapon was never Arab to begin with. Saudi Arabia enjoyed its swing producer status because many in the US would rather put up with an extremist autocracy, provided it's a pliant client state, than a progressive democracy like Venezuela, for instance. The State Department's plan for Iraqi oil stated that a state-owned oil sector – prohibitively contracted to IOC's – would "enhance the [Iraqi] government's relationship with OPEC."[9] So much for OPEC being the legendary enemy of the capitalist-imperialist West and for how one US administration after another desperately sought ways of punishing or dismembering the cartel. Ownership of oilfields as such isn't as important as controlling the price of the resulting oil, which is what determines profits, as one oilman told Palast:"[10] And one objective is making sure that oil prices never go too low to threaten the profits of the oil companies. So the oil privatization plan was quietly killed while the neo-con agenda continued everywhere else, with repeated attempts by the neo-cons to muscle in on the oil sector with the oil lobby responding in kind, relying on their respective Iraqi constituencies. Again, more banal evil doings went on as the Iraqi people were trampled.

But to be fair to those Iraqis allied to the neo-cons, quite a few went along with the American invasion so as to unseat Saudi Arabia from its privileged status in OPEC and so beef up Iraq's oil quota, which would be a good thing for everyone, save the Wahabis. So, the people to talk to are the neo-cons. It may seem odd for an Arab to advocate face-to-face negotiations with the neo-cons, supposedly all imperialists and all mad pro-Israelis. Not so.

The Western 'Other' too needs to be dissected and differentiated into its warring factions and these groups understood for who and what they are, ferreting out the one or two crucial common interests we have. Palast's and Rose's revelations confirm the Nitzan-Bichler thesis that sees US foreign policy, at least in the post-Vietnam era, to be determined by the 'Weapondollar-Petrodollar Coalition,' which consists of the large oil companies, armament contractors and OPEC member states. What fuels this coalition are high oil prices that are in turn maintained through periodic conflicts in the region – whenever oil prices sink too low and threaten the profits of the oil barons.[11]

This was Jonathan Nitzan and Shimshom Bichler's prediction, long before the Iraq War, that oil prices would paradoxically go up once the Americans gained control of Iraq's oil fields, dashing in one stroke the expectations of both liberal economists and neo-Marxist thinkers.[12] My only qualm with this thesis was how the neo-cons fit into it. Nitzan and Bichler saw them as the ideological shock troops of the vested interests – arms producers and the oil sector – that got

Bush elected on a platform of preemptive wars and beefed-up defense expenditures.[13] This clearly isn't the case. The oil lobby is all for instability in the Middle East if it means armed conflicts that generate arms sales and cause a rush in the oil market (higher prices), provided that client states remain internally stable.[14]

The neo-cons build their agenda on 'creative destruction' (or, more oxymoronically, 'positive instability'), and wish to extend this doctrine into US client states in the region, provided they create problems for Israel. Moreover, intra-coalition feuds extend into the realm of the OPEC members too (the standoff between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, as Palast ably documented).[15] As the term itself indicates, this is not a true class alliance, as Antonio Gramsci would envision it*, but a 'coalition of the willing' plagued by violent conflicts and small conspiracies, if we can use the term, over the slightest differences in means and ends.

Therefore, there are some neocons that really do have Arabs' best interests at heart and consequently it is in our advantage to talk to. One prominent example is none other than the dearly departed Paul Wolfowitz, the man who almost single-handedly persuaded Bush to invade Iraq after September 11.[16] However, Wolfowitz had a long-standing love affair with 'moderate' Islam ever since President Anwar el-Sadat's trip to Jerusalem. He taught himself passable Arabic to have the pleasure of listening to Sadat's speech in front of the Knesset, then learned passable Indonesian while the ambassador there, hoping to increase the number of moderate Muslims regimes in the Islamic world.

According to Stephen Sestanovich, "as a 'moral man', Wolfowitz might have found Israel the heart of the Middle East story… But as a policy maker, Turkey and the gulf and Egypt didn't loom any less large for him."[17] Needless to say I have reservations over what he means by 'moderate' but it is the case that he supported the sale of AWACs to Saudi Arabia, fought against tooth and claw by the Israel lobby. In fact, Wolfowitz also helped convince the Israelis not to retaliate to Saddam's Scuds during the First Gulf War. Therefore, Wolfowitz's drawbacks are almost strictly intellectual as far as we are concerned – his naïveté and over-enthusiasm, the latest in a long line of Graham Greene Quiet Americans. And it's not as if Arab intellectuals took the opportunity to fill in the gaps in his knowledge. Hopefully, in the process of talking to people like Wolfowitz we can make Western elites understand who 'we' are – Self and Other – and so what is really called for over here and who they should really be dealing over what and how. But we can't expect them to do that for us.

We have to inform them of what is wrong with us and, therefore, who they likewise should focus their efforts upon. The Arab Other needs pressing while the Arab Self needs 'de-alienating,' encouraged to take charge of itself by being given the intellectual tools for self-determination. And as for what we Arabs should negotiate with while we're having this conversation with them, the answer obviously is – oil. I'm talking about oil as a negotiating chip, something that will give the neo-cons what they need to counteract the power of the oil lobby and their benefactors in the Arab world. But in exchange for this we have to tip their ideological agenda on its head.

An Agenda for Change: Politics First, then Socially Conscious Economic Reform'

The whole problem with the economics first' approach, leaving aside its lack of economic sense as amply illustrated by the Iraqi disaster, is that entrenched political and bureaucratic elites have always been able to get around liberalizing reforms. They do this through co-opting the rising bourgeoisie (crony capitalism) to make sure it no longer has an interest in checking the power of the state and moving to a genuine rule of law system.[18] It is not in the interest of undemocratic regimes to liberalize and privatize because these mean handing the reigns of power to a faceless marketplace. The livelihoods of people no longer get tied to the all seeing, all-benevolent, identifiable person of Big Brother.

Economic reform creates rival centers of power: businessmen outside the loop who have a vested interest in keeping the state in check and who easily transform money into political leverage. The survival strategy of an authoritarian regime is to grant monopoly rights to selected, safe' businessmen, killing off efficiency gains and independent power centers through appealing to their rent-seeking instincts.

These regimes also maintain a stranglehold on political life by legitimizing themselves through the remaining vestiges of the rentier state (low tax rates, subsidies on essential goods), not to mention holding the bourgeoisie at bay by threatening to unleash the encouraged-to-be-envious masses.[19] The problem is actually worse in the wealthier parts of the Arab world. Throughout the 1990s the Gulf states fell into economic disrepute as growth rates declined, plans to industrialize fizzled and one government after the next fell into debt. The largest oil producer, Saudi Arabia, until recently had a total debt worth 107% of its GDP; $ 171 billion in domestic loans, $35 billion in foreign credit.[20]

The soaring price of oil since the Iraq War has eased the financial pressures placed on these regimes – they all now have budget surpluses with excess cash going in wild real estate speculation – and therefore have no incentive to liberalize along IMF-World Bank guidelines. (Nobody's advocating privatization and liberalization just for the sake of privatization and liberalization, least of all a lefty like me, but if done right it can place constraint on the power of the state to the benefit of all). This is a privilege that countries like Egypt and Tunisia don't enjoy. We can blame the oil lobby but we can't side with the neo-cons either because the political consequences of their economic agenda are scarcely any better, if not a whole lot worse. What is called for is a halfway house, some good old-fashioned embedded liberalism' of the kind that existed under the Bretton Woods order.

Surprisingly this actually fits the neo-con agenda, in spite of their liberalizing credentials, as they are great believers in capital controls (that is, restrictions on the flow of international finances to keep track of terror financing). And even in today's globalized world some countries have successfully employed them, such as democratic if not terribly pro-American Malaysia. More importantly, resurrecting embedded liberalism is something the neo-cons would adore because it would become a tool against the oil lobby.

Keynesianism, believe it or not, operates to the detriment of the oil lobby because growth induced full-employment economies depend, just as they did in the days of the post-war boom, on cheap oil. Low oil prices may not be to our immediate advantage as Arabs but, then again, high oil prices aren't to our long-term advantage either. Some economic pain is called for. We can't keep pushing back the reckoning day forever, sinking deeper and deeper into the debt spiral while we fail to industrialize, modernize our agriculture and invest in human development. (This is the Dutch Disease').[21]

Admittedly this is all overly ambitious and calls for a complete overhaul of the international economic order, beginning with the still very neo-liberal US, but more limited solutions can be implemented quite readily in the Arab context. Here we are talking about closed economies where a great many have fixed currencies or highly stable currencies backed by oil. And I'm quite confident that the European states would be happy to sanction some modicum of deficit spending in the Arab world if only because soaking up the unemployed means drying up the pools of legal and illegal migrant labor. The even more attractive prospect for the Europeans will be cheap oil, allowing them to resume their aborted post-war boom once again. (And Europe was more hospitable to readily employable immigrants back then, and the employed Muslim immigrants more well-behaved too).

Curing unemployment in the Arab world is a must for cultural reasons too, taking up the slack of all those disgruntled, college educated Arab youths who are all potential ticking time-bombs. Economically enabling people also means allowing them to do something other that eke out a living, have the time and job security to do a little thinking for a change. (There's a lot of this in the US-Middle East Partnership Initiative, incidentally).[22] But that in itself won't work unless there are thoughtful people whose slack needs to be taken up, the final topic I move to now.

The Missing Link: A Cultural Revolution*

What I've proposed, of course, presupposes enabling the Arab Self to elect its own spokesmen, something that should follow naturally from political reform. This way we can avoid the mistake made by the Americans in Iraq whereby they displaced, if not destroyed, one group of Arab Others only to replace them with another, neglecting in both cases the Alienated Arab Self. Hence, having the same old song sung, just with a new singer.

The West as a whole, and not just the US, needs to build credibility with the Arab Self, prove to Arabs that they removed Saddam because he was a tyrant, not just to replace him with a compliant Arab Other. Owning up to past mistakes is a cheap price to pay for stability; stability rooted in the substantive legitimacy of representative Arab regimes and by extension stability for the West. Their interests in the region and the security of their homelands from our chief export after oil – terrorism. In the long run this would spare the West another September 11th attack. Cultural alienation is the real barrier inhibiting a healthy dialogue between the Arabs and the West. That is, the Arab Self and the Western Other. When one talks of cross-cultural or civizational' dialogue, one must ask how representative' the speakers are of respective communities, after all. Moreover, the West must understand that the last shelter, last bullet, of

the Arab Other are the ulema, the experts in religion – the experts in religious excuse making, that is. This could have disastrous consequences, as we've seen in Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation, now in Iraq with the Arab volunteers, and again (possibly) as Iran and Saudi Arabia square up for a confrontation over the Iraqi carcass.

A face-to-face approach is something that should be facilitated by the globalizing communications revolution allowing direct conversations with that portion of intellectuals who aren't co-opted by the state. In fact, what we want is not only intellectuals, to avoid constructing, ipso facto, a new intellectual elite. We want just representatives of the Self, the common man, the poet, the singer, the civil servant, the seller on the street, the peasant, etc. The medium of television is important because it transcends the literate/illiterate divide, yet another problem in the Arab world. Such conduits – including Al-Jazeera, English and Arabic – would come in handy in this regard, official American reservations notwithstanding.

Internet connectivity is already an instrument of transparency and accountability while blogs and chatting increase communication and exchange of ideas and attitudes. All this will help facilitate mass psychological rehabilitation, getting people out of the prison cell they've become all too used to. It would be unfair to ask the Arab Self to all of a sudden to take responsibility of itself and make its own choices. Not that economics is far away from this since a key requirement to overcoming informational barriers involves breaking informational monopolies', on PCs, software, internet servers and mobile phones.

Moreover, we don't want top-down reform but a grass-roots intellectual revolution, with a special focus on the cultural industries. Institutional reform is called for here in several areas, such as making religious institutions both more independent of the state and less independent of society (subjecting it to popular accountability through increased transparency). Without this all you will get is a new song with an old singer, preaching from the bully pulpit about moderation' in the most immoderate way possible, transforming tolerance into a new dogma whose adherents alone will go to heaven while the extremist will be consigned to hell.

Absolute musts in this regard include legislation that encourages think-tanks and research centers, even if funded from abroad or established by foreigners. These are the veritable brains trust that will both employ the unemployed certificate holders – who are the chief recruits of Islamists – and help people here figure out what's wrong with the economy and polity and help get it fixed. Another must involves getting the publishing industry out of its current fix. The impossibility of making a living from writing is chocking the life out of high culture in the Arab world. Nothing sells except sensationalism (celebrities and sex scandals), cookbooks, archaic religious and literary texts and books on fortune telling, not to forget conspiracy trash about the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

We should also be open minded and merciful, giving the Arab Other the chance to reintegrate itself with the Self but, bearing in mind that if it refuses, then it is up to the foreign Other, who helped put these people in power in the first place, to clean up their own mess. We don't want another repeat of the Saddam execution, about whose vengeful' character even George W.

Bush was forced to express reservations, (despite his record as governor of Texas). Thanks to the transparently sectarian motives of the executioners, and the timing of the lynching, Saddam's ghost may haunt us as he goes down in Arab history as a Sunni martyr. As my friend suggested to me, Saddam should have been kept alive to be subjected to a battery of psychological texts, used as a case study of Arab dictatorship: Otherness'.

Ultimately a great deal of this depends on a return to interventionist Keynesian economics. While this may seem unfeasible in the near future, given the hold of neo-liberalism in Western power centers and globally, it is quite feasible in the Arab world. Ideally, one should be talking to everyone in the West, chiefly the West's own alienated Self – opposition parties, unions, minority groups, human rights organizations, charities, academics, NGOs, etc. – but as dialogues with the Vatican have demonstrated in the past, it is equally important to talk to the decision-makers too. They hold the key to economic decision-making, after all!

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The Pope And The Ethics Of Exclusion

By | 2007: Vol. 6, No. 3-4

A move is being made by many 'Christian' thinkers and political actors to paint Islam and, thus European Muslims, as inherently violent. The recent comments of Pope Benedict XVI may be seen as part of a renewed anti-Muslim discourse used to draw together and defend the heritage of 'Christian Europe'. How should the Left respond to such a strategy of portraying Islam as unreasonable and violent and Christianity as reasonable and non-violent? One way is to engage directly with the religious concepts mobilised by the Pope, to question his portrayal of the relationship between reason, violence and ethics as a means of undercutting his rhetoric. Such an approach might also help us to think through some of the presuppositions of our own ethical demands and the way we relate to the nature of post-secular conflict more generally.

Wayward Comments

On the 12th September 2006, a day not very far from a date etched into many of our memories, the current Pope, Benedict XVI, gave a speech in Germany. This speech had many Muslims in uproar, and left many others questioning the Catholic Church's official approach to Islam, religious tolerance and inter-faith communication more generally. The controversy was such that the Pope was obliged to offer points of clarification and something close to an apology.

In giving a speech within the context of a German university, Pope Benedict addressed generally the topic of the relation between 'faith and reason' and introduced this theme by recounting a dialogue between a Medieval Byzantine Emperor, Manuel II and a so-called "Persian interlocutor".[1] As a spokesperson for the Pope has subsequently claimed, the Pope had used the reading of this dialogue as a means of reflecting in an "academic context" upon the theme of the "relationship between religion and violence in general", with the conclusion of a "clear and radical rejection of the religious motivation of violence, from whatever side it may come".[2] We might reserve our judgment upon the Pope's purpose for recounting this dialogue, whether it was academic, strategic or otherwise, and consider for the moment the content of the now notorious dialogue as recounted by the Pope.

Pope Benedict recounts a moment in the seventh conversation which touches upon the theme of 'holy war'. The Pope notes that the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II addresses his Persian interlocutor with "startling brusqueness" on the central question of the relation between religion and violence in general. The Emperor says: "Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to

spread by the sword the faith he preached". Pope Benedict argues that Emperor Manuel, after having expressed himself so forcefully, goes on to explain in detail the reasons why spreading the faith through violence is something unreasonable. This involves the argument that violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul. "God", Emperor Manuel says:

(I)s not pleased by blood – and not acting reasonably is contrary to God's nature. Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and to reason properly, without violence and threats … To convince a reasonable soul, one does not need a strong arm or weapons of any kind, or any other means of threatening a person with death.

Pope Benedict goes on to claim that the decisive statement in this argument against violent conversion is that: "not to act in accordance with reason is contrary to God's nature". To which, drawing upon the modern editor of the dialogue (Theodore Khoury), he suggests, is self-evident to the Byzantine Emperor influenced by Greek philosophy, but this however, is not apparently so evident to what the Pope refers to as, "Muslim teaching" – of which he claims contains the conception that "God is absolutely transcendent" and therefore, not bound up with human categories, or even that of rationality.

For Pope Benedict, this supposed distinction is key, and the rest of his lecture is an extrapolation of a relationship shared between Greek philosophy and Christian thinking – the equating of God's nature with the *logos*. Pope Benedict quotes approvingly then, the line in the Gospel of John (1:1) – 'In the beginning was the *logos*' – noting that here the *logos* is for us not simply the 'word', but also, 'reason'. For Benedict then, Christian faith and reason are intertwined. His quotation of Emperor Manuell II is to affirm the argument that religious faith begins with and is to be spread by, reason, and not by violence – that is, by reasoning, communication, enlightenment, and by love.

Yet, while this line sounds at first convincing, or at least appeals to the ear, there is something more, something amiss here, something is rotten in this account, something stinks. At a surface level there involves a particular historical hypocrisy. This is perhaps bad enough, but there is something more, something about the all too neat division between reason, on the one hand, and violence on the other, which I find unsettling and which gives ground for further investigation.

Misunderstanding and Hypocrisy

What might initially be amiss within the Pope's comments? While the Pope does mention one central injunction given in the *Qur'an* – that "There is no compulsion in religion" (*Qur'an* 2:256). He, however, still presents a very limited, distorted and reductionist account of Islam and gives no reference the multiple historical traditions of Islamic thinking – or to the continued plurality of perspectives within Islam upon the question of the relation between the reason and divine.

One element that is troubling about the Pope's depiction of Islam is the manner in which he

sets up a dichotomy containing Greek philosophy, Christianity and the *logos* on the one side, and Islam on the other. The Pope takes one particular account given by a Muslim thinker – Ibn Hazn – that God is absolutely transcendent, beyond our categories, beyond rationality – and portrays the whole of Islam as adopting this position. Such a move is erroneous, naïve and in bad faith. It is akin to one pointing to a particular Christian thinker, say Origen, or Joseph Smith Jr.(the founder of the Mormons), and claiming that either of their accounts of the relation between reason and the divine are representative of the whole of Christian thinking. No decent Christian theologian would make such a blatant error in ignoring the plurality of theological conceptions within their own tradition of thinking, so why should it be okay to speak in such a manner about another faith?

Through building such a sharp dichotomy between the *logos* or reason, apparently shared by Greek philosophy and Christianity but not by what the Pope ambiguously calls "Muslim teaching", Pope Benedict erases, silences, distorts and suppresses at least 500 years of Islamic thought which engaged with and developed the notion of the *logos* of post-Socratic Greek philosophy. Major figures of the Islamic enlightenment, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), not to mention the Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides, are completed ignored by the Pope's account. These philosophers, who were also men of deep faith, and the many others who preceded and followed them, (including Muslim philosophers of the present) thought through precisely this question discussed by the Pope – the relation between God and the *logos*, between the divine and reason. While many of these thinkers have been marginalised by mainstream Islam, their historical importance should not be forgotten, and there is good reason to re-emphasise their teachings in response to dogmatism and religious fundamentalism.

Such figures are also historically important to Medieval Christianity's re-engagement with Greek philosophy which took place through the mediation of Islamic scholarship and via a critical reflection upon the relationship between reason and the divine, laid out by the scholars of the Islamic enlightenment. The cross-over of ideas between the Islamic and Christian worlds was central to a post-Roman Christian heritage. To not acknowledge this, and to repress it, as Pope Benedict has done, is to not only live within a world of historical abstraction, but to ignore the movement and sharing of ideas between cultures and religions that is at the heart of modern conceptions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

While the Pope's comments are unsettling they are not uncommon. His portrayal of Christianity as the religion that is of the *logos*, the religion of reason, is placed in sharp contrast with his depiction of Islam as the religion which shuns the *logos*, the religion of unreason, the unreasonable religion'. Such a depiction, as clearly pointed out by Edward Said[3] over twenty years ago, has been typical of a dominant Western, Christian attitude towards the Islamic world which was used to justify and legitimate the colonisation of the Middle East by Europeans and United States Americans.[4] The Pope's portrayal of Islam as the religion of unreason follows in the footsteps of countless Christian and secular Europeans and United States Americans who have painted the Muslim as irrational, stupid, unreasonable, uncivilised, violent, dirty and so on. The Pope's move is an old and typical move, one which portrays the

universe as cleaved into two, reason against unreason, civilisation against barbarism. There is an old colonial voice emerging from the Pope's robes, one which is mobilised now in the climate of the so-called 'war on terror' and the ever-louder calls from both Social Democrats and Conservatives in Europe to hold onto and affirm so-called 'Christian values' against the cultural threats of non-white immigrants from the various parts of the Islamic world.

What is perhaps most disturbing within the Pope's speech was his perpetuation of a thoroughly medieval prejudice that Islam is and was a religion 'spread by the sword'. Now while Pope Benedict has subsequently attempted to distance himself from the content of his quotation of Manuel II, the implication of using this quote without caution, or direct criticism, perpetuates the erroneous view that Islam is a religion spread by violence. This is an old prejudice and while the Pope has distanced himself from it he has not directly refuted it. Rather, his failure to talk about the historical violence carried out by religious believers and to simply attribute this violence to "cultural limitations" is a mark of theological inadequacy and historical hypocrisy.

