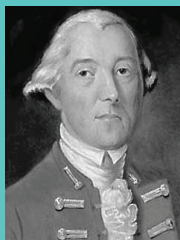


THE Dorchester Review

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1 ♪ SPRING/SUMMER 2011



Assassinating Hitler: The Last Plotter

Robert Bernheim

Why America Is Not a New Rome

Gil Troy

Revisiting the War of the Conquest

Conrad Black

Parliament Is Not Broken *John Robson*

The Classicist & the Cavalier *Phyllis Reeve*

Does Anyone Really Enjoy Graphic Novels? *Randy Boyagoda*

Was René Lévesque a Traditionalist? *Mathieu Bock-Coté*

Tory Civil Wars 1987-2003: A Symposium

Missile Defence Follies Adam Chapnick

Barbara Kay on Norman Podhoretz's Life & Work

An Australian visits 'Harperland' Greg Melleuish

Spain: Will They Dig Up Franco?

Chivalry in Small Packages Christine Schintgen

Bruce Patterson on 'The King's Speech'

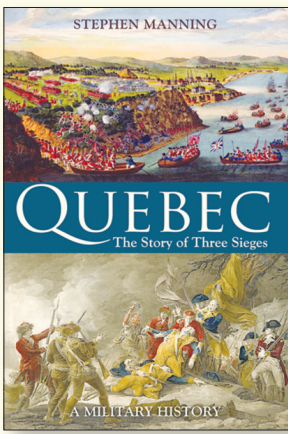
plus:

How the English Invented the Scots

ISSN 1925-7600



9 771925 760010



Quebec

The Story of Three Sieges

Stephen Manning

978-0-7735-3871-9 \$24.95 paper

“The book’s chief asset is the author’s lucid, measured prose, which is a delight to the ear . . . This is very readable history in the classical style.”

– Jack Mitchell, *Literary Review of Canada*

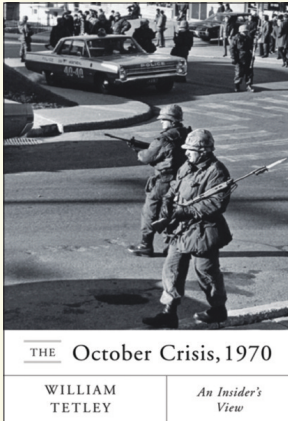
The October Crisis, 1970

An Insider’s View

William Tetley

978-0-7735-3118-5 \$27.95 paper

“Tetley addresses important questions, corrects widely believed factual errors, and successfully deconstructs events from a side of the conflict seldom written about by popular historians.” – *Canada’s History*



Sailor’s Hope

The Life and Times of William Cooper,

Agrarian Radical in an Age of Revolutions

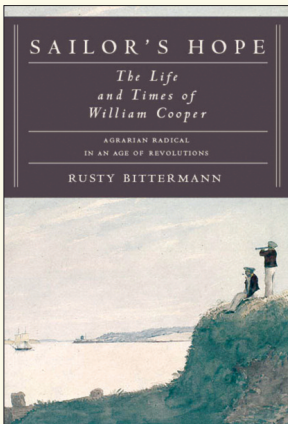
Rusty Bittermann

978-0-7735-3774-3 \$32.95 paper | 978-0-7735-3773-6 \$95.00 cloth

Winner: Publication of the Year Award

The Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation (2010)

A moving account of a multi-faceted man, tracking his engagement with the extraordinary changes occurring in the Atlantic and Pacific Worlds in the decades after the American and French Revolutions.



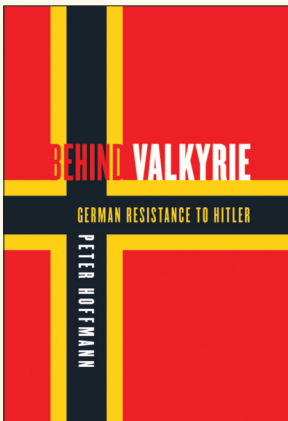
Behind Valkyrie

German Resistance to Hitler, Documents

Translated and edited by Peter Hoffmann

978-0-7735-3770-5 \$34.95 paper | 978-0-7735-3769-9 \$105.00 cloth

A collection of writings by those who fought Hitler from within Nazi Germany.



