Church & State

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Globalism:

Humanity Re-Asserts Itself?

The Reformations

The Bulgarian Atrocities

Solzhenitsyn

The Rise Of Prussia

Thomas Jefferson And The Indians

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Editorial

Globalism:
Humanity Re-Asserts Itself?

The political structure of the world appears to have altered significantly during Barrack Obama's Presidency of it. Russia has stopped its political disintegration and taken its place in world affairs as a capitalist and Christian democracy, with the ability to influence events beyond its borders which are dangerous to it. And Iran, which seemed to be marked down for destruction by the United States, has not only survived the Western Christian sanctions designed to destroy it, but has become politically active, constructively, beyond its borders, in Iraq and in Syria, while consolidating itself on the basis of its Islamist system at home.

Central to this turn of events was the 2003 decision of the USA, under the Bush Presidency, to make war on the disarmed Iraqi state, made helpless by the shredding effect of ten years' United Nations Sanctions, incautiously allowed by Russia, which under Gorbachev and Yeltsin had lost the ability to calculate its interests.

The United States had more than ten years to consolidate the mastery of the world that had fallen to it with the falling apart of the Soviet Union and the moral collapse of the Russian State. It had been seeking this opportunity since the mid-1940s when Wendell Wilkie, Roosevelt's ideologist, proclaimed *"One World"*.

The outcome of the chaotic World War, capriciously launched by Britain in 1939, and fecklessly prosecuted by it, was a world of two effective sovereignties—the Soviet Union, which had done the main job of winning it, and the USA, which had forced Britain back on the Continent in 1944, in time to meet the Russian forces in central Germany.

The United States got the Weapon Of Mass Destruction after Germany was defeated and when the main power of Japan had been broken. It got it too late for use when the outcome of the World War was still in doubt, but it used it anyway, in the tail-end of the Japanese War, when all that was seriously at issue was the terms of Japanese surrender.

There were British peace-lovers, the best-known of which was the philosopher, Bertrand Russell, who urged the nuclear bombing of the Soviet Union so that there might be world unity and world peace. But Washington, which had used these weapons for a comparatively trivial purpose against Japan, delayed using them for a global purpose against Russia until it was too late. Moscow made its own nuclear weapons in 1948, and that took Wilkie's *One World* off the agenda—until the sudden Soviet collapse of 1990.

Unexpectedly the USA found itself master of the world. But it did not know how to act in a situation which it had sought but had not expected to achieve. Then, in a kind of displacement activity reminiscent of Britain's in 1938=9, it made war on its ally, Iraq, after encouraging it to intrude into Kuwait, which had been pilfering its oil while it waged a containing war against the Islamist revolution in Iran. (It is not disputed that Saddam consulted the US Ambassador before his intervention in Kuwait and was given a green light, but neither is it mentioned.)

The Iraqi Army was easily driven out of Kuwait, and was slaughtered on its way home in what an American pilot described as a *"turkey shoot"*. But the Iraqi State system was not destroyed.

Iraq was put under UN sanctions and supervision, policed by the USA. The public utilities, on which the civilised life of its large cities depended, were shredded systematically by the Clinton Government during the eight-year interval between the two Bush Government. All that Iraq had in prospect under Clinton was an indefinite continuation of the same, with Saddam's tyrannical regime continuously patching up what Clinton was destroying.

Then Bush junior took over, invaded a country that had no means of defending itself, with Britain tagging along, and destroyed the State system that had kept it going.

The reason given for invasion and destruction was that there was a remote possibility that the Iraqi Government, under close UN supervision, policed by the USA, had somehow acquired nuclear and/or chemical weapons. If that remote possibility justified what was then done to Iraq, what would such a degree of possibility not justify?

The way the invasion was conducted indicated that the invading Powers did not entertain any possibility that they would be met with nuclear or chemical weapons.

The main force they were met with, after they had pulverised the liberal Baath State, was the force of fundamentalist Islam, which had been kept in check with comparatively little repressive force by the Baath regime.

The USA itself had fostered and modernised Islamic fundamentalism for the purpose of undermining the liberal secular regime in Afghanistan, in the 1980s, which was in alliance with Soviet Russia. And it triggered that development in Iraq when it called for mass uprising against the Baath regime by those who felt oppressed by it.

After that force was set in motion, one thing led to another until Russia made an alliance with the Baath Government in Syria which prevented it from being overthrown by the miscellany of fundamentalist groups which was recognised as the legitimate authority in Syria by the USA and Britain and was supported by them politically and with battlefield weapons.

Obama inherited the Iraqi mess from Bush. The Libyan mess is his own doing, as is the Syrian (and the Egyptian). But in Libya he accomplished the overthrow of the tyrannic liberal State by bombing the regime and enabling the Islamist militias to take over, while in Syria he pulled his punches, encouraging the fundamentalists but not engaging in any open military effort against the Government which he had de-legitimised.

He claimed that there was a liberal and democratic secular force active in the insurrection against the liberal but undemocratic secular regime, and that that is what he supported. This force was allegedly democratic as well as liberal and secular, but there is no evidence that it was any of these things. When it was demonstrated that the favourite insurrectionary group was in active alliance with Al Qaeda, he undertook to sever that alliance, only to admit some time later that he was unable to do it.

Though he failed to single out the alleged liberal, secular, democratic element from the Islamic fundamentalists who dominated the Opposition, or get it to stand alone, and support it with heavy weapons, Obama continued to treat the Opposition

in general as the legitimate political authority in Syria, and shared with it the object of overthrowing the Assad Government as a usurping tyranny. It was this paradoxical position in the *War On Terror* proclaimed by the USA itself that made possible the effective Russian intervention.

One can hardly disagree with this comment by the London *Daily Telegraph* (a right-wing Tory paper) on December 12th:

> "Since it was apparent that there would be no Western involvement, the real crime was then to encourage rebels in Syria to hold out as though one day there would be. If we were not going to provide the means to defeat Assad then it was wrong to keep saying that he would under no circumstances be allowed to win. If this conflict had ended earlier then many thousands of lives might have been saved and the Russians would not have a foothold in the area…" (14.12.16).

The logical American target in the Middle East after the collapse of the Soviet Union was Iran. It chose instead to attack Iraq, which had assaulted Iran on behalf of the West at a moment when the Shia revolution was in full flow and the makeshift Gulf States were feeling uneasy. Was it that Washington understood that there was a great depth of integral civilisation in Iran which would ensure that it would not crumble if attacked?

Iraq, however, was an easy target. It was a piece of the Ottoman Empire without any trace of nationalist cohesion in it. The Ottoman State did not operate by nationalism and its component parts were free of nationalist culture. When Britain conquered the Middle East in its Great War (helped by Tom Barry) it began at first to govern it as an extension of its Asian Empire. Then it changed its mind and decided to carve up the Middle East into a series of 'nation-states', regardless of the absence of appropriate national sentiment—and to import a Jewish population into Palestine to colonise it and form it into a Jewish State. (This was long before the European Holocaust.)

Under the Baath regime a sense of Iraqi nationality was being cultivated, but in 1990 it still had little spontaneous national life. Its nationality depended to a considerable extent on the regime, and a collapse was probable if the regime was assaulted.

There was no demonisation of the Baath regime in Iraq until 1990, when it was decided to make war on it. The demonisation was of Iran. Iran was saved from a major war when Washington decided capriciously to make war on Iraq instead. Iran was given a breathing space in 1991, and a valuable example of how things would be done in the world after the Cold War. Then, a dozen years later, it was given another breathing space when Washington, discarding the UN fig-leaf, invaded and occupied helpless Iraq, and wrecked it further, with a *Coalition of the Willing*.

And now Iran is a Regional Power, playing a part in clearing up the American mess in Iraq, and frustrating its ambition to destroy the Baath State in Syria.

The American Presidency of the World is passing away. Obama's Presidency contributed to the decline. He saw the increase in Iranian influence while continuing to demonise Iran. And he asserted that the United States is *"the only indispensable nation"*, and that its position in the world is *"exceptional"*, being the first President to say these things plainly: but he says them as they are ceasing to be the case. He is Hegel's *Owl of Minerva* who sees clearly at dusk what used to be the case.

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To page 4

Contents

Page

Globalism: *Humanity Re-Asserts Itself?*
Editorial **2**

The Long View
Stephen Richards **5**

The Reformations
Brendan Clifford **9**

Martin Luther King's Last New York Public Address
Manus O'Riordan marks
Martin Luther King Day **13**

Vox Pat: Single Combat; John Hume; The Red Flag; Misty Notions; Abp. Eamon Martin; Allowance; Thomas Flanagan; Casement Diaries; Rulers And Ruled; Road Deaths; High Moral Tone; We're Not Foreigners!; Garret And Britain; Catholic Publishers; Real GOMS!; Hardcore?
Pat Maloney **14, 36**

Biography of Daniel O'Connell. Jules Gondon
Part Two
Translated by Cathy Winch **15**

A Forgotten Event: The "Bulgarian Horrors" of 1876, a seminal event in solidifying British Imperialism
Pat Walsh **17**

The Russian Tradition (1)
Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Alexander Dugin And The Russian Question. Part 5
Peter Brooke **22**

Thomas Jefferson and the Indians Part 1
The Spanish Polemic on Colonisation. Part 11
John Minahane **30**

Maidin i mBéarra by Osborn Bergin
Translated by Pat Muldowney **35**

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As Obama was living out his last days in Office, his scheme for Syria was being nullified by an alliance between a restored Russian State, the Turkish regime which Russia helped to save from an anti-regime *coup* made in America, and Iran. And BBC radio broadcast a New Year survey of the condition of the world in which Carl Bildt, the Swedish Minister closely associated with the neo-con Establishment, and who facilitated the 2003 invasion of Iraq by trading on his country's reputation for neutrality, said that the restoration of the Russian State now poses a global danger.

The Russian restoration, and its achievement of the status of a Regional Power in the Middle East, follows from the erratic conduct of US foreign policy in choosing to destroy its allies rather than confront its undoubted enemy.

Bildt said that the revival of Russia places the world in what he called *"the Thucydides trap"*. Thucydides wrote the history of the Athens/Sparta War, the Pelaponnesian War, two and a half thousand years ago. Bildt sees the Athens/Sparta relationship being reproduced today—the relationship between an established Power and a Power whose strength was growing and had to find a place for itself in the world. Sparta was the dominant Power then, the USA is now, and the difficulty arises of how the US can accommodate the rising power of Russia.

Assuming it to be the case that Sparta held something like the dominance held by the USA during the past quarter century, its relationship with Athens bears no resemblance to that of the USA with Russia.

The USA, which has undoubtedly been dominant in the world for a generation, is an aggressive democracy, driven by an inner obsession to expand its power. The aggressive democracy in Greece was Athens.

Furthermore, Athens lived in a 'progressive' culture, a culture that could not settle down conservatively into a traditional way of life. It pulled life apart to see what it was like, and a way of life is not the sort of thing that can be stuck back together again. The most famous statement of its most famous citizen is that *"the unexamined life is not worth living"* (Plato). That meant, of course, that the lives of others, lived in existentially unproblematic cultures, were worthless. And that is the view of the great, restless power of the United States today.

Russia, the constructive power in the Soviet system of states, shared the world with the USA at the end of Britain's 2nd World War—in which Britain itself became little more than an onlooker. They shared the world in spheres of dominance, but competed for the extension of their power by wars on the margin.

When the Soviet system collapsed in 1990, the USA found itself alone in the world and did not quite know what to do. What it did was try to reduce Russia to a US economic hinterland. Russia was at its mercy all through the 1990s. Then, in an unexpected development, it restored itself as a viable state, but with a conservative culture. It was reviled for 70 years as atheist. Now it is reviled as Christian.

Western Europe sickened of itself as Christian but maintained a Christian veneer. It now finds itself confronted with a major state in which there seems to be a revival of authentic Christianity—and it is shocked and bewildered.

Dialectical materialism did not prove to be a viable popular culture for the Bolshevik state. Peoples do not live in scientific analysis. Dialectical materialism provided orientation and guidance for those who ruled. Most people did not rule, and did not want to rule. Objective understanding of the socio-economic process was not something to live by. Therefore, since life cannot be lived in the emptiness of analysis consistently applied, Christianity persisted in actual life.

The alternative to dialectical materialism in the great division of the world that resulted from Britain's 2nd World War was development through the pursuit of increased marginal profit in an international division of labour that strove to be global, and that had the opportunity to become global after 1990. But global capitalism cannot exist autonomously.

Capitalism was not a spontaneous growth that sprang up around the world of its own accord and in which the world could settle comfortably. It was an Imperialist construct, and the cultures of many peoples were destroyed so that the efficiencies of the international division of labour might be realised. Globalist capitalism is Anglo-American Capitalism mastering the globe for its own advantage. And it is proving not to be a possible mode of existence for the world.

Over a century ago Arthur Griffith founded Sinn Fein on his insight that human life is not possible in a uniform cosmopolis. There must be intermediary forms of life between the individual and humanity in general. That insight has been rejected in recent years even n Ireland—and the Agencies of the United Nations seem to be dedicated to engineering global uniformity. But the human material that shaped itself into different forms over centuries, and millennia, is resisting. The abstract *"economic man"* who will move about within an international division of labour in pursuit of marginal advantage has not evolved into existence. The migration of recent years is the consequence of destruction.

The most unexpected opposition to American Globalism has come from the United States itself. Its white working class was not content with seeing itself painfully dissolved so that American capital could perform its global mission. The *"most qualified candidate ever"* for the Presidency lost the election to a non-politician, a businessman, whose programme was to keep American capital at home, and accept the fact, in international affairs, that the Russian State had restored itself as a viable state which would have its place in the order of the world.

This retreat from Globalism was identified as Fascism by the English chattering classes, and there was of course an echo in Ireland.

This led to an interesting discussion about Fascism on the BBC's political programme for the intelligentsia, *Newsnight*, on November 3rd, when it was beginning to seem just possible that the uncouth, nationalist, racist, misogynist, outsider from another world would be sent to the White House by a selfish working class that was unable to see itself in historical perspective.

The participants were BBC interviewer, Emily Maitlis, and American literary novelist Paul Auster. They agreed that a Trump victory would be Fascist. And they agreed that they had often wondered what they would have done if they had been present in the appropriate place in 1933. They assumed that they would have known what was happening and would have done the right thing. And it was just possible that they would have the opportunity to do what they felt they would have done in 1933.

But Auster suddenly had doubts. He saw Trump as Hitler. But there were people who regarded him as a liberal living in a bubble of illusion. and sometimes he thought: *"Yes, that's me!"*

*

Stephen Richards

The Long View

If the Danish War of 1864 was the stone that gathered pace and set off the landslide of 1914, as I think can be tenably argued, what does that do to the competing narratives of the countdown to 1914, which are usually based on a much shorter timetable? Those narratives are certainly not completely exploded, but it would do us good to think more contextually, more culturally, about the fissures in British-German, specifically Anglo-German, relations, that were opening up in that half-century. The language of events getting out of control may be objectionable to those who argue, very plausibly, that events were all too readily under the control of one of the actors, namely Britain. But, however scheming those British political grandees may have been, they would have been powerless to act without the cover of a massive nationwide conviction that the new German State was up to no good, a conviction which had solidified over very quickly from the mid-1860s. So it might be said that the stars in their courses fought against Wilhelm II's Germany.

The springboard for these reflections has been the book I referred to in the last issue, *Englanders and Huns*, by James Hawes (Simon and Schuster, 2014). While I've no doubt that Hawes has his flaws, I have to say it's a long time since I've been so entranced by any history book. Hawes is a Creative Writing don at Oxford Brookes and. either because of that or despite it, he can write. He passes the reading in bed test anyway. His background is in Kafka studies, and he has apparently published three novels as well. If the highest virtue is courage, because without it you have no security for any other, as Dr. Johnson asserts, then the supreme virtue in a writer is readability, for the same reason. There are those who don't even attempt readability, but others, like the admirable Tom Holland, who seem to try too hard. His books are full of startling individual sentences, sparkling like diamonds, but with an ultimate stop-start, spluttering effect that becomes irritating after a while.

Hawes's is a book without photos, but the text is broken up by facsimile and facsimile-like reproductions of telling journalistic passages which the author uses expertly to underline his argument; and also by cartoons, scores of them, preponderantly from the German press. It has to be said that these German cartoons make their points in a singularly heavy-handed, non-hilarious manner, but full credit to Hawes for opening up these new windows for us. We even see some of the Gothic script, which is nearly as difficult for present-day Germans to figure out as it is for us.

Dropping The Pilot

It's a cartoon that became the powerful symbol for the received theory of the slide towards war, prevalent certainly in my youth, still propounded by German and British historians, and indeed the standard line in German schoolbooks. *"Dropping the Pilot"*, the *Punch* cartoon of 1890 was a brilliant image encapsulating Bismarck's fall: the old sea salt walks down the gangway, observed from the rail by a sneering smirking young man with the crown on his head. This image, not reproduced by Hawes, gave prophetic force to the idea of the watershed moment. It was from that date on that the situation became irretrievable, as Wilhelm became obsessed with naval and colonial rivalry.

This narrative was convenient for everybody, the author argues:

> "The tale of Wilhelm, Tirpitz & Co. is comfortable to Britons because it clearly blames the Germans; it is comfortable to Germans because it clearly blames a certain kind of German—the scar-faced, sabre-rattling kind, who, like Prussia itself, quite simply no longer exists.
>
> Blaming the Tirpitz Plan for everything thus preserves the idea, so fashionable in modern Britain, of a British Empire which was generally a Good Thing, if perhaps incompetently or pusillanimously run; and it preserves the idea, so essential to modern Germany, of a country whose natural 'Western' path was deformed by the failure of its citizenry to resist a right-wing war-mongering elite."

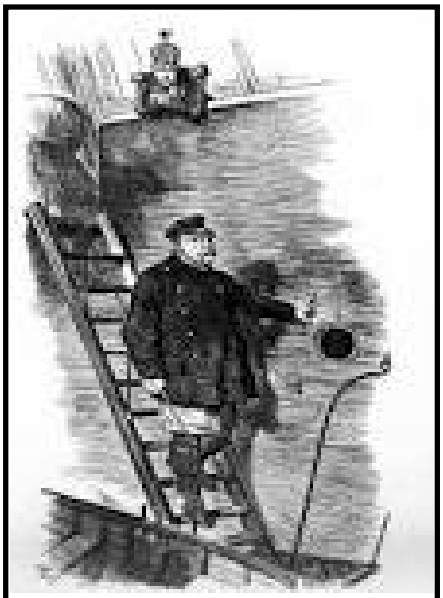
Using a plethora of contemporary sources, of which he has no doubt just skimmed the top of the barrel, Hawes proceeds to blow this proposition apart.

Literary Germany

To try to see the world through the eyes of the English ruling class in the 1860s it's useful to read Trollope and Thackeray who, though not of it, understood that class. Both in their own way were Hibernophiles, and also Germanophiles, and possibly for similar reasons. The Irish and the Germans were quaint and non-threatening, and could be safely patronised. It was to the amused observations of the English traveller that the Irish and the Germans owed their national characteristics. The world of English letters was the mirror they could see themselves in, if only they had the wit to look.

By the mid-19th century the German lands had begun to rival Paris and Italy as a holiday destination for the moneyed middle classes. Germany was a cheap destination, and it passed for exotic. To vacation in Germany was to step back in time, into a culture that was by turns charming, outlandish, and disgusting. The greater part of the country had not experienced an Industrial Revolution, or anything like it, and so, especially in the more Catholic regions, there was a sense of a static, peasant society, inured to poverty and hard graft. The disgust and the charm can lie cheek by jowl, as this 1867 account by Richard Spencer demonstrates:

> "We know not if our readers, in their summer visits to Germany, have extended their wandering to the Alpine district of Upper Styria [admittedly, not in



'Dropping The Pilot'

***Punch* on Bismarck's removal as German Chancellor**

Germany proper]. If not, we would recommend them, on their next tour, should they happen to have a taste for the romantic, the picturesque and the wonderful, not to neglect such a world-wide celebrity as the miraculous Maria of the Zell… though we would not recommend any traveller of high moral feelings to come within its precincts on any of the great festivals, as the scenes he would witness would excite in him a feeling of disgust, never to be effaced."

The imagination boggles. The closest parallel I can think of might be the wealthy Americans who visit Guadeloupe for the Festival of the Virgin. South Germany in the 1860s might as well have been a Third World country.

In the more urban areas the English traveller becomes restive under the pettifogging requirements of literalistic local authorities, and feels his every step is dogged. And of course *"Berlin women as a rule lack the fatal gift of beauty, being neither handsome nor even pretty"*! The safe bet is to stick to towns like Homburg, or Baden-Baden, where you will find civilised dining companions and won't have to put up with Thuringian maids, who can't be got to *"conform to English notions of cleanliness and propriety"*. The suffocating German feather beds too are a constant source of whingeing on the part of the English, and the shameless cigar-smoking in the presence of ladies is marvelled at. Some of this amused frustration, and some of the cultural *contretemps* of English-German social intercourse can be found much later in Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men on the Bummel* (1900) but for the most part the mood had changed by then.

The Expendable Cook

Things were beginning to change even in the 1860s. The Prussian army, until then derided for being a menace only to its own people, began to acquire a legend of invincibility, and the Prussian Junker caste, which supplied its *esprit de corps*, was coming under the notice of the English press. A shocking case of homicide in 1865, just after the Danish War, embedded itself in the English imagination. It was almost as if it had been calculated to cause maximum offence. As it involved a cook, one might say it had all the ingredients.

Daniel Eugene Ott, a German-speaking native of Strasbourg, was in the employment of Queen Victoria's son Alfred at Coburg as a *chef de cuisine*. Coming back with friends from a meal at a restaurant in Bonn (part of the Prussian dominions since 1815), they were accosted by two students and a young student volunteer who were similarly on their way home from a tavern. This group deliberately positioned themselves across the path of Ott and his friends, and were obviously intent on provoking a fight. After repeatedly asking for free passage, Ott lost his cool and said: *"What do you [expletive] boys really want?"* That was all the excuse that the young aristocrats needed. It was the work of a moment for Count Eulenburg, for that was the name of the young soldier-student, to whip out his sabre and to fell Ott with the flat of it, the force of the blow being such that he died a few hours later.

Eulenburg wasn't just anybody: his uncle was Prussian Minister of the Interior and a close associate of Bismarck. The Anglophone press was outraged, especially when it emerged that all that young Eulenburg had to endure by way of penalty was something like seven days' confinement to barracks and a good talking-to. The stain on his character didn't prevent him getting engaged to Bismarck's daughter some years later, a union prevented only by his sudden death from typhoid.

A Legend Is Born

It was perhaps from this time that the Prussian Junker bogeyman began to work his poisonous magic. During the Austro-Prussian War of the following year, the English press was contemptuous of both protagonists, Prussia in particular being an odious tyranny. British policy, in so far as it could be called policy, was simultaneously to favour Austria, and to support the Italian irredentist insurgency which Bismarck had artfully engineered on her southern flank. But it hardly mattered, because once again the breech-loading rifle was king, as witnessed at Koniggratz on 3rd July 1866. One would have thought that the Austrian military chiefs might have had serious thoughts about this over the previous two years. Rather than thinking, they preferred to line their troops up in nice rows to be mown down. The English treated the outcome with some *insouciance*. The Prussians had better guns: so what? Their army was organised, it was admitted, along remarkably efficient lines, and was an effective fighting force, but that fact interested the English only in terms of curiosity. The Prussians were a differently-constituted race and there was just no point in making comparisons.