If Pope Benedict was to have seriously engaged with the question of the relation between violence and religion this would have to begin with, I would suggest, in the least, two points of examination. Firstly, with an analysis of the context and rationale of any acts of violence attributed to the prophets of Judaism, Christianity and Islam – whether this be the throwing of the money lenders out of the Temple in Jerusalem, or, of the defence of Medina. Secondly, such an examination would have to involve an honest acknowledgement of the violence committed historically by religious institutions and their believers. For Pope Benedict this would necessarily have to involve an open acknowledgment of the massive violence of the Crusades, the re-conquest of southern Spain, the invasion and colonisation of Central and South America and an institutional silence within the highest levels of the Catholic Church during the genocide of the Jews of Europe. If the Pope was to take the question of the relation between violence and religion seriously, to investigate it seriously in the name of reason, then he would have to ask these hard questions and he would have to recognise and face up to a large number of highly uncomfortable historical facts.

Yet, Pope Benedict has not taken this question seriously, he has merely engaged in an exercise of mud slinging against the world of Islam and has participated in the expression of European prejudice against non-European religious belief. This attitude is not one of inter-faith dialogue, nor of open, unprejudiced debate in the name of reason. Rather, the attitude, marked by prejudice and aggression shares far too many uncomfortable resonances with earlier Christian violent actors, the Crusaders and Conquistadors. And while the hypocrisy of Pope Benedict's comments has been infinite – the depth of his apologies has been particularly shallow.

Violence and Reason

While holding onto these criticisms of Pope Benedict's comments I would like to push on a little further into one question opened by the Pope, that of the relation between reason, religion and violence. The assumption made by Pope Benedict, is one that has been echoed by many religious and secular thinkers within recent times: that is, violence is contrary to faith and

reason. The assumption is that violence is an exception, an aberration, and that it is opposed to the non-violent ethos of love within faith, and non-violent communication or dialogue within reason. The idea is quite beautiful, but is it a correct representation of either faith or reason – might not each contain degrees of violence? Or, at least, might not an ethics of love, one which sits at the intersection of faith and reason, contain a violence which we too often overlook? Perhaps there is a certain degree of violence contained within love, a violence sitting within the intersection of faith and reason. I call this violence the *ethics of exclusion*, and aspects of this can be seen within two prominent religious injunctions shared by Christianity and Islam.

The injunction, 'Thou shalt not kill' (*Exodus* 20:13), might be considered as a general prohibition upon killing, a prohibition against murder, a prohibition perhaps even against violence in general. The injunction may be thought in one sense to be an expression of an attitude towards non-violence stemming from and attributed to the divine, the *logos* or reason of the divine, given in the quotation of Emperor Manuel, that "God", "is not pleased by blood – and not acting reasonably is contrary to God's nature". Yet, does this injunction involve an absolute prohibition upon killing and violence? There are of course multiple and conflicting answers to this question, and I am not pretending here to offer the definitive solution.

Yet, in thinking about this question some comments by Augustine are relevant, and have been highly influential over many Christians and those who inherit Western traditions of law and ethics influenced by aspects of Christianity. For Augustine, the commandment against killing is not absolute. Rather, he argues that "divine authority itself has made certain exceptions to the rule that it is not lawful to kill men".[5] For Augustine, he who is commanded by God to kill, such as the commandment by God to Abraham that he kill his son, is excepted from the prohibition upon killing. Further, those who wage wars under public authority, or maintain peace and civil order against crime and civil war, may kill and use violence without acting in contradiction of the injunction 'Thou shalt not kill'. Furthermore, for Augustine, and for the majority of Christians, the killing of plants and animals is exempted from this general prohibition.

The prohibition upon killing becomes even more complicated when considered in light of the injunction – 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' (*Matthew*, 22:39). While at first glance one would normally assume that the notion of love has little to do with violence and killing, a brief extrapolation of the concept shows this not to be the case. One can quite easily think of the notion of a political community that is guided by an ethic of love – love as the ethic which binds humans together and brings them closer to the divine through the activity of ethical behaviour. Such an ethic of love involves also notions of protection, notions of care for the weak, the poor, the social outcasts, the marginalised, and as such it is a radical ethic of inclusion. And yet, such an ethic also necessitates the *defence* of those who are loved against those who may threaten or do violence to them.[6]

The injunction to love thy neighbour involves the injunction to help one's neighbour against those who might do violence to them. So in the situation where the neighbour is injured by crime, love may necessitate the provision of public order, peace and security and maybe even

punishment against those who break the civil law. In the situation where the neighbour is attacked by an enemy, the injunction to love might even involve going to war to assist and defend one's neighbour, and in such a situation killing and violence may be a practical and necessary outcome of the ethical injunction to love. This is not to say that the use of violence is necessary, in a situation of conflict there may be other methods of defending or safeguarding the neighbour. However, there remains a certain potentiality for violence contained within the concept of love and a certain aspect of its necessity it buried deep within the normative structure of the concept.

One way of thinking about the ethics of exclusion, at least in its relation to love, might be to think of it as the *failure of love*. That is, love sets out an ethical demand that we should embrace, help and care for our neighbour. However, in practice each human individual, or each institution, because each is limited and finite, can only extend its love, in space and time, to a limited and discreet set of others. In this respect, while the demand of love may be infinite, its practice might only be finite, and thus, as a result of finitude, one neighbour is left behind, left out, excluded, left to go hungry, or left to stand at the border or outside the city wall.

However, to split love and ethics in this way might be to discount the exclusionary aspect, the violent aspect of love, to push it towards the outer boundaries of the concept of love itself and thus to consider it as only a pragmatic afterthought. Such an approach is politically dangerous. One can do profound violence but justify this after the act by claiming that violence was done with all the good intentions of love. Too often the violence of love is explained away, rendered irrelevant, repressed even, by placing blame upon the wretchedness of finite, human, earthly life. Such an explanation is used all too commonly today to justify the civilian causalities within war – so-called collateral damage'. Those innocents bombed and killed by aggressive war are represented as the failures of love, the people we tried to save through love but killed through error.

Such a rigid dualism between the infinite and the finite, between supposedly pure notions of love and reason on the one hand, and the muddied and violent operation of human practicality on the other, is both conceptually tenuous and ethically irresponsible. By subscribing to such a dualism Pope Benedict is able to wash his hands of the historical violence carried out by Christians and the Catholic Church. For the Pope, the violence of history seems redeemed by the pure idea, the pure *logos*, and by good intentions' directed towards such an end.

This dualism, either within theology or within secular ethics, should be rejected. The relation between reason, ethics and violence is not properly understood if we think of an ethical concept, such as love, as being pure in theory, within a realm of pure reason, but which subsequently becomes impure, dirtied, complicated and violent in the move from theory to practice. The better approach is to think about the nature of normative demands within ethical concepts and to think about the conflicts, or what might be called *normative contradictions*, that occur within reason, within the *logos*. That is, within every ethical norm, such as love, there resides a demand that it be realised – this demand is an infinite demand, an infinite potentiality. Also contained within this normative demand is the potentiality for violence. The

potentiality for violence occurs within thought, within reason, and can be seen to occur as soon as the norm, say love, is directed or extended towards distinct objects. At the level of reason, at the level of only thinking in our heads or on paper, this violence is not yet real physical violence; it is only yet the potentiality for violence. Yet, this potentiality is contained within the ethical concept itself, it is a certain potentiality for violence contained within the word.

A certain sense of this might be seen to be present within a parable about the story of the fall of Satan (*Iblis*) in the *Qur'an* (2:34). The story goes that Satan formerly an angel (or a *jinni* in other accounts) was commanded by God to prostrate or bow down before the newly created Adam. Satan refused to prostrate himself before Adam and was subsequently thrown out of heaven. The standard account is that Satan was punished for his arrogance and for his disobedience to God. One Sufi reinterpretation of this story is that Satan, out of all of the angels was the only one who followed the Islamic notion that there is only one God. Hence, that one should only prostrate oneself before God and one should not bow down to idols, or set other beings near or on the level of God. On this counter interpretation Satan attempted to fulfil the word of God but this brought him into contradiction with the word of God.

In part the story of Satan is representative of the sense of normative contradiction contained within reason, within the logos, which as irreconcilable contains the potentiality for violence within it. It is this parable of Satan which paints a much clearer picture of the relationship between reason, faith and violence. Conflict and violence are contained within reason – within divine reason itself. Here there is no split world; violence is not separated off from a pure reason by the introduction of finitude, human arrogance, or human error as is the case of the narrative of the fall of man through sin. Rather, the error is already contained within reason and it is this point we need to hold onto if we are properly to come to terms with the relation between reason, faith and violence.

Contemporary Relevance

So how might the notion of the ethics of exclusion help us think about contemporary political questions such as the so-called 'war on terror' or the West's relationship with the multiple worlds and traditions grouped under the broad heading of 'Islam'? Well, we should reject the type of story that is becoming increasingly popular in many circles, not just conservative, but also liberal-democratic and social democratic, that Islam is a religion of violence while Christianity is a religion of non-violence. One way of rejecting this false dichotomy is, contra Pope Benedict, to attempt take an unbiased, empirical view of history, to accept the violence performed by many different religious and secular actors throughout history.

Yet, such an approach may not be enough, because the violence of the past, whether this be carried out by Jews, Christians, Muslims, or by the secular modern state, is almost always justified and legitimated after the event by many of our ethical conceptions. That is, empirical violence of the past is all too easily re-described, re-legitimated, re-narrated as having ethical legitimacy. Too often historical and contemporary violence is portrayed as the failure of love; painted as well-intentioned but unplanned violence, the result of error and human limitation.

The colonial wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are often painted this way. For many, their violence is redeemed by love, and the answer is always to be more ethical, to act in accordance with love, regardless of the violence which this produces.

Instead of such a view what is required is an effort to hold onto the violence of love – the violence contained within reason, ethics and the operation of normative contradiction. This violence occurring as a potentiality should not be separated from a pure reason, ethics or love. Rather, these three need to be re-conceptualised by a focus and emphasis upon the role and status of the potentiality of violence contained within them.[7] Such an approach to the thinking about ethics is needed, especially so, when attempting to come to terms with the nature of post-secular violence trampling upon the present.

For many on the Left, such an engagement with the operation of religious concepts, as I have attempted to sketch out here through the constellation of reason, violence and love, appears as a form of intellectual regression. However, by taking such a stance the Left loses a field of engagement that might otherwise be used to refute on their own terms many of the religious arguments put by institutional figures such as the Pope, and those made by political figures who attempt to hold onto the religious-moral higher ground as a means of countering their disastrous and violent policies within empirical-social reality. Further, by engaging with some of the concepts and forms of thinking characteristic of what can be termed – post-secular reason – the Left opens itself to a wider dialogue with members of the Islamic world who share many of the ethical and political goals central to the struggle against imperialist war and global capitalism. We can take the differing critiques of religion given by Hegel, Feuerbach and Marx seriously, and still engage critically with the content of religious concepts that are used to mobilise millions of religious actors around the world. Many on the Left are already doing this and as long as we do not lose ourselves completely within religious concepts the project of such an engagement can be a productive one.

Notes

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[1] Pope Benedict XVI, “Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections”, Lecture Presented to the Aula Magna of the University of Regensburg, Tuesday, 12 September 2006. http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2006/september.

[2] Statement of Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisco Bertone. http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk.

[3] Said, E.W. *Orientalism*, (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1978).

[4] The term United States Americans’ is a clunky term, but necessary in distinguishing the population of the USA from those many other populations that make up the continents of North

and South America.

[5] Augustine, *City of God against the Pagans*, Dyson, R.W. tr. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 33, I, 21.

[6] This war of love' is taken up by the just war' tradition.

[7] I try to outline a more thorough account of this relation in my forthcoming book: *War and Order*.

Tarik Kochi *is Lecturer at the School of Law, Queens University Belfast.*

From Pericles To Petraeus?

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No one should have been surprised that general Petraeus and ambassador Crocker's presentation to the House of Representatives was scheduled for September 11, exactly six years after the fall of the World Trade Center. What was perhaps surprising was that, while the public was waiting for this report, the president had managed to hold at bay the new (and fragile) democratic majority, preventing it from using the August break to mobilize a public opinion that is clearly tired and discouraged by an adventure that has lasted more than four years. The goals that are supposed to be attained are constantly changing as the end of the war recedes from year to year. Yet it was George Bush who used the month of August to take to the offensive. Whereas his critics had compared the quagmire in Iraq to the earlier one in Vietnam, the president began to remind people that the precipitous retreat from Vietnam had added new words to the political vocabulary-*boat people* in Vietnam, *killing fields* in Cambodia. Added to the constantly repeated threat of terrorism on the home front, Bush's new use of the Vietnam analogy has to be understood as part of a longer term strategy.

In order to see what is at issue, it is useful to step back from the immediate issues. That is one advantage of writing for a foreign public: you're forced to condense your ideas, to go to the essence, and above all to avoid the polemical temptation of satisfying your emotions at the cost of clouding your judgement. That's what I did in the "op ed" that I published in *Ouest-France* on September 10th, which serves as the basis for this enlarged English version.[1] I'm adding here to that argument some introductory remarks that take into account Bush's Address to the Nation of September 13; and I will conclude with some reflections on the longer-term implications of Bush's politics.

I

Bush's Address to the Nation was the eighth such speech in which he has used a televised speech to explain the political choices he has made concerning Iraq. His first speech (of March 19, 2003) announced the invasion, which he said was justified by the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD's) in the hands of a dictator. It was followed quickly (on May 1, 2003) by the proclamation of a rapid victory that would permit the reconstruction of a country in which liberty would soon triumph. A year later (on April 13, 2004), conditions had worsened; now the speech had to deny that there was in fact a civil war in Iraq while again promising the inevitable progress of democratic freedom. In the meanwhile, in November 2004, George Bush was re-elected in spite of the doubts that were increasing among the public. The candidate waged a volontarist campaign in which he used the threat of terrorist attacks along with a series of vicious attacks on the democratic candidate, who was accused of being a "flip-flopper" who would be incapable of taking the strict measures necessary to prevent threats to the homeland.

The situation continued to worsen, however, and the series of Addresses to the Nation continued as well. The promise of victory was repeated in the speech of December 18, 2005, but nine months later the tone changed radically during the Congressional campaign of 2006. The president no longer stressed the reconstruction of a democratic Iraq but-five years after 9/11-he once again insisted on the specter of a terrorism that would strike us at home if we were to retreat from Iraq. But this time, the rhetoric didn't work; the democrats won both houses of Congress, and the president was forced to reckon with the new situation. Thus, his Speech of January 10, 2007 announced a new strategy for Iraq, while redefining what "victory" would mean. He explained that he would send reinforcements that would help the Iraqis to take control of their capital, Baghdad, giving political space for the organization of a national government. Three months later, March 19 2007, he once again appealed to the nation, repeating his hope that the 30,000 troops dispatched in the "surge" were creating the breathing space that would permit the Maliki government to reach the "benchmarks" that had been set by Congress as the condition for continued American support in the future. In the meanwhile, his message to the public was summarized in one word, "patience."

The public reaction to the Petraeus-Crocker report, which was supposed to present an evaluation of the results of the "surge," was mixed. The public is tired of an engagement that doesn't seem anywhere near its end-but which doesn't really affect it directly, in spite of the deaths of over 3,700 soldiers (more than the total of those who died in the attacks of 9/11!), the wounding of a large number of others (of whom nearly no one speaks), and the expenditure of unbelievable amounts of money to maintain the troops, their equipment and supplies. The hearings in the House were introduced by Ike Skelton of Missouri, who made the absolutely pertinent observation that "our constitutional responsibility is to insure that the American military forces can deter and, if necessary, vanquish any threat to our interests… But the soldiers stationed in Iraq cannot be used elsewhere."[2] It was downhill from there, for the most part. The next day, when he appeared before the Senate, general Petraeus was unable to slip around the crucial question-"Does the war in Iraq increase Americans' security?" His admission that "In fact, I don't know the answer," never got the follow up it deserved.

The president's Address the following evening did not provide any answers either. The (or most of the) troops sent during the "surge" will be coming home next spring; after that there will be a new evaluation by the military commanders. That was no real surprise, since it was made necessary by material constraints on men and machinery. What was perhaps surprising was that George Bush, "the decider," felt no need to even refer to the Congressional debate on the occasion of the Petraeus-Crocker report.

II[3]

In November 2006, one might have thought that the democrats' electoral victory, along with the publication of the Baker-Hamilton report, was the prelude to a reduction or pull-out of American forces in Iraq, along with the opening of a new diplomatic track. But the opposite occurred: 30,000 new troops were sent as part of the surge. The only concession made to the democrats was that the commander of American forces in Iraq, David Petraeus, and the

ambassador in Baghdad, Ryan Crocker, will present to Congress this week [i.e., September 11 and 12] their report on the military and political situation.

General Petraeus became known to the public for his successes during the occupation of Mossoul in 2004. He's a skillful orator, capable of dressing his message well, strutting his medals and proud of his Princeton Ph.D. But he is not above criticism. In an op ed published in the *Washington Post* six weeks before the 2004 elections, he spoke of "tangible progress" and of a "reversal of the situation" in Iraq. One might wonder whether he has succeeded in the meanwhile in erasing the memory of this clear support of the Bush candidacy.

It is rather strange that an America that is so proud of its democracy, puts its faith in a general for making a decision of such importance.[4] George Bush justifies that anti-political choice by saying that "this decision will be based on a cold evaluation by our military commanders rather than on a nervous reaction by the politicians in Washington." He doesn't mention the opinion of the American public as having any weight in the matter.

There is nonetheless a troubling precedent for this faith. I refer of course to the speech of Colin Powell at the United Nations in 2003. That seasoned general, who benefited from an impeccable reputation, was at the time the Secretary of State of George Bush. Saddam Hussein, Powell assured his listeners, possessed weapons of mass destruction that he would not hesitate to use if he was not hit first by a preventive strike. The results of Powell's assurances are, alas, too well known to need further comment-even if all the failures in Iraq can hardly be laid at the door of the former Secretary of State, who soldiered on through the end of Bush's first term, even while keeping his criticisms to himself.

American political leaders cannot avoid the hard realities. Even if the surge seems to be working at least in some provinces, the army is at the brink of exhaustion. For technical reasons, it will be necessary to begin to draw down the forces in Iraq next April-unless one wants to re-introduce the draft, a choice that would lead to a real anti-war movement, more like the one of Vietnam days.

During his surprise visit to Iraq at the beginning of September, Bush avoided Baghdad, preferring to visit a base in Anbar province, a region where Sunni leaders, disgusted by the extremism of the so-called Al Qaeda in Iraq, have formed an alliance with the American forces. The message he was conveying was that the future would no longer be hostage to the incompetent leaders in Baghdad, who are too concerned with their religious quarrels and their mafioso turf wars to create a stable government. From this point of view, the Congress would no longer have any excuse to refuse the 50 billion supplementary dollars requested by the White House.

But there is another striking fact that challenges Bush's plans: the construction of the American embassy in Baghdad. This enormous project will be roughly the size of Vatican City; it will contain 21 buildings on some 104 acres of land, including 619 one-bedroom apartments, a gym and swimming pool facility, as well as (American) restaurants. The whole complex will

be surrounded by a wall that will be 16 feet deep. And of course, given the state of the infrastructure in Iraq, the embassy will generate its own water and electricity. The cost of this immense project is to be roughly 592 million dollars.

There is no need to underline the effect that the construction of this massive abode for the American proconsuls in the region will have not only on Iraqis but on their neighbors. One does not construct such a fortress without intending to stay for a good length of time.

Yet one can ask what use an embassy built with the intention of acting in a centralized country will have in present-day Iraq. Given that American diplomats cannot leave the infamous Green Zone without armed escorts, how will they be able to follow and help along the process of decentralisation that Bush is now proposing. It is well known that a large part of the civilian aid sent to Iraq does not reach its intended recipients due to the lack of security. In addition, closed behind their thick walls, American diplomats will hardly be able to practice a kind of public diplomacy that would permit the opening of communications among the Iraqi factions.

Whatever the Petraeus report proposes, and whatever the decisions made by a Congress that is run by a (very small) democratic majority, that embassy is the symbol of the lack of a coherent politics. Perhaps someone should remind Bush of the advice given by Vermont senator George Aiken to Lyndon Johnson during the Vietnam war: Declare victory and leave!

III

Rather than follow the wise advice of his various advisers and study commissions, the president who calls himself solipsistically the Decider, will follow his own adventure as far and as long as he can. But he now openly accepts the fact that the Iraq affair "will continue beyond my presidency." This is a remarkable admission. How many times did he promise victory, and how many times did he find rhetorical means to put off its achievement? Indeed, the term "victory" was replaced in his recent speech by the term "success,' which he used thirteen times during that 15 minute allocution. In effect, the president is admitting his weakness; he wipes clean his hands of the future, and passes to his successor the necessity to fulfill Colin Powell's so-called "Pottery Barn imperative": you broke it, you pay for it…

Once again, George Bush justified his political decision by appealing to the authority of the armed forces experts, accepting general Petraeus' request to wait another six months before evaluating again the results of the surge. He didn't speak at all about the political failures of the Iraqi government, nor of the daily life of the civilian population in a country that is increasingly wounded and divided. All that he wants to do, apparently, is to put off the point at which final decisions must be made. One might wonder whether, somewhere in that soul which is so convinced of the justice of his cause, he harbors the hope that a miracle will redeem his wild bet. Perhaps that's why he repeated several times the phrase, "it is never too late…" But psychology cannot replace political analysis. George Bush is what he is, but the presidency-and above all the future of the republican party-are not identical with him.

Two other interpretations of the president's strategy are worth considering. The first builds on

the analogy with Vietnam. If Bush, after denying its relevance for so long, began to use the comparison to his own advantage during the summer vacation, the reason is not that he suddenly feels pity for the potential victims of an American withdrawal. (In fact, the American treatment of both internal and external refugees is disgraceful, and the fact that no provision has been made for visas for Iraqis who have worked with the Americans is scandalous.) What more likely happened is that the president's political advisers pointed out to him that the republican party had drawn credit and credibility by appealing to the myth that the domestic opposition is to blame for the withdrawal of an army that was in the process of defeating the Vietcong. They used the old story of the knife-in-the-back wielded by a fifth column (the *Dolchstosslegende* that was so effective for the right wing forces in Germany after World War I) to discredit their opponents.[5] In this way, Bush's republican advisors seem to be assuming that despite the nearly inevitable defeat in 2008, they will have well prepared their revenge in 2012-and are all the more assured of success insofar as there are no simple solutions to the Iraqi imbroglio.