McGILL - QUEEN’S UNIVERSITY PRESS

www.mqup.ca

Follow us on Facebook.com/McGillQueens and Twitter.com/Scholarmqup

An historical and literary review published twice a year in print and online by the Foundation for Civic Literacy. Mailing address: 204-1066 Somerset St. W., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Y 4T3. Hon. Patron: The Lord Tweedsmuir of Elsfield. Chairman: Benjamin A. Mackenzie. Advisory Board: Jean-Robert Bernier, Xavier Gélinas, Rudyard Griffiths, Stuart Iversen, Kenneth Whyte. Contributing editors: Randy Boyagoda, C.P. Champion, Randall Hansen, Phyllis Reeve, John Robson. Rates: Single copy: \$16. Online sub.: \$25. Print (incl. online): Canada: \$30; USA: C\$35; Rest of World: C\$40. Web: www.dorchesterreview.ca; pay by credit or send a cheque. Printed in Quebec by Marquis Imprimeur Inc. © *The Dorchester Review* (ISSN 1925-7600)

FROM THE EDITORS 2

BIOGRAPHY

- ASSASSINATING HITLER: THE LAST PLOTTER 5 *Robert Bernheim*
THE SERIOUS HISTORIAN AS GADFLY 16 *Graham Stewart*
NORMAN PODHORETZ'S ACHIEVEMENT 19 *Barbara Kay*
THE CLASSICIST & THE CAVALIER 26 *Phyllis Reeve*

ANCIENT & MODERN

- THE USES OF DECLINISM 33 *Gil Troy*

COLONIAL ERA

- REVISITING THE WAR OF THE CONQUEST 36 *Conrad Black*
LOYALISTS THROUGH TWO WARS 41 *Samuel Pyeatt Menefee*
1848: PUSHING AT AN OPEN DOOR 46 *C.P. Champion*

QUEBEC

- RENÉ LÉVESQUE AS TRADITIONALIST 51 *Mathieu Bock-Coté*
IN SEARCH OF QUEBEC CONSERVATIVES 54 *Damien-Claude Bélanger*

ESSAY

- AN AUSTRALIAN IN 'HARPERLAND' 58 *Greg Melleuish*

AUSTRALIA

- THE LONG SEARCH FOR AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY 62 *Harry Gelber*

EDUCATION

- TEACHING HISTORY AS SELF-DOUBT 70 *By 'Rhetor'*

LITERATURE

- GRAPHIC NOVELS & THE BURDENS OF ENJOYMENT 75 *Randy Boyagoda*
CHIVALRY IN SMALL PACKAGES 79 *Christine Schintgen*

POETRY

- '*An Epitaph Upon the Excellent Countesse of Huntingdon, 1633*', 32

WAR & WEAPONRY

- CANADA'S BALLISTIC MISSILE FOLLY 81 *Adam Chapnick*
ISLAMIST ANGELS OF DEATH 86 *John C. Thompson*
THE RIFLE IN AMERICAN HISTORY 89 *Gary Mauser*

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT
DON'T MESS WITH PARLIAMENT 92 *John Robson*

SYMPOSIUM
TORY CIVIL WARS: 1987-2003 96 *Hugh Segal, Bob Plamondon, Tim Powers, Jack Hughes & Goldy Hyder, Scott Reid MP*

CONTENTIONS
HOW THE ENGLISH INVENTED THE SCOTS 105 *C.P. Champion*

FILM
'THE KING'S SPEECH' 108 *Bruce Patterson*

NOTES & TOPICS
Two Solitudes 53, *Debating History* 74, *Female Suicide Attacks* 88, *The West Is In* 99,
Will Spain Dig Up Franco? 110

AUTHORS 112

From the Editors

The Dorchester Review is founded on the belief that leisure is the basis of culture. Just as no one can live without pleasure, no civilized life can be sustained without recourse to that tranquillity in which critical articles and book reviews may be profitably enjoyed. The wisdom and perspective that flow from history, biography, and fiction are essential to the good life. It is not merely that "the record of what men have done in the past and how they have done it is the chief positive guide to present action," as Belloc put it. Action can be dangerous if not preceded by contemplation that begins in recollection.

Every historian and every writer has an agenda, frequently political and often unadmitted. To the entrenched complacencies of much professional scholarship and literary journalism, one antidote is corrective and restorative history, engagingly written. There are too few critical reviews published today, particularly in Canada, and almost none translated from francophone journals for English readers. It also remains likely, as Orwell put it, that, "The great majority of reviews give an inadequate or misleading account of the book that is dealt with. ... The best practice ... would be simply to ignore the great majority of books and to give very long reviews — 1,000 words is a bare minimum — to the few that seem to matter." At the *Review* we shall praise the good books and assail the bad.