Amusement, curiosity and contempt were overtaken by different emotions altogether after 1870. There was certainly no objection to the bumptious Napoleon III getting a bloody nose: that was something to gladden the hearts of the Tory squires. But the preliminary manoeuvrings were disquietingly complex, as the *Guardian* represents John Bull as ruminating:

> "There's been queer dealings between you two fellows which I don't half know yet. It seems to me that you're two big thieving blackguards; not a pin to choose between you, and that the best thing for me is to look after my own goods and chattels."

But most commentators assumed that, after a fierce struggle, it would be France that came out on top. The appalling impact of the Krupp guns, the Prussian mastery of communications, and the organisational shambles of the French command: these things were unforeseen. For all that, the Prussians were a bit shambolic themselves in the early stages of the conflict, at one stage blundering into Switzerland. But the legend of Prussian invincibility was now established, after Sedan.

Pecunia Non Olet

The British blundering was more of the economic and diplomatic kind. This was happening in the middle of Gladstone's first administration, at the high noon of Free Trade, what the Germans came to call *Manchestertum*: "Manchesterism", which, then as now, seemed alien to the German psyche. As Hawes comments:

> "[This] high-minded, and loud-mouthed, style of making vague moral appeals to peace and humanity seemed to Germans the most atrocious hypocrisy, coming from a government which allowed the continued delivery of munitions to anyone who could pay for them, and knew very well that in the real world that meant supplying one side only"

That side was France. As I write, the Saudi Government has admitted that the cluster bombs used by them in the Yemen are made in Britain, so this is an ongoing debate. According to the Hamburg *Borsenhalle*, as reported by the *Pall Mall Gazette:*

> "The England we have hitherto believed in… has been an ideal England, ruled by an intelligent and energetic aristocracy, which is in its turn supported by a vigorous and patriotic population of country

gentlemen, sailors, and merchants. The German people have wilfully shut their eyes to the progress of that social decomposition which now threatens the existence of England."

The *Borsenhalle* went on to remark on *"how deeply the canker of mercantilism has eaten into the [English] national character"*. Bismarck couldn't have planned things better for his domestic political purposes than they turned out. He had viewed the Liberals with their pan-Germanism as anathema to his strategy for Prussian aggrandisement. Up until now they had looked to England for much of their ideology of national self-realisation, German national parliaments etc. This was held against the narrow interests of the Prussian landed class. The Liberal view of England had taken a dent in 1864, when the British were indifferent to the aspirations of the ethnic Germans of Schleswig-Holstein. In the wake of 1870 Bismarck had no difficulty in persuading the Liberals that Britain wasn't really the friend of the German nation.

German Frightfulness

Estrangement was working on the other side of the North Sea (German Ocean?) as well, following the bombardment and fall of Paris. This is when we have our first sight of the German brute, laying waste to the city which, for all the troubled relationships of the previous two hundred years, was still an exotic wonderland for the English. Pioneering photographic evidence of shattered buildings and ruined salons had a profound effect on English sensibilities. And the thought began to form in English minds that these dreadful goings-on were taking place not on some Bohemian hillside but within a day's journey of London.

Sensational stories now began to appear, foremost being Colonel George Chesney's story, *The Battle of Dorking* (1871), first serialised in *Blackwood's Magazine* and then published in book form, selling a quarter of a million copies in a year. Chesney may have been something of a Colonel Blimp, but he was no fool, as this extract demonstrates:

> " But our people could not be got to see how artificial our prosperity was—that it all rested on foreign trade and financial credit; that the course of trade once turned away from us, even for a time, it might never return. To hear men talk in those days, you would have thought that Providence had ordained that our Government should always borrow at 3 per cent, and that trade came to us because we lived in a foggy little island set in a boisterous sea. They could not be got to see that the wealth heaped up on every side was not created in the country, but in India and China, and other parts of the world; and that it would be quite possible for the people who made money by buying and selling the natural treasures of the earth, to go and live in other places, and take their profits with them."

Enter the Northlanders, German-speakers, with spiked helmets, beneath which lurks an inhuman, calculating military intelligence. Perhaps we are here at the birth of Colonel Von Stumm, the anti-hero of John Buchan's *Greenmantle.* The mingling of this fear of military conquest with the fear of being superseded commercially was a conjunction of genius. Again, the passage quoted above could almost have emerged from the 2016 EU referendum debate in Britain. It reveals a remarkable continuity in British political preoccupations.

What Was Germany For?

Meanwhile, back in Germany, there was an explosion of national self-congratulation, ecstasy even. Surely the German nation had emerged from its long centuries of fragmentation and foreign domination, under which its *"genius was rebuk'd"*. Germany could now take her rightful place on the European stage, admittedly under Prussian suzerainty and excluding the Austrian and Bohemian parts of the nation, but even without them an impressive phenomenon, lying right across the heart of the continent. Population: 70 million or so; educational standards: first class; military prowess: undisputed; raw materials: abundant; industrial potential: huge. Germany had come of age.

But the question arose, what was the purpose of the new German state, if states are to have purposes? And what was the SWOT analysis for Germany? France wasn't going to be a serious threat for a generation. There was no fundamental quarrel with Russia; and Austria-Hungary, having been relegated to a subsidiary status outside the Reich, was something of a client state, with eastern preoccupations. That perhaps was a problem, if not a threat, as we shall see.

And what of England, with her far-flung colonies and dominions, and her unquestioned naval supremacy? England and Germany seemed like planets moving in different orbits. How, where and when would their respective interests ever collide?

Still, in the post-1870 glow nobody in Germany was thinking of that. As well as basking in their new-found sense of national military prestige, the German middle classes were busy riding the wave of a buoyant stock market, easy credit, and the French War Indemnity cash, which like the American gold in sixteenth century Spain, was a mixed blessing. It was the day of the Teutonic Tiger, and like its more recent Celtic variant, after a few years of plenty it ran into trouble. The second half of the 1870s was a bleak time for many in Western Europe, including England where there was a drawn-out agricultural depression. In Germany, when the merry-go-round went into reverse, the backlash was devastating. Hawes comments:

> "Britons knew what was wrong, of course: free trade had just not been tried thoroughly enough in Germany. The omniscient market would sort things out if its unseen hand were only permitted to work without let, hindrance or loss of nerve. No less an economic authority than the author of *'Onward, Christian Soldiers'* [Sabine Baring-Gould] wrote that what Germany really needed was 'the throwing open of the ports to foreign competition, and the letting of labour loose to follow trade to its centres , and move with it as it migrates'."

This was all very well if one was a well-connected English clergyman with an ample living and a private fortune. But what were the riches to rags Germans to do? Many of the young men found their way to London, where their education and work ethic often helped them to obtain reasonable employment. The girls often ended up in the sex trade. This wasn't how it was meant to be.

hIf the new Germany had a manifest destiny it surely wasn't this. Could it be that this catastrophe had revealed another side of the Free Trade stranglehold by which England kept the rest of the world in its place? Such considerations tended to intensify the suspicions of the average German Liberal that Britain wasn't playing fair. The ups and downs of stock markets and the plight of New Money were of course matters of indifference to the Junkers in their eastern fiefdoms.

We Wuz Robbed

The German sense of grievance found voice in the *"drum-like"*, *"shrieking"* tones and Macaulay-esque style of Professor Heinrich von

Treitschke. The interesting thing about Treitschke is that, despite the *"von"* he was neither Prussian nor an aristocrat, and indeed was a sort of National Liberal. But Prussia was co-opted by him as the vehicle of the Hegelian process by which she was to lead the German state ("Prussia-Germany", as it was often called) to hitherto undreamed-of heights in the cause of progress. He warned that there was one devious nation standing in the way. Friedrich Paulsen, Professor of Philosophy at Berlin, reminisced about a Treitschke lecture of 1878:

> "He was just speaking about England, and the invective he poured out in his blind hatred of English philosophy and the whole English mode of thinking became so intolerable to me that I walked out of the lecture room"

England had gained supremacy, not because of any inherent national virtue, nor honest toil, nor feats of arms (for which look to Frederick the Great and Blucher), but by cunning manipulation of the money markets. It was at least implied by Treitschke that the great financial crash had been brought about by English scheming.

This scapegoating of England for Germany's ills was mirrored from the late 1870s by rhetorical tropes in similar vein, with the rise to prominence of the Christian Social Party, led by Adolf Stoecker, the official Court Preacher, directed however against a different enemy: the Jews. Like the English, they were a rootless race that could look on with equanimity, even with secret delight, as the honest Germans fell into the capitalistic traps that had been prepared for them. Treitschke took up the theme with an 1880 essay in which occurred the sinister sentence: *"Die Juden sind unser Ungluck"*, an essay adapted from its 1879 original, which featured mainly the English and their sleekit ways!

Pomeranian Grenadiers

How did these undercurrents play out in Germany's, or rather Bismarck's, foreign policy from the first Balkan crisis of 1876 on? With hindsight, and even without, his course looks obvious. Whatever else Germany did, she must hold firm to an alliance with Austria and Russia, what later came to be known as the *Dreikaiserbund*. This *ancien regime* approach was also the policy most congenial to his own Junker class and instincts. It would safeguard Germany from the risk of encirclement and thus avoid the nightmare scenario of a war on two Fronts, a scenario which of course she managed to find herself in twice during the following century.

Unfortunately for everybody, the surrounding clamour of competing domestic interests combined with the geopolitical sensitivities of the other Great Powers meant that it was almost impossible to follow through consistently on the *Dreikaiserbund*. So Bismarck, not so much the master strategist, two moves ahead, appeared at times more like a fox on run, laying false trails and doubling back, responding to forces he couldn't control. The Balkans may not have been worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier, according to Bismarck, but when Serbia attacked Turkey in 1876 for control of Bosnia, following general uprisings in various Balkan provinces, Germany couldn't afford to coast along in neutral.

The problem in a word was Austria. If Serbian ambition wasn't curbed there was danger that the subject nationalities on the other side of the Danube would be encouraged by the Serb example, and, with Russia at their back, would rise up against their overlords, Austrian, Hungarian or Turkish. In that pan-Slavic revolution the whole eastern half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire could implode, leaving Austria proper, and Bohemia, to fall back on Plan B. That would be readmission to the German Reich, from which Austria had been expelled just a decade previously. The German Liberals would be dancing in the streets, but for Bismarck, the servant of the King of Prussia, such a consummation would be catastrophic.

Not only that, but for Germany to lend her moral support to Russia during this very combustible period would be to cause massive offence in London. Our old history teacher, Bob Mitchell from Kilkenny, used to tell us that Bismarck's great maxim was: *Don't antagonise England*. But so much easier said than done. This was the era of the Jingo:

> *"We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do,*
> *We've got the men, we've got the ships,*
> *We've got the money too!"*

The mood was certainly very febrile in London. The tangled concatenations of the conflicts of 1875 to 1878 are well beyond the confines of this article, to be revisited I hope but, when the Russians stepped in as the protector of the Serbs and Bulgars, the British fear was that they would go on to capture Constantinople. We all know that forty years later Britain was busy promising Constantinople to all and sundry, but in 1878 it was a different story. To preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was still a key aim of British foreign policy. The right to undermine the Ottomans was to be the sole preserve of the British, who would do it in a genteel sort of way, by slowly turning the Empire into a British protectorate.

Amid all this war fever Bismarck flew a bit of a kite, letting it be suggested by his friendly press that Germany was prepared to stand by Russia in this developing crisis, and sending a squadron of his new ironclads on manoeuvres off the cliffs of Dover (unfortunately they sailed in too close formation, and the *Kaiser Wilhelm*, attempting to avoid a fishing vessel, collided with the *Grosser Kurfurst*, sending her to the bottom with all 300 of her men). All this was designed to keep everyone guessing, but one wonders if Bismarck really knew himself what way he was going to jump. What he actually did, at the Congress of Berlin, was to collaborate with Disraeli in the isolation of Russia, to the joy of the German Liberals, the German Catholics, the Austrians and of course the English.

"Der alte Jude, das ist der Mann!" But it seems the feeling was mutual. While Bismarck admired Disraeli's theatrics and grandstanding, Disraeli was bowled over when Bismarck turned on the charm and admitted him to his late-night cigar-smoking sessions. As they say these days, the chemistry between the two leaders was good, which may have helped. In any event, this was the nearest Germany got to an overall understanding with Britain. Bismarck judged that it was prudent to put his eggs in the English basket, to help to dampen French *revanchism* and to stabilise the Balkans, if at the cost of alienating Russia. The two great Teutonic powers would co-operate by land and sea to ensure the peace of Europe under their joint hegemony.

At the time that perhaps wasn't an un reasonable expectation. But, as we know, it turned out to be a will-o'-the-wisp. How and why that came to be, we'll explore next time.

Brendan Clifford

The Reformations

The Reformation, considered as a religious event, began in Germany and Switzerland 500 years ago, in 1517, with Martin Luther in Germany and Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich.

Zwingli's Reformation was the more strictly religious of the two. It quickly dominated the public life of the Canton of Zurich, which remade itself in accordance with the new, iconoclastic, vision of Christianity.

Luther's Reformation was a more political event. It occurred within the Holy Roman Empire and made its way in the world in conjunction with the political life of the Empire, being debated by assemblies called by the remarkable Emperor Charles V, who came close to becoming the Emperor of Europe through Hapsburg statecraft.

Luther began in a small way and gradually enlarged the scope of his heresy as he gained political protection, but he never came close to the totalitarian vision of Zwingli, and he stopped well short of iconoclasm. Art never died out in Lutheran Germany.

Ireland experienced the Reformation as a catastrophe. But that had nothing to do with Luther.

The Reformation that affected Ireland was the English Reformation. The English Reformation was an entirely political event. It had in origin nothing to do with the matters that concerned Zwingli and Luther. It was an act of State that happened fourteen years after Luther stuck his theses on the Church door at Wittenberg. It had no religious motivation, and had no Reform content in the first instance. It was in fact anti-Protestant initially.

Henry the Eighth was consolidating the Tudor dynasty established by his father, Henry the Seventh, at the end of the English Civil War. He fancied strutting on the European scene, within the European cultural milieu, as a great King. When Luther appeared on the scene as a heretic, and the heresy began to spread, Henry offered to raise an Army to go on Crusade against it. And he wrote a refutation of it, to which Luther replied. And the Pope declared him *Defender of the Faith*—a title continued by his successors long after that Faith was subjugated.

Henry needed a male heir. He concluded, after many attempts, that his Spanish wife could not give him one. He asked the Pope to dissolve the marriage as invalid. The Pope could not comply with the request because Henry's Spanish wife was a relative of the Emperor, and the course of European politics had led to the Emperor being in occupation of Rome at that moment.

Henry therefore denied that the Bishop of Rome was the legitimate head of the Catholic Church in England. He made himself head of the Church and annulled his marriage, intending to keep the Church just as it was in other respects.

This proved not to be possible because the Church was much more than the Pope. It was the expression of an organic unity of sentiment and symbolism and social practice that bound England to Roman Europe, and that could not rest easy with a usurper Pope. Henry therefore came to see the need to break up the sub-structure of the Roman Church in England and invent something new to take its place. This required, in breaking up of the traditional English way of life. Thomas Cromwell was put to work on it. One of his first tasks was the suppression of the theatrical activities which were then an integral part of English towns, and were traditionally Catholic Christian in content.

The essential English Reformation was the assertion by the King that he, and not the Pope, was the supreme religious authority in the Catholic Church in England. The intention was to maintain the Roman Church as the national Church under an English head. When that did not work out, the Roman Church in England was suppressed by law and by force, with a compliant Parliament acting as an instrument of absolute monarchy.

The separation of Church and State was essential to the structure of Catholic Europe. There was contention between Popes and Emperors. Sometimes the Pope had the upper hand, and sometimes the Emperor, but the conflict was not between believers and non-believers, or between the populace and a priestcraft elite. The supreme poet of the Catholic world, Dante, supported the Emperor. He was exiled from Florence by the Florentine democracy, which supported the Pope.

The Pope never tried to become Emperor and the Emperor never tried to become Pope.

In England the Reformation was the act of the King in taking over the function of Pope in the Catholic Church in England. Church and State became one. And, since the State was then obliged to set about demolishing the inherited Church and inventing a new one, and it succeeded in that enterprise, the Church was the subordinate element in this unprecedented Church-State unity in Western Christianity.

(Zwingli's Zurich was also a Church-State unity, but with the Church aspect dominant: and it was not a precedent for the English development in the sense of being a model that was followed in England. After more than a hundred years of confused turmoil, England did in 1649 become something similar to Zwingli's Zurich. But that only lasted ten years. The collapse of the Protestant Republic demonstrated that the English people, though they had become saturated with theocratic conceptions, were in the last resort a people shaped by an absolute monarchical State of which religion was an instrument.)

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During the long process of religious destruction and reconstruction, the people were required to be loyal and to believe, even though what they were required to believe was continuously changing, and was often far from clear. And, on the whole, they did believe. And what could it be that they believed when the State had not clarified the authorised belief of the moment? They believed in the State.

There was some rebellion, and it was suppressed. And there was some passive dissent, but it was nudged along. But, on the whole, the populace was compliant. It submitted itself to remoulding in its religious beliefs, as well as in other matters, by the authoritative State. It put its trust in the State, and it only needed to be told by it what to believe in order to believe it.

Of course England is not the only place where such a thing happened. But, in the light of English pretensions of later times, it is useful to understand that this is how Protestant England came about.

What is called the *English Revolution* was a civil war within Protestantism, in the 1640s, a century after the founding act of the English Reformation, when a movement had been generated by elements of society in search of a durable structure of theological belief that the State was unable to provide.

It was fought between Government Protestantism, in which religion was treated as a necessary instrument of State, and movements of Biblicalist Protestantism which hardened themselves into a theocratic party in 1641 when the Government got into conflict with the Presbyterian Scots.

The Biblicalist theocrats—the Puritans who are sometimes glamourised as Republicans—seem to have believed, in a hazy sort of way, that, if they knocked down the Monarchy which insisted on keeping a foot in the Roman camp by maintaining the system of Bishops, God himself would undertake the governing of England. The King was executed in 1649 and his heir was hounded out of the country. But ten years later the Biblicalists found themselves in disarray.

Oliver Cromwell, a competent military man as well as a religious fanatic, kept the theocratic Republic going by exerting his military authority when it would otherwise have fallen apart in the mid-1650s. After he died another military man of the Revolution, General Monck, brought the son of the executed King back to be King. There was no resistance to the Restoration by the military force of the politically-exhausted theocracy.

The supremacy of the Government Church was restored. And it was defended by *coup d'etat* in 1688 when James the Second tried to subvert it by introducing freedom of religion.

Politics was made the monopoly of members of the Government Church by the Glorious Revolution of 1688. In 1690 the Revolutionary Government brought in an *Act of Toleration* whose chief provision was for the extermination of Catholicism. It also provided a degree of toleration for the stricter forms of Protestantism—the *Protestant Dissenters*—on the condition that they accepted exclusion from politics and applied their energy to economic affairs, such as the Slave Trade (of which England gained a virtual monopoly by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1712), the construction of industrial Slave Labour enterprises on the Caribbean Islands, and the development of wage-labour Capitalism at home.

That system flourished all through the 18th century. It was the system through which Britain became a World Power—the dominant World Power on its defeat of France in 1815.

After Capitalism was made the dominant world system by British Imperialism, and came to be regarded as being unquestionably a Good Thing, it was argued that it was a product of the Protestant Reformation, which released individual energies that had been suppressed by the Roman system but were released by mass Bible-reading.

This matter was discussed over many years by the B&ICO, which was the only political organisation of Irish Republican origin that took a close interest in the Protestant element in Ireland that evolved as a viable society over the centuries. The conclusion was that there was no essential connection between Biblicalist Protestantism and the rise of Capitalism as a dominant social system.

It was in England that the market system was freed from all social constraint and became dominant over social affairs. And England was a belated entrant into the Reformation, and a half-hearted one. Its break with Rome was political. Its Reformation was a political instrument of a newly-formed Imperial Protestantism. Wholehearted Biblicalism was politically dominant in it for only a single generation: 1641 to 1660.

If the Biblicalist regime had stabilised itself as a State, it seems probable that such free market development as had already happened would have been snuffed out. The object of the Puritan Parliament in its ten years of sovereignty was to establish in England what it understood to be the Biblical *Mosaic* system. That system involved the cancelling of debts every half-century. Great accumulations of capital, capable of shaping society to their requirements, would not have been built up under that system.

If the Puritan Parliament had had its way, England might well have become the *"green and pleasant land"* imagined by William Blake, but it would not have become the Empire that went a long way towards subjecting the entire world to its capitalist requirements.

Cromwell prevented Biblicalist social development by dispersing the Parliament that was seriously intent on going for it. And he opposed the abolition of *"the common law"*—which was law for the gentry—either because God whispered in his ear that the English gentleman was a Good Thing, or because God had stopped talking to him.

Blake imagined his *"green and pleasant land"* after it had been pushed out of sight by *"the dark Satanic mills"*. Over a century later, when the English militarist spirit was beginning to flag in the face of unexpected stubborn and effective German resistance, Blake"s poem was set to memorable music by an otherwise undistinguished composer. By all accounts that song, or hymn, had an instant effect in raising the spirits for the continuation of the Great War to the bitter end.

The iconoclasm of 1641-60 seemed to have stifled the artistic impulse in everything but the writing of hymns, and the 1916 crisis in the War seemed to energise for the moment the subordinated Biblicalist strain in the system.

Britain over-reached itself in its overly ambitious war on Germany but it hung on until the United States entered the War and demoralised the German war effort. England therefore became a Victor State with an enlarged Empire and Germany at its mercy, and it made Charles Villiers Stanford's setting of Blake's *Jerusalem* into one of its National Anthems—its most pervasive one. It is sung every morning at school Assemblies.

It is different in spirit from *God Save The King* and *Land Of Hope And Glory*, and from the other anthem acquired during the Great War—*"I vow to thee my country, All earthly things above"*, whose words were by the Great War Ambassador to the USA, the Anglo-Irish gentleman, Cecil Spring-Rice.

Jerusalem is Biblical. England finally acquired a generally-acceptable anthem expressing Protestant fundamentalism at a moment when its Protestantism, both in its Government and its Dissenting forms, was collapsing, and Millenarianism was woven into post-War and post-Christian England, helping it through the Inter-War era of mass unemployment without a proper social welfare system.

It was asserted by Walter Cox in his

Irish Magazine, long before Karl Marx, that the English State was a revolutionary State. Cox wrote as a Southern United Irishman only a few years after the United Irish attempt at revolution had been suppressed by the English Government±which was both the actual and official Government in Ireland, even during the period when the Protestant Ascendancy Parliament had the status of a sovereign Parliament. (Protestant Ireland, even during its generations of sovereignty, did not rely on itself to govern the country.)

A revolutionary State cannot be the State of a stable society living an accustomed way of life. A revolutionary State, while it is revolutionary, is socially disruptive. The English State was a disruptive social force in the world for centuries after the *coup d'etat* of 1688, which was its official Revolution. It made itself Imperial and powerful by its internal revolutionary development, but its action on others, of which Ireland was the first, was entirely distinctive.

Edmund Burke, a century later, was not happy about the 1688 event being called a Revolution. He said all that it involved was a slight breach in constitutional procedure and was hardly a revolution at all. And he was right in a sense. But the action of the English regime, as modified by the *coup d'etat* of 1688, and by the Whig *coup* against the Jacobites in 1714, set in motion the seriously revolutionary State whose continuously disruptive action brought unrestrained Capitalism into dominance over society in England, enabling it to remould the populace to its requirements, and enabling it to extend its disruptive action throughout the world in the service of English Capitalism.