This first interpretation assumes that a democrat elected in 2008 would withdraw quickly and without hesitation from Iraq.[6] But, within this framework, it becomes important to consider the implications of that gigantic embassy that is being build in Baghdad. It is strange that neither the media nor the politicians have talked about it. It's as if no one is willing to admit the symbolic, and real, weight of that edifice. The America that it represents has become a sort of new Rome, an imperial republic that is forced to make geo-political choices that conflict with the values that are the very foundation of its power. The classic historical experience is being repeated. Every high school graduate knows the famous Funeral Oration that Pericles delivered at the end of the first year of the long Peloponnesian War in praise of the Athenian democracy. But that student probably never read the final discourse of the great man of Athenian democracy. Speaking to a people who were tired of a war that seemed to go on and on, Pericles warned his fellow citizens: "What you hold is, to speak frankly, a despotism; perhaps it was wrong to take it, but to let it go is unsafe."[7] One might well say that Pericles was holding up a mirror to Americans who are too idealistic to recognize the "hard realities" in Iraq.

Many commentators speak of the ideological hegemony of the neo-conservatives who have become crusaders for democracy. But that description hardly fits men like Dick Cheney or Donald Rumsfeld. They are realists, used to the practice of geo-politics and indifferent to the importance of values. For a long time, I refused to accept the reductive notion that the invasion of Iraq was motivated by petroleum interests.[8] I still think that there were other motivations for the American action, certain of which remain valid.[9] Nonetheless, I keep coming back to that imposing embassy that brings back to mind once again the fate of the classical republics. Our leaders are not comparable to Pericles-although certain of them may think of themselves as Caesars-but they seem to have recognized that the future of the *Pax Americana* depends on controlling a crucial geo-political region. But what they have not recognized is that they are playing all-or-nothing. And that it will be necessary, if things go badly, that they be able to find support from a public that recognizes its own values in their adventure.

George Bush's Address to the Nation of September 13 was in fact aimed at only a small part of that nation-the "moderate" republicans who would be tempted to join with the democrats to oppose a presidential veto of a more realistic strategy in Iraq. This tactical goal was easily achieved since the democrats are divided, and will remain divided as long as the primaries continue to tempt one or another candidate or group to up the ante rather than discuss a longer term strategy.[10] No doubt Bush's (non)political way of kicking the can down the road will be accepted, even though it proposes simply the continuation of an impossible task.

But there remains that residence of the American proconsuls being constructed in Baghdad. What will be its future? And that of Iraq? And that of our republic?

(Translated by the author from the French original)

Notes

[1] *Ouest-France*, which is published in Rennes, is the largest circulation daily newspaper in France, reaching some 800,000 paid readers. It has a large number of regional editions, and appeals to a wide-ranging and more popular public than the better known Parisian press. It publishes its "op eds" (called "point de vue") on page one. The text that I am translating here builds from my shorter essay, and was written for publication in the monthly journal *Esprit*, where it will appear in October.

[2] I am translating this quotation back from my French version of it, being unable to find the original.

[3] This second part of the essay translates the *Ouest-France* op-ed. The editors' title for the piece stressed the "hard realities" of Iraq. I've made some minor changes for an American public more familiar with the situation.

[4] In fact, while the American public might trust its generals, George Bush seems to have confidence only in those who conform to his own prejudices, dismissing contrary advice for example about the number of troops to control Iraq offered by among others the former commander of US forces, general Shinseki. I'll return to this below.

[5] The militant web-left, organized by *Moveon.com* has sadly lent its credibility to this maneuver by publishing a full page ad in the *New York Times*, denouncing general *Betray-us*-a rather sophomoric play on the name of general Petraeus. The right immediately took advantage of this gift that accredits its own scenario.

[6] It will certainly be necessary to act quickly in order to have time to regain popular favor before the next elections. The next president might succeed at this insofar as he (or she) can play on the really existing divisions within the army between those who, like Petraeus, think that in the long run victory is possible, and those who recognize that the military machine is exhausted and that it needs time in order to rebuild itself to be ready to confront eventual

challenges in the future. As mentioned above, the army is not monolithic-although the idea that a critical left politics should lean on it for support is no more "democratic" than the use that Bush has made of Petraeus.

[7] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book II, 63 (Livingston translation).

[8] There was a tell-tale sign, nonetheless. The original title of the invasion was to be "Operation Iraqi Liberty," but someone at the Pentagon seems to have noted that the resulting acronym would be OIL. As a result, we are living still with "Operation Iraqi Freedom." It might be noted that in his recent autobiography, Allen Greenspan, who presided for 18 years over the Federal Reserve, did not feel the need to justify his flat statement that he is sad to recognize that it was politically difficult to admit what everyone knew: the war in Iraq concerns above all oil.

[9] Namely: the refusal of a dictatorship that had more than a passing resemblance to totalitarianism, and above all the hope for democratization in a country with a strong middle class tradition could serve as the basis for the emergence of an active civil society. I made that argument as the debate about the invasion was heating up in the spring of 2003. C.f., "Sortir la gauche de la critique morale," published in *Esprit* and translated in the German bi-monthly *Kommune*, both 2003. Unfortunately, after four years of occupation, civil war and mafias disguised as religious sects, that middle class is either in (internal or external) exile or else simply crushed by the rude life-conditions in which it finds itself. I've reconsidered the "democratization" argument in a review essay on "Paul Berman's Generational *Bildungsroman*" in *Constellations,* Volume 14, No. 3, September 2007, pp. 445-453.

[10] It is probably this situation that explains why the public shows more confidence in the judgement of the military than it does in the politicians, in spite of the strong tradition of civilian control.

Life And Work Of Erich Fromm

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Erich Fromm was born on March 23, 1900, in Frankfurt am Main, the only child of Orthodox Jewish parents. He died on March 18, 1980, in Locarno, Switzerland. The world in which Fromm was brought up was directed to traditional learning, to the perfection of man, to spiritual values–goals that were just opposed to the cliché of a successful Jew at that time. His mother, Rosa Krause, had an uncle, a brother of her father, who was a great Talmudist in Posen. He spent his last years in the Liebigstr. 27 in Frankfurt am Main, where Erich Fromm grew up, and became his first Talmudic teacher. When he was 16 he joined a group of students around Nehemia Nobel, the rabbi of the synagogue at Boerneplatz in Frankfurt. Nobel was a gifted preacher and mystic.

When Fromm graduated from the Woehler-Gymnasium in Frankfurt he started to study law at Frankfurt University; but law did not really satisfy him enough because he didn't want to become a lawyer. In 1919 he went to the University of Heidelberg and began to study sociology with Alfred Weber (Max Weber's brother), philosophy with Heinrich Rickert and psychology with Karl Jaspers.

In addition to these teachers at the University of Heidelberg, Fromm was deeply influenced between 1920 and 1925 by another Talmudic teacher, Salmon Baruch Rabinkov. "Herr Rabinkov", as he was referred to by everybody, was a Russian-born Talmudic teacher, an adherent of Habad Hasidism from Lithuania. Although Rabinkov impressed Fromm much more than his teachers at the university Fromm admired his doctoral father Alfred Weber as "a man of great intellectual power, of great integrity and of hard political conviction for freedom." (Fromm, 1979d, p. 20.)

From the very beginning, Fromm's sociological interest actually was a social-psychological one, addressed to the question of what causes people to think, feel and behave in a uniform way. This was also the focus of his 1922 dissertation under Alfred Weber (cf. Fromm, 1989b): Fromm examined the social psychological function of Jewish law in the community life of the diaspora Jews–the Karaites, in Reform Judaism and in Hasidism. Fromms main interest was a socio-psychological although even at the time of his dissertation he didn't have a developed psychological concept with which he could grasp the psychic function of the religious ethos and other forms of solidarity within the Jewish community.

Religious and non-religious teachings and teachers had a great influence on Fromm. But there was already very early also another major interest, expressed in the psychologically oriented

connoted question: "How is it possible?" His sympathy for the prophets and their messianic visions of the harmonious coexistence of all nations was profoundly shaken by the First World War. "When the war ended in 1918, I was a deeply troubled young man who was obsessed by the question of how war was possible, by the wish to understand the irrationality of human mass behavior, by a passionate desire for peace and international understanding. More, I had become deeply suspicious of all official ideologies and declarations, and filled with the conviction 'of all one must doubt.'" (Fromm, 1962a, pp. 6-7)

Six years later, psychoanalysis offered Fromm an answer to the question "How is it possible?" Fromm was introduced to psychoanalysis by his friend Frieda Reichmann, with whom he opened a psychoanalytically oriented sanatorium in Heidelberg in 1924. She conducted his first didactic analysis, and in 1926 they were married. He had further analyses with Wilhelm Wittemberg in Munich, with Karl Landauer in Frankfurt and with Hanns Sachs in Berlin, where Fromm also finished training in 1930 and opened his own practice. His social psychologically focused interest continued and brought him into contact with the Freudian Marxists Siegfried Bernfeld and Wilhelm Reich at the Berlin Institute.

At the same time that Fromm opened his practice in Berlin, he was appointed by Max Horkheimer to the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt-later known as the "Frankfurt School"–as its chief expert in all questions of psychology and social psychology. Here Fromm became intensively involved with Marxist theories and worked for years–in addition to his practice as therapist–on a socialpsychological field-research project on the unconscious attitudes of working people professing to be politically leftist (cf. Fromm, 1980a).

That Fromm's socialpsychological interest originated in his religious upbringing is evident from his Talmudic teachers as well as from his studies in sociology and his dissertation on Jewish law. But seven years after he had finished his dissertation, Freudian psychoanalysis permitted him a new formulation of his social psychological interest in the language of Freud's theory of the formation of psychic impulses.

Fromm's main interest is in the libidinal structure of the human being as a socialized being. Thus it is mainly a question of those passionate strivings and the unconscious of the socialized individual, as these factors make themselves evident when the unconscious of society is itself the object of study. Then there is a libidinous structure of society, which can be recognized as independent from the socioeconomic situation, since the life experience of the group is determined by the economic, social and political conditions. This means that society has not only a certain economic, social, political and intellectual-cultural structure, but also a libidinal one specific to it.

When Fromm embraced the idea of a socially molded unconscious or an unconscious of society by which each individual is to a large extent predetermined, he defined the correlation of individual and society anew. It was no longer valid to say "here I am and there is society;" but rather, "I am primarily a reflection of society, in that my unconscious is socially determined and I therefore reflect and realize the secret expectations, requirements, wishes, fears, and

strivings of society in my own passionate strivings." In reality, none of the following-not the apparent separation of society and individual, not the apparent separation of conscious and unconscious, not the apparent separation of society and unconscious–actually exist. All of these dimensions are in the social unconscious of every single human being.

This new approach shifts the perspective to the recognition of the dynamics of the unconscious on a social scale and finally leads Fromm completely to downplay Freudian instinct theory in order to avoid giving a predominant position to insights into the this singular libidinal structure, which is not very relevant to the dynamics of the social unconscious.

At the end of *Escape from Freedom* (1941a) Fromm summarizes his new formulations: "We believe that man is primarily a social being, and not, as Freud assumes, primarily self-sufficient and only secondarily in need of others in order to satisfy his instinctual needs. In this sense, we believe that individual psychology is fundamentally social psychology or, in Sullivan's terms, the psychology of interpersonal relationships; the key problem of psychology is that of the particular kind of relatedness of the individual toward the world, not that of satisfaction or frustration of single instinctual desires." (1941a, p. 290)

This re-vision of psychoanalysis also manifested itself in new terminology. Since Fromm used the concept of character for his social psychological insights, he called drive theory "characterology"; drive structure became "character structure," instinctual impulses became "character traits" or simply "passionate strivings"; drive itself is conceptualized as "psychological need", libidinal instinct is now called "psychological" or "existential need" (in contrast to instinctive or physiological needs); the libidinal structure of a society became the "social character," and instead of libido, Fromm, similarly to Jung, now spoke of "psychic energy."

When one surveys Fromm's numerous subsequent writings, one notices that all of his later works are far-reaching explications and modifications that illustrate his very specific approach to the individual as a social being. This holds true for Fromm's concept in the thirties of the authoritarian character (developed ten years before Adorno et al. published *Authoritarian Personality)* and also for his later discoveries. In the forties and fifties he described the "marketing character" and the "organization man" (as Fromm's analysand David Riesman did in sociological terms), and in the sixties he discovered a new orientation of social character: necrophilia, the passion to be attracted by all that is dead and without life (Fromm, 1973a). The foundation for these discoveries was laid in the early thirties when Fromm developed his own sociopsychological approach to man and society.

The coming of the Nazis to power in 1933 forced the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research to emigrate, first to Geneva, Switzerland, and then, in 1934, to Columbia University in New York. After a rather long illness, during which he stayed at Davos, Switzerland, Fromm accepted an invitation from the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute to give a series of lectures in 1933. When the Institute for Social Research found its new home in New York, Fromm moved there and resumed work at the institute while also continuing his psychoanalytic practice. From 1935 to

1939, he was a visiting professor at Columbia. His connection with the Institute for Social Research continued into the late thirties, when Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse came out against his reformulation of the Freudian theory of drives, the latter eventually denouncing him as a "neo-Freudian revisionist" (Marcuse 1955, p. 238).

During the Second World War, Fromm tried to enlighten the American public concerning the real intentions of Nazism. In 1943, he and others founded the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, and Psychology, and from 1946 to 1950 he was chairman of the faculty and chairman of the institute's training committee. Throughout the forties Fromm taught extensively. From 1945 to 1947, he was a professor of psychology at the University of Michigan, and in 1948-49, he was a visiting professor at Yale. From 1941 to 1949, he also was a member of the faculty of Bennington College in Vermont, and in 1948 he became an adjunct professor of psychoanalysis at New York University.

Fromm was married a second time in 1944, to Henny Gurland, a German photographer who witnessed Frankfurt School-member Walter Benjamin's suicide while fleeing from Nazi-occupied France to Spain in 1940. In 1940 Fromm became an American citizen. On the advice of a physician, who stated that his ailing wife would benefit from a more favorable climate, they moved from Bennington to Mexico in 1950.

In Mexico Fromm became a professor at the National Autonomous University in Mexico City, where he established the psychoanalytic section at the medical school. He taught there until 1965, when he became a professor emeritus. Henny died in 1952, and Fromm married Annis Freeman in 1953. Annis was two years younger than Fromm. She was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in Alabama. Trained in anthropology, she was most interested in his social approach to psychology. She planned their house in Cuernavaca, Morelos, where they lived from 1957 to 1974, when they moved to Switzerland.

In addition to his teaching duties in Mexico, Fromm attended to his responsibilities at the William Alanson White Institute in New York, held a position as a professor of psychology at Michigan State University from 1957 to 1961, and was an adjunct professor of psychology at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at New York University after 1962. Despite his extensive teaching activities, he kept up his psychoanalytic practice for more than forty-five years, remained active as a supervisor and teacher of psychoanalysis, and participated in social psychological fieldwork in Mexico.

Since childhood, Fromm had been passionately interested in politics, and in the middle fifties he joined the American Socialist Party and attempted (fruitlessly, as it turned out) to provide it with a new program. Although he recognized that he was temperamentally unsuited to practical politics, he did considerable work to enlighten the American people about the current possibilities and intentions of the Soviet Union. Fromm taught a socialist humanism that rejected both Western capitalism and Soviet Communist socialism and sympathized with the Yugoslav "Praxis" group's interpretation of socialism.

His strongest political interest was the international peace movement. In this, he was motivated by the insight that the present historical situation will decide whether humanity will take rational hold of its destiny or fall victim to destruction through nuclear war. Fromm was a cofounder of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, the most important American peace movement, which not only fought against the atomic arms race but also against the war in Vietnam. His last important political activity was his work on behalf of antiwar candidate Eugene McCarthy during the 1968 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination (see Fromm 1994b).

After 1965, Fromm increasingly concentrated on his writing. Beginning in 1968, he spent the summer months in the exceptionally benign climate of the Tessin, Switzerland, where he moved permanently in 1974. He and Annis took up residence in Muralto, far from the hectic pace of modern life, and it was there that Fromm died on March 18, 1980. Solitude and retirement on the Lago Maggiore did not lessen Fromm's interest in contemporary problems, a fact that is evidenced clearly by his literary productivity during the last years of his life.

As one surveys Fromm's literary output, one is struck by the variety and breadth of his interests and research. 1941 Fromm published his first important monograph in social psychology, *Escape from Freedom.* Based on an analysis of the relation between Protestantism and the development of early capitalism, the work demonstrates the modern individual's incapacity to value his "freedom from" as a freedom to." Instead, Fromm wrote, the modern individual attempts to escape from freedom by placing himself in authoritarian relations of dependency, becoming in the process destructive and conformist. The book's insights into the contemporary situation in Nazi Germany made a considerable impression on the American public.

In the forties Fromm developed a characterology that widens the perspective of Freudian libido theory and its narrow human image, while simultaneously indicating the ethical relevance of the various character orientations. The results of this research found expression in Fromm's important work, *Man for Himself–An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics* (1947a).

The Sane Society, published in 1955, develops further the themes of *Escape from Freedom* (1941a) and *Man for Himself* (1947a). Written from the viewpoint of a humanistic ethic, the book points to the socioeconomic reasons that prevent the realization of the human project. His analysis of the modern capitalist and bureaucratic social structure lays bare the universal phenomenon of alienation that can be overcome only if economic, political, and cultural conditions are fundamentally changed in the direction of a democratic and humanist socialism.

In addition to these three works, with their abundant observations and discoveries, Fromm wrote a number of monographs during the fifties and sixties in which the horizons of his thought emerge more clearly. In 1950, he published a shorter work, *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* in which he discusses his understanding of a humanistic religion as influenced by psychoanalysis and Buddhism in greater detail. *The Forgotten Language,* a discussion of fairy tales, myths, and dreams as universal and revelatory phenomena of human existence, appeared

the following year, in 1951. Fromm's bestseller was the short book, *The Art of Loving*. Using the concept of productive love," Fromm shows the consequences of a humanistic ethics for the understanding of self-love, love of one's neighbor, and love of one's fellow human being. Fromm paid tribute to Freud and Marx in three further books (1959a, 1961b, 1962a), while at the same time attempting to define his position in relation to these seminal modern thinkers. *Marx's Concept of Man* (1961b) is of special significance because it drew the attention of the American public to Marx's early writings, which were published in this book in English for the first time.

The importance of religion for a successful human existence and the future of man is clarified in two works, the essay Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism" (1960a) and *You Shall Be As Gods* (1966a), a radical interpretation of the Old Testament and its tradition" that pleads the cause of a nontheistic religion. Fromm develops a historical-philosophical perspective that views the Old Testament account of God and man as a process in the course of which man comes increasingly into his own. Thus God as an idea becomes identical with man's complete being at home with himself," and belief in a revealed God is understood as a stage on the path toward a humanistic religion" that develops in and through itself.

Subsequently, Fromm focused on two problems, one of which is the historically decisive question of whether man will once again become the master of his creations, or whether he will perish in an overly technological industrial world. Fromm's writings on politics, especially on nuclear weapons and the peace movement (1960b, 1961a), and his *The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology* (1968a), which can be considered a continuation *of The Sane Society* (1955a), address this question. The second problem relates to the decay of the individual and of humanity as a species. Using the types of nonproductive life he had previously explicated (1947a, 1964a), Fromm presents a systematic treatment of the polarity of possible orientations on the basis of character. The related questions concerning the antithesis of instinct and character, the inherent human destructive instinct postulated by behavioral research, and the skepticism concerning the human being's potential goodness that this view entails (and the doubt this skepticism casts on humanism) guided Fromm's research for five years. The results of his work over this period are summarized in *The Anatomy ofHuman Destructiveness* (1973a).

His last major publication, *To Have or to Be?* (1976a), attempts to synthesize the insights of social psychology with those of humanistic religion and ethics. Fromm identifies two fundamentally antithetical orientations of human existence–having and being–and links his abundant insights into the individual and social psyche to the tradition of humanistic religion and of significant historical figures. Fromm believed that responsible scientific work could not ignore the ends of its activity or refuse to synthesize insights from a variety of disciplines. Neither could it be neutral toward the ethical relevance of its findings. Science therefore requires a frame of orientation that is ultimately not deducible from the insights of any single discipline.

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Thinking About Fromm And Marxism

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Erich Fromm's work is unfortunately neglected in academia today, in no small part because his expansive humanism is out of joint with many forms of radical thought popular in those quarters. In addition, university psychology and psychiatry departments have almost completely excluded Freudians or psychoanalysts of any kind, which leaves no room for Fromm there either. Among the larger educated public in the U.S. and Germany, however, Fromm continues to be read widely, as can be seen in sales of his work. Many assign his writings in college and even high school courses. I have used his *Escape from Freedom* (1941) for years as a main text in an introduction to sociology course. Students, whose response has been very favorable, encounter therein a clear and engaging introduction to social theory (Marx, Weber, and Freud), to the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Europe, to the anatomy of fascism and authoritarianism, and to a critique of the atomization of modern capitalist civilization and its culture industry.

In the face of the academic neglect of Fromm's work, some have continued to discuss Fromm's work in scholarly publications as well. Douglas Kellner's *Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity* (1989) and Stephen Eric Bronner's *Of Critical Theory and Its Theorists* (1994) each give Fromm his due as a core member of the Frankfurt School whose work has continuing relevance. A recent study by Lawrence Wilde, *Erich Fromm and the Quest for Solidarity* (Palgrave 2004), places Fromm's progressive politics rather than psychoanalysis at the core of his intellectual project. In several articles, Neil McLaughlin has discussed Fromm's work, as well as the declining academic interest in it (see for example, "How to Become a Forgotten Intellectual," Sociological Forum 13:2 [1998], pp. 214-46). Fromm archivist Rainer Funk published a volume on the centenary of his birth, *Erich Fromm. His Life and Ideas. An Illustrated Biography* (Continuum Books, 2000). Funk covers all aspects of Fromm's development, from his early interest in Jewish theology to his discovery of Marx and Freud in crisis-ridden pre-Hitler Germany. Funk also offers a new account of the disputes between Fromm and the other leading members of the Frankfurt School, especially Theodor Adorno, who opposed Fromm's effort to move away from Freudian orthodoxy. By 1936, Fromm is arguing, "The problem within psychology and sociology is the dialectic intertwining of natural and historical factors. Freud has wrongly based psychology totally on natural factors" (p. 94), Adorno counters Fromm's "revisionism": "This time I did not like Fromm at all — he put me into the paradoxical situation of defending Freud" (p. 97). While Funk is clearly partial to Fromm, one does not need to accept the former's entire argument to recognize that the frequent attempts by Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, and many of their followers to portray Fromm as somehow more conservative, as well as hopelessly superficial, has

distorted the history of the Left.