The Dorchester Review has no political agenda but a robustly polemical one. If the mandate of *The Canadian Forum* at its inception in 1920 was "to trace and value those developments of art and letters which are distinctively Canadian," then the mandate of *The Dorchester Review* is very nearly the opposite. The nationalism that began with the 1920s centre-left has in some ways produced a narrowing effect on the country's imagination, squeezing out elements of tradition and culture inherent to Canadian experience that fail to conform to a stridently progressivist narrative.

We confess another potentially unpopular belief: that, at its core, Canada's strength and advantage — that of a British liberal society with a strong French national enclave, resilient aboriginal communities, and a vital pluralism born of successive immigrant arrivals — would be void if polemically separated from its European, Judeo-Christian and Classical traditions, which is another answer to: why history. We are conscious and grateful heirs to an invaluable if variously pressured tradition of free expression and criticism that is found and defended with particular seriousness in the North

Atlantic societies, and this we think should be recognized, protected, and always enhanced.

In our choice of a moniker and historical patron we take the name of a bewigged British soldier, an astute and unapologetic colonial governor from the pre-democratic era, in order to underline that history consists of more than a parade of secular modern progressives building a distinctively Canadian utopia. That the King praised Sir Guy Carleton, 1st Baron Dorchester, as “a gallant and sensible man” is no small recommendation.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge Toby Buchan’s acceptance of our invitation to serve as honorary patron. As an editor, publisher, and illustrator in England he is known as Mr Buchan. We approached him, however, as the 4th Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield and grandson of John Buchan, the great storyteller, historian, and 15th governor general of Canada. In that capacity, Lord Tweedsmuir graciously accepted. In the pages of this edition, notice can be found of the handsome new edition of John Buchan’s classic thriller, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, with a fine introduction by his grandson, our hon. patron.

In general the *Review* will not take editorial positions unless grievously tempted. Four of our five contributing editors have written articles for the first issue: Randy Boyagoda, C.P. Champion, Phyllis Reeve, and John Robson, who bring varied literary and editorial talents to the cause. We are proud to carry articles by Gil Troy, Sam Menefee, Barbara Kay, Graham Stewart, Greg Melleuish, Conrad Black, Adam Chapnick, Mathieu Bock-Coté, and many others. We welcome submissions as well as letters and comments, encourage readers to take out a subscription, and, when necessary, disagree with us enthusiastically and intelligently! ✕

**Lord Dorchester says
Subscribe forthwith!
It’s surely the least you can do.**



After all, the Rates are Really Quite Reasonable.

Online-only edition: \$25

Print subscription: (includes online access)

Canada: \$30

USA: \$35

Rest of World: \$40

Gift subscription: send an email with details to:

subscribe@dorchesterreview.ca

Single copy:

\$16 + postage

On the Web:

www.dorchesterreview.ca



UBC Press

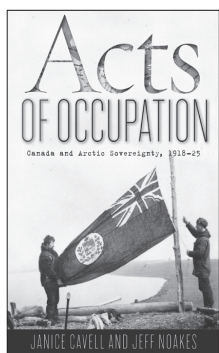
*celebrating
40 years
of outstanding
scholarly
publishing*

thought that counts



CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM
MUSÉE CANADIEN DE LA GUERRE

order online at
www.ubcpres.ca



Acts of Occupation

Canada and Arctic Sovereignty,
1918–25

**Janice Cavell and
Jeff Noakes**

This book was a delight to read ... The authors have thrown a clear light on a very important period in Canadian foreign policy as it pertained to Arctic sovereignty. The topic is quite timely, in view of the current focus on sovereignty over Arctic waters and the seabed.

– William Barr, Professor and Senior Research Associate, Arctic Institute of North America, University of Calgary

July 2011, 978-0-7748-1868-1
35 b&w photos, 5 maps



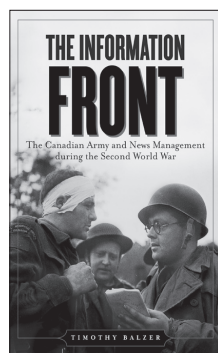
Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence, 1954–2009

Déjà Vu All Over Again
James G. Fergusson

This is important scholarship. It is the first history of Canada and ballistic missile defence, placing the most recent debates in the context of more than fifty years of developments and revealing recurring (and lamentable) patterns of Canadian decision making. Moreover, it also sheds needed light on Canadian involvement in NORAD, Canada-US relations more broadly, and how important defence decisions are made in Canada.