Jonathan Swift, an Englishman born in Ireland who played a significant part in English politics at a critical moment as a Tory pamphleteer, but was then exiled to Dublin, is usually claimed as an Irish writer. Whether one chooses to see him as Irish or accepts his own view of himself as English, he was one of the few writers who saw the course of disruptive revolutionary social action that the Whig party of the 1688 ruing class was determined to embark on, described it, and opposed it. But that is not what interests those who claim him as Irish.

Swift was a Tory because he saw that the purpose of the Whig view was to free the money system from all constraint, bringing it to dominance over everything else in society, and reducing all values to money values.

A century and a half later, when capital had become supreme, Marx described money as *"the universal equivalent"*—it was the basic common value which enabled all other values (or the semblance of them) to be acquired by exchange: by what Carlyle had called *"the nexus of callous cash payment"*.

It was not in Scotland, where there was a popular Protestant Reformation, that this happened. Nor was it in Northern Germany, where Luther flourished. (Prussia did not come about through capitalist development inspired by Lutheranism.) Nor was it in Zurich.

Zurich was a self-governing City-State without a nobility, organised both socially and politically by a system of Guilds. The Guild system of Zurich embraced Zwingli's comprehensive Protestantism very quickly and settled down within it. But the Guild, while it organises market activity, also controls it and limits it, and prevents social arrangements from being undermined by the power of great accumulations of money capital, and the appearance of a mass proletariat that is entirely subordinate to capital.

Zwingli's comprehensively anti-Roman vision of Christianity was adopted through public debate by the representative governing system of the Zurich Canton. Zurich was one of the newer Cantons of the Swiss Confederation and under the Roman Church organisation was still within the Bishopric of Constance. When Zurich adopted Zwingli's system, it commissioned propagandists (preachers) to propagate it throughout the Confederation. They succeeded in the other new Cantons, up to Basle, but were resisted by the founding Cantons of the Confederation, the Forest Cantons. Zurich then declared war on the reactionary, stuck-in-the-mud Cantons. Zwingli was killed in battle. The Reformation stalled. Switzerland settled down to be both Catholic and Protestant. (Zurich is perhaps best known to day as the suicide capital of Europe. You can go there and arrange to be killed.)

Lutheranism underwent a very different course of development within the Holy Roman Empire, of which the heart was a loose German Confederation of Kingdoms, Electorates, Bishoprics and City States.

When a dispute developed about the Theses (Assertions) that Luther published on the Church door at Wittenberg, the Emperor (the multi-lingual and multi=national Charles V, who was King of Spain as well as Emperor of the Germans) arranged for them to be debated by various authorities. It seemed at first as if Luther's criticism of the Roman Church was limited to the single matter of the debasement of Absolution by the commercialised sale of Indulgences, organised by another German monk, Tetzel—a matter on which many eminent figures within the Church agreed with him. And Luther later admitted that he did not know at first that he had anything else in mind beyond rescuing Confession/Absolution from the sphere of trivial routine and enhancing it into a soul-shaking event that should happen only once in a lifetime:

> "God knows, I never thought of going so far as I did. I intended only to attack indulgences. If anybody had said to me when I was at the Diet of Worms, 'In a few years you'll have a wife and your own household', I wouldn't have believed it'…" (*Table Talk*, June/July 1532).

He further reminisced:

> "Under the papacy everything was pleasant and without annoyances. Fasting then was easier than eating is to us now. To every day of fasting belonged three days of gorging" (*Table Talk*, Jan. 1533. Three centuries later, the Bronte sister, of Yorkshire/Ulster Protestant origin, who spent some time in Belgium as a governess, described Catholics as being stupid, fat and happy.)

What lured Luther on to bigger things than Indulgences seems to have been the way his little protest was encouraged by local authorities within the extensively de-centralised Empire.

I was an inside observer of Catholic Christianity, taking a detached view of it, from an early age. I became an altar-boy at the age of seven or eight in a rural parish because I memorised the Latin easily, though with only a hazy notion of what it meant. Religion then became a business matter for me. I was diligent in attending to the business because I found that it was often a means of escaping school for most of the morning—school being what I hated most in life. I lived half-way between the Presbytery (Priests' House) and the Chapel and did great numbers of Masses in each. And I heard many sermons, in the Chapel, both by local priests and missioners, but as stage-manager rather than as audience. (That was in the 1940s, which were an exciting time in Ireland.)

When I ceased to be an altar-boy and encountered religion from the other side, I found that I absolutely was not religious. I then spent about eight years, as a labourer, known to be irreligious, as part of a community that was for the most part sanely religious in a routine manner—because *"you have to do something to indicate that you are not just a beast"*.

The small actively religious minority —that was commonly described as *"religious"* by a community that was nothing but Catholic—harassed me a bit, leading me to take a defensive interest in religion. In the Irish Dark Ages of the 1950s, there was a wide range of Catholic periodicals that dealt intellectually both with religion and the world. I became interested in philosophy through coming across Aristotle in a farmhouse and I found those publications interesting, and through them I came to realise the great wealth of different views that jostled with each other within Roman Catholicism. And, on the basis of the sense of Catholicism that I acquired then, I would say that there was nothing in the 95 Theses on Indulgences that Luther stuck on the Church door at Wittenberg that was essentially incompatible with membership of the Roman Church.

They do not reject Papacy, but only specify the sphere of its authority in the matter of Indulgences. They do not reject Indulgences, or Purgatory, or any basic doctrine, and, even after the breach, Luther held on to elements of the Roman position in a way that Zwingli, with his more comprehensive vision, could not tolerate.

Dante supported the Empire against the Papacy, and consigned many Popes to Hell, and yet he is the supreme Catholic poet of the Roman Middle Ages. And Erasmus, who was a reformer as earnest as Luther, is one of the great figures of Catholic history.

Luther could not understand why Erasmus did not keep him company. He concluded that it was because Erasmus was not a man of principle, but an opportunistic twister—an eel.

The difference was that Erasmus was a reformer of the Church, while at a certain point Luther became a bull-headed destroyer of the Church, and a reformer of Christianity into something that it might have been before its appearance in adequately-recorded history as the Roman Church. But, compared with Zwingli and Calvin, he was only a tentative destroyer, and he provided no comprehensive replacement for what he began to destroy.

The mid-19th century French historian, Michelet, treated him as a German: *"the Saxon Luther was the Arminius of modern Germany"*.

Arminius preserved Germany from Rome at the time of Augustus. He gained military experience as a Roman soldier and applied it to organising an immense ambush of the Roman Legions in the Teutoberg Forest. Germany remained German, Pagan and uncivilised. The civilisation of the Roman Empire was, of course, Pagan in one sense, the sense of not being formally Christian. But three hundred years later Rome became Christian by blending the Christian cult into its Pagan civilisation, making Roman Christianity a world force. Christianity then, for more than a thousand years, became something that was hardly conceivable apart from the structure of Roman civilisation into which it was blended, and which it influenced.

The Saxons were forcibly Christianised by the French Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Charlemagne, in the eighth century, but were not Romanised or Latinised. The Germans remained German, and they remained free in the sense of not being subjected to disciplined citizenship in a comprehensive State system. (The ideology of citizenship may be contractual, but it seems improbable that its historic origin was so anywhere but Switzerland.)

Michelet's comment, which appears in the Preface to the *Autobiography* of Luther which he compiled from passages in Luther's writings, is worth quoting more extensively:

> "The *universal*, in whatever sense the word may be taken, is feeble against the *special*. *Heresy* is a choice, a specialty—there is specialty of opinion, specialty of country. Wickliffe, John Huss, were ardent patriots; the Saxon Luther was the Armenius of modern Germany. Universal in time, in space, in doctrine, the church was, as against each of its opponents, deficient in a common medium. She had to struggle for the unity of the world against the particular forces of the world… As a government, she had to encounter all the worldly temptations. As the centre of religious traditions, she received, from all parts, a crowd of local beliefs, against which she had great difficulty in defending her unity, her perpetuity. She presented herself to the world such as the world and time had made her. She appeared before it in the party-coloured robe of history. Comprehending humanity at large, she shared also its miseries, its contradictions. The little heretic societies, made fervent by zeal and by their danger, standing apart, and purer by reason of their youth, disavowed the cosmopolitan church, and compared themselves with her, much to their own satisfaction. The pious and profound mystic of the Rhine and Low countries, the simple, rustic Waldensians, pure as a flower amid Alpine snows, triumphed when they accused of adultery and prostitution her who had received all, adopted all. In the same way, each brooklet, doubtless, may say to the ocean: I come from my own mountains; I know no other waters than my own; whereas thou receivest the impurities of the world. "Ay", is the answer, "but I am the ocean…"
>
> "In the midst of my *Roman History* I met with Christianity in its origins; halfway through my *History of France* I encountered it again, aged and decrepit; here I find it again. In whatever direction I turn, it bars my way, and prevents my passing on" (*The Life Of Luther, Written By Himself*. English translation, 1846).

Lutheranism was a point of contention in German life until a settlement giving it a permanent place, along with Romanism, was made under the strategic statesmanship of Cardinal Mazarin by the *Treaty Of Westphalia* at the end of the 30 Years' War. It was a German religion, but not by any means the national religion of Germany. When German national development began in speeches of the human rights philosopher, Fichte, in response to French supremacy in Prussia under Napoleon, Fichte's appeal was not to religion of any kind—or to race—but to the German language which had continued unlatinised, bearing many things along with it.

Perhaps Luther's Germanising of the Bible, under protection in the Wartburg Castle, into language admired by Nietzsche, who despised the Reformation as a relapse from the Renaissance into superstition, contributed to the persistence of German as a language on its own. But Lutheranism was not German nationalist in any more specific way.

It was only under Hitler that Protestantism in Germany became a national Church, and acquired some resemblance to what English Protestantism had been

in origin: an instrument of the state. And I suppose that development owed something to Luther's ferocious writings against the Jews.

The German National Protestant Church was little mentioned in English propaganda—only a belated dissenter from it was usually mentioned, without quite saying what it was that he dissented from. But the Concordat between Hitler and Rome was a standard propaganda item—without it being explained what a Concordat is.

This periodical advocated a Concordat between Ireland and Rome about forty years ago, when Rome was riding high. The Hierarchy dismissed it out of hand, as did the furtive little groups of anti-clericals who didn't know what it meant. A Concordat is a Constitutional measure of separating the spheres of Church and State. What a Concordat would have done in Ireland was develop in the public a sense of the distinction between the proper spheres of Church and State, of which there was no sense under O'Connell's slogan of *"A free Church in a free State"*. It was only when Pat Maloney succeeded in bringing a Court action on the issue that a public awareness of the distinction began to develop.

What the German Concordat meant was that the Roman Church had a space within the German State into which the Government could not intrude. It gave the Church a position independent of the regime. That position constituted social resistance to the regime. When the regime was destroyed, the resource of Concordatist Catholicism led to the rapid construction of a new German regime in the Western Occupation Zones.

The German Christian Democracy, which forged the new German State, did so in antagonism with Britain, whose active collaboration with the Nazi regime in the 1930s it knew from experience, and as far as I know the Christian Democrats gave cover, by hegemonising it, to the German Protestantism that had been part of the Nazi regime.

Was that the life-cycle of Lutheranism? I don't know.

PS: Henry the Eighth's pamphlet dispute with Luther seems to conceal itself in English publishing. I have never come across a book that presents it all. It began with Henry's defence of the the Seven Sacraments, which Luther cut down to two in his *Babylonian Captivity Of The Church*. It was for this that the Pope declared him *Defender of the Faith.* That was in 1520. I assume Luther published a reply, but I have not come across it.

I recall seeing a remark by Luther, some time later, that his message was sneaking *"into Papist England behind the back of the King"*. That must have been after 1531, when Henry's world was getting confused.

Henry made himself Pope, divorced himself and re-married, Luther unfrocked himself and married a nun, but he didn't consider to be Henry's divorce to be valid.

In 1528 Henry published *Answere Unto A Certaine Letter Of Martyn Lther* [sic]". A photographed copy of this was published by the De Capo Press, Amsterdam and New York, in 1971. It seems to include a letter by Luther, but the whole is in dense Gothic type, including strange lettershapes that have not survived into the present alphabet. It would need to be transcribed in order to be read. It is undated.

Then in 1928 there was published in New York: *Luther's Reply To King Henry VIII: Now First Englished After The Lapse Of Four Centuries* (1522). It begins with a Latin epigraph from Luther with the translation: *"I fight for liberty, the King for captivity"*.

The text begins:

> "With such blindness and madness has our Lord Jesus Christ stricken the whole kingdom of the papist abominations, that for three years now the Cyclops of their infinite host, warring on Luther alone, are still at a loss to understand for what reason I am at war with them. In vain do all the books that I have edited and published testify that I seek this one thing only, which is that the divine Scripture be given the pre-eminence, as is right and just, and that all human inventions and traditions be taken out of the way as most hurtful stumbling blocks… I dispute *de jure*, and they answer *de facto*. I seek a cause; they show a work. I ask, *By what authority do ye do this?* They reply *Because we do it, and have done it*. So for reason they give their will, for authority their ritual. For right they allege that customs, and that in the things of God.
>
> There is in their schools a most vicious method of arguing, which they call begging the question. This they learn and teach till grey-headed—in fact, till burial,—with infinite sweat, with infinite trouble, poor unhappy men…"

*

Manus O'Riordan

To Mark
Martin Luther King Day
16 January 2017

Martin Luther King's Last New York Public Address

On 23rd February 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was the keynote speaker at a benefit, marking the 100th birthday of W.E.B. Du Bois, held at Carnegie Hall, New York. In his tribute that night, King remarked that *"Dr. Du Bois has left us, but he has not died. The spirit of freedom is not buried in the grave of the valiant*".

On 4th April 1968, scarcely six weeks later, Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis. His speech at Carnegie Hall was his last New York public address.

During the course of his address, Martin Luther King observed:

> "We cannot talk of Dr. Du Bois without recognising that he was a radical all of his life. Some people would like to ignore the fact that he was a Communist in his later years. It is worth noting that Abraham Lincoln warmly welcomed the support of Karl Marx during the Civil War and corresponded with him freely. In contemporary life the English-speaking world has no difficulty with the fact that Sean O'Casey was a literary giant of the twentieth century and a Communist or that Pablo Neruda is generally considered the greatest living poet though he also served in the Chilean Senate as a Communist. It is time to cease muting the fact that Dr. Du Bois was a genius and chose to be a Communist. Our irrational, obsessive anti-communism has led us into too many quagmires to be retained as if it were a mode of scientific thinking."

(See http://politicalaffairs.net/martin-luther-king-s-speech-in-honor-of-web-dubois-by-norman-markowitz/ for the full text of this historic address.

See http://links.org.au/node/3674 and https://janos.nyc/2015/02/23/today-in-nyc-history-mlks-last-speech-in-new-york-1968/ for comments on the absence of this address from the Martin Luther King Archives.

See https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aL4FOvIf7G8 for video of Martin Luther King's prophetic statement—*"I have been to the Mountaintop"*—at the close of his speech in support of striking sanitation workers in Memphis on 3rd April 1968—the very eve of his assassination.)

VOX PAT

Rulers And Ruled
Road Deaths
High Moral Tone
We're Not Foreigners!
Garret And Britain
Catholic Publishers
Real GOMS!
Hardcore?

RULERS AND RULED

In September 1919, Liam Lynch and a column of Cork No. 2 Brigade IRA—including Michael Fitzgerald—ambushed a group of British soldiers on their way to Fermoy's Wesleyan Church.

One soldier, 20-year-old Private William Jones, was killed, and another, Private Lloyd, was injured.

Private Jones was, reputedly, the first British soldier killed in the War of Independence.

British forces sacked the town in retaliation and in reaction to the coroner's inquest, which recorded a verdict of *'Accidental death, unpremeditated'*. The soldiers' actions were highly co-ordinated, but it was claimed 'the men' had acted spontaneously.

Lieutenant Colonel Hughes-Hallett, posted in Fermoy at the time, recalled:

> "[They] proceeded to every shop or place of business of the coroner and the members of the jury… the jeweller's (Barber's), the Boot Shop (Tyler's) and (Lombard's) and the foreman of the Jury, etc, were all faithfully dealt with. Trays of rings and watches were soon being flung into the river. A chain of men... smashed bottles on the pavement, and drink flowed in a stream down the gutter."

The *Irish Times* reported a later town meeting and a bitter exchange between Colonel Dobbs—representing the British army—and Mr Kelleher, vice-Chairman of the [Fermoy] Urban Council. Dobbs agreed to a request that he confine the troops to quarters, but—angered by the jury's verdict—warned that he would not be responsible if they got *"out of hand"* again.

> Dobbs: "You have not the pluck to say that [Private Jones] was murdered."
>
> Kelleher: "There is pluck enough in the town."
>
> Dobbs: "Why didn't you come forward to assist, when the men were shot? Not a man, woman or child had the pluck to come forward and give assistance."
>
> Kelleher: "No one came near us when our windows were broken."
>
> Dobbs: "Damn the windows! You have got no industry, you are simply living on the army and but for them you would be taking in each other's washing. When this thing happens and you lose a few hundred or a few thousand pounds, you come and cry for protection."

Michael Fitzgerald, along with Terence MacSwiney and nine other IRA volunteers, was arrested on 8th August 1920. On 11th August 1920, MacSwiney began a hunger strike. Fitzgerald and the other nine volunteers joined in. Fitzgerald, untried and without sentence was the first to die on October 17th 1920 as a result of the fast. He died in Cork Prison. He was followed by Joe Murphy and Terence MacSwiney. Their deaths are credited with bringing world-wide attention to the Irish cause for independence.

> (Dr. Aoife Bhreatnach, a historian specialising in Garrison Towns, speaks to Donal O'Keeffe about Fermoy's [Co. Cork] fascinating military history that defined its development-*Evening Echo*-29.12.2016)

* Dr Aoife Bhreatnach tweets as @GarrisonTowns. irishgarrisontowns.com

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ROAD DEATHS

Almost 600 people on average have been killed every year on Ireland's roads, north and south, since records began, road safety chiefs announced.

In the Republic, 23,948 victims have lost their lives as a result of an accident since 1959. In Northern Ireland, where officials have recorded road deaths since 1931, 14,839 people have been killed in car crashes over the past 85 years. (*Evening Echo*, Cork-21.11.2016)

In the 28 years of the Northern war, (1970-1998) it is estimated that 3,500 people died.

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HIGH MORAL TONE!

"The level of political debate in Irish life is still more about gimme, gimme, gimme than politics" (Niamh Bhreathnach, Labour, Minister for Education, in 1997).

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WE'RE NOT FOREIGNERS!

> "Irish citizens are expected to have their special status in the UK protected post-Brexit, according to British Brexit Secretary, Mr. David Davis.
>
> "Mr. Davis told M.P.s he believes there will be no change to what is enshrined in law in the Ireland Act, 1949.
>
> "This legislation established the special status in which the Republic of Ireland is regarded 'not a foreign country' for the purpose of UK laws" (*Irish Independent*, 8.11.2016)

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GARRET & BRITAIN

> "I'm afraid I don't know a lot about the English." (Garret FitzGerald, Fine Gael, Taoiseach, confesses all on BBC Radio 4 in 1991.)

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CATHOLIC PUBLISHERS

> "Following losses of almost half a million Euros, Ireland's largest religious publishers have vowed to turn their dire financial situation around, *The Irish Catholic* has learned.
>
> "Despite several successive years of crippling losses and a net loss of ¤496,580 in 2015, in its newly published financial statements for 2015, Veritas claims to have a plan 'that will see the business return to generating positive cash flows'.
>
> "Such a turnaround is clearly imperative, since the company ended last year with less than ¤300,000 in the bank and less than ¤600,000 due from customers, while almost ¤4.4 million was due to be paid to creditors over the course of this year" (*Irish Catholic*, 3.11.2016)

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REAL GOMS?

> "The arrival of the Supermarket and the Shopping Centre into Ireland at such close proximity were also direct assaults on prevailing mores and there was the amusing sight for the first few years of Irish shoppers being seen with mesh shopping baskets on the streets of the towns and cities for the simple reason that shoppers didn't know they were supposed to put them back.
>
> "Expertly researched and written with droll and deft touches of humour, this cultural cornucopia will shock and surprise as much as it will amuse. For the generation who were foot soldiers

in these cultural wars, this book will have a special resonance but it is composed and arranged in a way for all to savour and relish.

"Was it really that bad in the Ireland of the 1960s? No, it was far, far worse" (Brian Boyd reviews *Hopscotch and Queenie-i-o: A 1960s Irish Childhood* by Damien Corless, Collins Press, Cork. ¤12.99.

We've heard of the Village Idiot but the Global Village Idiot is something else to behold!

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HARDCORE?

"Mr. O'Malley [Desmond O'Malley] has never had the experience of being responsible for the prisoners of this country, with so many hardcore extremists inside them. In his time, they were mostly outside" (Paddy Cooney, Fine Gael TD, Minister for Justice, in 1974.)

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Jules Gondon

First published
Sagnier et Bray, Publishers, Rue des Saint-Pères, Paris, 1847

Translated by Cathy Winch

Biography of Daniel O'Connell, Part Two

Daniel O'Connell was already well established in his profession and had reached the age of 28 when his thoughts turned to marriage. His uncle and his father had presented several rich propositions, all of which he had rejected. He had pledged his heart to one of his distant cousins, the daughter of Doctor O'Connell of Tralee; the doctor was a man of excellent reputation but could only give his daughter a very small dowry. A rift therefore occurred between O'Connell and his family, but that did not stop him, and he and the beloved of his heart were united in marriage. The wedding was celebrated secretly in the house of his brother-in-law in Dublin. His parents only had knowledge of it several months after, and several years passed before the *fait accompli* was followed by reconciliation. During this time, reduced to his own resources, the young lawyer had to depend on his labours to provide the means lost to him because of his position *vis a vis* his family.

Circumstances came to the help of his talent and activity. He was one of the first Catholics to enter the Bar, and all his fellow Catholics naturally turned to him as their lawyer. Despite the prejudices of the times, his *debuts* earned him the goodwill of most of the judges before whom he spoke. The juries, charmed by the spark and novelty of his talent, showed him a marked preference. They were happy to see him on the side of the Defence, because they knew that the quick and witty lawyer would be sure to find a way to break the monotony of a trial with some jovial pleasantry. Everyone knows that O'Connell always had a talent for rallying people to his way of thinking by making them laugh. His *debut* ensured the success of his career. He expounded his cases with a rare clarity, and knew how to use circumstances favourable to his clients in such a way that his opinion won approval.

Although he was a Catholic, and because of this, deprived of a great number of possible clients, nevertheless he soon had a brilliant *clientele*, and the number of cases he was called on to plead, or on which he had to give his opinion, took so much of his time that sleep and mealtimes had to take second place. Long before daylight he was in his study, the walls of which were bare save for a crucifix, where he prepared in silence for the battles of eloquence he was to fight some hours later. He then went to the Four Courts, when, going from one court to the other, he normally pleaded several cases on the same day, and the team of solicitors around him kept on the alert. Then, in the evening, no meeting was held where his burning words were not heard, no public dinner where he was not applauded. Catholics signed no petition or protest which he had not written or signed first. O'Connell was thus everywhere at once, a wonder of prodigious activity. Neither his private affairs, nor his profession, ever let him lose sight of the public good, of which he was always the first and the most intrepid defender.