Below, I reflect on some aspects of Fromm's relation to Marxism, keeping these recent discussions in mind.

Freudian Marxism

NONE DENY THAT IT WAS FROMM who first introduced the Frankfurt School to a form of Freudian Marxism that was at the root of all of their subsequent efforts to theorize "authoritarian personalities." Drawn frequently from the lower middles classes they often combined a masochistic reverence and obedience to higher authority with sadistic urges to dominate the less powerful. Their prime example was fascism, but their argument has been extended to the guards at Abu Ghraib or those drawn to religious fundamentalist movements, including radical Islamism. Fromm summed up these issues in popular form in *Escape from Freedom* (1941), a pioneering analysis of the appeal of fascism to those living under the uncertainties and the atomization of modern capitalist society.

Few are aware that Fromm actually began his attempt to unite Marxian class analysis with psychoanalysis in a critique of the criminal justice system, rather than in the study of fascism as such. Writing in Germany in 1930, he notes in one of his earliest published articles that the criminal justice system continues its punitive ways despite numerous studies by liberal reformers proving that prison or capital punishment are completely ineffective in protecting society from crime. Pointing to "hidden functions" of the criminal justice system, Fromm argues that whether in punishing or in showing mercy, "the state imposes itself as a father image on the unconscious of the masses," working to bind them to the rulers, even against their own economic interests. A second hidden function of the criminal justice system is to divert the anger of the masses over their own social conditions away from the dominant classes and onto the criminal. This allows the masses to express their pent-up anger "in a manner that is harmless for the state." Fromm adds: "Part of the function of war lies in the same direction." ("The State as Educator," in *Erich Fromm and Critical Criminology*, edited by Kevin Anderson and Richard Quinney, University of Illinois Press, 2000, p. 126). One need not accept Fromm's Freudian framework *tout court* to recognize that he has put his finger on some of the ways in which the whole issue of crime has ideological dimensions that legitimate the capitalist order.

Most commentators regard Fromm's early writings as more steeped in Marxism than his postwar ones. This is another indication of the extent to which the pro-Adorno interpretation has become dominant on the Left. In fact, the opposite is true. Fromm's most important contributions to Marxism came after World War II, when he championed a specifically Marxist humanist standpoint in the public sphere in the U.S. As the radical psychologist Joel Kovel aptly notes, Fromm's move away from orthodox Freudianism led to "the introduction of Marx's humanism — the humanism of the 1844 Manuscripts — in place of Freudian instinct theory," something that "distinguishes him from the other psychoanalytic Marxists of the time" ("Foreword," to the *Erich Fromm Reader*, Humanities Press, 1994, p. xi). In *Beyond the Chains*

of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud (1962), Fromm acknowledged publicly that Marx was for him the more important of the two thinkers.

The Unpublished Discussion of Trotsky

ONE INDICATION OF FROMM'S RENEWED INTEREST in Marxism after World War II was his decision to write a review of *Trotsky's Diary in Exile*, published in 1958 by Harvard University Press. Fromm may have intended to publish it in the mass-circulation *Saturday Review*, for which he often wrote during this period. In his review, Fromm deplores the "general habit of considering Stalinism and present-day Communism as identical with, or at least a continuation of revolutionary Marxism," especially the attempt to link "Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky" to "the vengeful killer Stalin, and to the opportunistic conservative Khrushchev." Concerning Lenin and Trotsky, he adds:

They were men with an uncompromising sense of truth, penetrating to the very essence of reality, and never taken in by the deceptive surface; of an unquenchable courage and integrity; of deep concern and devotion to man and his future; unselfish and with little vanity or lust for power.

Fromm concludes that "just as was the case with Marx, …the concern, understanding and sharing of a deeply loving man …shines through Trotsky's diary."

Fromm strongly objects to one aspect of Harvard University Press's publication of Trotsky's diary, however, a passage in the publicity copy referring to Trotsky's "underlying fanaticism and selfishness." I am aware of no similar defense of the life and work of Lenin or Trotsky in the writings of other members of the Frankfurt School. (Quotations from "A Recently Discovered Article by Erich Fromm on Trotsky and the Russian Revolution," *Science & Society* 66:2 [2002], pp. 266-73).

Marx's Humanism

WITH HIS BOOK *MARX'S CONCEPT OF MAN* (1961), Fromm probably did more than any other individual to introduce Marx's *1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* to the American public. *Marx's Concept of Man* consists of a 90-page discussion by Fromm, Tom Bottomore's translation of 110 pages from Marx's *1844 Essays*, 23 pages from other texts by Marx (primarily *The German Ideology* and *The Critique of Political Economy*), and 40 pages of reminiscences from those close to Marx. Despite subsequent claims that Fromm expresses in his introduction a preference for the young Marx over the "mature" Marx of *Capital*, the text does not support such claims.

Fromm's was not the first effort to launch a discussion of the *1844 Manuscripts* in the U.S. Marcuse had discussed them more profoundly in his *Reason and Revolution* (1941), and the Marxist humanist philosopher Raya Dunayevskaya continued the serious theoretical discussion in her *Marxism and Freedom* (1958), a volume that also included the first published English translation of two of the more important *1844 Manuscripts*, "Private Property and

Communism" and "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic." A full translation of the *Manuscripts* appeared in 1959 in a small edition from Progress Publishers in Moscow. These previous discussions and translations drew relatively limited responses, however. Fromm's stature as a public intellectual and his extremely popular form of presentation helped to spark a far wider discussion of the young Marx, not only among the broad intellectual public, but also in mass media outlets such as *Newsweek*, which conceded that "Marxian scholars have long known that there is an amazing world of difference between the mythical Marx and the real man."

An interesting and unfortunately still relevant part of Fromm's own contribution to *Marx's Concept of Man* is his critique what he terms "the falsification of Marx's concepts" in the mass media and even among intellectuals. He adds that "this ignorance and distortion of Marx are more to be found in the United States than in any other Western country" (p. 1). Too often, he writes, Marx is portrayed as a crude materialist who "neglected the importance of the individual" (p. 2). Fromm refutes this, holding that "the very aim of Marx is to liberate man from the pressure of economic needs, so that he can be fully human" (p. 5).

What Fromm sees as a second "falsification" of Marx, this one carried out by both Western intellectuals and Stalinist ideologues, is the forced identification of Marx with the single-party totalitarianism of the Soviet Union and Maoist China. During the Cold War, this led even leftist intellectuals to take sides with either the West (for example, Sidney Hook) or Communism (for example, Jean-Paul Sartre) as the lesser evil. Fromm will have none of this, as he sharply differentiates "Marxist humanist socialism," on the one hand, from "totalitarian socialism," on the other (p. viii), with the latter in reality "a system of conservative state capitalism" (p. vii). Again, this critique on Fromm's part has relevance for today, in light of the many attempts to tie the collapse of the Soviet Union to the "death" of Marxism.

Unfortunately, in his introduction to *Marx's Concept of Man*, Fromm sometimes imposes his own more eclectic form of humanism on Marx himself, as for example when he writes that "Marx's philosophy constitutes a spiritual existentialism in secular language" and that Marx's concept of socialism is rooted in "prophetic Messianism" (p. 5). Cold War liberals and some of those on the left who had "chosen" the West seized upon these weaknesses to attack not only Fromm, whom they already resented for his critiques of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, but also the whole new view of Marx as a radical humanist that he was presenting. (These critiques grew even louder after the publication the same year of Fromm's critique of nuclear weapons, *May Man Prevail?*)

In a review of *Marx's Concept of Man*, the young philosopher Richard Bernstein dismisses the *1844 Manuscripts* as "a series of jottings." In language prefiguring later Habermasian and post-structuralist critiques of Marx, Bernstein also warns that Fromm's talk of human "self-realization" in Marx was a "dangerous" form of "absolute humanism" that "as history has taught us… can by subtle gradations turn into an absolute totalitarianism" (*New Leader*, Oct. 2, 1961). Sidney Hook, an originator of the "Hegel and totalitarianism" school who had ignored Marx's *1844 Manuscripts* in his acclaimed *From Marx to Hegel* (1936), pontificates in another hostile review: "To seek what was distinctive and characteristic about Marx in a period when

he was still in Hegelian swaddling clothes… is to violate every accepted and tested canon of historical scholarship" (*New Leader*, Dec. 11, 1961). Nonetheless, the ground was shifting toward a fuller appreciation of the whole of Marx and toward a new type of radicalism that would attack not only economic exploitation, but also alienation.

The Fromm-Dunayevskaya Correspondence

IT WAS WHILE PUTTING TOGETHER *Marx's Concept of Man* that Fromm began his thirty-year correspondence with Raya Dunayevskaya. Although they never met face to face, over 100 of their letters have survived and are to be published in the coming years. (At present, they can be found in the microfilm Raya Dunayevskaya Collection and in the Erich Fromm papers in Germany.) One major topic in their correspondence is Marx, especially the young Marx. Their correspondence documents the process by which Dunayevskaya contributed an essay to *Socialist Humanism*, the 1965 international symposium that Fromm edited, and Fromm's assistance in obtaining a publisher for her 1973 book, *Philosophy and Revolution*. In a 1961 letter Dunayevskaya mentions that she first read the *1844 Manuscripts* in 1939, after which she suggested to Sidney Hook that they be published, only to have him dismiss the idea. This foreshadowed Hook's harsh attacks on Marcuse's *Reason and Revolution* in 1941, as well as his subsequent ones on *Marx's Concept of Man*, cited above. Other important letters include some pungent critiques by both Fromm and Dunayevskaya of Frankfurt School members Marcuse, Adorno, and Horkheimer, as well as Sartre.

The Fromm-Dunayevskaya correspondence also contains an illuminating discussion of gender. In 1976, while working on her *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation, and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (1982), Dunayevskaya writes to Fromm concerning the "lack of camaraderie between Luxemburg, Lenin, and Trotsky." She asks: "Could there have been, if not outright male chauvinism, at least some looking down on her theoretical work, because she was a woman?" A year later, not having received a response to the above, Dunayevskaya writes to him again on Luxemburg and feminism, this time mentioning Luxemburg's reference to Penthesilea the Amazon queen. This time Fromm responds, although he has been hospitalized following a heart attack: "I feel that the male Social Democrats never could understand Rosa Luxemburg, nor could she acquire the influence for which she had the potential because she was a woman; and the men could not become full revolutionaries because they did not emancipate themselves from their male, patriarchal, and hence dominating, character structure." (Most of Fromm's letter appears in Dunayevskaya's *Women's Liberation and the Dialectics of Revolution* [Wayne State University Press, 1996], p. 242).

Fromm's life and work centered on how human beings could realize their full humanity, not only in psychological terms, but also politically and philosophically. Always searching for a pathway out of the alienated world of capitalism, he played a major role in the discussions of Marx and of socialist humanism in the U.S. and internationally.

Kevin B. Anderson *is a Professor of Political Science, Sociology, and Women's Studies at Purdue University. His most recent books are* Foucault and the Iranian Revolution *(co-*

authored with Janet Afary, University of Chicago Press, 2005) and The Rosa Luxemburg Reader *(co-edited with Peter Hudis, Monthly Review Press, 2004).*

Modes Of Authority And The Crisis Of Higher Education

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Graduate students pondering a career in the Liberal Arts are often anxious to learn about the latest trends in the teaching profession, and seek advice from older, more experienced faculty about how to address or manage their first undergraduate courses. But if they are candid with the newer cohort, older faculty are often baffled or dismayed by the changes they have observed over the course of their careers, including an unmistakable loss of rigor and lowering of standards, a subtle but deep erosion of their authority in the classroom, a pervasive tendency to devalue their expertise, and a frequent blurring of boundaries and roles that renders it difficult for them to be effective pedagogically.

For example, at the beginning of the semester, a student inquires whether he has to read the textbook to get a "decent grade." I ask what he means by a "decent grade", and he says a "B+". I reply that some students could achieve a "B" without reading the text, but only if they attend class regularly and take excellent notes. Even so, I added, this approach is risky, and students are simply *expected* to read the book I assign *regardless* of the grade they hope to achieve. The student groans audibly and slouches in his chair, and many students roll their eyes or moan softly in sympathy.

Another example: a colleague with decades of experience tells a student who is dominating class discussion that his opinions were ill-informed and somewhat irrelevant to the issues at hand. He does this as tactfully as possible, to keep the class discussion on course, but the student takes exception, and reproaches the professor for posing "as some kind of authority." There are murmurs of sympathy in the classroom, and my colleague feels obliged to remind students that he really *is* an authority on this particular subject, which is why he was hired to teach it in the first place.

Finally, most academics are approached, sometimes repeatedly, by students who inform their professor that they will lose their academic standing, or their chance at entering a graduate program, etc., if they do not manage to achieve the requisite "A." The better ones offer to do extra work, but many just plead aggressively for a higher grade as if their "best effort", semi-regular attendance, and a (more or less) polite demeanor automatically entitles them to an A grade. And though they seldom say so in so many these students seldom fail to convey that

they are cruelly disappointed, or deserved better, implying eloquently by their anguished expressions that the professor who refuses to comply with their wishes is a sadist, or utterly indifferent to their fate.

While many professors have “war stories” that are much more disturbing, these vignettes are fairly representative. Experience suggests that most students nowadays are deeply averse to reading, and derive little benefit or understanding from the reading they do. They loathe candid or critical evaluations of their work, and feel that they are not really responsible for their own performance. Attitudes like these are commonplace now, but were almost unheard of half a century ago. We hear a lot of rhetoric about “progress” and “excellence” in teaching, yet the fact remains that today’s students have diminished attention spans, diminished expectations of themselves, and increasing expectations of professors to function as sources of solace, self-esteem or entertainment, rather than simple and effective instruction. What accounts for these dramatic changes?

Grade inflation is a part of the problem. In 1940, C-minus was the most common GPA at Harvard University, and in 1955, only 15 percent of undergraduates had a GPA of B-plus or higher. But by 2000, fully half of all grades given in the Liberal Arts at Harvard were As or A-minuses; only six percent was C plusses or lower (Douthat, 2005, 95.) While some efforts were made to stem the tide, the mean grade at Harvard today is still a B+, which means that most students are, by definition, “above average.” Sadder still, the shocking absurdity of this situation didn’t ruffle many feathers, until it became fodder for the popular press (Douthat, 2005.)

These data require no interpretation. When the largest and most prestigious university in the land hands out As like candy, only unusually conscientious undergrads will really try to earn their grades with serious effort, while Professors who still require some diligence from their students will become increasingly unpopular, and potential targets for punishment or censure from administrators who are anxious to keep enrollments high.

Closely allied to grade inflation is the widespread belief, shared by most students, administrators, and indeed, by many teachers, that the primary purpose of post-secondary education is to enhance the student’s self-esteem, rather than to impart knowledge, skills and self-discipline, or embark on a deep but disinterested pursuit of truth, regardless of the financial rewards or difficulties that this personal commitment entails. This seemingly innocuous misconception makes post-secondary education more “user friendly” by eliminating the possibility of failure, or reducing it to an absolute minimum. But this pseudo-therapeutic approach also invites and encourages mediocrity, intellectual dishonesty and self-indulgence at all levels. Indeed, it is the necessary and inevitable flip side of the predominantly *consumeristic* spirit in which most students now approach higher education

How did we get into this mess? To answer this question, I follow Erich Fromm in distinguishing carefully between rational, irrational and anonymous modes of authority. These modes of authority are described in three of his books; *Escape from Freeedom* (1941),

The Sane Society (1955) and *The Art of Loving* (1956). As I sketch the outlines of these heuristic schemata, I remind readers that the descriptions of rational, irrational and anonymous authority offered here are not carved in stone. Like all heuristic categories, these concepts are what Max Weber called "ideal types", or ways of organizing and interpreting data, not actual entities whose properties or development are governed by natural law. Like all such schemata, they have their limitations. But used judiciously, they are splendid tools to interpret the vicissitudes of "being-in-the classroom" – from both a teacher's and a student's point of view.

Let us start with rational authority. According to Erich Fromm, rational authority is a relationship between two (or more) people of *unequal* age, experience or status, where the person in authority seeks to abolish their differences in status eventually by bringing the student up to his (or her) own level (Fromm,1941, p. 186.) The person in authority here is recognized as someone who possesses knowledge rooted in their training and experience, or "expertise," and is therefore authorized to set goals and standards that students must strive to emulate. While equality is the ultimate goal of rational instruction, the achievement of such equality presupposes respect and discipline on the student's part. In order to master a skill or a body of knowledge, the pupil must follow the master's instructions, and practice diligently. The teacher, in turn, must teach by example, providing a model for the student of how to practice, and derives satisfaction from the student's progress, because it confirms his knowledge and ability. In the event that the student matches or exceeds the master's level of knowledge and proficiency, the friction of competing egos is presumably contained and diffused by a disinterested love of the craft that they both share.

To summarize, then, rational authority is based on competence, experience and mutual respect, and entails the possibility of equality, and indeed, perhaps, of deep and sustaining friendships, depending on circumstances. By contrast with rational authority, *irrational* authority is designed to perpetuate or intensify conditions of inequality through the use of force, or the threat of force, and/or the use of deception, secretiveness and/or the manipulation of interpersonal relationships. Though often disguised as benevolent paternalism, such authority is really motivated by greed, fear and/or the desire to dominate and humiliate others. Instead of teaching by example, it is blatantly hypocritical, saying: "Do as I say, not as I do." Those who embody and exercise irrational authority feel threatened by the prospect of genuine equality, and habitually distort the truth, though they may enjoy a kind of sordid intimacy with others – which Fromm variously called "sadomasochism" or "symbiosis" — to alleviate their loneliness and to consolidate their hold on power. So while rational authority promotes the growth of reason, or critical thinking, and of ethical autonomy, irrational authority tends to stifle intellectual independence and sound ethical judgment, though it may promote the acquisition of certain adaptive skills, and a kind of cunning or facile intelligence.

Now consider the disparate meanings which words like "mastery", "obedience" and "disobedience" have, depending on whether they are invoked with reference to rational or irrational authority. For rational authority, "mastery" signifies a degree of knowledge, skill or

self-command achieved through disciplined and dedicated effort, usually with the help of a "master" who consents to share his accumulated wisdom. Indeed, that is his primary function and *raison d'etre* . In this context, obedience to authority entails a commitment, not to the teacher qua teacher, but to the craft or discipline, and the goal of becoming a skilled practitioner in one's own right. Disobedience, by contrast, denotes an act or state of immaturity, because when voluntarily embraced, rational authority promotes gradual progress towards equality and autonomy.

When applied to the exercise of irrational authority, however, the word "mastery" means dominance, plain and simple. Dominance of this kind is sustained through force, intimidation or deception, rather than moral authority. Here obedience to authority means abject servility, which erodes the person's self-respect – although this fact need not be conscious, particularly when this servility is disavowed or covered up by neurotic pride and/or compensatory tendencies to idealize "the master." Conversely, disobedience in this context signifies a healthy attempt to sunder the bonds of oppression that masquerade as disinterested care and guidance.

Before we discuss anonymous authority, note that the concepts of rational and irrational authority Fromm outlined do not hinge on the content or domain of knowledge that is sought. On the contrary, it hinges on *how* that knowledge, skill or experience is imparted. In other words, it denotes what Fromm called *a mode of relatedness* between teacher and pupil. This is extremely important, because during the Enlightenment era, and much of the 19th and 20th century, spiritual or religious authority was construed by "progressive" thinkers as the very embodiment of irrationality, while science was thought of as inherently "rational."

Fromm did not think that way at all. Before training as an analyst, Fromm considered a career in the Rabbinate, and was not naïve or narrow minded enough to embrace this positivistic way of framing these issues. Even if he had been, fascism shattered that misconception, at least for Fromm and his contemporaries. After all, Hitler and his followers espoused a virulent irrationalism combined with an unbridled enthusiasm for science and technology. The two are quite compatible, as Theodor Adorno, and Zygmunt Baumann never failed to point out. (1)

Anyway, to repeat, rational and irrational authority are not domain or content-specific. Whether the subject being taught is botany or the Bible, cosmology or cooking, dentistry or Divinity, a teacher may address his or her pupil in a manner that embodies rational or irrational authority – or both, in some measure. Whether, or to what extent, rational or irrational authority are ascendant depends cultural norms and on the style and personality of the teacher. And despite their manifest differences, rational and irrational authority share one important similarity. Unlike anonymous authority, rational and irrational authority engage those affected by them in a highly *personal* manner. As Fromm noted in *Escape From Freedom*:

> In external authority is clear that there is an order and who gives it;

> one can fight against the authority, and in this fight personal independence and moral courage develop. But . . . in anonymous authority both command and commander have become invisible. It is like being fired at by an invisible enemy. There is nobody and nothing to fight back against (Fromm, 1941, p.190).

So unlike rational and irrational authority, where differences in power, knowledge or status are freely acknowledged, or even rigidly insisted upon, *anonymous* authority is an attitude that fosters conformity or compliance that is diffusely present in groups of nominal equals. It is not backed by overt demands, or by threats and coercion. It manifests itself as bureaucratic anonymity or slack conformity in groups whose members share a collective identity, or a common project, but lack a deeper communion with each other, resulting in a perpetual sense of insecurity; a fear of being isolated, or merely "different." The consequent reliance on convention and public opinion, rather than on genuine principle, tends to erode the growth of humanistic conscience, rendering those subject to it prone to apathy or opportunism (Fromm, 1941, chapter 7). And unlike rational authority, which tries to raise the inexperienced or untutored mind to new levels of competence, anonymous authority tends to drag everyone down to the *lowest* common denominator.