– Joseph Jockel, author of *Canada in NORAD, 1957–2007: A History*

2010, 978-0-7748-1751-6
18 b&w photos, 3 maps
Studies in Canadian Military History Series
Published in association with
the Canadian War Museum



The Information Front

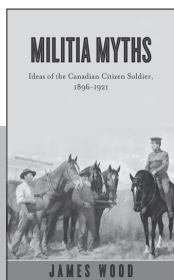
The Canadian Army and
News Management during
the Second World War

Timothy Balzer

An immensely readable and very illuminating history. Others have focused on the battlefield correspondents, but Balzer shows us that what Canadians knew about their army's actions during the Second World War was shaped, in large measure, by the military public relations apparatus.

– Chris Dornan, Director of the Arthur Kroeger College of Public Affairs, Carleton University

July 2011, 978-0-7748-1900-8
22 b&w illustrations
Studies in Canadian Military History Series
Published in association with
the Canadian War Museum



Militia Myths

Ideas of the Canadian Citizen
Soldier, 1896–1921
James Wood

2010, 978-0-7748-1766-0
29 b&w photos, 6 tables
*Studies in Canadian
Military History Series*
Published in association with
the Canadian War Museum



From Victoria to Vladivostok

Canada's Siberian Expedition,
1917–19
Benjamin Isitt

2010, 978-0-7748-1802-5
37 b&w photos, 5 maps
*Studies in Canadian
Military History Series*
Published in association with
the Canadian War Museum

Assassinating Hitler: The Last Plotter

Robert Bernheim

Valkyrie: The Story of the Plot to Kill Hitler by its Last Member. Philipp Freiherr von Boeselager with Florence and Jérôme Fehrenbach. Vintage, 2010.

Books and films on the German resistance to Hitler during the Third Reich can be problematic for those born in the post-war years, especially for those residing outside of Europe. We tend to sit in a place of haughty rectitude, condemning the resisters before we even crack open the binding of the narrative, or see the first frames of the movie.

Why is this? Because we have already concluded that they could have done a better job, and that really, they should have known enough earlier to act sooner. After all, didn't they just wait until it was clear that Germany was going to lose the war before they even tried to kill Hitler? They could have saved so many more lives, including millions of Jews, the physically and mentally handicapped, gypsies, and others deemed "unworthy of life" had they acted with firmer resolve years before and succeeded. The bottom line: we distrust their motives, and find

fault with their lack of results.

Philipp Freiherr von Boeselager boldly addresses this mindset in his memoir, *Valkyrie: The Story of the Plot to Kill Hitler by its Last Member*, written in collaboration with Florence and Jérôme Fehrenbach. A number of key questions and issues, however, remain by the time this brief, but crisp, memoir draws to a close.

Published less than six months after the blockbuster film "Valkyrie" swept into cineplexes and one-screen theaters alike in late 2008, this memoir tells a story about the plot to assassinate Hitler, not from the point of view of one of its principal participants, but from the perspective of one of its lesser-known and seemingly marginal figures.

In *Valkyrie*, Philipp Freiherr von Boeselager explains that he did not become a German cavalry officer during the Third Reich "to shoot the head of state like a dog." (p. 60) Nonetheless, in order to get to the place where he was willing to commit treason, and possibly sacrifice his own life for the good of the cause, Boeselager, like most of the resisters, needed to engage in long and deliberate periods of deep reflection and circumspection. Such a critical decision was also the result of external events and encounters with family members, friends, associates, and those in authority that, more often than not, had its roots in childhood experiences and Christian theology.

Therefore, it is not surprising that he begins his memoir with a simple statement about his family: "My brother Georg was born in August 1915, I in September 1917. We were the fourth

Robert Bernheim is executive director of the Holocaust & Human Rights Center at the University of Maine at Augusta. A magna cum laude graduate of Bowdoin College, he studied at Goddard and the University of Freiburg, and has a Ph.D. from McGill, the subject of which was "The Commissar Order and the Seventeenth German Army," 1941-42. He has lectured at both Middlebury College and the University of Vermont.

and fifth in a family of nine children.” According to Philipp, the bond with his older brother was a special one: “Georg and I were very close. Only two years apart, we were like Castor and Pollux — natural playmates, and accomplices in the same practical jokes.” *Valkyrie*, therefore, is not just the tale of one man’s involvement in the anti-Hitler resistance, but also the narrative of how two brothers wrestled with the unfolding horrors of the Third Reich and decided to do something about it; it is truly a family affair.