Before we turn to O'Connell as a public personality, we must mention here a little known anecdote, that shows that the young lawyer had from his beginnings in the world the presentiment of the role he would later be called on to play. Returning from one of his favourite days out, hunting, and without taking the time to change his soaking wet clothes, Daniel fell asleep in front of a big fire. This imprudence nearly cost him his life. He caught a typhoid fever, and it is said that in fits of delirium he kept repeating the lines of an English poet, the meaning of which is as follows:

> "I die unknown; no one will speak of me; a few noble spirits will speculate on what I might have become, and they will think that want of life cut short my powers."

The political life of O'Connell began in the year 1800. The legislative Union had just been accomplished. Although we are not here to write a history of Ireland, we must explain what that *Union* was, which O'Connell fought each day of his life to repeal. This is what he said:

> "Union has been imposed on Ireland by a combination of terror, torture, force, fraud and corruption.
>
> The instigators of the Union revived the fire of a dying rebellion. They set Protestant against Catholic, and Catholic against Protestant. They stirred up internal discord, always with the object in mind of realising their plan of enslavement. While the Union was being made, *Habeas Corpus* was suspended; all constitutional liberty was abolished in Ireland. Martial law was proclaimed; the use of torture was frequent; liberty, life and property were without protection; public opinion was stifled; court-martial trials were the order of the day; meetings legally called by magistrates were dispersed by force of arms; the voice of Ireland was silenced. The people found itself without protection; that was not all. Aside from the places that were given out as bribes, the Union cost England 75 million francs!
>
> The Union was neither a treaty nor a pact; it was carried out by violence, fraud, terror, torture and corruption. It has no power to bind, because it is the result of superior force. It is nothing but a word. The two countries are not united.
>
> Thus was extinguished the independence of Ireland; thus was consummated the greatest crime ever committed against Ireland by the British government!"

The crime was consummated and the odious system which brought the Union into being remained in force. Ireland continued to be covered with English

troops, and the people was told it did not have the right to meet. Catholics however did not let themselves be discouraged by this duress. On 13th January they assembled at the *Royal-Exchange-Hall* to petition against the Union. They had barely arrived when the armed forces appeared. O'Connell, who had organised this event, presented himself at the head of his friends to the officer in charge of the troops and protested with so much conviction and energy his respect of the law that the officer, struck by the novelty of this way of speaking, did not evacuate the hall; he let the Catholics hold their meeting. It was in that meeting that O'Connell pronounced his first political speech. It was, as the English say, his *maiden speech.* He protested against the Act of Union, and expressed the opinion that Penal Laws, with all their enormities, were preferable to the concessions which had been the price of legislative Union. This meeting concluded after voting a petition in favour of the Repeal of the Union.

From that day on, O'Connell's worked to enfranchise his country with no respite. In his speech of 13th January 1800 he showed his compatriots the road he wanted them to share with him. The scenes of blood and disorder which had just desolated his country strengthened his conviction that Ireland must not engage in armed struggle against England. The thing to do was to create new resources, place oneself beyond attack by standing on the ground of legality, and take advantage of this position to worry, hound and tire out England, forcing her to keep her eyes forever on Ireland, giving no respite, no diversion, in order to win through fear and lassitude what could not be won by force.

For forty-seven years, armed with the right of petition and association, O'Connell kept Ireland on an active footing, always agitating, always threatening, going to the very limit of legality, but never beyond it. O'Connell, who had started life a champion of Catholics, soon became the champion of his country. He identified with the people, spoke its language, and revived its suffering by evocation of the persecutions endured by previous generations. He made people aware of their rights, awakened in their hearts the love of freedom, and created links between him and the people so strong and so durable that only death could break them.

Already, in 1804, thanks to the efforts of O'Connell, the Catholics of Ireland deployed such a level of activity that the Government took umbrage. Catholics had organised a central commission called *the Catholic Board*. A Proclamation from the Viceroy forced them to disband it. O'Connell, an expert in the subtleties of English jurisprudence, recreated the commission, under the new name of *Catholic Committee.*

Pitt, who had been removed from power in 1801 when he tried to fulfil the commitment to the Catholics of Ireland which he had made at the time of the Union, was back in Office in 1805. A Catholic deputation went to see him to ask him to present to Parliament the measure of emancipation which he had promised. The Minister, citing obstacles put in his path by the King, expressed his regret that he could grant nothing.

Lord Grenville nevertheless presented a petition for Emancipation to the Upper House, and M. Fox to the House of Commons. The motion was rejected by 178 votes against 49 in the first Chamber and 336 against 124 in the second.

With the death of Pitt in 1806 the Whigs came to power and Catholic hopes started to rise. Their hopes were soon dashed however. Their perseverance had not been subjected to a long enough trial. In 1808 and 1810 O'Connell composed two new Petitions which were rejected by Parliament. In that latter year, the municipality of Dublin initiated an imposing demonstration in favour of the Repeal of the Union. O'Connell, who was present at this meeting, attended by Protestants and Catholics, made one of his most magnificent speeches and showed himself more and more worthy, by his talent and his wisdom, of the title of Leader of the People, which in their hearts everyone already agreed he was.

The same year (1810), the Catholic Bishops of Ireland published some resolutions in order to calm a certain public disquiet and to dissipate certain rumours. It was said that they had acceded to the desires of England on the question of the *Veto* which the Government wanted to have on the nomination of Bishops, and that they had accepted money from the Imperial budget. They denied these rumours most strongly. The question of the *Veto,* which we will have to deal with, had occupied the Catholics since 1799, and we will mention the services which O'Connell rendered in the agitation which the question later raised in all of Ireland.

In 1810 the Orangemen started to be alarmed by the unanimity of the Catholics, and the harmony and unity of action that O'Connell had brought about. Petitioning in favour of emancipation was being organised on a vast scale, despite the obstacles put forward by a few *prudent* men within the Committee. It was about that time that O'Connell suggested to his friends that they should vote an *Address to the Prince of Wales*, who inspired a degree of hope among Catholics. The Prince encouraged this hope until he acceded to the throne as George IV, he then forgot and betrayed all his promises. The Government, giving in to the clumsy suggestions of the Orangemen and arming itself with laws everyone thought had fallen into oblivion, obtained extraordinary powers from Parliament and started judicial persecutions against the Catholics and the liberal press.

Daniel O'Connell, then the leader of the Catholics and friend of liberal Protestants, was first and foremost a lawyer, but in 1811 the prosecutions by Dublin Courts of several eminent Catholics and of the press led to him becoming in the eyes of public opinion a legislator and politician. He was naturally chosen to defend the accused in all the memorable court cases of this period. The Dublin Bar will long remember these judicial contests, in which O'Connell deployed all the resources of his eloquence and genius: the Attorney General, Mr Saurin, left court each day smarting from the blows inflicted on him by his intrepid adversary. For the young lawyer, each case was a new triumph. The right of association, the right of petition, and of press freedom emerged victorious from these conflicts.

The defeats suffered by their opponents in the Courts gave heart to the Catholics. In 1812, they held meetings in several Counties to protest against Government actions. The national movement was getting organised. Looking at the Irish papers of the day, and judging by the attention the press was beginning to devote to them, we can see the growing importance of Catholics in society. We find meticulously detailed accounts of meetings which, a few years previously, merited only a few lines. Public opinion was made to count. These facts, neglected by the biographers of O'Connell, are not without interest for the readers of *l'Univers* at a time when the activity of Catholics in France, as a constitutional party, is not dissimilar to what was happening thirty-five years ago, in Ireland.

In 1813, as in France in 1847, the legislature had to deal with petitions coming from all parts of the country. A

Bill with the avowed aim of emancipating Catholics was presented to Parliament. But it realised the promise of its title more or less to the same extent that our Bills on the freedom of education do away with the university monopoly. In return for some insignificant concessions, the English Government renewed its pretensions to the *veto* on the nomination of Bishops. This mendacious Bill, several clauses of which were injurious to the discipline and independence of the Catholic Church of Ireland, was rejected by a Synod of the Irish Bishops. The Bishops immediately informed the country of their resolution by means of a Pastoral Letter addressed to the clergy and the faithful, bearing 26 signatures. The Bishops contacted the Catholic Committee, asking for help in the propagation of this important document.

There were in England and in Ireland Catholics who disapproved of these actions. They thought the Bishops were imprudent, and the Committee showed excessive temerity. An action centre was formed in London. A Committee was organised to support the movement in Ireland. The Catholics of England were just as interested as their brothers in breaking the chains that weighed them down. However we are sorry to say that they persisted in their compromising spirit to such an extent that they jeopardised the heavy responsibilities entrusted to them.

One member of the Committee, the famous Doctor Milner, then Apostolic Vicar of the Central District, felt obliged in conscience to send a paper attacking the Bill under consideration to all members of the House of Commons. In his essay, the learned theologian developed the opinion succinctly expressed in the resolution of the bishops of Ireland. He rejected any intervention of the State in the nomination of bishops, any control whatever that would limit the prerogatives of the successor of Saint Peter. Since for the Government the *veto* was the condition *sine qua non* of the partial emancipation that was being proposed, rejection of the clauses deemed unacceptable to Church discipline meant rejecting emancipation. This reasoning seemed too rigorous to some Catholics. The English Catholic Committee disavowed the paper in which the illustrious prelate protested against the Bill. Its members met in extraordinary session and pronounced the expulsion of Doctor Milner, accusing him of *gross calumny* in a document which made this event known to the public.

TO BE CONTINUED

Pat Walsh

The "Bulgarian Horrors" of 1876, a seminal event in solidifying British Imperialism

A Forgotten Event

A *'National Conference on the Eastern Question'* took place in Piccadilly, London, on 8th December 1876. The Convention was attended by 1,200 delegates and *The Times* noted "*we have never known any association for a political object which has obtained support over so large a part of the scale of English society".*

But who is aware of this most significant political event in the life of Britain today?

On the morning of the event *The Times* said:

> "To-day the 'National Conference on the Eastern Question' will be opened at St. James's Hall, the Duke of Westminster in the chair… The name of 'Conference', although not literally inapplicable to such a gathering, does suggest a deliberation for practical measures which is not likely to be found at St. James's Hall… Resolutions will be proposed and discussed; the most popular orators will attract the largest audiences; the most spirited passages will receive the most spirited applause; and outbursts of denunciation will be more successful than a valuable but tiresome statement of facts. The result can only be to place on record a series of Resolutions, condemning in more or less stirring language the Turks and their proceedings, reproving the Queen's Government, and declaring that the British people will obey the precepts of humanity, and will do their utmost to free the Christian from his Mahomedan oppressor. Such will be the results of the Conference, and no doubt they will be dwelt upon by its enemies in every tone of impatience and ridicule"
>
> (8.12.1876).

The *Times* noted that, whilst the *'delegates'* at the National Conference were engaging in deliberations, the professional Diplomatists would be meeting *"at Constantinople, to begin the work of a more practical Conference, and to discuss with large information and full powers of decision the difficult questions which are as dark to the amateurs of Piccadilly as to the rest of the world."*

But while the Piccadilly Convention was seen by those engaged in the practicalities of High Politics as a bunch of amateurs pontificating on a subject they had little knowledge of beyond righteous indignation, half-truths and exaggerations, *The Times* realised that what it was seeing in London was something very significant:

> " The Conference can have no practical result… But it is not the less a most significant fact that at such a crisis and after so long a period of controversy a great movement should manifest itself… as a demonstration of opinion it is remarkable and powerful. It shows the deliberate judgment of a most influential class. In spite of continuous appeals to national jealousy, in spite of the authority of the Government… in spite of international traditions supported by great names past and present, a body of men representing the most cultivated as well as the most sober-minded and conscientious sections of the community have associated themselves to protest against an alliance with Turkish power. If nothing comes of the 'National Conference' except the publication of the list of 'Conveners' it will still have been successful. The names are those of men distinguished in every department of intellectual exertion, of men eminent by position or by service to the State, of men who may be fairly taken to represent the various interests of the country. It would be simple presumption in any one to affect contempt for a movement thus supported. Let those who would disparage the Conference try whether they can obtain any list of names in favour of their own Eastern policy. We have never known any political association for a political object which has obtained support over so large a part of the scale of English society. We have never known men combine who represented such diversities of opinion, or such traditional antagonisms. Putting aside politicians and philosophers… let us look simply to the signatures which indicate the tendencies of the religious world. At the opening of the Crimean War the powerful influences which proceed from this quarter were strongly in favour of Turkey… British Protestantism declared itself decidedly for the Ottoman. Lord Shaftesbury contrasted the tolerance of the Sultan's Government for the missionaries with the fanaticism

of the Czar and his Priests. Lord Shaftesbury is one of the Presidents of the Conference. There are High Churchmen in the list of 'Conveners'; but at the same time there are prominent Dissenters of every denomination, and a cause must appeal to very general sympathies which unites the names of Pusey and Liddon with those of leading Baptists and Methodists… the list of names gives but a very partial indication of the number of prominent persons who are generally favourable to the objects of the Conference… Those only have joined the Association who think that a public demonstration is justifiable and expedient."

This was indeed a kind of paradigm shift within British Protestantism—which was Britain, essentially. Edward Augustus Freeman, the influential historian, noted at the time:

> "what stronger argument can there be in favour of a certain object than that it commends itself alike to High Church and Broad Church, to Non-conformists of every sect…"
>
> (*Contemporary Review*, Feb. 1877).

The remnant of English Catholicism decided to have nothing to do with the *"National Conference on the Eastern Question"*.

It was also a movement within civil society against the traditional pro-Ottoman Foreign Policy of the British State, a movement much more substantial, as *The Times* suggests, than even the impressive list of names participating. It was really something of a seminal event of the most fundamental character.

Britain had acted as an ally of the Ottoman Empire for most of the century. During this period Britain was determined to preserve the Ottoman State as a giant buffer zone between its Empire, particularly in India, and the expanding Russian Empire. It was part of what was known as the 'Great Game' in England that 'the Russians should not have Constantinople' and the warm water port that this would have given them. It was for this reason that England fought the Crimean War.

However, whilst Britain was determined to preserve the Ottoman Empire and was prepared to use force to prevent the Russians having Constantinople, its relations with the Sultan were, of course, very disadvantageous to the Turks. England helped preserve the Ottoman Empire—but as a weak, dependent state, through devices like the *Capitulations*. This was so that Ottoman territories could be absorbed into the British Empire in a gradual process (for example, Egypt) when the opportunity arose. The main concern was to preserve it until the day when it could be collapsed to the advantage of the British Empire and not that of its Imperialist rivals in Russia and France.

The two chairmen of the National Conference were the Duke of Westminster and Lord Shaftesbury—two ends of the political spectrum. On the platform were William Morris, J.R. Green, William Lecky, John Ruskin. Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer sent their support.

A.J.P. Taylor (*The Troublemakers*) noted that those in England who had fiercely supported Governor Eyre, who had brutally suppressed freed slaves in Jamaica (killing around a thousand) and had protested against poverty in 1865 (Carlyle, Froude, Tennyson and Ruskin) were now the chief agitators against the Turks. Those who criticised Eyre (like Cardinal Newman, who became a Catholic) remained unmoved by the Bulgarian atrocity propaganda.

The Duke of Westminster opened the Conference. He condemned Prime Minister Lord Beaconsfield's (Disraeli) objective of *"maintaining the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire"* and said:

> "Years ago a distinguished statesman remarked that only one government in Europe was worse than that of the Turks That was the then Temporal Government of Rome. Happily… the Temporal Roman Government has passed away—as we hope and believe, for ever. (Cheers) The worst Government now remaining in Europe is that of Constantinople, and it seems to us a most extraordinary thing that men in this country, and a portion of the Press, seem to think that the Turks have still a power of regeneration within themselves… England requires some form of self-government for the Christian Provinces. She also requires the disarmament of the population, particularly the Mahomedan civilians. It is impossible to suppose that the Emperor of Russia can recede from the demands he has righteously and properly made… There is a precedent for you in the establishment of a better state of things in the Lebanon. A friend of many of us, the present Governor-General of Canada, was sent on a mission to that country. The first thing he did was to hang a Turkish pasha (cheers and laughter)… It seems to me in this great question, above English interests, there rise the great interests of humanity (Loud Cheers). In former days England was proud to lead the van for the amelioration of the human race and for freedom. She shook off the shackles from the slave; and I should beg to ask deferentially why, if reforms cannot be brought about without actual military occupation, the fleets and the armies of England should not be sent to Constantinople, not to oppose Russia, but to coerce the Turk? (Cheers) " (*The Times* 9.12.1876)

It is clear from this passage that what excited the passions of the audience was the anti-Catholicism and anti-Turkism. Something that I had a notion of, became clearer to me upon reading this passage: Here was Protestant/Liberal England which had in the past only found unity in its anti-Catholic finding a new demon, after the Romanist threat had been subdued and Ireland subdued by God's will and 'Famine'. And it found the new unifier in the new demon—the Turk. Not since the Glorious Revolution had Protestant England been so drawn together in righteous common cause as over Bulgaria!

The Rev. Denton of St.Bartholemew's in Cripplegate, London was a typical clerical attack on the Turk, which was so typical of the Orientalist racism pumped out for half a century after:

> "He did not think that the question was one merely of Mahomedanism and Christianity, but rose rather out of the incurable incapacity of the Mahomedan race to govern than from the imperfect religion that they professed… the Christians of Turkey were living among a race who had been well described as tigers in disposition, and more sensual than even the most debased of human beings… in the midst of a population superior to themselves… There was no security for family honour or, indeed, for anything which men hold dear. The Christians, he might add, possessed noble qualities, which would show themselves whenever the Turkish rule was withdrawn. They… were living under a despotic Government with… no limit to the despotism of neighbours who were restrained by no law in the indulgence of their passions."
>
> (*Times*, 12.1876).

The *"Bulgarian Horrors"* united all of Britain's greatest historians on the same side against the Turks—Freeman, Lecky, Froude, Kinglake, Bryce, Seeley, Stubbs, Carlyle and J.R. Green. Freeman startled the James' Hall Convention with the challenge:

> "Would you fight for the Freedom of the Empire of Sodom?… Perish the interests of England, perish our dominion in India, rather than that we should strike one blow or speak one word on behalf of the wrong against the right."

It was actually Carlyle who coined the Gladstonian phrase *"the unspeakable Turk"*.

A.J.P. Taylor asked why this novel alliance of usually divergent voices within the intelligentsia came about:

> "What was there in the contemporary historical approach which made the leading historians of the day so fervent for morality, so enthusiastic for the Bulgarians, so eager to interfere?… They were not usually friends of national freedom; most of them became Unionists a few years later. Nor were they Radical in ordinary politics. Their specialist interests ranged widely over epochs and eras. None except Freeman really knew anything about the Balkans, past or present. What they had in common… apart from Carlyle was their belief in Progress. They were all secular missionaries, a role to which many historians still aspire. The outrages angered them by seeming to cast doubt on their faith. Again all, except J.R. Green, were men of Power, glorifying Empire and the rise of modern States. They were all, without exception, fervent patriots eager to crush anyone who would challenge the moral code of their civilisation. They were more concerned to batter the Turks than to liberate the Bulgarians" (p.77).

As A.J.P. Taylor notes the *'National Conference on the Eastern Question'* was much more an anti-Turkish affair than anything to do with concern for the Bulgarian. Its political objective was to demonise the Turks and loosen the British Government's support for the Ottomans.

A.J.P. Taylor also notes a new development in British history in this event:

> "These historians, for the most part, also managed to combine Progress and Christianity… The Bulgarian Horrors provided the only occasion in our history when the majority of the leaders of the Established Church were against the Government—the only occasion, at any rate, since the Glorious Revolution … This unusual response was no accident, nor even a conversion to humanitarianism. A few Evangelicals came in… But the High Churchmen predominated. In fact the agitation over the Bulgarian Horrors was in large part a byproduct of Ritualism. Liddon, the leading Puseyite, was the first Englishman to attack the Turk when he preached at St. Paul's on 13 July 1876. Pusey himself sent a letter of blessing to the Convention at St. James' Hall. The driving force behind the agitation was W.T. Stead, the first popular journalist and friend of Cecil Rhodes, who had suggested sending Gordon to Khartoum, started the Big Navy agitation and who went down with the Titanic. Stead wrote in his journal: 'I felt that I was called to preach a New Crusade… against the Turks who disgraced humanity'…" (p.77).

T.P. O'Connor described Stead as *"a Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusades out of their time"*.

It was Stead who persuaded Gladstone to write his famous *"Bulgarian Horrors"* pamphlet. This contained the infamous denunciation of the Turks as *"the one great anti-human specimen of humanity"*. Disraeli, who had been subject to ferocious anti-semitic vitriol by the humanitarians, gave the stirring riposte to Gladstone's pamphlet: *"of all the Bulgarian horrors, perhaps the greatest"* (*John Charmley, Splendid Isolation*, p.42).

Stead's great political project was ending the 'Great Game' against Russia in the interests of European peace. His ally in this was the mysterious Olga Novikov (who became known in England as "the Member for Russia") who had come to England to reunite the Christian churches from the Rome/Byzantium split. Gladstone linked her arm when coming out of the National Conference sending out a powerful message.

Having seen the Great Game's end with Edward Grey's 1907 agreement with the Tsar, Stead suddenly realised that an even greater and more catastrophic game was afoot, with Germany. The Great Game had been called off to prepare for a Great War. But too late did Stead realise that his dream and work of 30 years had turned into a nightmare. He went down on the Titanic just after publishing his thoughts in a book about the Balkan Wars. After seeing events in Libya, when for the first time a British Foreign Secretary had stood aside as the Public Law and Treaties were flagrantly violated, the man who had *"written more words against the Turk than any man alive"* realised that something disastrous was afoot and peace had been a pretext for war.

According to A.J.P. Taylor the St. James' Hall Convention was much more than just another agitational meeting:

> "In name it recalled the Chartist Convention of 1839; in outlook it anticipated the Councils of Action of 1920. It was far more than a conference or a political demonstration; it was an anti-parliament, designed to represent the true spirit of England. Hence politicians were excluded: they were all part of THE THING. It was planned to have delegates elected from each town by a town-meeting, presided over by the Mayor. But the plan could not be worked in time… Most of the delegates were self-appointed… The speakers at the Convention—a two-day marathon of oratory—were clergymen, historians, novelists; Trollope, the Bishop of Oxford, Bryce, Liddon, Freeman. The presence of Sergeant Simon did not deter Freeman from referring to Disraeli as 'the Jew in his drunken insolence'—at this time anti-Semitism was still a Radical attitude. Gladstone was the only prominent politician who spoke, and he claimed to be in retirement. He spoke as a theologian and historian, as a moralist…" (p.81).

Why was Victorian England getting so worked up about a few thousand Bulgarians? After all this was the same society which had, let us say charitably, wasted Irish lives by the million in the same generation. After what the English called the *"Indian Mutiny"* (Why not the "Bulgarian Mutiny"?) Charles Dickens had said:

> "I wish I were commander-in-chief in India … I should proclaim to them that I considered my holding that appointment by the leave of God, to mean that I should do my utmost to exterminate the race."