Another crucial difference between anonymous authority and other varieties is that it is a relatively recent phenomenon. In *Escape From Freedom*, Fromm traced rational and irrational authority back to feudalism and the early capitalist milieu, when the modern university first took shape. Many of the customs, conventions and norms of academic life that emerged then persist, in attenuated form, today – more so in older universities that are conscious of their history and traditions. But increasingly the attitudes and expectations of those bygone eras are morphing into different rituals or attitudes, or merely crumbling in the tide of anonymous authority.

Fromm discussed anonymous authority in *Escape From Freedom*, noting that that this, and not the fascist mentality, is the mentality that is characteristic of industrial democracies. But Fromm's focus in that book was the eclipse of rational authority under fascism, so it was not until *Man For Himself* (1947) and *The Sane Society* (1955) that Fromm addressed anonymous authority with the seriousness it deserves. In *Man For Himself*, Fromm attributed the diffusion of anonymous authority to the growing impact of the market place on human values and behavior. Why? Because unlike a country fair or a medieval market, the modern market is not a place of *meeting* – a place where consumers know the producers of goods, appraise their wares carefully, and negotiate directly. In modern (or "mass") markets, producers and consumers are utterly disconnected from each other, encircled on either side by armies of "middle men" whose market machinations out the price and destination of commodities entirely beyond the control of producers and consumers alike. Moreover, in mass markets the packaging, presentation and advertising of goods assumed unprecedented importance. Since they cannot trust individual producers, whose work and products they know intimately anymore, people tend to rely on brand names and labels, and in due course, image and perception overshadow reality in the judgment of most consumers.

While preferable to fascism, obviously, anonymous authority poses formidable threats to democratic norms and institutions. Why? Because it erodes our capacity to think critically, and then to act on our thoughts and convictions. And by critical thinking, Fromm meant the capacity for "rational doubt" – or healthy skepticism – not intelligence as measured by I.Q. tests. According to Fromm, a person can be highly intelligent, highly successful and still lack the ability to think deeply, freed from conventional prejudices and beliefs. The primary prerequisite of critical thinking is an *emotional* ability to question prevailing beliefs and practices, which requires moral courage, and a willingness to court disapproval or punishment (Fromm,1955, pp.64-66, pp.152-155). And this sort of clarity and courage are discouraged by prevailing cultural trends and expectations. In effect, Fromm said that by eroding our powers of judgment and action, anonymous authority was transforming active, responsible citizens into mere consumers.

The slow but steady transformation of mature, responsible citizens into mere consumers has proceeded apace since 1955. Fifty years later, it is all too apparent in the state of our news media, and its coverage of political trends and issues. Moreover, we can see its impact on university life in numerous ways. Prior to World War II, post secondary education was invariably seen as a privilege, or a preparation for a higher calling, and was associated with a certain voluntary austerity of life-style – for most students, anyway. Nowadays, it is seldom considered a privilege, but viewed as a right or an obligation, and above all else, as a *commodity* . Many universities pay lip service to the idea that an education in the arts, humanities or social sciences ought to pursued for its own sake, rather than instrumentally, as a means to a career. But this rhetoric is so deeply disjunctive with the spirit of the postmodern university that it rings hollow, contributing to a nagging sense of unreality at commencement speeches and other university functions that is difficult to dispel. Having turned education into a commodity for sale, rather than something to be mastered through strenuous effort, universities have become retailers that must compete for student enrollments by improving the "packaging", i.e. the amenities of university life, rendering the life of the average student quite luxurious by comparison with fifty years ago, and ruinously expensive for middle class families. Cable television, Starbucks' Coffee Shops, state, climbing walls, cheaper textbooks, wireless internet – the list of campus amenities is almost endless.

What happens to the professoriate, in such circumstances? As education is viewed increasingly as a commodity, rather than a challenge or a commitment, professors are experienced by students, administrators and the public at large less as producers of knowledge, whose experience and expertise is shared voluntarily with others, and more as salaried sales persons or service providers whose job it is "sell" the student on a certain course of study, and then to transfer this agreed upon bundle of goods from the central warehouse to the student as quickly and painlessly as possible. At the end of each semester, students evaluate their service providers through Teaching Evaluation Questionnaires, an "instrument" which can make or break a teacher's career. The effect is to render untenured professors wary of and subservient to the anonymous authority of an increasingly illiterate cohorts of students who are often ill-equipped to judge their real abilities. The result? They lower their standards, hand out too many As and Bs; a proverbial "race to the bottom."

Tenured faculty are increasingly affected as well. Now that merit pay has been abolished or severely attenuated in many places, and raises are based on standardized performance evaluations, many tenured faculty play to the gallery to insure that they don't have too many dissatisfied customers, and acquire a reputation which will render their classes unpopular and under-enrolled. The sad but inevitable upshot of all this is that the more we accommodate to prevailing trends, the more students feel "comfortable" in our classes, the less we are respected by students and administrators – and the less we respect ourselves, if we are not taken in by our surface popularity and the prevailing hype.

What is to be done? There is no simple solution for our present predicament. Academics who embrace and espouse rational authority as the optimal approach to teaching invariably face a deluge of complaints – from students, colleagues and administrators alike. If the prevailing culture does not support it, the decision to live and work in this spirit requires courage and considerable risk. But the crisis of higher education in America may allow for some degree of correction, precisely because of cultural trends. After all, the waning Bush-Cheney administration was based entirely on irrational authority, and the cultural backlash to it, which is now underway, may promote the restoration of democractic norms and practices in our universities as well. And the movement to halt global warming, which is now gaining ground among students, completely undercuts our thoughtless, consumeristic orientation, prompting reasoned reflection on our past and future. The more we bring these issues into the classroom, and link them to the prevalence of different modes of authority, the greater the likelihood that one, perhaps, things will change.

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Animal Rights, Gene Technology, And Human Breeding: A Conversation With Peter Sloterdijk*

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"I don't believe in a God that created harelips" – Peter Sloterdijk

The human genome has shown how close we are to animals. Could this not lead to greater kindness to animals?

The deeper insight into the genetic similarity between animals and humans and between humans and plants leads us to a situation which many people can understand and that was formulated in German Idealism and in natural philosophy around 1800. Think about Schelling who revolted against with "the complete death blow to all of nature" Fichtes moral idealism. Much of what we encounter anew in the labs was philosophically present two hundred years ago. What was then presented in a frock coat comes to us again in the language of the white smock. The broad population has the right idea that must be publicly explained about what occurs in the technicians' laboratory. It is there that developments are dangled that concern the entire human condition.

Who can control these laboratories?

Obviously there is a type of a Council among those involved. Since a couple of years ago crowds of people have been gathering around the laboratories of the gene cardinals -a desire that manifests itself like type of bio-political church following of sorts. And a second ring is forming around this nucleus of anthropologically-engaged that is coming together among the lawyers of the remaining creatures. These assume a new a type of legal representation or trust toward the steps of animal evolution. These themselves have no voice and represent a vulnerable life and have a say among the full collection of living creatures that are coming in to being because we perceive them as vulnerable lives and as having a delicate ecological connection.

The animals will soon be sitting with us at the table.

Do we need, in addition to a code of anthropological technologies also a code of animal technologies?

Absolutely. I think that a new branch of occupation will come into existence, a new category of legal competence. In one way or another there will be animal lawyers and animal trusts. The traditional animal agencies affiliated with veterinarians, agricultural ministers and animal

protection groups do not suffice in order to create an enforceable set of ethics that corresponds to the knowledge of the similarities between humans and animals. One can clearly detect this tendency from the creative unrest that has touched upon all of Europe for weeks with regard to the BSE scandals and other animal-related catastrophes. At last, people are talking about animals again and about farmers again too. Up until now farmers were the unrewarded agents of the animal world in our society. Their tasks must be newly defined and compensated.

At present millions of animals are being burned to death because of BSE and foot and mouth disease. How can one reconcile this with respect for animals?

Animals are allowing themselves to be remembered through catastrophes and I am certain that this will lead to lasting effects for their diet and the ethos toward animals. But unlike before one cannot delegate the question of guilt onto society as in the times in which a left wing radical agitation movement existed which held that “society” was an address on which all of the blames could be pinned. Today we’ve learned that it doesn’t make sense to project vague moral ills onto society. Everyone who is able to function is accountable. Society does not operate as a whole. At the center of the BSE debate is not “society” but the meat market. We cannot achieve anything today with abstract free-floating rhetoric.

Can there be any type of justification for killing millions of animals?

I don’t think there’s any justification for it. One can give reasons as to why one does it. But it can’t be justified. One has to be careful not to not to confuse explanations with justification. It’s important to keep the gaping wound open. Crimes against animals cannot be glossed over.

Does the injustice lie in the fact that animals are deprived of their right to be eaten and instead get burned to death?

This is a sophistic argument. No, the injustice toward animals begins much sooner. When animals, in Hegelian terms, are a priori produced merely as beings in the service of beings other that themselves and when their purpose of existence is determined by a restless, reckless, empty consumption. There is something fundamentally wrong with this. It raises fundamental questions about intensive livestock farming. Intensive livestock farming does not belong to the farming tradition; rather it is an evil synthesis of nomadic animal breeding customs and modern meat-capitalism.

Do you believe that there will be the possibility of practicing the genetic altering of animals thoughtlessly in the future? Will it be possible to speak of animals á la carte? This would contradict your vision of animal emancipation.

We’re moving toward a medically-dominated society. A medical-pharmaceutical-biotechnical complex is taking shape which wrestles with the greatest illusions of vitality. Health myths, illusions about immunity and life-extension are coming to take the place of religion. Already today, life-extension is a widespread option. Modern people do not want keep too much guess work in life. Otherwise it will drive them to a metaphysical superstructure. Life-extension that

has been developed by present day medicine removes a great deal of the metaphysical pressures from our lives in that it eliminates the need for the many subsequent demands of an unfulfilled life as in the Middle Ages. The modern individual wants to die like Job once did: old and satisfied with life. This is the basis for the medically-dominated complex.

Will there be human beings á la carte, conforming to the most bizarre wishes?

No, the ideal of human formation will not be purposefully damaged. Just as before, we will experience monster shapes and hybrid forms as something horrible and shutting out horror remains an effective means. Once again we will understand the concept of monster from its origin. The word, as etymologists explain, comes not from the Late Latin, *monstrare*, to show; rather from the Classical Latin *monere*, to admonish. They surface among people as signs from the hereafter. Monsters were the envoys of the gods. They carried a mandate of evil. Through them, we once held, the gods wanted to impart admonitions and signs. This perception of the monstrous will probably come back again soon under a different omen. Because by nature there will be some anomaly stemming from the general human biotechnological level-headedness and even when some attempts will possibly succeed, it is foreseeable that many of them lead to the formation of monsters. Because we stand before man-made catastrophes of human formation and we will speak about these admonitions. This pushes us to a new level of monologues. Monsters are mirrors of ourselves.

Can it not be seen in the inverse: If genetic modification will make people more and more perfect, then aren't we the monsters, we who remain from the time before the biotechnical age and were created in the archaic fashion?

I take horror novels and horror theories for that what they are, as entertainment. Targeted biotechnical human creation will not, according to the knowledge we now have, be realistically attainable for a long time. What is currently being discussed by the human improvement party seems very, very speculative to me.

Have we made ourselves?

Yes, human beings are genetically cultural beings that have changed their biological structure through extended stays in the house of cultural inclinations. Neoteny plays a decisive role in the special biological development of humans. The retention of youth forms and even of fetal formations up into adulthood speaks for this. I have met molecular biologists and sociologists who never even heard of the term. For example the fact that human faces have no snouts is a cultural effect.

Does the euphoria over the deciphering of the human genome relativize the fact that certain human dimensions are still unknown?

We still are not able to decipher nearly as much as is often claimed. According to what we hear, biologists are still only able to understand only one or three percent of the genome. The German Nobel prize winner Nüsselein-Vollhart is of the opinion that we don't even really

understand a single gene that is we are not able to grasp it in its full functioning. To understand the genome is the work of a century. I think that geneticists will soon need the help of cultural philosophers in order to ask more intelligent questions on genes. The way in which the material is currently questioned is medically-coded and exclusively medically-oriented. This is too narrow of a perspective. We are looking for dispositions for disease. This is a one way street for research.

Recently you had a conversation with the genetic researcher Craig Venter, which left us feeling a bit puzzled. Are not the questions that we are currently discussing more interesting than Venter's motivation for his research?

This is what Venter and the American ambassador who was also there in Lyon also thought. But in that case it was a misunderstanding. For me the point was not Venter's motivation. I wanted to place him within the Cultural Revolution that stems from the American Revolution, as Harold Bloom has referred to the phenomenon. We are experiencing the formation of a hyper-ideology for the networked world: the fusion of stock market illusions and bio-illusions. The two greatest systems of illusions are growing together that have appeared in human history up until now: the religiously vital and the economic dynamic. The first has to do with spiritual life success, with choosing and blessing with a sort of metaphysical immunity. The second is about an economic success, the I-forming satisfaction over growing accounts and status gains. This situation presents us with a new intellectual task: to grasp what happens when these two illusionary- and immunizing systems merge with one another.

Do you mean a bio-Calvinism of sorts?

Perhaps that is the right expression. Because it's high time to describe this American religion or the resulting bio-religion more precisely. For this reason I have used the opportunity to make a few suggestions to Craig Venter, as to how he can position himself as a proponent of this movement. He did not accept these suggestions in the Lyon situation. Instead he has served us with a skeptical version of his own interpretation, which in no way means that a more enthusiastic version does not exist. I know two speeches by him in which this comes through very clearly. One from June 26, 2000 as he stood next to Clinton, allowing his to gaze wander beyond the end of the millennium and then revealed his great vision; and another one which he held before Vietnam veterans and traces his work back to this time stating that he had survived the war and wanted to do something big and important with his rescued lie. This shows that Venter has the ability of tapping into more than one inventory of vocabularies and experiences. He can take on mournful or agnostic tones at will. In my opinion this is proof of extraordinary intelligence.

Venter has practiced an appropriate rejection of metaphysics with regard to you, up until the statement that he allegedly researched the genome because he wanted to buy himself a bigger sailboat. Did you demand too much from him?

Probably. But even if the temptation for cooperative philosophizing did not work, at least he

has reacted in a way that demonstrated that he was thoroughly and exceptionally intellectually present. I was only not able to move him to theoretical acrobatics.

Does this lie in the fact that a deep-seeking, worry-ridden European asked a happy researching American? Was there an intersection of two cultures?

That's how it can be seen. One should however not underestimate the European advantage in this confrontation. In the last one hundred years, Europeans have learned how to withdraw from imperial overstretching. The Americans, in contrast, still have the missionary, naïvely expansive view that belongs to the assumption of leadership through neophytes. When it is stated that the Europeans have forfeited their position of leadership, one mus also add to that that it was perhaps the best thing that could happen to them. Economically, they were able to keep a leading position and cede the disadvantages of political dominance. There is now a volunteer that disencumbers Europe. Actually, Europeans feel a lot more comfortable in their mild skepticism toward progress than they are willing to admit. The widespread enthusiasm for America does not run deep in Germany and in Europe. They applaud Americans but do not want to be like them. They lean back a bit and unsurprisingly it is an armchair on which they are leaning and it is an expensive, well-made director's armchair. They lean back only lightly in order to feel more relaxed and to make more leve-headed decisions. The European style of exercising power has become more discreet. This could mean that it possesses more control and sustainability and can prove itself more capable of enduring in the long run than any naïve surge ahead and take charge kind of attitude with projects in which one can virtually not know where they will lead.

For this reason retroactive appeals function so poorly here.

Roman Herzog experienced this and future appeals politicians will experience this in the future. The Europeans no longer participate in volunteer mobilizations/ Is this not a great advantage?

Is this also valid for the gene technology revolution? Sometime we perceive politics shying away from this topic.

Europeans await the monsters just as they once did for the barbarians. We are looking out for incidents in which the gene technology euphoria will break. But we know that it can continue even without the euphoria. Everything that can be incorporated into solid success stories will here also become part of the culture. The Europeans and the Germans as well, will not deny themselves the tiny steps of progress in gene technology. Just that the Europeans have practiced this hang-gliding over the abyss too often in the last century.

The new cultural minister Julian, Nida, Rümelin claims that embryos have no human worth. What do you think? As of when is a person worthy of having human worth?

When one asks these questions, one is already on the wrong track. One must simply know that the concept of human worth is thoroughly shaped by old European substance metaphysics. If

one is going to use these terms then one should do it consistently and grasp it in its entirety. The tiniest part of a substance is still only a substance. The question as to when a human life should really begin to be honored as such is nothing more than the Catholic way of talking about human worth because they see the early cells of humans as being just as sacred as the grown imago. Unfortunately, those who hold this position don't express themselves clearly in most cases because they are too cowardly to avow themselves to a decisive metaphysical position. Cowardice generates confusion and the confusion produces pseudo-debates. The discussion of human worth is a metaphysical semantic game that only makes sense under its own premises. As soon as one transfers this debate into secular, legal and philosophical language it falls into an existential crisis out of which it comes defeated.

How should one then discuss when human life begins?

I would prefer to use the concept of guardianship. Legally and psychologically, this concept is sufficiently clear and expresses the idea that there are relationships among people, that are also binding and to a high degree especially when one end of the relationship is not able to exercise its self-assertion. This applies directly to children. A successful human life stems from a stage of guardianship. This is reminiscent of the insurmountable necessity of guardianship s the highest form of solidarity even when one has to come to terms with the fact that this concept will attract a bunch of neurotic and autistic prejudices against the power of the guardians. I am convinced that a generous and thoroughly thought out theory of guardianship will preserve us from many of the absurd side effects of an overreaching discourse on human worth.

Are you only thinking of guardianship for children that are already here?

Not only as such. There is, as I stated earlier, a guardianship for the unborn and the never born. A type of immigration takes place in every society. By this I don't mean those from the outside but those from the inside, the biological immigrants of every new generation. These immigrants don't make their entry through external borders, but through mothers. And even here a politics of immigration has always existed. Never have societies welcomed all of their immigrants indiscriminately: neither the ones that wanted to come in from the outside, nor the ones that sought to come in from the inside. In the case of biological immigration the role of the border control has always lain with the mothers; they play the roles of the immigration officers. They are the ones that decide who will be let in and who will not; this has been a woman's right since time immemorial. One has to come to a consensus over this fact in order to begin discussing principles.

In the case of "surplus" embryos the immigration officers are not mothers but doctors.

Here one can reasonably apply the rule of the graded protection services. You interpret the margin for the earliest forms of potential human life as undefined and that is located on the lowest step of protection. Of course the embryo that is only a few days old has a right to provision. But there are a series of exceptions and evasions that go with that. This lies in the

nature of this question, as one already knows with natural events. Every third or fourth menstruation cycle is a spontaneous rejection due to a refusal to allow an organism to nest in one's body. Yet women in most cases have no idea about this. As soon as the maternal organism has allowed the nesting to take place, one will agree to a higher level of protection worthiness.

What does this speak for?

That the concept of a graded protection worthiness we come closer to real life circumstances and the moral intuitions of human being than with an abstract general concept of person that one can only implement at the expense of the implausibility of embryos in the four-cell stage. Most of them factually operate with a three-step plan, that has been preserved: from the beginning the fertilized egg and the invisible embryo are under the protection of their natural and legal guardians, who could both use greater leeway in making determinations; in the next step the implanted embryo enjoys a higher level of immunity because of its manifest presence and its intimate welcome through its mother. The immunization goes even further when toward the middle of the pregnancy a soul in the traditional sense, enters the picture. At this point a ring of protection fully encloses the new life; from that point onward we are dealing with a human being whose rights may be denied by no one, under any pretexts whatsoever.

What lies before human worth? Integrity?

Many overextended ideas circulate over integrity. One speaks of the integrity of a disabled life, of the right to incompletion, of the right to be conceived and not made. In such formulations lie some pleasant ideas in part, but they are tied to a problematic tendency to capitulate to discoveries. With all due respect to theology: nature is a already a single improvement process and at the same time an innumerable gene copy error. I reject the theological transfiguration of hereditary diseases. I don't believe in the God that created hare-lips. Of course, I can understand that many find it scandalous that very soon therapeutic improvements will be attempted on embryos or even on the blastocyst. But to have malformed children come out of evolution is at least just as scandalous.

But won't it get to the point where everything that does not correspond to an ever increasing demand of perfection become a disability?

There is a danger in this. But it does not stem from gene technology per se but from an infantile model of thinking of narcissistic people. The perfectionism of dimwits is dreadful. How can this be prohibited? As a matter of fact ideas of breeding of a superman, a sturdy human or a talented mutant are surfacing above all in the United States at present. But this is laughable both from a moral standpoint and from an anthropological one as much as the idea of a retro-breeding of humans to the fighting apes of the Darwin era was ridiculous. On the other hand, one must be careful not to allow genetic crackpots to practice applied science fiction in isolated laboratories. But in this condensed world such developments are to be feared less than many believe. Even anomalies will sooner or later be resocialized by the technological community.

Only serious gene technicians have an authentic cultural mandate.

In most cases there is no chance of curing disabled embryos because diagnostic medicine is far more advanced than therapeutic medicine. Consequently the therapy consists in killing the embryo. Doesn't the right to be cured transform itself into the right of not having to have to exist?

Many styles of parenting will be developed from this. Many people will want to keep procreation under the veil of ignorance; others will intensively occupy themselves with the possibility of genetic precautions. The theory and practice of biological guardianship gains more territory. This is a trend in our culture since the introduction of contraceptives. The provision will extend to an area that has not been reachable because the technical premises were not present. It will be ever more difficult to engage in naïve parenting.

The way in which a human being should become should be decided in conversations between medical hegemonists, as you refer to them, and the worried or overly worried parents. These then lead to a rational debate over the biological prerequisites for a successful life. Isn't this terrible since something which cannot be decided through reason is being decided rationally?

Yes, this is an accurate insight. Decisions don't not usually forced by reasons. Decisions always require the risk of a leap. Reason for anxiety sets in if one were able to create future generations optionally and produce complex characteristics intentionally. This remains a fable for the foreseeable time. The prevention of hereditary diseases of the severest type is, as soon as this becomes possible, not an unholy machination but an expression of responsibility. There are borderline situations in which the parents must decide for a demand for life as informed guardians. There is no way of getting around this.