In *War of Civilisations: India AD 1857*, Amaresh Misra, a historian from Mumbai, suggests that Victorian Britain presided over an *"untold holocaust"* which caused the deaths of almost 10 million Indians over a decade beginning in 1857. British histories have counted only hundreds of thousands slaughtered by the English in immediate reprisals, but none have bothered to count the number of Indians killed by British forces desperate to impose order, claims Misra:

> "It was a holocaust, one where millions disappeared. It was a necessary holocaust in the British view because they thought the only way to win was to destroy entire populations in towns and villages. It was simple and brutal. Indians who stood in their way were killed. But its scale has been kept a secret" (*The Guardian*, 24.8.2007)

Perhaps Misra's figures are inflated (like the National Convention). Perhaps England only slaughtered hundreds of thousands rather than killing millions in an internal security operation in its Indian Empire only a decade or so before the same people condemned the Turks for killing 10,000 Bulgarians.

Britain was not at all squeamish about the means it accomplished its destiny of achieving *Greater Britain* across the surface of the world and maintaining it. Gladstone's heir apparent as leader of the Liberal Party Sir Charles Dilke, had boasted in his best-seller that—

> "the Anglo-Saxon is the only extirpating race on earth. Up to commence-

ment of the now inevitable destruction of the Red Indians of Central North America, of the Maories, and of the Australians by the English colonists, no numerous race had ever been blotted out by an invader"

(*Greater Britain*, 1869).

Sir Charles Dilke's praising of the Anglo-Saxons as the greatest exterminating race the world had ever seen was hardly disputable. And there was no noticeable public dissent from the praise. It could not be said that the British were denialists—at the time, anyway!

So why were the boasting, swaggering, self-proclaimed, undisputed champions of the world at Genocide so concerned at the deaths of a few thousand Bulgarians? Was it simply a huge English blind spot that has enabled the British State to combine Progress and the extirpation of "inferior races"?

This was a peculiar point in English history. Christianity was ceasing to be a functional ideological medium of life for the English middle class which had become the critical mass of political life as a consequence of the 1832 Reform. *The Times* knew that it was central element of English life that was making an appearance in great substance at the *"National Convention"* in St. James's Hall.

The British Empire had been made by the religiously sceptical ruling gentry, supported by theocratic Protestant passions from the populace. Active anti-Catholicism, which was sustainable on a base of either philosophical scepticism or a fundamentalist Biblical belief, was the cement between them that made for the Imperial joint venture.

The English middle class was Nonconformist (non-Anglican Protestant) in origin and, when it entered political power in 1832, there was a great revival of English Christianity. However, there was a simultaneous development of science alongside this Christian revival. The science was essential to the growing power of the Imperial State and the prosperity of the middle class, which was bound up with industry and what was called "Manchester Capitalism": so it could not be let go of. The scientific Nonconformists tried to reconcile the two elements but found that the scientific had the effect of predominating and actually undermining the Christian belief system. This proved to be profoundly disorientating for them.

Ultimately the ideological medium that bound together the different elements in English society, including the new working class that was a product of the scientific/industrial development, was Imperialism. This was made into *Social Imperialism* to perform that function. The 1876 mobilisation at the "National Convention" was in some ways a last gambit to reunite British Protestantism in an alternative course. It failed as a project with that objective. However, as *The Times* noted, its great substance had to be taken account of by the State and could not be ignored.

The British State did what it always does in such circumstances. It absorbs, directing discordant and potentially dangerous impulses into positive service. And so Nonconformists became Imperialists with the more devout forming the Liberal humanist wing of the Imperial State and others developing toward Liberal Imperialism as Imperialism became the social cement of the society. The dissenters sometimes dissented from the worst of the savagery the English gentry of that period applied to the 'savages'. But they understood that it was the rougher edges of the thing they were all in together—the thing called *"Progress"* and *"Civilising"* in England.

The first practical outcome of the Convention was the formation of the *Eastern Question Association*. It published a series of pamphlets contained in a volume called *Papers On The Eastern Question (1877)*. But the Convention did not result in the usurping of Parliament. Gladstone called for a British intervention in alliance with Tsarist Russia and the Concert of Europe against the Turks. Then he drew back. He assumed a place as a responsible member of the governing Imperial class.

The short-term effect of the agitation in England that culminated in the National Convention was to greatly increase the problems of the region and increase the death toll. The original killing that sparked off the *"Bulgarian Horrors"* was the massacre of around one thousand Bulgarian Moslems by Bulgarian (Christian) revolutionaries in May 1876, whilst the Ottoman Army was away dealing with problems in Bosnia. Irregular forces known as *basi bozuks*, made up of Circassians, who had been driven out of the Caucasus by the Russians, and local Moslems were employed to repress the rebels. Having defeated the insurgents the Ottoman forces exacted reprisals against local villages. Between 3,000 and 12,000 insurgents and civilians were killed.

The National Conference, and the Gladstone agitation around exaggerated atrocities, which never mentioned the deaths of Moslems, had the effect of check-mating Disraeli and preventing the Government from deterring Russian intervention. Russian public opinion was worked up and the messages sent out by such a wide and varied section of British opinion at Piccadilly encouraged the Tsar to move his armies, where usually he would have feared to tread.

The situation had triggered a Serbian war with the Ottomans which was ending in an Ottoman victory. However, the Tsar demanded a division of the Balkans into Christian states. The Turks could not accept such a demand and the result was the Russian/Ottoman War of 1877-8 in which the Ottomans had to fight alone. The war in Bulgaria was ferocious after stout Ottoman resistance. Professor Justin McCarthy estimates the number of Moslem deaths in Bulgaria at 260,000 with over 500,000 refugees (*Death and Exile: the Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821-1922*, p.339). Disraeli had to step in to save Constantinople from the Russians with a combination of military force and robust diplomacy. The Treaty of Berlin limited the Tsar's gains, in Britain's interest but, through its redrawing of the map of the Balkans in Great Power interest, rather than in relation to actual populations, it stored up trouble for a century and more.

The "Bulgarian Horrors" involved an utterly unsuccessful insurrection which produced a successful result due to Great Power intervention. The unsuccessful rising amplified into a major event in British politics by Gladstone and the "National Convention" led to a major war. The Bulgarian template was born—insurrection, Ottoman counter-measures, Great Power intervention.

This was the template used by the Armenian revolutionary groups in the 1890s. Except this time there was no final part. In 1914 there was a further attempt to apply the Bulgarian template under the auspices of a Great War that was surely meant to be cataclysmic for the Ottoman Turks. There was insurrection, this time in conjunction with multiple Great Power interventions and there were Ottoman counter-measures of a very different character and magnitude to fit the existential threat.

The movement in British society that had begun with the National Convention of 1876 became the cheerleaders of insurrection and the Gladstonian "bag and baggage" policy, now extended to

Anatolia. James Bryce was still there from 1876 to aid the propaganda effort in 1915 and he saw the catastrophe it helped bring about for the Christians of the Ottoman Empire.

The British ruling class of gentry knew how and when to make war advantageously and how and when to make peace advantageously. It did so until 1914, when it launched a World War rashly, expecting it to be a limited Balance of Power affair—limited in liability for the British island. But it fought the Great War as a moral crusade aimed at the destruction of Evil—the enemy states. And, instead of feeling its way to an advantageous peace, as it had always done in the past, its catastrophic moral war had anything but limited liability. This appears to have been due to the great increase in the political influence of the Biblicalist middle class, shown in 1876 at the "National Conference", and the respectable working class, who had been filtered into power in a series of electoral reforms.

1876 had proved to be not just a template for successful insurrection in the Ottoman Empire but for global catastrophe based on moral principle.

The turning-point in world history is identifiable. It happened when the Protestant/Calvinist impulse in the British State took command of the conduct of the Great War that had been prepared by the gentry, which for two centuries had been fighting wars to improve Britain's position in the conflicts of interest which arise naturally in the world, and fought it as a *total* war of Good against Evil. It ruined a Balance of Power war by giving it the democratic force of Puritan morality.

Reasonable conduct/limited liability in pursuit of short-term advantage became impossible when the spectre of Evil was raised in 1914 by those who had originally assembled at St. James's Hall in Piccadilly in 1876. Moral absolutes were incorporated in a political culture which had prided itself since the early 18th century on having left such things behind it. They were let loose by the Liberal Government in August 1914 to cover the moral collapse of their position. The moralists like Bryce became State propagandists to cover their metamorphosis into war-mongers and expansionary Imperialists. It was war with a good conscience that sacrificed great swathes of humanity for the best possible of causes—the satisfaction of feeling virtuous of the English middle class. They redirected their morality and criticisms of Imperialism towards its enemies, while turning a benign pragmatic eye on what Britain did in the world.

In 1876 there was still informed discussion of world affairs and realistic decision-making about Imperial affairs in England. The *Times*, representing the oligarchy with its independent knowledge of the world and informal means of contemplating things, took a realistic view of the Ottomans. The 'National Conference' took an idealistic and moralist position which, in the view of the *Times*, was impractical as Imperial politics. The Idealism of the middle class had to be curbed *within* the party system of the British State whilst it became implicated in Imperialism and developed a more realistic view of the world. The idealism of the middle class was never quite tamed and the Whig element within the Liberal Party, in which it engaged in politics, generated a Liberal Imperialist tendency to counteract it.

The Liberal Imperialist inner group planned a Great War behind the backs of their largely Nonconformist backbenchers from 1905, doing so in collaboration with their Unionist Party opponents. However, at the vital moment the War Plan had to be disclosed to what represented the democracy. The democracy was not a real democracy, representing only about a third of the adult population, but neither could it function as an oligarchy, being much too extensive for this.

The moral compass of the Nonconformist Liberals broke apart in August 1914 when presented with the *fait accompli* by Edward Grey—the existence of the War Plan and arrangements of honour concluded with France and Russia. However, to energise the masses on the voluntary principle and supply Kitchener with his mass army, the mindless and rhetorical morality of the middle classes had to be indulged and spread to present the united front necessary for the waging of the Great War. Practical thought went out the door and the production of fierce warmongering was the only game in town for all concerned. The force that first made an appearance in 1876 took centre stage in Imperial affairs and turned the world into a global killing field.

Note on Sir George Campbell

One of the speakers at the National Conference, a Scotsman, Sir George Campbell, published a book in the week of the Piccadilly meeting, *A Handy Book on the Eastern Question*. Sir George was an Indian administrator in Bengal who had a military role in putting down the 'Mutiny' and was in Office during the Bengal Famine. He became a Liberal MP after returning from India. He complained in Parliament that the famine had been let run its course due to the policy of not interfering with the market, which he thought should be shelved during times of emergency when the lives of millions were under threat. The *Times* provided a review of his book on the Eastern Question on 11th December. It was quite a surprising read. *The Times* noted that:

> "On the national character of the Turks Sir George Campbell differs widely from Mr. Gladstone, and we may add, from Mr. Cobden… He does not believe that people to be 'the one great anti-human specimen of humanity', but rather to be orderly and well-behaved by nature, with 'some of the manly virtues of a dominant race'; though demoralised by a misgovernment of which they are at once the instruments and the victims. Sir George Campbell truly observes that 'almost all those who have come into contact with the ordinary Turks are unanimous in their praise… The Turkish peasant is usually 'honest, sober and patient', Constantinople, like ancient Rome, is a sink of nations, 'there is no great city in the world with such various elements, where there is so much security with so little police interference'. In a word, the vices of Turkish rule are apparently not inherent in Turkish blood; they do not spring from below, but from above. In this case, as in so many others, 'the fault is in the system', and if Turkish officialism could really be swept away as easily as Mr. Gladstone fancies, Turks and Christians might live side by side in comparative harmony."

The review continued:

> "In what, then, do the Christian grievances consist? Not in religious persecution at the hands of their Mahomedan neighbours, for 'not only have they the most perfect freedom of religion and religious worship, but they are allowed to conduct their own ceremonies, processions, etc. with an unrestrained freedom which is perfectly astonishing. As for the exemption from military service, it is really a privilege of inestimable value cheaply purchased by the payment of a very modest tax—a privilege to which the Christians largely owe their numerical preponderance over the Musselman population, and the loss of which, in the form of enforced conscription, they would resent with far better reason."

Furthermore:

> "The leading idea of Sir George Campbell's treatise is that the grievances of the Christians in Turkey, however real, are not confined to Christians, but extend also to their Mahomedan fellow-subjects, being mainly due, not to any special vice in the Mahomedan religion, or in the Turkish character, but to an incredibly bad system of government. He does not admit Mahomedanism is so favourable to despotism or so incapable of development as it is alleged to be; still less than it is 'a brutalising religion', as Mr. Cobden termed it. On the contrary, he maintains that Mahomedanism, as distinct from… its fanatical perversions, is a reasonable and humane religion; that 'under Mahomedan law the rights of married women are preserved to a degree which we have not yet ventured on, and I hope never shall;' that it anticipated the Code Napoleon in its rules of inheritance, and is not much worse than English law in its rules of evidence; that a Mahomedan ruler 'is a strictly limited Constitutional Monarch … both the Mahomedan laws and the whole spirit of their religion are really extremely democratic… that the best Mahomedans are 'models of toleration' compared with many Christian states…"

Peter Brooke

Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Alexander Dugin And The Russian Question
Part 5

The Russian Tradition (1)

From Under The Rubble

In 1974, at more or less the same time as his expulsion from the USSR and the publication of the *Letter to the Soviet Leaders* and the first volume of *The Gulag Archipelago*, Solzhenitsyn also published a collection of essays by various writers given the title in the English translation *From Under The rubble*. The book was co-edited with the well-known mathematician, Igor Shafarevich.

In the 1980s, Shafarevich published in *samizdat* an essay on 'Russophobia'—an assault on various writers whom he regarded as hostile to the Russian national tradition and to the prospect that, from under the Soviet rubble, Russia might emerge as a nation in its own right. In the course of his argument he draws a distinction between the people as a whole (Russians) and the 'small people'—perhaps it would be better to say 'small community'—meaning an intellectual élite with interests that are contrary to the interests of the people as a whole but who, because of their small number and cohesiveness as a group, are able to exercise a disproportionate influence on the course of events.

He bases his argument on the thesis of the French historian Augustin Cochin whose account of the French Revolution stressed the influence of groups such as the political clubs and masonic lodges which Cochin calls the *"thinking societies"* (*sociétés de pensées*—the term 'think tank' comes to mind). As Shafarevich's essay proceeds it becomes increasingly clear that the Russophobe intellectual élite is, for the most part, Jewish.

I want to discuss Shafarevich's argument —and the names he evokes—in some detail but first, I think, a little background is necessary on the subject of 'the Russian tradition'.

Solzhenitsyn, like Shafarevich, has three essays in *From under the rubble*. The first—*'As breathing and consciousness return'* is based on a letter he wrote to Andrei Sakharov, the nuclear scientist and father of the Russian H-bomb, responding to his 1968 treatise *"Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom"*. Solzhenitsyn. making it clear that Sakharov's own thinking had evolved since then, is critical of the fact that Sakharov's treatise, important and radical as it was, is still locked in a Soviet and Leninist mindset. Solzhenitsyn, going beyond what he himself could have published openly in 1968, is arguing for the development of a distinctively Russian—as opposed to Soviet—politics.

In a second essay, on *'Repentance and self-limitation in the life of nations'*, he argues that this will only be possible when Russians recognise the creation of the Soviet Union and their own imperialist ambitions as having been sinful. The third essay, translated under the title, *'The Smatterers'*, was a critique of the Soviet intelligentsia—at least it would have been if Solzhenitsyn thought there was anything left in the Soviet Union worthy of the name:

> "So, having failed to reach a precise definition of the intelligentsia, it would appear that we no longer need one. What is understood by the word in Russia today is *the whole of the educated stratum*, every person who has been to school above the seventh grade.
>
> "In Dal's dictionary, the word *'obrazorat'* as opposed to the word '*proveschat'* is defined as meaning 'to give merely an outward polish'.
>
> "Although the polish we have acquired is rather third rate, it will be entirely in the spirit of the Russian language and will probably convey the right sense if we refer to this 'polished' or 'schooled' stratum, all those who nowadays falsely or rashly style themselves 'the intelligentsia', as the *obrazovanscchina*—the semi-educated estate—the 'smatterers'…" (p.242).

Vekhi—Alternative To Marxism

Solzhenitsyn's essay begins by evoking the days when there was such a thing as an intelligentsia in Russia—not just an educated stratum or even the sum total of those engaged in intellectual activity, but a distinct caste with its own moral character—quite analogous to Augustin Cochin's 'small people'—and the critique that was made of it in 1909 in a collection of essays published under the title *Vekhi* (Landmarks).

Vekhi was an important event in the development of a distinctively Russian intellectual tradition. It reflected what was perhaps the major alternative line to the variety of Marxism that triumphed with the Bolshevik revolution. It could be seen as the coming together of two tendencies—a group of Marxists known as the *"legal Marxists"*, and the philosophical idealists of the 'Moscow Psychological Society', founded in 1885 (dissolved in 1922), deeply influenced by one of their members, Vladimir Soloviev, friend of Dostoyevsky and possibly a model for Ivan Karamazov. Soloviev died in 1900. The 1909 collection was preceded by a collection of essays by some of the same writers published in 1903 under the title *Problems of Idealism*. In his introduction to a modern translation of *Problems of Idealism* Randall Poole, an American academic, says of the Moscow Psychological Society:

> "For leading philosophers in the society, neo-idealism offered compelling intellectual support not only for the autonomy of philosophy but also for rule of law liberalism and constitutional reform" (p.1).

The Psychological Society philosophers argued—

> "that the positivist criterion of reality

was far from exhaustive, and that what it did not exhaust constituted the special domain of philosophy. This domain was human consciousness itself, to the extent that it could be shown to be irreducible to empirical experience... Neo-Idealism thus took shape as a type of philosophy of consciousness" (p.4).

The connection between law and idealism (which can be very crudely defined as the understanding that material reality can only be known as a phenomenon of consciousness) derived from a Kantian view of ethics: *"the claim that the irreducibility of ethical ideals to empirical reality gave the individual a certain autonomy relative to the natural and social environment"* (p.14).

We can see that, although the term 'liberalism' is being used, the philosophical underpinnings of this liberalism were very different from the positivist and utilitarian—or even ethical Protestant—underpinnings of liberalism in the United Kingdom.

The 'legal Marxist' contributors to *Vekhi* had been Marxists who published in the legal press and argued for the merits of capitalism as a stage that had necessarily to be passed before the transition to Socialism. As such, they were already in opposition to one of the main strands of the Russian revolutionary tradition—the *narodniks* (populists), who saw the rural population and particularly the institution of the rural commune, as a model for the Russian future. One of the best known contributors to *Vekhi*, Nicolas Berdyaev, describes the attraction of Marxism as he encountered it as a student in 1894, in his autobiography, *Dream and Reality*:

> "I have asked myself more than once what impelled me to become a Marxist, albeit an unorthodox, critical and free-thinking one; and why I should still have a 'soft spot' for Marxism. It is easier to answer this question in negative terms: I could not associate myself with the socialist Populists, or the Social-Revolutionaries as they later came to be known, because their outlook was infirm of purpose and their belief in social revolution by some internal process in the existing peasant commune was a piece of unimpressive idyllism. When they emerged in the shape of the 'People's Will' party, which adopted more revolutionary methods (they were responsible for the assassination of Alexander II), they did not in the least change their basic mentality, with its implied submissiveness to the 'power of the soil' and its disguised Rousseauism. Marxism, on the other hand, denoted a complete re-orientation and marked a profound crisis of the Russian intelligentsia. The Marxist movement of the late 'nineties was born of a new vision: it brought with it not only emancipation from the routine of populism, but also a purpose and new conception of man. What attracted me most of all was its characteristic appreciation of the moving forces below the surface of history, its consciousness of the historic hour, its broad historical perspectives and its universalism. The old Russian socialism seemed provincial and narrow-minded in comparison. The fact that Marxism took root among the Russian intelligentsia was evidence of a further Europeanisation of Russia and of her readiness to share to the end the destiny of Europe. I myself felt very anti-nationalistic and was never tempted to assert Russia against the West" (pp.117-8).

By 1909, however, the *Vekhi* group had turned from Social Democracy to 'Constitutional Democracy'. To quote the account by Leonard Schapiro:

> "The main influence in this development came from Petr Berngardovich Struve [...] the most prominent of the renegades from Marxism, if only by reason of the fact that it was he who in 1898 had drawn up the manifesto of the Social Democratic Party. He parted company with Marxism in 1901 and in 1902 founded a paper in Stuttgart, *Osvobozhdeniye* (Liberation) which became the leading influence in the formation of the party of National Liberation (Kadets) in 1905. Struve became a member of the Kadet party, and sat as a deputy in the short-lived Second Duma in 1907. After the dissolution of the Duma he retired from politics to academic work and to work on *Russkaya Mysl'* (Russian Thought) [...] Already by 1907 a vast gulf separated Struve from the party which he had done so much to create [...] After the revolution of 1905 he believed that the time had come for liberalism to break with the revolutionary tradition from which the party had in large measure drawn its inspiration. This the Kadets were unable or unwilling to do. In his memoirs of the First and Second Dumas, V.A.Maklakov traces the victory of Bolshevism to this factor above all ..." (p.57).

He quotes another of the contributors to *Vekhi*, Semion Frank, saying of Struve that he had *"brought a new note into the typical outlook of the intelligentsia of his day"*:

> " 'This note' Frank continues, 'I can only describe as government consciousness. Oppositional and particularly radical public opinion felt itself oppressed by the government and completely estranged from it. State power was 'they', a strange and inaccessible compound of court and bureaucracy, pictured as a group of corrupt and mentally limited rulers over real 'national and public' Russia. To 'them' were opposed 'we', 'society', the 'people', and above all the 'caste' of the intelligentsia, concerned for the welfare of the people and devoted to its service, but by reason of its lack of rights capable only of criticising the government power, of arousing oppositional feelings, and secretly preparing a revolt. Petr Berngardovich had within him, and displayed from the very first, the embryo of something quite different [...] He always discussed politics, so to say, not from 'below' but from 'above', not as a member of an enslaved society, but conscious of the fact that he was a potential participator in positive state construction'…" (p.58).

We may recognise something of this *"government consciousness"* in Solzhenitsyn's *Letter to the Soviet Leaders* in which, while hardly concealing the contempt he feels for them, nonetheless gives the leaders his opinion without questioning their right to govern. He determinedly rejects a policy of revolutionary overthrow; and the thesis that the Cadets' inability to break with their revolutionary tradition played a large part in the final success of Bolshevism is a recurring theme of *The Red Wheel.*

Philosophical Orthodozy

By 1909 most of the contributors to *Vekhi* had also become Christian but they had arrived at this via a combination of German-philosophy-inspired idealism and the powerful quasi-political influence of Soloviev. At least three of the contributors—Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov and Frank—joined the Orthodox Church—Bulgakov became a priest. But their orthodoxy wasn't always very orthodox. In his autobiography Berdyaev says, summarising what is probably the central theme of his very large output:

> "In opposition to [the influential romantic era German theologian, Friedrich] Schleiermacher and many others it must be stated that religion is not a 'sense of dependence' but, on the contrary, a sense of independence. If God does not exist, man is a being wholly dependent on nature or society, on the world, or the state. If God exists, man is a spiritually independent being; and his relation to God is to be defined as freedom" (pp.179-80).

Berdyaev's essay in *Vekhi* is a general appeal to the intelligentsia to respect

philosophical truth above their, in his view false, idealisation of *"the people"*:

> "the division of philosophy into proletarian and bourgeois, into left and right, and the assertion of two kinds of truth, one useful and one harmful, all these are signs of intellectual, moral and general cultural decadence" (p.11).

Bulgakov in his essay *'Heroism and Asceticism: Reflections on the religious nature of the Russian intelligentsia'* evokes the heroic desire of the young Russian intelligentsia to endure prison and exile to save the world but argues that it is destructive:

> "revolution is a negative concept. It possesses no independent content and is characterised solely by the negation of what it destroys. Therefore the impulse of revolution is hatred and destruction. Yet, one of the foremost Russian *intelligenty*, Bakunin, formulated the idea that the spirit of destruction is also a creative spirit, and this belief is the main nerve of heroism psychology. It simplifies the constructive tasks of history for, given such an understanding, it requires first and foremost, strong muscles and nerves, strong temperament and daring ..." (p.40).

He contrasts this with Christian asceticism:

> "If tumult and the search for great deeds are characteristic of heroism, just the opposite is the case here, where an even course, 'measure', restraint, unrelenting self discipline, patience, and endurance, in fact just those qualities our intelligentsia lacks, are the norm. The traits of true asceticism are faithful execution of one's duty and the bearing of one's own cross in self-renunciation (i.e. not only in the outward sense but in the more inward sense as well) and relinquishing all that remains to providence" (p.50).

It is above all the intelligentsia's hostility to religion that is responsible for *"the deepest chasm between the intelligentsia and the people"*:

> "The world-view and spiritual make-up of the people is determined by the Christian faith. However great the distance here between the ideal and reality, however dark and unenlightened our nation, its ideal is Christ and His teaching, and its norm is Christian asceticism. What, if not asceticism, has been the entire history of our people: first oppressed by the Tartars then by the Muscovite and Petersburgian state systems with its centuries-long historical yoke as the sentinel of Western civilisation against both savage peoples and the sands of Asia, in this cruel climate with its eternal famines, frost and sufferings. If our people could endure all this and preserve its psychic strength, if it could come out of all this alive, albeit somewhat crippled, it is only because it had a source of spiritual strength in its faith and in the ideals of Christian asceticism, which comprised the basis for its national health and viability" (pp.56-7).

The religious theme is developed in Struve's essay *'The Intelligentsia and Revolution'*:

> "After Christianity, which teaches not only submission to but also love for God, the fundamental inalienable element of any religion must and cannot help but be the belief in the redemptive power and decisive significance of individual creation, or rather, individual action that can be realised in accord with the will of God ...
>
> "The basic philosopheme of socialism, its ideological axis as a world-view, is the principle that ultimately good and evil in a person depend on external circumstances. Not by accident is the founder of socialism a follower of the French Enlightenists [sic] and Bentham, Robert Owen, whose theory on the formation of human character repudiates the idea of individual responsibility ...
>
> "The fundamental philosopheme of any religion predicated on love and reverence and not on fear is 'the Kingdom of God lies within you'. For a religious world outlook, therefore, nothing is more dear and important than a person's individual self-perfection, which socialism disregards on principle.
>
> "In its purely economic teaching, socialism does not contradict any religion, but neither does it qualify as a religion itself. A religious person cannot believe in socialism ('I believe, oh Lord, and I confess') any more than he can believe in railroads, the telegraph, or proportional representation" (p.141).

Vekhi In The 1960s

Some of the contributors to *Vekhi*, including Berdyaev, Bulgakov and Frank, contributed to a further collection published in 1918, under the title *De Profundis* or, in Russian, *Iz glubiny*. As Max Hayward points out in his Introduction to Solzhenitsyn's collection, its Russian title, *Iz pod glyb*, is a *"phonetic echo"* of the earlier book (p.vii).

But how would Solzhenitsyn have come to know *Vekhi*? He would certainly have known of it. It had been roundly abused by both Lenin and Plekhanov and as such constituted part of the demonology of Soviet philosophy. The notes to Plekhanov's *Selected Philosophical Works* inform us:

> "*Vekhi*—a collection of articles by prominent Cadet publicists, representatives of the Counter-Revolutionary liberal bourgeoisie—S.N.Bulgakov, N.A. Berdyaev, P.B.Struve and others—was published in Moscow in the Spring of 1909. The contributors to *Vekhi* tried to discredit the democratic revolutionary tradition of the liberation movement in Russia and also the views and activities of V.G.Belinsky, N.A.Dobrolyubov and N.G. Chernyshevsky [nineteenth century writers associated with 'Nihilism' understood as a generally materialist and utilitarian world view—PB]. They derided the revolution of 1905-7 and thanked the tsarist government for using its 'bayonets and prisons; to save the bourgeoisie from the ;wrath of the people'…"

The quotation is a misquotation from a misrepresentation by Lenin, who is quoting the article 'Creative self cognition' by Mikhail Gershenzon—ironically the only one of the *Vekhi* writers who accepted the Bolshevik Revolution and was allowed to remain in Russia. His account of the intelligentsia—*The History of Young Russia* (1908)—was republished by the Soviets in 1923. He died in 1925. It is of course the intelligentsia, not 'the bourgeoisie' who are expected to *"bless the authority which alone with its bayonets and prisons manages to protect us from the popular fury"*. Gershenzon's point is that the people *"do not see in us [the intelligentsia] a human soul; thus they hate us passionately, probably with an unconscious mystical horror"*.

In a note written in response to newspaper criticisms of this passage he says:

> "the sense of this sentence is that through its entire history [which starts with Peter the Great, who created the European minded élite which eventually produced the intelligentsia as an intellectual caste divorced from the wider society—PB] the intelligentsia has been placed in an unheard of, horrible position: the people for whom it has fought hate it, and the authority against which it has fought, turns out to be its defender, whether the intelligentsia likes it or not ..." (p.81).

Given the fate of the intelligentsia under Bolshevism, was that not quite impressively prophetic?

But to return to Solzhenitsyn and *Vekhi*. Having been all but forgotten outside Soviet demonology, *Vekhi* was republished in Paris in 1967 by the YMCA Press, under the direction of Nikita Struve, Peter Struve's grandson,

who was soon to play an important part in promoting Solzhenitsyn. An incident which occurred in the offices of the journal *Novy Mir* (New World) suggests that Solzhenitsyn had read and appreciated it by September 1969.

Novy Mir

Under its Director, Alexander Tvardovsky, *Novy Mir* had long been pushing at the boundaries of what could be published in the Soviet Union. It was through Tvardovsky's personal enthusiasm and influence that *One day in the life of Ivan Denisovich* had been published. But Tvardovsky was himself a Marxist-Leninist and a faithful supporter of the Soviet Government. Indeed he was, until the mid-sixties, a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet and even a member of the Central Committee which was supposedly charged with administering the country while the Supreme Soviet was not in session (the real Government however was the Politburo, supposedly responsible to the Central Committee).

Solzhenitsyn's *The Oak and the calf* is largely an account of his intense, conflicted relationship with Tvardovsky. It was Tvardovsky's honesty and love of good writing that had enabled Solzhenitsyn's fame to develop, which was his best, possibly only, weapon and defence. But his relations with Tvardovsky required him to—if not exactly define himself as a Leninist, at least conceal the depths of his anti-Leninism.

As an illustration of this relationship there is the case of his play *The Feast of the Victors*. This was one of his earliest writings, dated 1951 in the work camp at Ekibastouz, committed to memory (it was written in verse, though there is no hint of this in the French version I have read) and written down later. In it, he takes a favourable view of the Vlassovite Army, made up of POWs and deserters from the Red Army, which fought alongside the Germans in the Second World War.

In an earlier article in this series I quoted Dmitri Panin complaining that the first volume of *The Gulag Archipelago* hadn't been sufficiently sympathetic to the Vlassovites, and I quoted a quite vigorous defence of them that appears in the third volume, prefaced with the remark that it is only after passing through the horror of the first two volumes that the reader would be in a position to understand it.

In September 1965, a copy of *The Feast of the Victors* was confiscated by the KGB, together with *The First Circle*. For Solzhenitsyn this was a disaster "the greatest misfortune in all my 47 years ... harder for me to bear' than the arrest in 1945 (*Oak and the calf*, p.103). The seizure of *The First Circle* was bad enough but the seizure of *The Feast of the Victors*, together with his verses written in the camp, was—

> "a still worse disaster ... This was the real thing, and all that had come before a mere foretaste of disaster! Bridges were breaking and crumbling beneath my feet—prematurely and ingloriously" (p.106).

Michael Scammell, in his biography of Solzhenitsyn, underplays the radicalism of *The Feast*:

> "In an era of genuine anti-Stalinism it might almost have passed the censorship, except for the sympathetic passages on the Vlassovites, the very mention of whom triggered an automatic and genuine loathing in Soviet readers at that time" (p.328).

But that of course is the point. For a Soviet readership it was the equivalent of such modern Western taboos as holocaust-denying or indeed expressing admiration for Stalin. We might think in this context of the case of David Irving and how he is regarded in Western Europe (the more so since Irving, like Solzhenitsyn, though for a rather longer period of time, did enjoy a period of respectability).

The KGB strategy was to print limited editions of *The Feast* and *The First Circle* (so far as I can see the shortened *'Circle 87'*, the bowdlerised version Solzhenitsyn had prepared in the hopes that Tvardovsky might publish it), showing them to selected influential people—the way the British Government used the 'Black diaries' attributed to Roger Casement comes to mind.

Among the influential people in question was Tvardovsky but he refused to read it on the grounds that it had been improperly stolen from the author. He asked Solzhenitsyn for a copy but he claimed the one stolen by the KGB was the only copy he had. He did eventually say Tvardovsky had his permission to read the KGB copy but Tvardovsky still refused. I have little doubt he would have had difficulty coping with the support for the Vlassovites. It may be that he instinctively felt this and that might explain his refusal to read the play even when he had Solzhenitsyn's permission.

At any rate we can see what a very honourable man Tvardovsky was but also the delicacy of Solzhenitsyn's position, relying on and feeling very obliged towards a man who was still his ideological opponent. Which brings us closer to the incident concerning *Vekhi*.

Komsomal Patriotism—*Molodaya Gvardia*

In April 1998 an article appeared in the official Komsomol (Communist youth) journal *Molodaya Gvardia* (Young Guard) by Mikhail Lobanov under the title *'Educated Shopkeepers'* (the word here translated *"shopkeepers ... connotes [according to Yanov] a narrow, conventional, money grubbing mentality"*. It is an almost exact Russian equivalent of the Irish word *'gombeen man'*. Funny that there doesn't seem to be an English equivalent!). According to the account in Alexander Yanov's *The Russian New Right*:

> "To say that the appearance of Lobanov's article in the legal press—and indeed in such an influential and popular journal as *Molodaya Gvardia*—was a surprising event is not enough. It was a *shocking* event. The malice, venom and wrath which in the Soviet press is usually expressed in discussions of 'imperialism' or similar 'external' themes is now directed, so to speak, 'inward'. Lobanov unexpectedly discovers a rotten core at the very heart of the first socialist state in the world—and at the very height of its triumphant transition to Communism. He discovers an ulcer certainly no less terrible than 'imperialism'—in fact much more terrible. This ulcer consists in 'the spiritual degeneration of the "educated" person, in the rotting of everything human in him.' What is involved is not an individual psychological phenomenon, but a social one on a mass scale—'the mass (all with advanced degrees) infected with shopkeeper [read 'gombeen man'—PB] mentality', the 'flood of so-called education', which 'like a bark borer undermines the healthy trunk of the nation' and which is 'shrilly active in a negative way', and therefore constitutes 'a threat of disintegration' of the very foundations of national culture. In short, there is already developed in a socialist country a social stratum of 'educated shopkeepers' not foreseen by the classical Marxist writers or noticed by the ideologists of the regime, and this stratum now constitutes the nation's number one enemy. This is Lobanov's fundamental sociological discovery.
>
> "He sounds the alarm—and he brands this enemy of the nation with all the passion available to a servile journalist. True culture, he says, does not come from education, but from 'national sources'—from 'the soil of the people'. It is not the educated shopkeepers, but 'the suppressed ... uneducated people

which gave birth to ... the imperishable values of culture'. As for the shopkeepers, everything they have is 'mini': 'The shopkeepers have a mini-language, mini-thought, mini-feelings—everything mini... Their motherland for them is mini.'

"In the best tradition of servile public-affairs writing, Lobanov illustrates his thought by informing on people. On the living and on the dead: on the stage director Meyerhold, shot by Stalin, and on the stage director Efros, not yet repressed. For some reason all of Lobanov's illustrations—all of the 'agents of corrupters of the national spirit'—bear unmistakably Jewish surnames. It is these Jewish elements, which 'attach to the history of the great people', that play the role of a kind of enzyme in 'the mass infected with shopkeeper mentality and carrying diplomas'…" (pp.40-41).

Yanov points out that Lobanov's article coincided with the perceived threats to the Soviet régime from the Prague Spring and by the surge of opposition excited by the trials of Andrei Sinyavsky and Alexander Ginzburg. But he continues:

"the defence of the regime has a very strange look in Lobanov's version. He does not appeal to Marx or to 'proletarian internationalism'; on the contrary, he appeals only to the 'national spirit' and to the 'Russian soil'. Lobanov's article does not have the appearance of the cliche-ridden 'refutation' of a Marxist pedant, but rather that of a cry of pain from a Russian frightened to death at what is happening to his *country*, to his *nation* [...]

"[…] he insists that 'there is no fiercer enemy of the people than *the temptation of bourgeois prosperity'* [Yanov's emphasis—PB]. Then he cries (citing Herzen): 'A bourgeois Russia? May Russia be spared this curse!' 'Americanism of the spirit' is the focus of the danger for Lobanov. This is what is conquering Russia—not only with the help of the seductive 'minis' with refined manners and Jewish surnames, but also with the help of the 'temptation of bourgeois prosperity'. (For this read "material well-being of the working people", which is the fundamental propaganda slogan of the present Soviet Establishment.)

"In other words, the Soviet leaders themselves, by their orientation toward 'material prosperity' and their promises that Communism will bring physical and spiritual 'satiety', are encouraging the conquest of Russia by the bourgeois spirit. They are flirting with America. They think that intercontinental rockets will defend them from the mortal threat radiating from that country. But rockets will not defend them, Lobanov admonishes the leaders. The real threat is not American rockets, but the bourgeois nature of the 'American spirit'. [...]

"Lobanov's positive recommendations do not go beyond suggesting to the regime that it seek out a social power base—a constituency, so to speak—not among the 'educated shopkeepers', but among simple Russians, peasants and urban masses, not spoiled either by 'satiety' or by 'education', unique and in their uniqueness not subject to the temptation of worldwide evil. (*Noblesse oblige*—and the censor as well.) 'These people', says Lobanov (ending his article in a pained and edifying tone), 'have saved Russia. And are they not the embodiment of the historical and moral potential of the nation? And is not our faith and our hope to be found in them?'… (pp.41-43).

Lobanov's article was followed in September by another piece along similar lines under the title *Inevitability* by Viktor Chalmaev, regarded by Solzhenitsyn as a thoroughly servile Soviet hack. This took up the theme of the spiritual deadness of a consumer society:

"Capital mercilessly transforms a people from a spiritual organism into a mathematical sum consisting of standardised individuals, into a mass of separate units concerned only with common, everyday needs. The bourgeois crowd is always coarsely and vulgarly materialistic; its goals are easily 'measured', calculated, and satisfied; it has no spiritual yearning straining far beyond the horizon of antlike humdrum concerns. A man's worth is measured according to his ability as a 'businessman'. In real life this has led to the one-sided development in bourgeois man of an exclusively voracious system, similar to that of termites…"

But Chalmaev was more specific than Lobanov (or at least than Lobanov in Yanov's account) in his praise for the qualities of the *"simple Russians"* as *"the embodiment of the historical and moral potential of the nation"*:

"Constant labour on the land; the monastery; the crown [sic, crowded?—PB] tavern, and once or twice in every century—the ice of Lake Chad [where Alexander Nevsky defeated the Teutonic Knights—PB], the wild grass of the fields of Kulikovo [where Dmitri Donskoi defeated the Tatars], Poltava [where Peter 'the Great' defeated the Swedes], or Borodino [where Kutuzov defeated the French] ... That is why our history seems so destitute when compared to colorful European chronicles overflowing with a multitude of entertaining events. [In Russia] we find no wealth of debates, no early parliamentarianism, no flowery oratory on eternal values ... 'An eternal silence reigns in the heart of Russia', said Nekrasov. Once in every century, the coarse-grained, oft-flogged Russian peasant, weighed down by many burdens, would set out for the Kulikovo Field at hand and, projecting one hundred years into the one night before the battle, he would think about his homeland, about good and evil, and about the world in which he lived ... And in this wordless, silent brooding, fused with great deeds, he was able to attain spiritual heights which no mechanical orator could ever hope to reach [...] And what of the monastic cells of desert-dwelling patriots such as [Saint] Sergii of Radonezh, who inspired Dmitrii Donskoi to fight a decisive battle, or the patriot Patriarch Germogen, who during the Time of Troubles [the Polish invasion at the beginning of the seventeenth century—PB] sent appeals to every part of the country urging unity? No, our sacred history is not a wilderness; perhaps it has simply not been 'explored' as thoroughly as it should be…'

And he goes on to castigate:

"those who in the name of "progress" protest against the "idealisation" of the peasant, against celebrating springs and primal sources. They regard the fate of Lake Baikal and of the Russian forests in precisely the same way: "Let us have our way for another twenty years, and we'll dig you a new and better Baikal, wherever you want! And our debt will be paid!" ...

"At times these 'bookkeepers', citing the arguments of scholarship, warn that the village will cease to exist altogether by the year 2000. At other times they suddenly reproach all admirers of nature, rivers, and the earth for being out of touch with the 'people'—'Here you are', they say, 'sighing over all this, while the people are longing for television and plumbing, for Cognac, a popular "touristy" ditty, and the "casual manner" of contemporary culture... ' And if a poet should have thoughts of 'stars in the field', then he is accused of 'wearing bast shoes' and of being an 'antinational' idealist to boot ... Maybe they are right, to hell with the Baikal. Can't they dig up as many as they want and build concrete banks all around them ..."

The reference to Lake Baikal is interesting. Situated in southern Siberia, in an area that historically could be attributed to China, it is the largest fresh water lake in the world. In 1966 a paper pulping mill was opened, expelling its waste into the lake and prompting

protests from environmentalists. The issue had been raised as early as 1963 in a book by Vladimir Chivilikhin—*The Bright eye of Siberia*. According to Yitzhak Brudny:

> "Chivilikhin was a well-known opponent of Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation drive within the Soviet intellectual elite. "The Bright Eye of Siberia" was published in [the conservative 'Stalinist' journal] *Oktyabr* and probably was viewed by Kochetov [the editor] as an integral part of the Stalinist effort to discredit the Khrushchev reforms. Nevertheless, Chivilikhin's essay helped to focus the attention of Russian intellectuals on environmental issues and, at the same time, link those issues to Russian nationalism" (pp.55-6).

We may remember that the ecological considerations of the Club of Rome are part of the argument of Solzhenitsyn's *Letter*.

'Village Prose'

The *Molodaya Gvardia* articles did not appear completely out of the blue. There was, through the 1960s, a movement of writers celebrating, or rather lamenting the destruction of, Russian village life. Solzhenitsyn himself had contributed to this with his *Matryona's House*, published by *Novy Mir* in 1963, a celebration of an old peasant woman whose only apparent quality was the patience with which she bore a hard life and the contempt and disregard of her neighbours and relatives. *Novy Mir* played a prominent role in this development. As early as 1957 it had published Vladimir Soloukhin's *Byways of Vladimir*. Geoffrey Hosking describes it, saying:

> "When Vladimir Soloukhin walked through Vladimir Oblast in 1956, he had the sense of throwing off spiritual barriers raised by a generation of hectic activity: the people who caught his imagination were the craftsmen of Mstera [a traditional centre of miniature lacquered box painting—PB] and the peasants who grow rowan trees in Nevezhino, men who have pursued their calling in much the same way for centuries" (p.706).

As well as *Matryona's House* Hosking lists other contributions *Novy Mir* made to the 'ruralist' or 'village prose' school, including—

> "Efim Dorosh's rambling yet passionate *Derevenskii dnevnik*" (Rural diary) in which "the peasant and his traditional way of life occupy the centre of the stage. The villages, the fields and woods and lakes of the Rostov region, the local linguistic usages, the private cows and garden plots, the onion domes of the churches, the lacework friezes of the peasant huts—all these things he sees as a single ecological and human organism which bureaucrats and planners disturb at their peril. *Kolkhoz* chairmen and party secretaries play a positive role only insofar as they understand this" (pp. 708-9).

Boris Mozhaev's *Iz zhizni Fedora Kuz'kina* (Episodes of the Life of Fyodor Kuzkin—1966) was also published in *Novy Mir*, as was Vasilii Belov's *Plotnitskie rasskazy* (A Carpenter's tales—1968):

> "In Olesha's view, a man who by his own labor creates wealth for himself and for the community is not a *kulak*. But a man who sells what he has bought, or who hires others to do his work for him, is an exploiter. When Aviner calls Feduilenok an exploiter because he hired labor for the haymaking and harvesting, Olesha corrects him: 'That wasn't hiring, that was *pomochi*....' *Pomochi* is the term for the traditional mutual help given by villagers to one another during periods of intense work, such as haymaking and harvesting, when no family can cope with the demands of its own plot of land. In comparison with this inherited system, the collective labor of the *kolkhoz* is shown to function badly. It is organised by officials who do not understand the land, and the proceeds are not for the benefit of the community but go to maintain an army of officials. 'And the *kolkhoznik* gets what's left over. Sometimes damn all.' This is what has demoralised the village, so that all the able-bodied men have pushed off elsewhere, and the only person left to mind the horses is an old woman with a hernia" (pp.176-7).

Molodaya Gvardia itself, which published the articles by Lobanov and Chalmaev, had also published a host of stories and poems celebrating village life and, by implication at least, old Russia. Vladimir Soloukhin worked in its editorial office from 1958 to 1981. He was one of the most popular writers in Russia, writing in a usually breezy, cheerful, personal style about often rather grim subjects. In 1968 he published an account of his travels round Russia searching for icons. He had chosen his time well. This was the period, 1958-1964, of Khrushchev's campaign against the Church, when churches were being closed down and abandoned or turned into warehouses. The icons were of no interest to anyone—especially the best and oldest icons. These had gone black—the title of Soloukhin's book in Russia is *Black panels*—because of the drying oil used by the painters, and had often been overpainted with several layers of later work which had then also gone black. Soloukhin's book begins with his first experience of seeing a restorer at work:

> "Now at last we were really looking through an aperture in the dark curtain. On the other side of it everything was bright and festive, red and blue, sunny and lively, while we on this side remained in a dull, dark, gloomy world. It was like looking at a bright screen from the dark of an auditorium—a screen showing a different period of time, a different beauty, a life other than ours. Another planet, another civilisation, a mysterious, fairy world" (pp.22-23).