Can one or should one set fixed policy as to which disabilities should be aborted?

Politics can, may, and must do whatever is in its reach, but it can never do this alone again. It will have to be surrounded by a circle of consultants. All decisions must be an outcome of discussions and must be embedded in checks and balances. Our society has gotten so complex and so rich in inhibitory and compensatory mechanisms that really big idiocies succeed in having a long life.

Our situation is more determined by the fact that no one is ready any longer to formulate norms that are not already relativized in the act of expressing them. There is the danger related to this that we will sink into discursive goo. Absolute idiocies can be committed in this type of scenario over which one can be artfully deceived. Doesn't one need a group like the Catholic Church, which is naïve, yet clever enough to set clear boundaries?

As far as naiveté goes, I see no danger that could escape us. There is always enough ignorance and there will be no want for advancing decisiveness. What is important is to have a mechanism in place that will balance the naiveties and the fundamentalisms.

The position of naiveté is much trickier today because it is, at least in the case of the Church, in a way, an enlightened naiveté. It is aware of the contours it gives the debate. The Church however secretly doubts itself as it pronounces its position.

For this reason I am looking for a more encompassing term for naiveté. It has to capture the readiness on the part of people to make decisions. The ability to make decisions presupposes leaving certain aspects unconsidered and not thinking certain thoughts through. This naiveté is indestructible.

The state surrounds itself with consultants. The Federal Chancellor wants to have a national Council on Ethics. Would you participate in it?

My answer depends on whether it is you who is asking me this or the Federal Chancellor.

* *This interview was translated from the original German and re-published with the permission of Dr. Heik Afheldt.*

Peter Sloterdijk *is the most commercially successful contemporary philosopher in Germany. His bestseller* Critique of Cynical Reason *is the best sold philosophical book in Europe. Recently, in an interview he did with the "FAZ" he spoke with the genetic scientist Craig Venter on the motivations behind his research and the consequences of the new knowledge on the biology of human beings. Sloterdijk triggered a controversy two years ago with his thesis on human breeding and is now refining it with a political debate on pre-implantation diagnosis and therapeutic cloning. Peter Sloterdijk teaches in Karlsruhe and Vienna.*

Poetry by Paulo Henriques Britto & Vivian Demuth

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“On High” by Paulo Henriques Britto
(translated from the Portuguese by Idra Novey)

“I Have Been Calling Them” and “Faders” by Vivian Demuth

Paulo Henriques Britto
(Translated from the Portuguese by Idra Novey)

On High

I
Even the world doesn’t fit
within the slender space
consigned to it.

All things overflow their borders.
(And so the taut angst of armchairs,
the ashamed cry of faucets.)

Not only you, poet, suffer from
the stingy work of demiurges.
Even the gods write twisted lines.

Still, one has to attempt. For instance:
“Night is a deep backpack.”
No, not backpack. Maybe bat cave?

Not that either. Far too wild,
too tiresome, again. And the night,
plainly, is no longer a child.

II
Careful, poet: time fattens the soul.
After a certain number of pages
angels no longer rise between the lines.
And even reason, that modern thing
wears out as well, like any coin.

Having a meaning is a risky game,
and can't be resolved in a single dice throw.
The precision of a gesture alone isn't enough.
Even the most catlike movement is nothing
without the ballast of existence, that

tired thing, with its texture too thick
to pass through the timid sieve
of pale poetry, that ancient thing.
Time is scarce. The dictionary is fat.
Careful: no silence is ever enough.

Brazilian poet ***Paulo Henriques Britto*** *was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1951. His third collection of poems,* Trovar Claro*, received Brazil's equivalent of the National Book Award, and his fourth book,* Macau*, won the Portugal Telecom Prize. Britto is also one of Brazil's principal translators of British and American literature. His translations include works by E.L. Doctorow, Henry James, V.S. Naipaul, Thomas Pynchon, Wallace Stevens, and Elizabeth Bishop. He currently teaches at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro.*
Poet and translator ***Idra Novey*** *is the author of the poetry collection,* The Next Country*. Her poems and prose appear or are forthcoming in* The Paris Review, Ploughshares, The Literary Review*, and* The Believer*, as well as the poetry anthology,* Third Rail*. The poem, "On High," is reprinted here in translation, by permission of the translator, from the new book,* The Clean Shirt Of It *(2007, Boa Editions, www.boaeditions.org), a bilingual collection of Paulo Henriques Britto's poems in Idra Novey's translation which received a* PEN Translation Fund Award.

Vivian Demuth

I Have Been Calling Them

For a long time I have been calling them without reply
I smell them in the DNA hills of my boreal bed
I see them waiting on a black forest coat of male arms
I hear them arguing, tongues flying in Native winds
I rub their dark feathers dipped in a dry Alberta stream
As I write in the rocky darkness to talk with them

For a long time I have been calling them without response
And after I saw the twirling Precision helicopter crash
After I ran downhill into the smell of crushed metal and dreams
After I touched a cold firefighter's blue-winged lips
with the erratic cry of my breath, then I called them again
while walking alone in logged woods and for once
the giant ravens croaked and lifted me
as we listened to our breath alight in tall evergreens

Faders*
–for Anna Politkovskaya

What fades?
Evergreens, survivors of chain-linked
generations of logging, now a cemetery
of vertical bones with marrow devoured
by defrosted mobs of mountain beetles.
Dry pine trees, fragile, faded red
like splattered blood of hunted journalists
marked in blinding daylight of corruption
and wars. The paper dollar skin of a million
carved trees changes hands to kill or save
a forest, to pay the salary of a determined
investigative reporter or to complete
the handshake of a prearranged hit.
When the deal is done, baked winds
blow tinder needles into the world's circular
currents where the sad news is read by ever-
globalizing children scavenging through
trashed newspapers. This is the hazardous
graveyard, dumped skeletons of trees and
journalists, the unpredictable resting place
from which a thoughtful spark has potential,
in spite of death, to melt and release
a thousand tender seedlings.

*Faders is a forestry term for pine-beetle-infested pine trees

Vivian Demuth *is a Canadian poet and fiction writer, whose first novel,* Eyes of the Forest, *was recently published by* Smoky Peace Press (www.smokypeacepress.com) *She is also the author of a poetry collection,* Breathing Nose Mountain (www.poetspath.com/exhibits/viviandemuth). *For the last fifteen years, she has worked summers as a fire lookout in the boreal forest of Alberta, Canada, where she hosts an annual Poetry on the Peaks events. In recent winters, she has lived in New York, where she has taught creative writing and worked in an outreach center for the city's homeless.*

Body Of Secrets: How America's Nsa And Britan's Gchq Eavesdrop On The World, By James Bamford

By | 2007: Vol. 6, No. 3-4

As we observe the fortieth anniversary of the Six-Day War of June 1967, there are few things to celebrate. One notable exception is the full exposure of the actual events of the Israeli aggression which hitherto have been carefully guarded secrets. In particular the frenzied attempts by the Israelis to sink the USS Liberty and kill its crew, attempts covered up at the time by order of the Johnson White House and covered up ever since by censorship and elaborate lies by Israeli and US authorities. Now, thanks to the remarkable book Body of Secrets by James Bamford, it is possible to learn not only what happened to the Liberty, but what it was Israel was so desperate to conceal from the eyes of the world, especially from the Russians and the Americans. What they were covering up, and what President Lyndon Johnson would help them continue to cover up, was war crimes and crimes against humanity, a continuation and intensification of the deliberate and calculated policy of the colonial settler state to remove by all possible means the indigenous people.

Now a distinguished visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, Bamford is an American journalist who has made the nation's intelligence gathering agencies his specialization. He grew up in Natick, Massachussetts, spent three years in the US Navy during Vietnam, then earned a law degree from Boston's Suffolk University on the G.I. Bill. Bamford has used the Freedom of Information Act to produce three substantial books all dealing with the super-secret world of US and British spies Before Body of Secrets, Bamford published The Puzzle Palace (1982), also about the National Security Agency, and his new book A Pretext for War: 9/11, Iraq, and the Abuse of America's Intelligence Agencies (2004), explores the role of intelligence-gathering agencies up to, during and after the events of 9/11. As the author told Kevin Zeese, Pretext for War includes a detailed minute-by-minute look at the confusion and chaos in Washington in the hours following the 9/11 attack. (see "Inventing Pretext for War," interview by Kevin Zeese, Monday, May 25, 2005. http://democracyrising.us/content/view/226/164/ A good deal was already known about Israeli crimes in 1967 by readers fortunate enough to get hold of Arthur C. Forrest's The Unholy Land (1970-1971).

Forrest was sent by a consortium of North American church magazines to research rumors that the Israelis were not in fact allowing the refugees back into Palestine, in spite of their carefully staged claims to the contrary. Forrest quickly learned that refugees were still fleeing across the Allenby Bridge; that many had been attacked by Israeli planes using napalm; that the camp at Jericho which had held some 65,000 refugees from 1948, had been attacked and

thousands driven across the River into Jordan by planes using machine guns and napalm; that survivors from the Jordanian Army said whole field hospitals had been napalmed. Of course Forrest was bitterly attacked for daring to criticize Israel, especially for revealing the truth about Israeli use of napalm against civilians and hospitals. He writes: One of the horror stories being told in Amman was of the experiences of fleeing refugees being sprayed with napalm. At first I didn't believe it and shuddered at the thought of using some of the pictures of victims available in Jordan. 'If it were pictures of Vietnam you'd publish them wouldn't you?' a Palestinian said. (Forrest 16) Forrest was shocked and dubious concerning these reports, so he went to visit survivors of these attacks in Jordanian hospitals. He spoke to Mr. Sami Oweida, the father of a family who had recently crossed the Bridge and whose surviving members were still being treated in hospital in Amman We crossed the King Hussein [Allenby] Bridge, walking. Planes were going overhead […] W tried to avoid big crowds, thinking the planes would bomb the crowds. Then at that moment [about 4 PM] I saw a plane come down like a hawk directly at us. We threw ourselves on the ground and found ourselves in the midst of fire. (Forrest 17)

Forrest also quotes the report of General Sir John Glubb whose interpretation of the Middle East Crisis was published in July 1967 as follows: The greater part of the Jordan army were destroyed by napalm [.] Glubb quotes from a signed statement by a team of doctors from the American University of Beirut.[…] 'A doctor reported that the Mobile Field Hospital, containing 350 patients, was incinerated with all its patients and staff by napalm,' Glubb says. (Forrest 16) Forrest took photographs of some of the burned victims, one of which he later published in the United Church Observer, his Church paper in Canada, of a little girl recovering from napalm burns. "That, I was told, proved I was anti-Semitic. To condemn napalm in Vietnam is alright. To report its use by the Israelis is considered anti-Semitic" (Forrest 17). When Forrest asked for permission to visit the three destroyed villages Yalu, Beit Nuba, and Emmaus, he was refused on grounds that "There isn't any Beit Nuba!" (15). Nevertheless Forrest managed to travel to the devastated area. From survivors whom he asked about the destruction of these villages in retribution for their resistance in 1948, he learned that Israeli bulldozers had demolished houses over the heads of the infirm elderly who perished in the rubble (15). Now, thanks to James Bamford's outing of the secrets of the "Black Chamber" which housed the American NSA, (National Security Agency) and that of the British GCHQ, (Government Communications Headquarters), it is possible to reconstruct a more complete picture of the Israeli crimes and their cover-up including its attack on the USS Liberty. The well planned war of 1967 was designed to take as much land as possible and to make it appear that the Arab armies had attacked Israel. This is the startling conclusion of a chapter in Bamford's, Body of Secrets (2002).

In prose that reads like a John LeCarré thriller, Bamford records the growing anxiety back in Washington when authorities in the Joint Reconnaissance Center realized that the Liberty was steaming into dangerous proximity to what, on June 4th had become a war zone. Five different emergency messages failed to reach the endangered ship. About the same time in Tel Aviv, Foreign Minister Abba Eban summoned U.S. Ambassador Walworth Barbour to a meeting in his office. Building an ever larger curtain of lies around Israel's true activities and intentions,

Eban accused Egypt of starting the war. Barbour quickly sent a secret Flash message back to Washington. 'Early this morning,' he quoted Eban, 'Israelis observed Egyptian units moving in large numbers toward Israel and in fact considerable force penetrated Israeli territory and clashed with Israeli ground forces. Consequently, GOI [Government of Israel] gave orders to attack.' Eban told Barbour that his government intended to protest Egypt's actions to the UN Security Council. 'Israel is [the] victim of Nasser's aggression,' he said. (Bamford 192) It should be remembered that Abba Eban, was the same person who promised the UN that the Palestinian refugees would be allowed to return as a ploy for gaining UN recognition in 1948.

One is reminded of the insightful remark of Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht who says in her fine book The Fate of the Jews (1983), "Zionists executed the psychological coup of the century by taking Palestine from the Arabs and then pretending Jews were Arab victims" (Feuerlicht 246-47). Meanwhile the Liberty, prominently flying a large American flag. was identified as an American spy plane by an Israeli pilot. "At 6:05 A.M: the naval observer on the plane reported back to Israeli naval headquarters. 'What we could see was the letters written on that ship,' he said. 'And we gave these letters to the ground control.' The letters were 'GTR-5,' the Liberty's identification. 'GTR' stood for 'General Technical Research' – a cover designation for NSA's fleet of spy ships" (Bamford 199). More specific identifying markers were sent in a message to the Israeli navy headquarters in Haifa: "the ship cruising slowly off El Arish was "an electromagnetic audio-surveillance ship of the U.S. Navy named Liberty whose marking was GTR-5." Not only did the ship have "GTR-5" painted broadly on both sides of its bow and stern, it also had its name painted in large, bold, black letters: "U.S.S. LIBERTY." And Bamford adds, "Although no one on the Liberty knew it, they were about to have some company" (204). Bamford's documentation removes any doubt that the Israelis knew the Liberty was an American ship, and its position so close to the scene of Israeli war crimes made it absolutely necessary for them to destroy it. Bamford details the "criminal slaughter" in which the Israelis were engaged at nearby Al-Arish (201). From the first minutes of its surprise attack, the Israeli air force had owned the skies over the Middle East. Within the first few hours, Israeli jets pounded twenty-five Arab air bases ranging from Damascus in Syria to an Egyptian field, loaded with bombers far up the Nile at Luxor. Then, using machine guns, mortar fire, tanks, and air power, the Israeli war machine overtook the Jordanian section of Jerusalem as well as the west bank of the Jordan River, and torpedo boats captured the key Red Sea cape at Sharm al-Sheikh.

In the Sinai, Israeli tanks and armored personnel carriers pushed toward the Suez Canal along all three of the roads that crossed the desert, turning the burning sands into a massive killing field. One Israeli general estimated that Egyptian casualties there ranged from 7,000 to 10,000 killed, compared with 275 of its own troops. (Bamford 201) Bamford documents the attack by Israeli tanks on a UN convoy of Indian peacekeeper soldiers on their way to Gaza, and the subsequent attack on a UN headquarters in Gaza in which fourteen UN members were killed. "One Indian officer called it deliberate, cold-blooded killing of unarmed UN soldiers" (201). Bamford then details the slaughter of hundreds of Egyptian prisoners of war who were made to dig their own graves and then machine-gunned (202-205). On the morning of June 8, the Israeli military command received a report that a large American eavesdropping ship was

secretly listening only a few miles off El- Arish. At the same moment, a scant dozen or so miles away, Israeli soldiers were butchering civilians and bound prisoners by the hundreds, a fact that the entire Israeli army leadership knew about and condoned, according to the army's own historian.

Another military historian, Uri Milstein, confirmed the report. There were many incidents in the Six Day War, he said, in which Egyptian soldiers were killed by Israeli troops after they had raised their hands in surrender. 'It was not an official policy,' he added, but there was an atmosphere that it was okay to do it. Some commanders decided to do it; others refused. But everyone knew about it.' (Bamford 236) It was not in Israeli nor in US interest to have this aggression against Egypt, Syria, and Jordan revealed to the world. Early in the afternoon of June 8, 1967, Israeli jets and missile boats opened fire on the USS Liberty which was by then off the coast of Gaza. Struck by rockets, cannon, and torpedoes, the vessel suffered extensive damage and over 200 casualties including 34 dead. Israeli forces were then engaged in the fourth day of what would soon be called the Six Day War, and, as Bamford shows, the Liberty was hit repeatedly by waves of Israeli air force fighters loaded with 30 mm cannon ammunition, rockets, and even napalm, then assaulted from the sea by torpedoes (200-201). Israel claimed the attack was a "tragic mistake." In spite of earlier exposés like that of Arthur Forrest and interviews with survivors of the USS Liberty, few people in the West even today know what Israel was doing. In subsequent investigations, however, it has emerged that those directly connected to the attack on the Liberty rejected Israeli claims the ship was attacked by accident. In his biography of President Lyndon Johnson, for example, Robert Dallek says "The highest officials of the [Johnson] administration, including the President, believed it 'inconceivable' that Israel's 'skilled' defense forces' could have committed such a gross error" Dallek. 430-31).

If Israeli intention was to cover up their criminal napalm attacks on Palestinian civilians in order to drive them out of Palestine, it seems to have been a success. The information given by Arthur Forrest and James Bamford is consistent with that of another witness to Israel's use of napalm against civilians in 1967. Norman F. Dacey, formerly chairman of Volunteers for Nixon, whose open letter to then President Richard M. Nixon was published in Lebanese newspaper Al-Anwar, January 17, 1972. In it Dacey told Nixon that he would henceforth campaign for Nixon's defeat, citing his disgust with US policies in the Middle East. "I have walked through Egyptian hospitals and seen row on row of beds of little children, their bodies burned black by American-made napalm, dropped from American-built planes in claimed 'defense' of Israel" (Dacey qtd in Ashiurakis 1974). Other readers will find other parts of Bamford's huge book (715 pages) important for what it has to reveal about US and UK intelligence roles in relation to Cuba, to Viet Nam, Germany, Russia, and China. As increasing numbers of Europeans and Americans question the official account of the events of September 11, 2001, related research has turned up information about other "false flag" operations such as "Northwoods," the plan developed by extremist military hawks to commit acts of terrorism against American citizens and/or military installations and plant false documents which would incriminate Cuba. Bamford provides a detailed account of these plans which, to his credit, President John Kennedy refused to authorize.

Among the more bizarre but not atypical schemes under the "Northwoods" umbrella was a plan to sabotage the launch from Cape Canaveral on February 20, 1962, of astronaut John Glenn on his historic journey into space. Right-wing military leader Lyman L. Lemnizter and his friends proposed that they should arrange for the rocket to explode and kill Glenn, then provide proof that the Cubans were to blame (Bamford 84). Another plan was to create an incident which will demonstrate convincingly that a Cuban aircraft has attacked and shot down a chartered civil airliner en route from the United States to Jamaica, Guatemala, Panama or Venezuela. Th destination would be chosen only to cause the flight plan to cross Cuba. The passengers could be a group of college students off on a holiday or any grouping of persons with a common interest to support chartering a non-scheduled flight." (Bamford 85) Lemnitzer and fellow hawks, Bamford records, predecessors of today's neo-cons, were frustrated that Kennedy not only refused to authorize these provocations for war against Cuba, but actually seemed to be "going soft" on Cuba. Bamford shows that Robert and John Kennedy were receiving encouraging signals that Fidel Castro was eager to establish friendly relations wit the U.S., (sentiments expressed quite specifically in an interview with Castro by ABC reporter Lisa Howard). To these overtures the Kennedys had responded with positive messages designed to arrange diplomatic meetings, perhaps in a third country (Bamford 128). Through William Attwood, attaché to Adlai Stevenson's UN mission and long-time Castro contact, serious discussions between White House and Cuban diplomats were taking place. Howard, continuing in her role as unofficial intermediary, mentioned Attwood to Major René Vallejo, a Cuban surgeon who was also Castro's right-hand man and confidant.

On October 31, Vallejo called Howard, telling her that Castro would very much like to talk to Atwood anytime and appreciated the importance of discretion to all concerned. (Bamford 129) After extensive communications with Castro's aides in which detailed plans for meetings were formulated, Attwood was able to send a very positive memo to President Kennedy saying that "Vallejo's manner was extremely cordial" and saying he was instructed to set up plans for a later meeting between Kennedy and Castro and would await their call Tragically, Bamford concludes, "But President Kennedy did not see Attwood's memorandum. At the moment it arrived he was traveling in a motorcade in Dallas, Texas" (Bamford 130). Bamford's disclosure of the hidden face of U.S. and British secret intelligence- gathering organizations makes clear the mechanisms of control by which super-hawks have derailed efforts for world peace over the past fifty years. The book closes with some alarming information about secret biological warfare research. In the race to build the world's most powerful computer, MIT scientists were by 2001 attempting to marry the digital with the biological by altering the common E.coli bacterium "to function as an electronic circuit" (Bamford 612).

This rather macabre information resonates with Michael Ruppert's documentation in Crossing the Rubicon of a series of mysterious deaths among world class microbiologists especially those working on the sequencing of DNA. (See Ruppert's Chapter 29″Biological Warfare".) The suggestion is that there are experiments being conducted, for example to find lethal agents specific to certain ethnic groups, and to a kind of software being used for this highly-classified work (Ruppert identifies it as "PROMIS") which has a built-in "back-door" capable of identifying anyone who succeeds in "secretly scanning their databases to see what they were

working on" (Ruppert 511). But my own primary interest in Bamford's book is what it tells us about the Israeli capture of Gaza, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, which, as the commentators are saying, changed the shape of the Middle East. Most of the people now starving in Gaza are refugees who were driven from their villages in successive waves of territorial conquest involving massacres and land thefts over sixty years. Out of a cowardly fear of offending Israel, European and American leaders ignore legitimate Palestinian demands to be allowed to return to their homes and villages though this simple and principled move would solve 99% of the security problems of Israel. In the close analogy with Native American history in which tribe after tribe were driven from their land, pursued and hounded into remote Reservations preparatory for the final extermination, Gaza represents the stage of Wounded Knee, an advanced stage on the only Roadmap that is really operative there: the Roadmap to extermination. Though it represents the only remaining hope of a just and peaceful settlement, the refusal of Israel to even consider implementing of the right of return is peculiarly self-destructive.