He then sets off on his travels (his collection was eventually said to be worth £2 million). Throughout his journey he is continually regretting the loss of the beauty the churches had given the Russian countryside:

> "I drove to Yeltesunovo, left my car on the outskirts of the village and went on foot to look at the ruins of the church. There were still traces of blue on the interior walls. It seemed as though a heavy shell had been fired through the building, after which tanks had gone through it, and now the wind was blowing freely through what was left. The bell-tower, which had been a landmark for miles around, had disappeared without trace. In former days travellers had been able to stop and count all the neighbouring villages nestling among fields and woodland: Rozhdestvenno, Ratmirovo, Fetinino, Kichleyevo and finally Yeltesunovo. From the outskirts of Vasilyevo they could discern, in the golden-blue haze, twenty-one white belfries thanks to which they were able to take their bearings. In winter, during snowstorms the bells were always rung, performing the function of a lighthouse. And those who passed by could simply admire them, since they were the glory of the undulating Russian countryside, while from the towers themselves you could admire the vast expanse of the Russian land.' (p.76)

And he has a number of conversations with people, usually old women, who know what the icons really mean:

> "'How do you tell between light and darkness? When there was a monastery and a church here, and we used to decorate the icon with flowers—do you think the village was a darker place then? You're mistaken, my young friends. The icon came down to us from the bright days of antiquity, and now, as you can see, it's been swallowed up by the darkness of ignorance. And here are you two young men looking for it—why? Because the icon is a light and

a flame, drawing you to itself.' (p.73)

"The board was on a shelf about two inches from the floor: I bent down and stretched out a hand to take hold of it and inspect it in the light. I could just see, through the blackness, that the whole surface was occupied by a picture of the Virgin with huge mournful eyes. I had almost touched it when it was snatched from before my eyes by the ex-nun, who had darted in sideways like a sparrow-hawk and, with the rapidity and skill of a conjuror, concealed the precious object under her white-spotted black apron. Her eyes as she did so were full of determination, anger and downright hatred, mixed with fear in case I should try to seize the icon from her.

"'Good heavens', I said, 'I only wanted to look at it.'

"'You shan't, you shan't!' she cried in a frenzy. I expected her to start stamping her foot at any moment. 'Haven't you mocked them enough? Are you still not satisfied? Don't I remember how you went at them with axes? You shan't, I tell you! Hit me instead if you like, chop me to bits, throw me into the stove—I won't let you touch it!'…" (pp.78-9).

He describes an encounter with an old woman in the recently closed Volosovo monastery:

"In front of the taper and the open book we saw a tiny, bent old woman dressed in black. Her whole body trembled feverishly: her hands, her shoulders, her head, her lower lip and her tongue as she strove to get words out. None the less, we managed to hold a conversation with this strange being in her out-of-the-way habitation.

"'I live alone here, all alone. Yes, I'm a nun. They pulled everything down, and I'm the only person left. I made this little cell for myself, and I get along somehow. So far they've left me alone. What's my name? Mother Eulampia. Before I was a nun? Oh, my dears, that was a long time ago, what's the good of remembering? Katerina, my name used to be. Anyway, here I am looking after the icons. I'm still alive and I look after them. I keep the flame burning night and day.'

"'Who put you in charge of the icons? Who asked you to look after them?'

"'Why, God, of course. I protect them by God's order.'

"'So I suppose this is your main business in life, your chief duty?'

"'It's the only duty I have. As long as I'm alive, my one business is to keep the flame alight in front of the icons. When I'm gone, the candles will go out too'…" (p.109).

Another conversation evokes the *"liquidation of the kulaks"*, a frequent theme in village prose (and the subject of Soloukhin's powerful short story *The First mission*, which finally won over Solzhenitsyn, highly suspicious as he was of such a successful writer so "close to the *nomenklatura*"):

"Antonida had no antique icons, but she had a Virgin of Kazan that we liked the look of: it was painted in the nineteenth century, but in a handsome style.

"'Will you sell us this one?'

"'Oh, dear. Oh, dearie me. It's a remembrance from old Masha Volchonka.'

"'Was she a relation of yours?'

"'She was our neighbour—they were kulaks, and a cart came one night to take them away. It was winter, there was a snowstorm blowing. They bundled the children and all into a sledge and that was the last we saw of them. Aunt Masha rushed round to say goodbye; she fished this icon out from under her coat and said: 'Here, keep it; it'll remind you of me.' So I've kept it, and every time I dust it I think of her'…"(p.145).

And finally:

"Aunt Dunya kept on repeating: 'I've told you already, I don't understand things like that. But I won't change my mind about the icons. The idea of my letting you take one out of the house—how do I know who'd get hold of it? You'd only make fun of it, anyway, you and your friends.'

"'But we wouldn't, Aunt Dunya—the very opposite! Everyone would admire it as a beautiful picture, a great work of Russian art!"

"'There you are—who says icons are there to be admired? Prayers are what they're for—you pray to them and you keep a light burning in front of them. Is an icon some sort of naked girl, that you want to admire it?'

"'You don't understand what I mean, Aunt Dunya.'

"'I've told you already, I don't understand things, so you needn't waste your time asking. I won't change my mind about the icon. How could I deliver it into the hands of strangers? If I did, Our Lady would appear to me at night and say: 'Avdotya, how could you do such a thing as to give me away to the first person who asked?' What could I say to her then, what could I reply to our Blessed Mother?'…" (p.161).

Novy Mir Defends Socialist Future

So we can see that there was a lot of backwardness going on in Russia in the 1960s, even in some of the high places of Soviet culture. No wonder the articles by Lobanov and Chalmaev excited such indignation—even including the editorial committee of *Novy Mir*. A denunciation was written for *Novy Mir* by Alexander Dementyev, whom Solzhenitsyn regarded as a particular enemy. Solzhenitsyn gives a probably not very objective account in *The Oak and the Calf*:

"The critic keeps in mind the orders with which he was sent into action—to strike and to smash, never inquiring whether anything inside there deserves to live, concerning himself not with truth but with tactical advantage. He begins with older history, and cannot help shaking with rage when he hears of such people as 'hermits and patriarchs', cannot suffer a word of praise for the second decade of the century, since it has been so sternly condemned by Comrade Lenin and Comrade Gorky. Although it has nothing to do with the debate, he twice pours abuse on *Vekhi* ('the renegade's Encyclopedia' ,'that symposium of shame;), because it is a habit with him, and because his brakes are poor. While he is at it, he snipes at Leontiev [a passionately anti-European, anti-modernist nineteenth century philosopher who saw the future of Russia as lying in the East, in a revival of 'Byzantine' culture], Aksakov [slavophile theorist], and even Klyuchevsky [nineteenth century historian], the *pochvenniki* group [a political movement led by Nikolai Strakhov, an associate of Dostoyevsky's. The name is derived from the Russian word for 'soil'], the Slavophiles. What can we set up in opposition to them? Why, our science. (You and your science! Enough to make a cat laugh! Twice two is—whatever the Central Committee determines from time to time.) Still, the Party teaches us (though only since 1934) not to disown our heritage, and Dementyev's ample embrace takes in "both Chernyshevsky and Dostoyevsky" (one of whom summoned men to the axe, the other to repentance: he really should choose) and even Rublev's [fifteenth century icon of the] Trinity (also admissible since 1943).

"Anything connected with the church sets *Novy Mir*'s critic more violently atremble than ever: whether it is corrupt 'ecclesiastical rhetoric' (actually the highest poetry!) or merely a mention of 'friendly shrines' and 'melancholy churches' by the poets of *Molodaya Gvardia*. Think what you like of their verse, the pain it expresses is unmistakable, the regret sincere. A church is disappearing under water, and the poet vows:

'I will wrest you, I will save you
From the surging water's hold
Or clasp your wall and perish with you
In the foaming deluge rolled.'

"'Not', says Dementyev, coldly and jarringly, 'the jolliest of occurrences',

but there is no need for 'this state of exaltation'; 'the religious theme demands a more carefully thought out and soberer approach'. (More carefully thought out, you mean, than the demolition of churches in our country? In Khrushchev's time they even used bulldozers. Whatever you say about *Molodaya Gvardia*, it had, if only obliquely, put up a defence of religion. Whereas liberal, sincerely atheistic *Novy Mir* took pleasure in supporting the onslaught on the church in the post-Stalin era.)

"The nature of patriotism is something else on which Dementyev leaves us in no doubt: it is not a matter of love for antiquities or for monasteries, but a sentiment to be awakened by 'labour productivity' and 'the brigade method'. What an ugly thing is affection for your 'little homeland' (your native place, the locality in which you grew up), when both Dobrolyubov and the CPSU have made it clear that your attachment must be to your 'greater homeland' (the frontiers of your love precisely coinciding with those of the state, which among other things simplifies the organisation of military service). And why should anyone say that picturesque Russian speech had been preserved only in the countryside (when Dementyev has been writing socialist jargon all his life—and managing very well)? Bah—the *muzhik*-fanciers even dare to prophesy that:

> 'With outstretched hand, we shall seek again
> The fountainhead from which we sprang.

"Will we, though? Dementyev knows we won't! If you must extol the village, let it be the new village, and 'the great changes it has known'; show the 'spiritual significance and the poetry of agricultural labor in the *kolkhoz*, and of the socialist transformation of the countryside'. (Right, red professor, show us how you can work, twisted into a Morlock.)

"Continuing his tactical defence of Europe, why, Dementyev wonders, should *Molodaya Gvardia* object to the yowling of tape recorders in city backyards? Or the 'insane ravings' of jazz in a Voronezh hamlet where no one reads Koltsov [presumably Alexei Koltsov, early nineteenth century poet of rural life. He has been compared to Robert Burns.—PB]? In what way is pop music inferior to Russian songs? Soviet prosperity 'leads to the enrichment of culture' (witness the domino players, card fiends and drunks we meet at every turn!). He needs no lessons in the art of turning things inside out. If *Molodaya Gvardia* assures us that [the early twentieth century poet Sergei] Yesenin was persecuted, driven to his death—Dementyev shamelessly 'remembers' how Yesenin was loved! (not by him, of course, as a Komsomol activist, not by Party and trade union committees, not by the newspapers, not by the critics, not by Bukharin—but loved he was!).

"The really important thing is that 'the Great Revolution has been accomplished' ,'a socialist order has come into being', 'the moral potential of the Russian people is embodied in the Bolsheviks' so 'let us look forward with confidence!' 'The wind of the epoch is filling our sails... .'

"And so on, ad nauseam; my hand gets tired of copying it. The inevitable quotations from Gorky, the inevitable quotations from Mayakovsky, all of it stuff we have read a thousand times. Does he see a threat to the Soviet regime? Yes, of course—and this is it: 'the infiltration of idealistic'—then, swinging with the right to confuse the opposition—'and vulgar materialistic ... and "revisionist" ' and (to restore the balance) 'dogmatic ... perversions of Marxism-Leninism!' There you are—that's what threatens us! It is not the spirit of the nation, our environment, our souls, our morals, that are in danger, but Marxism-Leninism, in the considered opinion of this avant-garde magazine!

"Can this journalistic pig-swill, this cold and heartless pauper's fare, be the offering not of *Pravda* but of our beloved *Novy Mir*, our one and only torchbearer—and in lieu of a policy?"

Much of *The Oak and the* Calf was written contemporary with the events described. Having written more or less what we've just read he went to see Tvardovsky:

> "'Yes; but all in all, A.T., I found Dementyev's article painful. You attack them from the wrong side. This desiccated dogmatism of Dementyev's ...'
>
> "He was suddenly on the defensive.
>
> "'I wrote half that article myself.' (I didn't believe him. This was an un-Soviet characteristic of Tvardovsky's: not to distance himself from something under attack, but to cherish it more than ever.) 'You know what they are—a gang of crooks!'
>
> "'I'm not denying it. All the same, you're tackling them from the wrong side. ... Do you remember at Ryazan, when you were reading my novel (*Circle 87*—PB): "Go to the stake if you must, but make sure you have a good reason."'
>
> "'I know, I know', he said, smoking furiously, as he warmed to the argument. 'You're all for the churches! For the good old days!' (It might have been better for the peasant poet [Tvardovsky was a well respected poet—PB] if he had felt the same.) 'hat's why they don't attack you.'
>
> "'They can't even mention my name, let alone attack me.'
>
> "/Still, I can forgive you. But we are defending Leninism. In our position, that takes a lot of doing. Pure Marxism-Leninism is a very dangerous doctrine (?!) [sic—PB] and is not tolerated. Very well, then, write us an article and tell us where you disagree.'
>
> "I hadn't an article, but I already had the preceding pages in outline form, on a sheet of paper. I wasn't going to put Samsonov's catastrophe [*August 1914*—PB] aside to write an article, of course—but perhaps I could at least say what I thought? After half a century in which every illuminating word had been suppressed, every thinking head cut off, there was such general confusion that even close friends could not understand one another. These were my friends: could I speak freely on such a subject? I was always made so much at home at *Novy Mir* that I often hadn't the heart to spell out unpleasant things for them.
>
> "'Aleksandr Trifonich, have you read *Vekhi*?'
>
> "He made me repeat it three times—a short word, but an unfamiliar one.
>
> "'No, I haven't.'
>
> "'Well, has Aleksandr Grigoryich [Dementyev] ever read it? I think not. So why did he aim two quite unnecessary kicks at it?'
>
> "A.T. frowned in an effort to remember. 'What was it that Lenin wrote about it ... ?'
>
> "'Lenin wrote all sorts of things ... in the heat of battle', I hastened to add—or it would have sounded too harsh and could have precipitated a split.
>
> "Tvardovsky had lost his previous Bolshevik assurance. His new habit of self-questioning showed itself in wrinkles on his face.
>
> "'Where can I get it? Is it banned?'
>
> "'It isn't banned, but there's a 'hold' on it in the libraries. Your lads can get it for you'…"

Michael Scammell in his account of this confrontation suggests (p.671) that this may have been the moment when Solzhenitsyn thought of putting together the collection that was to become *From under the rubble*. He also thinks Solzhenitsyn may have been introduced to *Vekhi* not long beforehand by Shafarevich.

TO BE CONTINUED

John Minahane

The Spanish Polemic on Colonisation

Part 11

Thomas Jefferson and the Indians Part 1

De Tocqueville on Black Americans

After writing several hundred pages of the book now known as *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville felt obliged to explain that there were three races inhabiting the United States, and the democratic laws and customs he had been describing applied only to one of them.

In European-created America, democracy was for the whites. Neither the Indians nor the blacks could expect democratic rights and freedoms. The exclusion was most absolute in the case of blacks.

De Tocqueville (writing in the 1830s) observed that the black human being had been torn completely out of his African cultural context. In America he was kept in the degraded state of slavery, which had become habitual for him.

> "He was reduced to slavery by violence, and the habit of servitude has given him the thoughts and ambitions of a slave; he admires his tyrants even more than he hates them and finds his joy and pride in a servile imitation of his oppressors."

If he was freed, the black found freedom very difficult. To flourish in the free condition required personal discipline, for which he had had no training. *"In the northern cities many (blacks) die in misery; the rest crowd into the towns, where they perform the roughest work, leading a precarious and wretched existence."* And the white population did not hate the free blacks less than they hated black slaves. In fact, they hated them more and kept more strictly apart from them.

However, in the northern states, the black population was declining, and in time it might completely disappear. The situation was different in the south. There the black population was relatively large and growing, and the difficulties of abolishing slavery were much greater. An idle white master race was used to living off black labour. Also, from a purely economic point of view slave labour was efficient for crops such as cotton, sugar and tobacco.

And yet, in the long term slavery couldn't last:

> "Whatever efforts the Americans of the South make to maintain slavery, they will not forever succeed. Slavery is limited to one point on the globe and attacked by Christianity as unjust and by political economy as fatal; slavery, amid the democratic liberty and enlightenment of our age, is not an institution that can last. Either the slave or the master will put an end to it. In either case great misfortunes are to be anticipated."

Realistically, what were the prospects if the black population of the south became free?

> "Once one admits that whites and emancipated Negroes face each other like two foreign peoples on the same soil, it can easily be understood that there are only two possibilities for the future: the Negroes and the whites must either mingle completely or they must part."

But the first possibility seemed inconceivable. White Americans in general, especially those of English descent, had tremendous racial pride. The idea that they could find themselves on the same level as the Negro was their very worst nightmare. It followed that—

> "if I absolutely had to make some guess about the future, I should say that in the probable course of things the abolition of slavery in the South would increase the repugnance felt by the white population towards the Negroes...
>
> If, on the one hand, one admits (and the fact is not in doubt) that Negroes are constantly crowding into the far South and increasing faster than the whites, and if, on the other hand, one agrees that it is impossible to foresee a time when blacks and whites will come to mingle and derive the same benefits from society, must one conclude that sooner or later in the southern states whites and blacks must come to blows?"

In such a struggle everything might depend on the balance of forces. If the united power of white America was ranged against them, the southern blacks had no chance, but they did have a chance if there was a rift between North and South. *"Perhaps then the white race in the South will suffer the fate of the Moors in Spain"* and be forced to retreat northwards.

Whichever way he looked at it, de Tocqueville seemed to come up against impossibilities.

> "In the North there was every advantage in freeing the slaves; in that way one is rid of slavery without having anything to fear from the free Negroes. They were too few ever to claim their rights. But it is not the same in the South.
>
> For the masters in the North slavery was a commercial and industrial question; in the South it is a question of life and death. Therefore one must not confuse slavery in the North and in the South. God protect me from trying, as certain American writers do try, to justify the principle of Negro slavery. I am only saying that all those who formerly accepted this terrible principle are not now equally free to get rid of it.
>
> I confess that in considering the South I see only two alternatives for the white people living there: to free the Negroes and to mingle with them or to remain isolated from them and keep them as long as possible in slavery. Any intermediate measures seem to me likely to terminate, and that shortly, in the most horrible of civil wars, and perhaps in the extermination of one or other of the two races."

Fenimore Cooper on Black Americans

There were many who held the view that an all-out war of extermination was a likely prospect. Among them was the novelist James Fenimore Cooper, one of those who justified slavery in principle. It was as old as mankind, he said, and it was in no way essentially un-Christian: a slaveholder might be an excellent Christian and might have admirable human relationships with his slaves. The blacks, indeed, lived better as slaves in America than they did in freedom in Africa, and for that matter they lived as well as or better than the free lower classes in many countries of Europe.

But though he defended the principle, Cooper had to admit that slavery was *"an impolitic and vicious institution"* in actual practice. It couldn't last. When it was gone, there would be two races which, because of the separating effect of colour, could never blend.

"The time must come when American slavery shall cease, and when that day shall arrive (unless early and effectual means are devised to obviate it), two races will exist in the same region, whose feelings will be embittered by inextinguishable hatred, and who carry on their faces, the respective stamps of their factions. The struggle that will follow, will necessarily be a war of extermination. The evil day may be delayed, but can scarcely be averted" (*The American Democrat*, 1838).

What were those *"early and effectual means"* that could obviate a race war? Cooper doesn't say, but he seems to imply a physical separation. The idea of shipping the blacks to a free republic in Africa, Liberia, had been actively pursued since 1820 by an organisation called the *Colonisation Society*. However, in any given year of the experiment the natural increase of blacks in the United States was many times greater than the numbers transported to Liberia. *"Back to Africa"* was a doubtful solution.

One of the ablest minds that wrestled with this problem was Thomas Jefferson. More than once he expressed the opinion that, after slavery was ended, there would have to be separation of the black and white races, as they could not be expected to blend. His opinion on this was all the more striking because he expressed the opposite opinion about whites and Indians: a blending of those races in future was possible and much to be desired. So far as I know, he never worked out an explicit solution to the problem of the non-blending blacks and whites. Implicitly, though, and in practical policy, he tended towards the second option which de Tocqueville broaches: doing all he could to postpone the day when slavery in America came to an end. (And yet always making the abolitionists feel he was one of them at heart.) But more about this later.

De Tocqueville on the Indians

In *The American Democrat*, where he reviewed American politics and made many acute observations, Fenimore Cooper did not so much as mention the Indians. But already he had written the great novel on the American Indian catastrophe, *The Last of the Mohicans*. On the surface the story is rather sentimental, but only on the surface. The novelist knows the realities and does not evade them, least of all the fact that, while it might be fatal to become the white man's enemy, still less is there any salvation in becoming his friend. Uncas, the last of the Mohicans, is a most admirable warrior, the white man's friend. As such he is fated to die tragically, together with the mixed-race woman who loves him (herself the product of a love between an English general and a Creole woman).

What Cooper shows or suggests is spelled out in de Tocqueville's account.

"All the Indian tribes who once inhabited the territory of New England —the Narragansetts, the Mohicans, the Pequots—now live only in men's memories; the Lenapes, who received Penn one hundred and fifty years ago on the banks of the Delaware, have now vanished. I have met the last of the Iroquois; they were begging. All the nations I have just named reached to the shores of the ocean; now one must go more than a hundred leagues inland to meet an Indian. These savages have not just drawn back, they have been destroyed. As the Indians have withdrawn and died, an immense nation is taking their place and continually growing. Never has such a prodigious development been seen among the nations, nor a destruction so rapid."

What could the Indians do to prevent their complete ruin? In de Tocqueville's opinion, nothing.

"I think that the Indian race is doomed to perish, and I cannot prevent myself from thinking that on the day when the Europeans shall be established on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean, it will cease to exist.

There were only two roads to safety open to the North American Indians: war or civilisation; in other words, they had either to destroy the Europeans or to become their equals.

At the first settlement of the colonies it would have been possible for them, by uniting their forces, to deliver themselves from the small number of foreigners who came to land on the coasts of the continent. They more than once attempted this, and have been on the point of succeeding. Today the disproportion in resources is too great for them to contemplate such an undertaking. Nevertheless, men of genius do rise up among the Indian nations, who foresee the final fate that awaits the savage population and who seek to reunite all the tribes in common hatred against the Europeans; but their endeavours are unavailing."

He then summarises the process of destruction. Indian societies were undermined by inducing them to accept white settlements and to enter market relationships which were superficially attractive but essentially corrosive. They became dependent on the whites for goods. In return they hunted animals for furs, whereas previously they had hunted for food only, but these resources were constantly diminishing. Besides, the sheer noise of the white settlements frightened the game animals away.

Eventually the Indians would be forced to move from their traditional lands to follow the animals. In the 1830s, de Tocqueville says, this dispossession was typically effected by purchase. Emissaries of the United States Government would come to the particular Indian nation and say: You see that there are very few game animals left on your lands, soon you will have nothing; but some distance away (*"beyond those mountains"*) there are lands which have game in abundance.—If the Indians still hesitated, the tone became threatening. They were warned that white farmers would soon come and occupy the lands anyhow by force, and the Government could do nothing to stop them. Next, the Indians would be presented with large quantities of firearms, woollen clothes, brandy, and shiny decorative things.

"What can they do? Half convinced, half constrained, the Indians go off to dwell in new wilderness, where the white man will not let them remain in peace for ten years. In this way the Americans cheaply acquire whole provinces which the richest sovereign in Europe could not afford to buy."

The Indians as Farmers

Force was impracticable as a means of saving the Indian communities. But what about the second option, civilisation? This would mean becoming farmers, which meant changing their entire way of life. But they loathed the thought of that.

"No Indian in his bark hut is so wretched that he does not entertain a proud conception of his personal worth; he considers the cares of industry degrading occupations; he compares the cultivator to the ox plowing a furrow and regards all our crafts merely as the labour of slaves. Granted he has formed a very high opinion of the power and intelligence of the white man; but while admiring the results of our endeavours, he scorns the means to obtain them, and though he admits our ascendancy, he yet considers himself our superior. He thinks hunting and war the only cares worthy of a man."

Quite like the 'feudal' ideas of the old European ruling class, de Tocqueville thought. *"How odd it is that the ancient prejudices of Europe should reappear, not among the European population along the coast, but in the*

forests of the New World."

Nonetheless, for all their visceral horror of European agriculture, the Indians would resort to it if they saw no other option:

> "Several considerable nations in the South, among others the Cherokees and the Creeks, have found themselves practically surrounded all at once by Europeans who landed on the Atlantic coast and came simultaneously down the Ohio and up the Missisippi. These Indians were not chased from place to place, as were the Northern tribes, but had been gradually pressed within too narrow limits, as if by hunters encircling a copse before they finally break into it. The Indians, thus faced with the choice of civilisation or death, found themselves reduced to living shamefully by their labour, like the white man. So they became cultivators, and not entirely giving up their habits and mores, sacrificed only as much of them as was absolutely necessary to survival.
>
> The Cherokees went faster; they created a written language and established a fairly stable form of government, and since everything goes forward at an impetuous rate in the New World, they had a newspaper before they all had clothes."