Can Israel have forgotten that it was by Abba Eban's false promise to allow the refugees to return that Israel gained acceptance in the United Nations? Serious thought must be given to the comprehensive plan presented, with all the maps and demographic studies required, by Dr. Salman Abu Sitta, showing the feasibility of starting immediately an orderly and carefully monitored program of re-settlement and compensation. Abu Sitta estimates (though recent pell-mell settlement expansion, Jews only roads, and the "Wall," may have altered his calculations) that 80% of Refugees in contiguous countries could be returned to their homes without seriously impinging on major areas of Jewish population; the rest, he suggests, could be negotiated. (See Abu Sitta's "Implementing the Right of Return" in The New Intifada 2001) But why, you might ask, would events of 1967 be relevant today? And why, therefore, are Bamford's revelations so critical? Because the picture he presents of the deliberate killing of prisoners of war and the murder of civilians by napalm should rip the mask off "poor little Israel" as victim of Arab aggression. The same program of ethnic cleansing and progressive land confiscation is still proceeding apace, and this program is at the heart of all the other major conflicts in the region, most recently the barbaric rape, murder and pillage of Iraq by the US/UK which was instigated on behalf of an expansionist Israel to destabilize the region thereby enabling the "transfer" of the indigenous population of Palestine. That the Israeli plan is and always has been the complete elimination of the Palestinians is shown by its ongoing murders of Palestinians (such as the massacre of Jenin refugee camp in 2002), the campaign of assassination and wholesale killing like the missile attack which killed a whole family picnicking on the Gaza beach.

In Imperial Israel and the Palestinians (2002), Nur Masalha documents recent Israeli plans for the destruction of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the two great mosques on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem (122-23), and for the "final solution" to the Palestinian problem which they hope to put into practice with the help of their American accomplices-a plan of "transfer" for which they foresaw the destruction of Iraq as a necessary step. Masalha quotes Meier Lipschitz, an Israeli developer of Jewish-only housing, as saying a war against Iraq is a real (religious) duty. If it is possible to make provocation, we must carry this out immediately.

Such a golden opportunity in a convenient international situation falls into our hand once every hundred years… No one will busy himself with the triviality of transfer which we will carry out in parallel at the same time… Who exactly will be interested in the fate of two million Palestinians, who supported the butcher of Baghdad and are settled on the lands of the little king (King Hussein)? (184) Masalha says the gist of this argument is that war against Iraq should be provoked if only so it could be utilized for the forcible mass expulsion of the Palestinians"(185). Bamford's book has a great deal more to teach us about US and UK secrets, the Cold War, and the Great Game. But on this anniversary of the second Nakbah, I hope I may be forgiven for foregrounding what Body of Secrets has to teach us about the true character of Israel as a colonial settler state in which there is, in spite of all the talk, no place for the indigenous people.

Rather than carrying on with the futile question of a "one-state" as opposed to a "two-state" solution, it is time to correct the root injustice which has caused so much death and suffering: allow the Palestinian refugees to return and receive compensation for their losses, allow them to rebuild their villages, restore their cemeteries, rebuild their mosques and churches. The claim that Israel must be a "purely Jewish state" should be reconsidered: would it not be better to be a Jewish state in which Jews live at peace with the original inhabitants?

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Servants Of Wealth: The Right's Assault On Economic Justice, By John Ehrenberg

By | 2007: Vol. 6, No. 3-4

My students often question me about the current state of American politics and society. Being located in a plainly proletarian city, they aren't so much asking for an empirical account of the conditions they are already observing for themselves. Instead , they want me to explain how the greatest country in the world' could find itself encumbered with the grim realities facing it today. From Bush's abortion of a war, to crime, poverty and inequality, they demand an explanation of how these things could happen. Of course, I try to give them an answer and encourage them to find their own; but, our attempts often emerge disjointed and partial. John Ehrenberg's book *Servants of Wealth*, on the other hand presents a comprehensive and cogent analysis of the current state of America that explores the ideological, economic, social and political rise of what Ehrenberg calls the Modern Right's "aggressive use of state power to advance the interests of the rich."[i] What Ehrenberg has done in his book is to put forth one of the most clearly and concisely articulated accounts of neo-conservative ideology and the brutal impact it has had on American society.

Using a sharp analysis of the years preceding the Reagan Revolution as his foundation, Ehrenberg argues that a combination of social and economic factors created a climate that was ripe for opportunistic conservatives to dramatically shift the ideological discourse in America away from that of New Deal Liberalism.

Included in this ideological shift was the emphasis the New Right put on the military. Ehrenberg identifies the major players in the neo-con's concerted effort to make their obsession with militarism a policy reality. From The Committee on the Present Danger to The Project for the New American Century, Ehrenberg explains how the New Right successfully used fear tactics and terror to craft a more aggressive foreign policy. In his words, "[T]he developing neo-conservative argument hinged on convincing the population that the United States was facing a mortal threat…and that fundamental changes in American foreign and defense policy were needed."[ii] This in turn meant increased defense spending which the New Right was more than willing to sacrifice social programs to pay for. According to Ehrenberg, "[T]he neo-conservatives set about convincing the population that security from external threats was worth the price."[iii]

But, the New Right couldn't stop at increased militarism and a more aggressive foreign policy, according to Ehrenberg. For this to be successful, they argued, a much more cohesive domestic situation needed to emerge and that meant an immediate end to the "[i]ncreased participation by blacks, young people, workers, and women [that] carried with it an important reassertion of egalitarian and redistributionist social policies,"[iv] These social disruptions' were a major

source of competition over the resources the Right desperately needed to fund their aggressive foreign policy. Furthermore, the demands more participation created was perceived as a threat to the stability of the state. As Ehrenberg puts it, “Higher levels of participation and more democratic movements had simultaneously demanded more government activity and had limited its authority.”[v] Theorists like Samuel Huntington and Allen Bloom argued that the 1960s and 70s had witnessed an “erosion of state legitimacy and governmental authority,”[vi] that threatened the stability of the country. These arguments were buttressed by the red-faced, hellfire preachings of Jerry Falwell and the establishment of his Moral Majority that derided all the accomplishments of the progressive movement as being un-godly and instead demanded an austere state authority to subdue the influence of what they considered “crazed feminists, criminal blacks, and a weak-willed and corrupt liberal elite.”[vii]

Another key focal point of Ehrenberg’s analysis of the New Right is their position on racial issues, in particular the position of African Americans in society. As a corollary to the redistributive and socially inclusive traditions of the New Deal, the Civil Rights movement made great strides in redressing the iniquities of racial discrimination and Jim Crow. Things like the 1964 Voting Right’s Act, Civil Rights Act, and Affirmative Action were all substantial steps in rectifying black marginalization. However, as Ehrenberg points out, Neo-conservatives have methodically worn away at this progress and the just reasoning behind it. In its place they have popularized a sinister and reactionary set of ideas that had historically been reserved for plantation masters and Klansmen. What the Right did was deny the historic, structural constraints blacks face in society and assigned blame for racial inequality on what they considered the cultural inferiority of African Americans. In Ehrenberg words, the New Right crafted and perpetuated, “[a] popular narrative [that] suggested…blacks systematically undermined the normal rules of social progress through acts of individual and collective violence, public expressions of contempt for middle-class morality, and excessive demands on others. [The New Right] fed a racial discourse that began to blame an allegedly self-destructive and irresponsible population for its own failure to advance.”[viii]

Questioning the benign nature of the welfare state was another tool the Neo-cons used in their campaign to destroy the New Deal social model, according to Ehrenberg. Fueled by the theoretical assertions of anti-socialists and supply-siders like Friedrich Hayek, and Milton and Rose Friedman a whole generation of politicians including Newt Gingrich and especially Ronald Reagan set about convincing the American public that New Deal Liberalism was antithetical to both freedom and prosperity and that is was actually the cause of society’s problems not an answer to it. Furthermore, they made the perverse assertion to the advantaged classes in society that they had been falling victim to a society gone awry. As Ehrenberg states, “Even though the United States provides less social welfare and taxes its citizens less than comparable societies, the Right feeds the myth of an overtaxed population…Even though the United States is marked by higher levels of economic and social inequality than comparable societies and does less in its tax and transfer policy to mitigate the effects of both, the Right feeds the myth of an extortionist state that takes money from the industrious and gives it to the lazy.”[ix]

The final step in solidifying the Right's ideology as the new American discourse, according to Ehrenberg, was to undermine the core principle around which much of New Deal Liberalism was based; i.e., that inequality is bad. As Ehrenberg explains, "The contemporary Right…crafted a series of arguments that explains how policies that benefit a tiny minority of the population aren't really what they seem. It has learned to appeal to a country that still adheres to a broadly democratic ethos by arguing that equality applies to opportunity alone, that economic differences are accurate reflections of contributions to the general welfare, and that making the rich even richer will benefit everyone."[x] In essence what the Neo-cons did was to convince an unsuspecting population that everyone benefits from the unfettered economic activity and that "[t]ampering with the market will destroy democracy."[xi]

Servants of Wealth is a beautifully crafted analysis and critique of neo-conservative ideology for which Ehrenberg should be lauded. He highlights the wide spectrum of issues that collectively define the core of his subject. Furthermore, he paints a vivid and frightening portrait of the impact Neo-Conservatism has had on the disadvantaged classes of society. His assurance that, "[t]he Right's twenty-five-year campaign to reward wealth and property has come at an enormous price for the "common" people in whose welfare it has long claimed to be interested,"[xii] is a pithy indication of the keen insight that makes this book a worthy contribution to the literature.

However, Ehrenberg may be off the mark in his assumption that New Deal Liberalism is dramatically different in nature than Neo-conservatism. Granted, the New Right plays a bit nastier but in the end it is still the same game. Call it what you will: elitist, bourgeois or plutocratic, the top strata in society continues to play for keeps and they still play on an unleveled field. The difference is that through New Deal Liberalism, FDR had enough sense or foresight to force the upper strata to throw the marginalized classes concessions once in a while to keep them appeased. The New Right's approach is to turn the screws a little tighter to bring the under-classes into submission. But in the end, we have the same result-the reality of permanently disadvantaged classes struggling to survive in society. Indeed, my reading of FDR and New Deal Liberalism is a bit more cynical. Whereas he views FDR as the champion of the under-classes, I see him more as the champion of the Capital class. After all, the essence of what FDR did was to ensure the stability of the capitalist system from the chaos and discontentment that was threatening to explode in Socialist revolution as a result of the depression. And it worked; FDR compelled the advantaged class to start giving a little back but only in an effort to help them keep the lion's share. Normatively Ehrenberg is justified in claiming that this is a preferred condition; but, it falls well short of anything we could or even should consider economic justice. Therefore, by asserting that the Right had somehow assaulted economic justice, as I read him, Ehrenberg ironically may only have reinforced the bourgeois fallacy that it once existed.

Notes

[i] Ehrenberg, John. *Servants of Wealth: The Right's Assault on Economic Justice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006. p. 15.

[ii] Ibid., p. 23.

[iii] Ibid., p. 19.

[iv] Ibid., p. 51.

[v] Ibid., p. 51.

[vi] Ibid., p. 51.

[vii] Ibid., p. 68.

[viii] Ibid., p. 74.

[ix] Ibid., pp. 112-113.

[x] Ibid., pp. 142-143.

[xi] Ibid., p. 159.

[xii] Ibid., p. 168.

Cosmopolitanism: Ethics In A World Of Strangers, By Kwame Anthony Appiah

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Foreign policy not so long ago seemed to move in maddeningly elitist ways far outside the public sphere of ordinary citizens, but it's now almost downright *de rigueur* for many Americans, stung by blowback' effects, to be interested in its arcane details. As a result of technological innovations ranging from a 24-hour news cycle to international conferences broadcast on live-blogs, access to the international sphere has begun to feel ever more unmediated and raw. Foreign policy appears to be more transparent (even if illusorily so). Meanwhile, "globalization" has become a mind-numbingly catch-all designation, encompassing both G-8 conferences and that weird "something-isn't-right" feeling you get when you buy Chilean salmon at Wal-Mart for $4.84 a pound and suddenly realize that it's terribly, even impossibly cheap (here borrowing an observation from Charles Fishman's *The Wal-Mart Effect*).

If you're troubled by the blatant bullying of the Bush administration, you may also recognize a nagging inner feeling of helplessness regarding everything that's going badly in the world, as well as an acute sense of diminished possibilities for getting any meaningful and decent alternative program into action. For internationally-minded Americans, no institutional vehicle for sensible cooperative internationalism is immediately apparent. There's a blunt way of putting this: "No international community exists. The term is a euphemism for American hegemony," as Perry Anderson, in the lead-up to the Iraq war, stated in the *London Review of Books*.

It is this gap between a multilateral global order replete with bona fide robust political dialogue and its actual emaciated quality which stirred Kwame Anthony Appiah's book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. Appiah is bored by talk of global politics and globalization, so he digs into the ethical issues underlying, and raised by, what he portrays as rival discourses. His is an elegantly written and thoughtful reflection on what it means to be "at home in the world," but in its personal meanderings it fails to respond with the urgency that the pressing problems he identifies clearly demand. The book is never less than interesting, but, at the end, one wonders if it is really worth the trip.

This disappointment is largely a result of his self-imposed limits. Appiah draws many strands in *Cosmopolitanism* from the deeper thinking evident in his *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton UP, 2005), a very good book, and one so earnestly helpful and agreeable that one almost hates to quibble. Appiah showed how, once you have rooted through and refurbished all the heavy, dusty, odd-looking furniture in liberalism's creaky attic-individuality, culture, autonomy, and, above all, identity-you'd plainly discern that liberalism's commitments really reside with a

“rooted,” or partial, cosmopolitanism. Here is an ethical position that he believes pulls off the neat trick of respecting both the identity we provincial human beings construct out of given materials but likewise views materials and practices of other people elsewhere as equally worthy of respect – if not always necessarily desirable.

“Cosmopolitanism” emerged in the Hellenistic age, among the Stoics and Cynics. Two strands “intertwine in the notion. One is the idea that we have obligations to others, obligations that stretch beyond those to whom we are related by the ties of kith and kind, or even the more formal ties of a shared citizenship. The other is that we take seriously the value not just of human life but of particular human lives, which means taking an interest in the practices and beliefs that lend them significance. So we should learn from others. The model for this ethical education is “conversation,” one that takes place across “boundaries,” that is, conversation across identities. As he argued in *The Ethics of Identity*, “we make our lives *as* men and *as* women, *as* gay and *as* straight people, *as* Ghanaians and *as* Americans, *as* blacks and *as* whites.” What his notion of cosmopolitanism-as-conversation represents is a transcendental philosophy pervading all identities. It is a mode of interaction that encompasses both our obligation to those beyond, as well as our obligations to those nearest, us-thus, the partial, or rooted, nature of the cosmopolitanism. This intermediate position mediates between a universalizing internationalism, which would dissipate rooted commitments, and “identity politics,” which asserts the rights of a particular group over other broader obligations.

Appiah’s role models include himself. Born and raised in Ghana, Appiah was educated at Cambridge University and now is a professor of Philosophy at Princeton. His parents were interracial. His father was Joseph Appiah, a leading figure in the movement for Ghanaian independence; his English mother, the late Peggy Appiah (to whom *Cosmopolitanism* is dedicated) was a charity worker and collector of Ghanaian folklore. Many of Appiah’s examples of a cosmopolitan existence derive from this unusual upbringing. One chapter, “Imaginary Strangers,” is devoted to recounting a “diverse” reception he and his mother arranged for the king of Asante in Ghana.

Alan Ryan opined in *The New York Review of Books* that “nobody is better placed than Anthony Appiah to make the case for rooted cosmopolitanism.” But Appiah’s invocation of himself is inherently problematic. He jokes that what most people imagine when they hear “cosmopolitan” is “a Comme des Garcons-clad sophisticate with a platinum frequent-flyer card regarding, with kindly condescension, a ruddy-faced farmer in workman’s overalls.” What Appiah tries to derail is the charge that cosmopolitanism is elitist. But his class advantages are not irrelevant. The sense that his supporters have of Appiah being the cosmopolitan *par excellence* highlights what he discounts: that cosmopolitanism itself constitutes an “identity.” In a real sense, Appiah has not chosen to be a cosmopolitan. Cosmopolitanism has instead been thrust upon him, and he was “well-placed” to comment on it. Henry James, another man whose upbringing made him a ‘man of the world,’ wrote “being a cosmopolite is an accident, but one must make the best of it…there comes a time when one set of customs, wherever it may be found, grows to seem to you about as provincial as another; and then I suppose it may be said of you that you have become a cosmopolite.” (Still, he never stopped writing about America.)

For James, cosmopolitanism was less a matter of an ethical attitude than a matter of pure Providence. Just so, Appiah was *disposed* (to some extent) to espouse his rooted cosmopolitanism. Nice work if you can get it.

Still, there's nothing wrong with being cosmopolitanism, even with advantages. I like Appiah's optimistic vision of the world. His model of "conversation" is agreeable, though largely because it's so vague. Still, one would surely hope that cosmopolitanism is possible for more than a tiny minority. Appiah is unable to address this little detail. He refers to "times when…universal concern and respect for legitimate difference…clash," and notes this is "the sense in which cosmopolitanism is the name not of the solution, but of the challenge." The "challenge" becomes clear in his chapter, "the Counter-Cosmopolitans," where he repudiates the all-devouring ideological goals of al Qaeda and Christian fundamentalists, as well as in his last chapter, "Kindness to Strangers," a description of the problems facing charitable giving from individuals and nations to those less well-off.

In both the aforementioned chapters problems arise that demand a more savvy political analysis than Appiah can offer. Instead, he dishes out bromides that only the more comfortable among us can buy. For example, he explains that he disagrees with philosopher Peter Singer who devised a utilitarian calculus on how much the better off should give to the poor. He admits he does "not know exactly what the basic obligations are of each American or each human being." He does know that we can do more, but also that "if all Americans or Europeans stopped buying consumer goods, the result would almost certainly be a collapse of the global economy." Well, sure: but who is he arguing with here? This should be the beginning of an argument, not its end. As for humanitarian interventions he hedges unattractively: "Perhaps we should stop genocide, intervene when there is a mass starvation or a great natural disaster. But must we do more than this?" Appiah doesn't even pretend to know. So why read him?

Cosmopolitanism isn't enough. Take a stroll down to the Current Events book aisle this season and you'll find American academies and policy magazines yielding a bumper crop of foreign policy notions. Why, there's Francis Fukuyama hawking his sobered-up "realistic Wilsonianism." And there's the New America Foundation's Robert Wright peddling his dry "progressive realism;" How about Paul Berman and his rueful post-68-styled liberal interventionism. Or how about Peter Beinart's "chronic careerism"?. Nearly all these writers espouse the "partial cosmopolitanism" Appiah advocates, except that they do so squarely inside the field of politics. They are all at odds with the imperious notion (not exclusively neo-con in origin or influence) that the entire international system must operate at the whim of American interests. All these writers-at least rhetorically-are passionate about human rights, raising standards of living in "Third World" nations, and respecting the practices and values of other cultures. So what?

A strong, progressive, and political cosmopolitanism eludes Appiah precisely because he wants too much to be agreeable. The same problem afflicts the liberal political writers too. But they at least acknowledge what delicate Henry James brutally recognized in his novels, that cosmopolitanism is largely for the privileged. Appiah's cosmopolitanism centers on the

individual; so ultimately his book fails to grapple with the daunting political project that an ethics informed by a cosmopolitan outlook would demand.. The rights of America to stand-in for the international community must be, in a manner of speaking, redistributed. Cosmopolitanism demands that the right to be cosmopolitan extend to everyone in the world, so Americans themselves (and Appiah too) become, in effect, less cosmopolitan.

Reading Legitimation Crisis In Iran, By Danny Postel

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In Persian there is a piece of proverbial wisdom that praises a statement, a report, an analysis, or even a book, for being brief-and thereby beneficial. To a person who is not getting to the point, Iranians politely plead to be "brief and beneficial." Danny Postel's book, *Reading Legitimation Crisis in Tehran*, does a good deal of justice to this Persian wisdom by succinctly broaching very important issues about the current political struggle in Iran and the attitude of western progressive forces to it.

At the very outset Postel's book poses four essential and interrelated questions and then attempts to respond to them. Firstly, why are progressive forces in the U.S. and the west in general are so confused and silent about the clamor for political and social change that is currently taking place in Iran? Secondly, why in the contemporary Iranian intellectual and political activism scenes it is "liberalism" and not Marxism, or one of its more contemporary successors such as post-colonial discourse, that enjoys currency? Thirdly, how can we explain the rich and vibrant political and philosophical discourse that is developing in Iran and what lessons this development has for the western progressive forces? And finally, what sense can we make of Michel Foucault's views of the Islamic revolution of late 1970s in Iran?

Postel mentions three barriers of language, geographical distance and the relative small number of Iranians in the US, as a partial explanation of the first question. But these are relatively less important. The core reasons for the American and western leftists' being reluctant to embrace the cause of Iranians who are trying to bring about change in their country lies somewhere else. The essential reason for this reluctance is that American progressives are used to advocate those causes that are fighting the Empire and their local lackeys. The Left in the US has developed what Postel calls a "tunnel vision" that deems only the political and social movements that are fighting right wing oppressors who are supported by the United States, worthy of embracing-such as those in Central America in the 1980s. The Iranian dissidents are fighting a government that is a "sworn enemy" of the Empire.

What is more, the oppositional forces in Iran, are not couching their opposition in discourses such as Marxism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, subaltern studies and different mixtures of these. The Iranian progressive forces have by and large adopted western liberal-democratic discourse and its past and contemporary gurus to advance their cause. These are very significant issues that have prevented the western progressive forces, if not opposing Iranians seeking change in their country, at least being aloof to them and their fierce struggle in recent years. For the far left in the west, liberalism is a tool of imperialism and embodiment of Eurocentrism. Why should they support a cause that utilizes a discourse that they deem to be

at the core of what they are struggling against? The Iranian reformists are then the friends of my enemy, and therefore, if not my enemy, they are not my friend either.