To the dispassionate French observer their efforts seemed very impressive:

> "In the little that they have done, these Indians have assuredly displayed as much natural genius as the European peoples in their greatest undertakings; but nations, like men, need time to learn, whatever their intelligence or endeavours."

Time!—yes, that was the essential. But the adapting Indians were not going to get the time that they needed. In the first place, when the Indians took to agriculture they were drawn still deeper into the market economy, whose functioning they had not grasped. The whites bamboozled them with ease. Many of the neophyte farmers were swindled, undermined and ruined. But then, when they had already engaged in agriculture for decades, encouraged by Thomas Jefferson above all and by the mainstream white political consensus that Jefferson represented, the Cherokees were told that white farmers needed the lands where they were farming, and they would have to go and farm somewhere else.

It was said then quite bluntly by high officials such as Lewis Cass that the Cherokees had failed to become like the whites. They were far from being real farmers: they were miserable, inefficient, impoverished excuses for farmers, and the United States could not have its natural development held up by waiting the eternity it would take them to reform themselves. Forty years previously, in fact, the United States had guaranteed the Cherokees' lands by solemn Treaty. But either these Treaties were not now binding (the individual State having the right to overrule them)—or, supposing they were formally found to be binding by the US Supreme Court, as actually happened, the Federal Government refused to enforce them against the State of Georgia.

Long-continued possession of their lands by an Indian people would not be respected—even though they now met the Lockean requirement for holding property rights to their land, since they tilled it. The Cherokees formally protested to the US Congress in the best language of law, but in vain.

Gentlemanly Genocide

What de Tocqueville describes more than suffices to match the modern (United Nations) definition of genocide. It was a steady, relentless, deliberate destruction of peoples. But, even before Darwin, the 19th century Anglo-Saxon culture was relaxed on this topic. Representive men could acknowledge, even boast of, what was being done. It would be hard to speak more plainly than Lewis Cass, Governor of Michigan and a champion of the harder line on Indian policy:

> "If one judges the future by the past, one can expect a progressive diminution in the number of Indians, and one can expect the final extinction of their race. In order that this event should not take place, it would be necessary that our frontiers cease to extend, and the savages settle beyond them, or that a complete change operate in our relations with them, which would be unreasonable to expect" (quoted by de Tocqueville).

What fascinates de Tocqueville above all is the *gentlemanliness* of the genocidal process:

> "The Spaniards let their dogs loose on the Indians as if they were wild beasts; they pillaged the New World like a city taken by storm, without discrimination or mercy; but one cannot destroy everything, and even frenzy has a limit; the remnant of the Indian population, which escaped the massacres, in the end mixed with the conquerors and adopted their religion and mores.
>
> On the other hand, the conduct of the United States Americans towards the natives was inspired by the most chaste affection for legal formalities. As long as the Indians remained in their savage state, the Americans did not interfere in their affairs at all and treated them as independent peoples; they did not allow their lands to be occupied unless they had been properly acquired by contract; and if by chance an Indian nation cannot live on its territory, they take them by the hand in brotherly fashion and lead them away to die far from the land of their fathers.
>
> The Spaniards, by unparallelled atrocities, which brand them with indelible shame, did not succeed in exterminating the Indian race and could not even prevent them from sharing their rights; the United States Americans have attained both these results with wonderful ease, quickly, legally and philanthropically, without spilling blood and without violating a single one of the great principles of morality in the eyes of the world. It is impossible to destroy men with more respect for the laws of humanity."

When he says things like this De Tocqueville might be accused of writing nonsense for the sake of rhetorical effect. Contrary to what he says here, the white North Americans had done plenty of violence (and the Spanish, for that matter, had made plenty of humane laws). And it is ridiculous to suggest that the treatment of the Cherokees was perfectly legal, in accordance with great moral principles and respectful of the laws of humanity.

But to say that the Indians were destroyed *philanthropically* is not completely nonsensical. There was a special tone that Philanthropy gave to Indian policy in the United States. Before simply wiping them off the map of America (except for a few miserable reservations), the white elite had aspired to turn the Indians into English-speaking Protestant farmers who would be incorporated into American democracy. This project has many similarities with the Protestant Crusade launched in Ireland in the early 19th century, though the context and the results were different.

The philanthropic enterprise was important in shaping white America's view of itself and its reputation; it created the context where even the sharpest observer might feel obliged to say: *"It is impossible to destroy men with more respect for the laws of humanity"*. Probably the most important single individual in all of this was Thomas Jefferson, America's most philosophical president, a man for whom *"complex"*

isn't the word because it's too simple, yet whom an admiring biographer could plausibly call *"the apostle of Americanism"*.

Jefferson and Christianity

Thomas Jefferson was born into great wealth in the State of Virginia in British-held America. He inherited 1900 acres of land, including a tobacco plantation, worked by slaves. Jefferson married well and, on the death of his father-in-law, he doubled his holdings and more than doubled his number of slaves, to well over a hundred. He supervised the building of a splendid mansion on top of a hill called Monticello, where he could live in proper magnificence. It was built by slaves and decorated by slave master craftsmen. His enormous income wasn't equal to his spending, so later on he had problems with debt. But he was never compelled to downsize and he died on his Monticello.

Jefferson was trained in the law, like so many American Presidents. (Till a couple of months ago it seemed that no one who didn't talk the lawyer-talk would ever get that job again.) But he only practised law for about twelve years, because he didn't need the money.

Raised as an Anglican Protestant, in due course he read Bolingbroke's criticism of the Bible and he broke with orthodox Christianity. Jefferson became the great champion of religious freedom in America. *"It does me no injury for my neighbour to say that there are twenty gods, or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg."* Not everyone was ready to say that in the 1780s, and his political opponents tried to use this against him—according to John Ferling, *"these two sentences were reprinted endlessly in Federalist newspapers as proof of Jefferson's impiety"*. But, despite being called 'atheist' and 'infidel' countless times, he still became President in 1800.

Jefferson refused to give any public clarification of his religious views. The point was that, whatever they might be, he had a right to hold them. But he was actually a kind of Christian. His view was that Jesus, without ever claiming to be more than human, had left us the outlines of the best possible human philosophy. These had been recorded afterwards in a confused and fragmentary form and corrupted by people with other philosophical agendas.

> "Notwithstanding these disadvantages, a system of morals is presented to us which, if filled up in the true style and spirit of the rich fragments he left us, would be the most perfect and sublime that has ever been taught by man."

Nearly three centuries earlier Erasmus had a view that was somewhat similar. He too said that the Gospels contained the perfect human philosophy. But Erasmus wasn't prepared to say that this perfect philosophy was lodged in a mass of rubbish: rather, anything in the sacred text that conflicted with reason should be interpreted allegorically, and the Christian reader must learn how to do that by practice. Now Jefferson, as his biographers keep emphasising, was a commonsense fellow. He wouldn't have had much time or talent for allegory, or expected his readers to go allegorising for themselves. What he proposed instead was the scissors.

In 1803, while President of the United States, he found time to go to work on a copy of the Gospels with scissors and paste. The product was a little book *"which I call the philosophy of Jesus. It is a paradigma of his doctrines, made by cutting the texts out of the book and arranging them on the pages of a blank book in a certain order of time or subject."*

Later on this *'Jefferson Gospel'* was published. It gives most of the bones of the Gospel story but leaves out the marriage at Cana, the loaves and the fishes, and all other miracles. There is one story of healing, which need not be seen as miraculous. The book ends with Joseph and Nicodemus rolling a great stone up to the tomb of Jesus—so then, no resurrection either. Also missing, if I'm not mistaken, are some fierce denunciations of the Pharisees as hypocrites, *"whited sepulchres"* etc. Jesus the philosopher is very positive.

Jefferson on Slavery

As a young lawyer Jefferson was elected to the colonial assembly of Virginia, and later to the Congress of the United States. He showed his talents in the political conflicts leading up to the War of American Independence. And it was he who wrote that magnificent work of lawyer-talk, the *Declaration of Independence*, with its ringing declarations (*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal ...—**"The celebrated proposition"***, Fenimore Cooper rather impatiently explained, *"is not to be understood literally"*).

In those years he was a fierce public critic of slavery. He described the slave trade as an *"execrable commerce"* and explained how slavery injured the slave-owners, apart from the damage that it did to slaves: slave-owning whites became tyrannical and workshy. And he didn't just express opinions, he tried to do something towards bringing slavery to an end. *"He was one of the first statesmen in any part of the world to advocate concrete measures for restricting and eradicating Negro slavery"*, David Brion Davis said.

In Virginia he drafted a proposal to make it legally possible for individual slave-owners to free their slaves. And he tried to commit the United States to the ending of slavery, by writing such a commitment into the *Declaration of Independence*.

*"When Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that **"all men are created equal"**, can he have possibly meant to include the slaves? The usual answer is no. It has seemed evident that Jefferson expected the word **"white"** to be silently added before **"men"**."*—Howver, his draft declaration included an attack on slavery which effectively would have committed the United States to end it. That was too much for the Congressmen and they struck those sentences out:

> "Thus when the Continental Congress deleted Jefferson's attack on the slave trade, it drained out the full implications of 'all men are created equal'."

When America's War of Independence began, Samuel Johnson asked the very pertinent question: *"How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty from the drivers of Negroes?"* Jefferson felt the sting of that question, no doubt about it. He maintained his public opposition to slavery for some years. And then, round about the time of the French Revolution, he fell silent.

When he had most power (as Secretary of State, Vice-President, President for two terms, and ex-President), he did least to promote an end to slavery. In fact, he did nothing at all. Abolitionists wrote to ask him to give a lead: *"he sent soft answers... to soothe or baffle them"*. And there was one key action of his that massively expanded the scope of slavery and the difficulty of ending it.

Jefferson was President when the United States accepted Napoleon's offer to sell the French territory of Louisiana. This doubled the size of the United

States. The question then arose of what kind of labour relations would be included in the Bill establishing the new state. Slave-holders and slave-traders were exerting a great deal of pressure, to which Congress made some resistance but the President made none. In fact, Jefferson instructed one of his Senate supporters to insert a clause in the bill to allow slavery in Louisiana. There's no way round it, he acted to extend slavery.

And nonetheless he continued to explain to people, especially influential foreigners, that of course he wanted to see an end to slavery, but the time must be ripe and public opinion must mature.

> "Jefferson assumed the role of Great Communicator on slavery, defending himself and his country against all challengers. As luminaries such as Lafayette and Thomas Paine discovered, debating Jefferson would always prove fruitless. A shrewd and relentless lawyer, he composed briefs for the defense containing 'just enough of the semblance of morality to throw dust into the eyes of the people', to borrow his own words. In their entirety Jefferson's rationalisations amount to nothing compared with his perfectly clear presidential order to admit slavery to the Louisiana Territory. Later in his life Jefferson mocked abolitionists for 'wasting Jeremiads on the miseries of slavery' and more or less went over to arguing that slavery was a positive good."

"Interest is Morality"

Many slave-holders were talking about freeing their slaves and some were actually doing it. Jefferson tended to discourage them. George Washington, America's first President, had led by example: he went to trouble and expense to ensure that his slaves would be freed after his death. By contrast, Jefferson freed hardly any slaves during his lifetime, with a few very special exceptions, and he bequeathed his slave property to his heirs.

What produced this change in Thomas Jefferson's thinking and practice? Henry Wieneck tackles that question in a fascinating book published a few years ago. As Wieneck sees it, the key moment was when Jefferson realised with full intensity (in 1792 or thereabouts) that slaves were wealth. They were productive capital. They reproduced themselves with a natural rate of profit, estimated by Jefferson at 4 per cent per annum. They could do a great many practical things. They could make a man rich, and they could make a rich man's life very pleasant.

"Interest is morality", Jefferson said in 1805, in a letter to his private secretary. The reference was to other people: he was describing the attitude of the slaveowners who dominated politics in the South, men supposedly unlike himself, who would not be mentally or morally ready to free their slaves for a long time to come. It seems, however, that he understood them because they were the same as himself.

When he did envisage slaves being freed, he insisted that free blacks would have to live separately from whites. In a book on Virginia which he wrote in response to questions by a French diplomat, and which was aimed at reform-minded readers in France, Jefferson explained that the freed blacks would have to be sent away somewhere, to develop as *"a free and independent people"*. He did not specify where they could be sent. But separation was necessary because the two peoples were so alien to each other.

(Wieneck observes that, though Jefferson suggests there could be no trust between blacks and whites, in practice the elite black slaves who worked in and around the Monticello mansion were trusted with a great deal. However, the majority were kept in order by terror, by whip-wielding overseers. Some people said they were crueller than on the Louisiana estates, which were notorious.)

Jefferson and Sally Hemings

Anyhow, the fact is that Jefferson expressed fierce opposition to black-white racial blending, and he supported laws designed to punish it. But once again interest seems to have complicated morality. In 1784, his wife having died, he went to Paris for five years as a kind of super-diplomat. Later his daughter joined him there, bringing with her a 14-year-old slave called Sally Hemings. The slave girl didn't have much to do, but Jefferson took pains to treat her like a young lady of leisure, buying her fine clothes and hiring a tutor to teach her French.

When it was time to return to America, the 16-year-old Sally was reluctant to go back. She was aware that under French law she was free, while as soon as she set foot in America she would be re-enslaved. However, at that moment she was pregnant . . . And so she agreed to return to America, on condition that all of her children would be freed on reaching the age of 21. On this basis she returned to the United States, where she had five more children by Jefferson. They were never publicly acknowledged by him and received no affection from him, but (although otherwise Jefferson hardly ever freed slaves) on reaching the age of majority they were indeed given their freedom.

All this was later reported by one of Jefferson's mixed-race children, who had learned the facts from his mother Sally. In fact, the story had been in circulation much earlier. Visitors to Monticello remarked how some of the household slaves were the image of Jefferson. During his first term as President the whole story was even published by a well-known muck-racking journalist—admittedly, bad things happened to the fellow afterwards.

However, the Jefferson industry, which had much the same feelings about such conduct as the public Jefferson, held out against this revelation for the best part of two centuries. The Hemings testimony was dismissed as fake news, or simply ignored (as in Gilbert Chinard's biography), or more recently arguments were put forward against it and alternative fathers proposed for the mixed-race youngsters at Monticello.

In 1974 Fawn Brodie came up with the idea of a daring inter-racial love affair, casting Jefferson as a romantic hero—an idea that Hollywood soon followed up on. The Jefferson industry, though, wasn't having this: it was too obvious that the idol would be exposed as a hypocrite. But eventually the DNA testers caught up with him. It was established that at least one of Sally Hemings's children was fathered by *some Jefferson*, and the obvious Jefferson was the one identified long ago. Major sections of the Jefferson industry have conceded the point as proven, though some diehards are still resisting.

(One admirer of the great man was certainly delighted by the news: President William Jefferson Clinton. The story broke while he was in political difficulties over having sex with a White House intern. Compared to what Thomas Jefferson had got away with, Clinton's transgression seemed rather trivial.)

On the love story angle, Wieneck says that there isn't the slightest evidence of anything like that. The evidence is of a transaction between Jefferson and a 16-year-old slave girl who was

temporarily free: for him, sexual services; for her, all of her children to be freed at the age of 21. Sally had not asked anything for herself, and no provision was made for her in Jefferson's will.

The 1800 Election

Jefferson's main opponent in the 1800 election, John Adams, had never owned any slaves. He possessed a farm and had enough money to buy slaves for it, but he despised the idea. However, it was Jefferson who ran in the election as a radical democrat and, when he won it, claimed to have achieved *"a revolution"*.

Adams's Federalist Party was accused of trying to create a narrow oligarchic ruling class in the United States. The Federalists wanted to make the central government too strong, and they threatened to make the president something like a European monarch or dictator. They were thinking in terms of a strong national army and navy and were drifting towards war with France, whereas the American should stay clear of European conflicts. One particularly obnoxious Federalist measure was the creation of a big financial institution, a national bank. Jefferson wanted smaller government, stronger states' rights, stronger citizens' rights, militias for defence, cheap land, and no encouragement for industrial capitalism.

Due to the peculiar electoral system of that time, Jefferson tied the election with his running mate, and in order to clear the last hurdle to become President it seems he had to do a deal with the Fedcralists. He could cheapen the land, but he wasn't allowed to obstruct urban capitalism. Some of his supporters were disgusted when he didn't abolish the Bank of the United States, and he was called *"an accommodating trimmer"*.

At any rate, he was a master of stage sets and scene-painting, as will be clear from the above. It was easy to mistake the reality that he represented. I must leave it to a future article to discuss what he represented for the Indians.

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Maidin i mBéarra

Is é mo chaoi gan mise maidin aerach,
Amuigh i mBéarra 'm sheasamh ar an dtráigh,
Is guth na n-éan a'm' tharraing thar na sléibhtibh cois na farraige,
Go Céim an Aitinn mar a mbíonn mo ghrádh,

Is obann aoibhinn aiteasach do léimfinn,
Do rithfinn saor ó ana-bhroid an tláis,
Do thabharfainn druim le sgamallaibh an tsaoil seo,
Da bhfaighinn mo léir-dhóthainn d'amharc ar'm' mo chaoimh-shearc bhán.

Is é mo dhíth bheith ceangailte go faon-lag,
Is neart mo chléibh dá thachtadh 'nseo sa tsráid,
An fhaid tá réim na habhann agus gaoth ghlan na fairrge,
Ag glaoch 's ag gairm ar an gcroí seo 'm lár,

Is milis bríomhar leathan-bhog an t-aer ann,
Is gile ón ngréin go fairsing ar an mbán,
'S ochón, a rí-bhean bhanamhail na gcraobh-fholt,
Gan sinn-ne araon i measg an aitinn mar do bhímis tráth.

Osborn Bergin

Morning in Beare

It is my regret that I, of a pleasant morning,/ Am not abroad in Beare standing on the beach/ And birdsong enticing me over the hills by the sea/ To Céim an Aitinn where my love abides.

Quickly, happily, delightedly I would leap/ I would run free from the heavy burden of enfeeblement/ I would turn my back on the dark clouds of this life/ If I could only get my fill of looking at my fair, dear love.

It is my loss to be tied down in weakness/ In the strength of my body smothered here in the city-street/ While the sweep of the river and the pure sea-breeze/ Are calling and crying to my heart within.

The air there is sweet, lively, gently embracing/ And the brightness of the sun spreading across the field/ And, ochone, O womanly true woman of the branching tresses/ That we are not both amongst the gorse as we once used to be.

(Translation: Pat Muldowney

VOX

Single Combat
John Hume
The Red Flag
Misty Notions
Abp. Eamon Martin
Allowance
Thomas Flanagan
Casement Diaries

PAT

SINGLE COMBAT

The battle of Creadran Cille was fought in 1257 between the Gaels of Tír Chonaill, led by Gofraidh Ó Domhnaill, (Godfrey O'Donnell) and the Normans, led by Maurice FitzGerald. It took place at Ros Ceide (Rosses Point) near Drumcliffe, in the territory of Cairbre Drom Cliabh, near Sligo town. The forces of Tír Chonaill were victorious and drove the Normans out of their territory.

Many claim that it was the last major battle ever decided by a single combat. The Donegal chieftain, Godfrey O'Donnell defeated the English Lord Justice of Ireland, Maurice Fitzgerald, but was badly wounded.

Still not fully recovered the following year, 1258, O'Donnell was carried out to defeat the invading O'Neill clan near Letterkenny—and died of exhaustion immediately afterwards. He is believed to be buried in Conwal graveyard (1795). Early records of ecclesiastical settlement at Conwal are dated in the Annals of Ulster around 914 AD.

The graveyard is directly across the road from the scene of the Battle of Scarriffhollis, 1650, where Sir Charles Coote defeated the Irish who were led by the Bishop of Clogher, Heber Mac Mahon. The defeat marked the final destruction of the Ulster Confederate army.

O'Donnell was made the hero of a famous epic poem by James Clarence Mangan. (See: *The Dubliner: The Lives, Times and Writings of James Clarence Mangan* by Brendan Clifford. 176 pp ISBN 0 85034 036 5. AB. 1988. ¤15, £10.

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JOHN HUME

"I don't give two balls of roasted snow what advice anyone gives me." (John Hume, leader of the SDLP after he was criticised for meeting with Sinn Fein leader, Gerry Adams in 1993.)

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THE RED FLAG

The funeral of "Jim" O'Connell, the veteran Socialist and author of "The Red Flag" took place 14th February 1929. The remains were cremated at Golders Green Crematorium, London, and at the Service *"The Red Flag"* was sung to the air of the old Jacobite song, *"The White Cockade"*, which was Mr. O'Connell's favourite tune for the song.

The proceedings were directed by Mr. "Tom" Mann, Chairman of the National Minority Movement, and there was a large number of representatives of trade unions present. Addresses were given by Mr. George Hicks, representing the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, and by another old friend, Mr. Henry Noble.

In 1920 in *How I Wrote "The Red Flag"* O'Connell commented:

> "Did I think that the song would live? Yes, the last line shows I did: *"This song shall be our parting hymn"*. I hesitated a considerable time over this last line.
>
> "I asked myself whether I was not assuming too much. I reflected, however, that in writing the song I gave expression to not only my own best thoughts and feelings, but the best thoughts and feelings of every genuine socialist I knew... I decided that the last line should stand" (*Irish Times*, 15.2.1929).

Jim O'Connell, (1852-1929) was born in the townland of Rathniska near the village of Kilskyre, to the north of Kells, County Meath.

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MISTY NOTIONS

"The historian says he is relieved that the passionate debates between those labelled revisionists and anti-revisionists have receded into the mists" (Roy Foster, *The Centenary Conversations*, Galway, *Irish Independent* supplement-5.11.2016)

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ARCHBISHOP EAMON MARTIN

> "Martin credits his mother Catherine and his late father John for ensuring that none of the family ever joined the IRA. They had 'huge respect' for John Hume, who used to say that the struggle was not worth a 'drop of blood'.
>
> "We had a big family—six boys and six girls—six boys growing up in the middle of this [Derry City]. I have great regard and respect for my parents for the way they were able to keep us from getting involved", Archbishop Eamon Martin said" (*Sunday Business Post*, 23.12.2016).

"To live in the midst of a battle and to try to ignore it is beyond human capacity"—Vladimir Maximov.

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ALLOWANCE!

"Unmarried mother's allowances have suddenly become a growth industry". Brendan McGahon, Fine Gael TD for Louth, June, 1987.

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THOMAS FLANAGAN

> "A student in the faraway Wild West (in Berkeley, California) once asked Thomas Flanagan—professor, scholar and historical novelist—what was the greatest contribution the Irish ever made to literature written in English. That learned man, who is somewhat given to quirky remarks which his friends describe as Flanaganisms, said: 'To burn Edmund Spenser out of Kilcolman Castle, during the Desmond Wars, and stop him from writing about the Faerie Queene'…" (Benedict Kiely, Methuen, 1999).

Whatever about its authenticity, there's 'one sure Fiver', Benedict didn't make the remark!

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CASEMENT DIARIES

> "If I was faced with the necessity of believing in either the Immaculate Conception or the virtue of the British State in such a matter, I would choose the Immaculate Conception" (Brendan Clifford, *Irish Political Review*, December, 2016.

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MORE *VOX* ON PAGE 14