Thus, Postel embarks on a valiant attempt to expose the fallacies that are lurking in this type of analysis. First, he argues, "liberalism" in the context of contemporary Iran, is quite revolutionary. The quest for human rights, women's rights, civil liberties, pluralism, religious toleration, freedom of expression and multi-party democracy, are indeed nothing but a radical attempt to bring about liberation to majority of Iranians who have been in bondage to various forms of tyranny for centuries. Secondly, Postel correctly points out, Iranian reformers are quite sophisticated when it comes to their understanding of the west. They are aware and critical of Western domination and the hegemonic aspects of its discourse, but they are sophisticated enough to distinguish western imperialism from the empancipatory discourses and institutions that happen to have been developed in the west. Moreover, it is quite significant that Iranian dissidents who come to west, for the most part, have not been seduced by the neocons. On this issue it is important to note that Postel's book is somewhat too sanguine and generous. A very important exception to this general trend is the book *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, and some exile activist who have indeed bitten the bait of the neocons.

In a similar vein, Postel shows the ironical situation of the western left vis-à-vis Iran. Their very anti-imperialism is a form of imperialism in that it ignores and tarnishes the efforts of Iranian reformists to bring about change in their society. And Postel provides a very enlightening example: in a talk by Shirin Ebadi, a western leftist activist attempts to muzzle Ebadi saying that her criticism of abuses of human rights in Iran plays into the hands of the neocons and their desire to launch an attack on Iran.

A section of Postel's book focuses on why certain discourses are attractive to Iranian students, activists, reformist, and intellectuals and certain other discourses are not. What Iranians at this point are attracted to are Kant, Hegel, the Frankfurt School thinkers, Habermas, Hannah Arendt, Karl Popper, Isaiah Berlin, just to mention a few. Marxism, post-colonial discourse, post-structuralism, post-modernism, Foucault, Derrida (with the exception of certain aspects of their work) do not generate much interest in Iran. Marxism, in Iranian's experience, like many other parts of the world, has brought mostly dogmatism, tyranny and Soviet and Soviet-style domination for Iran. The post-colonial discourse doesn't make much sense in Iran's context either (but Postel treats this issue rather in passing and in my view this very important question deserves much more elaborate treatment). Post-colonial discourse emanates mostly from the historical experience of the sub-continent and as a whole is alien to the Islamic world for various reasons. Post-colonialism is an attempt to fashion an identity for those parts of the world which were savagely colonized by the west and has to oppose the west for existential reasons. But Iran, and many parts of the Islamic world have not shared this experience. The west for Iranians is not all negative, and they appreciate its emancipatory aspects. Iranians are very interested in the notion of human subjectivity and agency which constitute the very foundation of modernity and democracy. In contrast to many parts of the formerly colonized parts of the world, Iran as a Muslim country has a very strong sense of subjectivity and agency built into its very metaphysical foundations. Post-colonial discourse, which in its attempts to

deconstruct the west undermines the notion of human subjectivity, is very alien to Iran's metaphysical foundations. I wish Postel would have elaborate somewhat more on this issue in this book.

But Postel addresses an issue that is close to this question in his treatment of Foucault and his misunderstanding of Iran. Foucault went to Iran during the height of revolution and myopically saw what he wanted to see to corroborate his anti-humanist theories. Foucault quixotically viewed Iranian revolution as the revolution against modernity that he would have loved to see take place in the west. But as he mistook the Shah's regimes as the embodiment of modernity he misunderstood the Islamic revolution as the anti-modern revolution of our time. He did not realize that Iranian revolution was in fact the proto-modernist revolution of Islamic puritanical Protestantism. Unfortunately Postel makes the same mistake that Foucault made in regarding Iranian revolution as anti-modern, of course Foucault celebrated it while Postel laments it. Because of the very fact that Iranian Islamic revolutionary discourse of the 1960s and 70s which created the Islamic Republic of the 80s subscribed to a form of indirect human subjectivity and agency, mediated by the Subjectivity and Agency of God, it is nothing but the beginning of modernity in the Iran and in fact in the Islamic world. This is an important issue that needs to be recognized.

Another important issue that needs to be addressed in a book such as Postel's which attempts defends certain notions of liberalism is to distinguish between different shades of liberalism. One may think of categories such as "bourgeois liberalism" and "democratic liberalism," the first and foremost seeing liberty in terms of freedom of to engage in economic activity without any restraint, while the second places more emphasis on different types of rights.

On the whole I think this is very timely book that addresses a crucial question in our time, namely, the solidarity and sympathy that the progressive forces in the west and the United States can extend to their counterparts in Iran. The progressive forces, the NGO's and intellectuals can do much more that just opposing a war in Iran; they can and should actively get involved in supporting the reforms in Iran. Postel's plea in this direction is quite helpful and persuasive. We can fruitfully compare the current situation of Iran to that of the last years of Soviet time and the failure of the progressive forces in the west to support the movement of the people in the Soviet societies and the disastrous consequences thereof. Hence the importance of Postel's warning and plea.

Farzin Vahdat *is a sociologist interested in critical theory and the development of modernity in the West and the Middle East. He teaches sociology at Vassar College and is the author of* God and Juggernaut: Iran's Intellectual Encounter with Modernity*. He is currently co-editing a book on the future of the reform movement in Iran.*

Threatening Anthropology: Mccarthyism And The Fbi's Surveillance Of Activist Anthropologists, By David H. Price

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Don't dare be a liberal – never mind, a leftist. That was the message of McCarthyism and its ideological cousins through the Seventies in anthropology. If you tried it, the FBI and CIA would see to it that you paid dearly. This is the major finding of David Price's *Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the FBI's Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*. Price finds that the state campaign against the left – during and after the Second World War – was prosecuted against liberal do-gooders as much as against Communists, fellow travelers, and former Communists. Imagine, the Feds emptied and searched the garbage of Margaret Mead too.

First, they had to get the right "Mead." Not being avid *Redbook* readers, the authorities mistakenly pounced on an Oklahoman Margaret Meade whose heinous crime was serving as head of the League of Homeless Women in the thirties. The other Mead's belief in cultural relativism, the joys of adolescence, and relief for working mothers did get her into trouble, though. There is a certain irony here, as Mead was the coldest of Cold War liberals in anthropology, capping her career with a vigorous defense of the Vietnam War. She even offered Henry Kissinger advice as to how to use local Vietnamese workers in support roles so as to make the US presence more palatable. Mead had been vetted for government work no less than five times. She worked on grants from the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Rand Corporation. The latter published her book on Soviet life that Price describes as containing "crude personality and cultural generalizations of Soviet society … closely aligned with the American government's anti-Soviet stance." (257)

Mead's experience suggests that working for the state is just as dangerous as having liberal views. The lesson is that if you don't have a record, working for the state will start one. *Nota bene* all of you interested in calling up your "file." if you don't have a file, your action will start one. After all, why would a citizen above suspicion even ask? The tools used, according to Price, included interviews with the target and anyone who conceivably might have knowledge of her/him, wiretapping, mail openings, garbage sifting, and assiduous reading of leftist materials. If you need a native language dictionary, go to the Mormons. If you need indexes of leftist periodicals, check with the FBI, who unfortunately for scholars are much less generous with their research than the Mormons.

Most of the skullduggery was under direct supervision of J. Edgar Hoover and his boyfriend Clyde Tolson. They kept four rooms of private files on potential subversives, and put numerous

persons on preventive detention lists that would become operable in a national emergency. They along with congressional committees stoked political hysteria and witch hunts on college campuses across the country. Their investigations impugned the reputations of many. Some scholarly targets were fired, other fled abroad, and still others left the field while young researchers and graduate students. Some succeeded in exculpating themselves. Others, Price infers, kept their academic mouths shut, avoided public pronouncements and self-censored their writing.

It was ugly, though at times perversely comical. Rutgers fired the internationally renowned anthropologist Ashley Montague on the word of a contact of a trustee who had heard him speak at the Women's Club of Milwaukee. His attack on Joe McCarthy, averred this trustee and vice president of the Hanover Bank, "coincided with the usual Communist theme song." (280) Montague, this mortal threat to America,, went on to become a favorite guest of Johnny Carson. When television media ethically outrun the academy, think of the level of degradation visited upon colleges by their business-dominated boards and weak-kneed, timeserving administrators.

There were plenty of quislings. Karl Wittfogel's anti-communist campaigns against former colleagues and competitors are well known. Perhaps the most perfidious anthropologist Price turns up was George Peter Murdock, who took it upon himself to write Hoover directly in 1949 and name seven persons as Communists. The American Anthropological Association's staff and leadership (with the exception of 1950 AAA president Ralph Beals) claimed professionalism prevented its mixing in politics, even when reputations and jobs were at stake. One AAA president, A. Irving Hallowell, made it clear that Communists were on their own. So did the ACLU for that matter.

McCarthyism in anthropology – if, following Price, we take the term to refer to the general campaign against liberal and left activism – continued through the seventies. In Price's concluding chapters, he recounts how people are harassed for advocating racial equality, while others were persecuted for opposing American foreign policy. Few universities, whether great or small, escaped the McCarthyism dragnet. Yet, it was actually Harry Truman who started the insidious ball rolling with a 1947 executive order requiring loyalty oaths of all federal employees. His courageous effort was followed by many states and organization, including in 1949 the University of California. Thirty university professors were fired for refusal to sign. In anthropology at Berkeley, one of the traditional top five departments in the nation, anthropologist Cora DuBois' refusal to sign cost her a job offer and Berkeley an outstanding chair. Again, FBI files form the most complete documentation of the conflict between DuBois and President Robert Sproul. Despite the fact that DuBois served three years during World War II as a ranking officer of the Office of Strategic Services, the immediate predecessor to the CIA, she was investigated again as a candidate for a job at the World Health Organization. Hoover ordered an even more exhaustive, full-scale investigation of DuBois after she refused to sign the California loyalty oath.

Repression continued apace through the Eisenhower and Kennedy years. For instance, Kathleen Gough, one of the finest anthropologists of the postwar period, was let go from

Brandeis after a campus speech against the US policy toward Cuba in 1962, the text of which was preserved for our edification by the FBI. Faced with a hostile climate once more because of their ant-Vietnam activities and generally leftist views, Gough and her husband David Aberle left the University of Oregon for Simon Fraser University in Canada. There Gough was caught up in a 1969 political housecleaning engineered by the university to rid itself of 14 leftist faculty members in the social science department of which Gough was a part.

As luck would have it, Cora DuBois was president of the American Anthropological Association during the Gough episode and appointed an ad hoc committee to investigate the charges against Gough at Simon Fraser and the university's tenure procedures. The committee's recommendations came down decisively on Gough's side, and they suggested the need for greater AAA vigilance in defense of anthropologists. Nonetheless, Gough was fired, in 1970 and subsequently received nominal support for her research from the University of British Columbia where Aberle had found a post. Price quotes Gough's conclusion on the costs of the affair both to her and Simon Fraser: "(SFU) was censured and boycotted for 15 years by most professional associations in the social sciences worldwide. The result for me, however, was the I could not find a regular teaching position locally until 1984." She died in 1990.

Throughout this period, the FBI by express authority of the Attorney General, compiled and kept a "Security Index" beginning in 1946 that consisted of those persons to be detained without due process in the event of a national security crisis. Price reports that there were many anthropologists on the list, the result of personal decisions by Hoover. Usually, membership was for life, and as these were top-secret designations, the persons targeted had no idea they had been marked for preventive detention.

Price has written a well researched and necessary book. He filed over 500 Freedom of Information Act requests, and challenged more than 250 record denials. He includes copious and revealing information from the files he recovered. He also reveals how much information is still censored or withheld, even in cases that would strike the ordinary citizen as trivial. Having examined how the stick of repression was used against political activists was used in anthropology in the postwar period, Price now is writing on the topic of how the state helped shape political consensus with the carrot of research funding. Using this volume as a yardstick, it promises to be another important book. Emerson's adage that all it takes for evil to triumph is that good people do nothing is here confirmed. Based on Price's book, one might also add: "if you try to change your society, trust not your state, your university, or your profession."

Michael Blim *is Professor of Anthropology at the* CUNY Graduate Center. mblim@gc.cuny.edu

Court Jesters In Absurdistan: Review Of Rebel With A Cause: Liberal Satire In Post War America, By Stephen Kercher

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For me, fresh out of a Chicago suburb, it served as the diving board to Bohemian oblivion: a Second City show seen in 1961. To encounter people in post Fifties America, on a stage, skewering Ike, Liberal-indifference, and cookie-cutter Suburban conformity was bliss in that airless Cold War Utopia. Second City director Paul Sills was to remark: "If you said "Eisenhower" on stage you got a laugh." The Compass and early Second City companies were populated by University of Chicago wits like Severn Darden, Tony Holland, Mike Nichols, and Elaine May who, owing to Robert M.Hutchins and an open-ended admissions policy, helped populate a theatrical hothouse.

Add director Paul Sills (whose mother, Viola Spolin, wrote "The" book on Improvisation), and an ex-Harvard student named David Shepherd, and the result was a sonic boom that's still reverberating through the American theater. Shepherd and Sills first did Compass theater, and when that splintered Sills found backer/partners Alk, Sahlins et. al. and opened Second City to instant acclaim. How grim the Fifties were, and how welcome but momentary the early Sixties mix of coffee house, bookstore, folk music and satire. In Chicago the Gate of Horn; the Café Oblique, Bill Smith's Bookstore, the Second City, and the College of Complexes, The Pad and Maury's coffee house made for a Beatnik nirvana . These scenes changed lives, forged impossible possibilities, and led to literacy, insurrection, sex, drugs and post-beatnik hippy culture.

Sills, whose last show at the Second City (1967) "The Trip," concerned an acid trip, grew disgruntled at displays of mere irony and wit and moved on to direct the Game, Story and Free Theater's – where I was resident actor/musical director. The name changes came as often as the debt collectors waving heating bills. The story of satire in the Sixties is tied to American Improvisational theater, which led, not just to the Second City and Story Theater, but to the Improv comedy scene, Saturday Night Live, Second City TV (Canada) and Belushi's descent into fame.

The first Improvisational theaters were among David Shepherd's and Paul Sill's many attempts at building a community culture independent of the corporate behemoth which has come to dominate American life, as they predicted. Both Sill's and Shepherd's efforts are invariably lumped as part of a "theatrical" scene which does disservice to their attempts at addressing the Post War marginalization, angst and bleakness – using theater as a focus for community. Its all background to Steven Kercher's Rebel Without a Cause. Whether or not you prefer moderate

satire, this is the “liberal” stuff. It’s a great story, this adventure with Improvisation at its heart.

When post-war America suddenly put a great hand round its own nasty throat, the hand was satirical theater. Where once there was morbid triumphalism; the sleepy Ike years with their hidden histories of assassination and torture; the Organization men and their treadmill, there was now laughter and mockery. Should you read between the lines of Kercher’s book it’s actually a hard history: careers destroyed (Mauldin and Bruce), marginalization, Red baiting and exile (Oliver Harrington), thwarted visions (Second City, Premise, Compass), Cold War hypocrisy and chauvinism. Kercher, whose book is otherwise encyclopedic, does not touch on the devolution at the Second City, where caustic comic commentary turned to Sit-Com pretension and business franchise in but a few decades.

But there are hilarious business moments. Ted Flicker of the Premise writing to Sills and Bernard Sahlins at the Second City offering to divide America between them: “A Premise here, a Second City there,” because there was: “money, money, money to be made.” Sills, whose contempt for commercialism was legendary, may not have been amused. But those were heady days, and Flicker made himself a fortune while extolling the virtues of “playing together,” and “not going commercial.” Flicker, in all his visionary glory, cashing in. Look where it went. Women for a start: whether Joan Darling’s or Barbara Harris’ ove-psychoanalyzed, unloved, lonely, neurotic urban heroines who could be simultaneously emasculating and vulnerable to the point of suicide, or Elaine May’s icy charm and savage Male demolishing repartee.

He: “Hi.”

She: “Schmuck.”

May, like Darden could drill a victim in seconds, on or off stage. On entering Jimmy’s, a legendary Hyde Park bar on a windy night, May heard a male patron say: “Hi, Elaine, been out on your broom?” May responded: “Why? You want something up your ass?” Pity the poor undergraduate after that riposte. Nichols and May were to construct an entire universe of the guilty Jewish son, and his sadist mother. And then reverse the roles. Neurosis, analysis, catharsis, Broadway. Yet Kercher does an end run around Post War satirical/political theater: its as if Show Biz is safe ground, but the corrosive attempts of the satirical/radical theater elude him. The two most significant political/ satirical theaters this country produced in the Sixties, Peter Schumann’s Bread and Puppet, and the San Francisco Mime Troupe under R.G.Davis, are hardly mentioned but for a cursory reference to Davis. Both outfits were radical and both were influenced by the German Marxist satirist Bertolt Brecht.

Davis and Schumann are world-class artists who extended the satirical form. Davis went on to found Epic West, the first Brechtian Theater in the U.S. I mention them because their inclusion would have extended Kercher’s attempt at a vision of Sixties satire. Perhaps there will be room in a revised edition. Kercher’s quite good on Lenny Bruce’s modulated self-destruction and evisceration at the hands of moralist-cops, and Mort Sahl’s determined spin-out. Kercher also

gives us cartoonist Bill Mauldin's now forgotten eclipse, from War hero creator of Willie and Joe to Red baited victim, knocked back into line but almost out of his profession. There is an excellent account of the Black cartoonist Oliver Harrington, whose work is as piercingly bitter as was his life and exile, and anonymous death in East Germany after decades of obscurity.

Kercher weights his account with facts, and hundreds of quotes – so much so that the reader is sometimes left groping for a perspective amidst the meticulous detail. The downside of a work as detailed and scholarly as this one is its dismaying academic insistence on a □false' neutrality. Judgments, whether right or wrong, make for interest and reader response, and research, no matter how well documented, can soften and sometimes annul the wit and incision of an argument. Kercher often balks at venturing an insight when a generality will do. Well-honed and judicious opinion there is in abundance, but one must sometimes grope after Kercher's point. Product of an Academy that insists on Professional objectivity, and a wit diminishing fair-mindedness, Kercher invariably does his duty: all of which can make for terrific scholarship and somnambulist indecision. Do we really have to be told endlessly that Sixties performers were male chauvinists?

Kercher sidesteps the question of how the absolute laugh-strangling futility of Flip Wilson, Bill Cosby, Dick Cavett, Soupy Sales and the rest was "achieved" following the fantastic stuff done just a few years earlier by Second City, Nichols and May, the Premise and the rest. And yes:" (Tom) Lehrer's parodic songs were pessimistic." This is, as the Po Mo people like to say: "over-determined."

This fine book will long remain a useful reference guide to American cartoonists like Herblock, Walt Kelly, and Al Capp,"the sick humorists," Lenny Bruce, Second City, Premise, Ted Flicker, Del Close, Sills, The Committee, Nichols and May, Gary Goodrow and thousands more. There are good sections on the English: Cook, Moore, Bennett, Miller, and the rest of that Fringe Establishment that are now an irreducible part of cultural history, whether Cook and Moore's brilliant improvisations; Jonathan Miller's directorial career, or the increasingly acclaimed playwright Alan Bennett. For a book this size, Kercher makes remarkably few missteps. In one footnote, however, he mistakes Lenny Bruce's use of the word schtick for "stick," and then compounds the error by making Bruce's Yiddish, which was pungent and fluent: "Black argot."

There is some very good stuff on NBC's attempt at "commercial satire" geared to the now defunct corporate assumption that audiences can think. Although not his stated purview, it would have spiced things to get Kercher's views on why TV satire (Maher, Colbert, Stewart, et. al.) is now the only place within the Network media spectrum where you hear something approaching the Truth disguised as comedic routine. Stewart is now regularly quoted and and so effortlessly humiliated two CNN hosts (one Liberal, the other a bow tied Conservative) that they were yanked off the air within weeks of their dicing at his hands. Bill Maher does some great spot-on political analysis, but keeps undermining his own considerable intelligence by insisting on going into the toilet, unprompted, when he senses he's losing em. Colbert, whose devastating critique of Bush, disguised as homily (with a clueless Bush present) at a White House Correspondents dinner, was largely ignored by the mainstream media, brought off the

satirical coup of the Century before an audience of befuddled, stupefied fruit flies. In that incredible moment revealing the Titanic gulf between White House journalistic sycophancy and the devastating skewering of a serving President seated but a rubber chicken away and oblivious to his lampooning, as was much of the fat cat audience.

The internet, despite the New York Times insisting that the single greatest “live on camera” disemboweling of an American President had “bombed” made Colbert a National reputation overnight, as his astronomical Youtube.com stats would verify. Maher, Stewart, and Colbert owe a debt of gratitude to the Network Media Black Hole that has made their careers and fortunes. The film documentary (Michael Moore the prime example)- remains, with TV satire, the last popular source for political information and analysis, often uncorrupted by Spin, Mercantilist “logic” and pro Market crooning. Satire remains a means of communication, education and information where, as Kafka pointed out: “The Lie has become a world order.” Satire is that greatest of modern heresies: critical consciousness.

Kercher points out that satire can also amount to little more than elitist snobbery, and insider tediousness. Kercher, in treating the “liberal satire” of his subjects, does not venture, as did Brecht, Hasek, Kafka, and Edmund Wilson, to suggest that satire is an educational method disguised as entertainment. This approach would have given Kercher a driving through-line (just what is it that satire does?) that the book lacks. But the Improv legacy now contains a well-paid fact: Improvs co-optation as a sales tool. Improv, as a method does not appear to do much to create satirical material, (as Roger Bowen notes in the book) but it does serve to further solidarity and group cohesion. Tom Peters and the thousands of less successful business gurus now use “Improv” as often as they do the word “market.” Improv is heard endlessly at the thousands of “act out your career dream, let’s all pull together” guided weekends to which middle management executive trainees are now routinely sentenced. Long way from those Bohemians at the University of Chicago, riffing in a drafty storefront. But here’s the final problem I’ll urge Kercher to consider next: satire presumes a very definite standpoint, is that why America is currently the world’s laughing stock?

Warren Leming *is a writer/critic who also served as actor/musical director with the original Story Theater Company and the Free and Game theaters. He divides his time between Berlin and Chicago.*