Boeselager, however, follows a traditional chronological narrative for most of the memoir. In the first chapter, “A Taste for Freedom,” he describes highlights of his childhood, and focuses on those formative events and individuals he believes helped to shape the traits, morals, and worldview that formed the bedrock of his character. In this section, Boeselager credits his father, Albert, with setting an example through his love and appreciation of two seemingly disparate pursuits, freedom and hunting:

My father ... was a cultured man of letters. His mother’s side of the family hailed from Brussels, and he considered the European nobility a unitary body. He hunted all over the Continent and spoke four or five languages.

Because of this, he attached particular importance to learning how to make proper use of freedom and the capacity for Christian discernment that was for him its corollary — and also to hunting.

Hunting, however, is the predominant and indelible life-lesson Boeselager returns to with regard to his and his brother Georg’s experiences in the German military resistance to Hitler:

It was hunting that truly shaped our behavior in nature, and profoundly influenced our way of life.

Hunting was not only a way of hardening the body. It prepared us, without our being aware of it, for the laws of life, for the struggles of existence: saving one’s strength, fleeing from an adversary, recovering, knowing how to use cunning, adapting to the enemy, assessing risk.

We learned how to keep our sang-froid in the tumult of dogs excited by the battle ...

Hunting also accustomed us to the laws of violent death, internalized the notion of an offering. Yes, hunting was a preparation for the supreme sacrifice — the sacrifice of life.

Furthermore, Boeselager draws our attention to the impact of his education and Christian faith on his decision to join the anti-Hitler resistance. Sent from his Rhineland estate in Heimerzheim to a Jesuit boarding school about an hour’s drive away in Godesberg near Bonn, Boeselager identifies key principles of his educational religious training that prepared him to take a stand against a tyrant and a corrupt moral and political system:

The Jesuit curriculum ... did not seek to train priests, but to reconcile the sacred and the profane in human beings, and to keep alive the flame of faith amid the chaos of the world. The practice of religion was not supposed to be an end in itself; it was intended to slip naturally into schedules, the lives, as it were, the skins of young boys. The five or six years we spent in Godesberg helped root in us a solid, authentic, uncomplicated, moderate faith. Ultimately, we acquired more a way of behaving than a body of knowledge ... In any case, we learned the most important thing that can be taught: how to learn.

The headmaster of the boarding school was a patriot. As he saw it, the Christian values, humanism, sense of honor, respect for others, and tradition of intellectual rigor and critical vigilance that had long characterized Jesuit pedagogy were not incompatible with patriotism. Interestingly, none of my classmates later became a Nazi supporter. This fact, which was rather exceptional in my generation, deserves to be noted.

Boeselager makes an important distinction between being a patriot and a Nazi supporter. For him and others in the anti-Hitler military conspiracy it was not incongruent to have a deep and abiding love for Germany, and yet not be part of the ultranationalist Nazi mindset;

Hitler did not have a monopoly on the love of the Fatherland.

But patriotism can also blind, and Boeselager is forthright in admitting that he was not paying careful attention to the regime's actions while he was in officer training during the late 1930s. "I have to admit that the famous papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* ("With Burning Anxiety"), which denounced Nazism, had hardly any effect on me. I was barely twenty years old; at that age, one easily forgets encyclicals read from the pulpit, and one certainly doesn't read them for amusement!"

Such an admission, even with regard to the encyclical, is a fresh and welcome perspective in the corpus on the Third Reich. Yet one thing commanded his attention at the time: his father's reversal of his own decision to join the Nazi Party. According to his son, Albert von Boeselager originally joined the party a year after Hitler came to power not out "personal conviction, or even opportunism," but as a way to appease the local population, who looked up to him as a leading member of the aristocracy. After all, should the elder Boeselager come across as scornful of "the popular elements" of Nazism that the vast majority of the locals found so appealing?

Three years later, however, Albert von Boeselager's perspective had dramatically shifted. For one thing, the Nazi authorities continued to violate the concordat signed with the Holy See in July 1933. In 1937 the Nazi regime ordered the removal of crucifixes from schools. For the elder Boeselager, a devout Catholic, such an action revealed much about the totalitarian aims of Hitler and the National Socialists. Taken together with other Nazi laws and regulations that violated, restricted, or withdrew individual freedoms, Philipp's father decided to resign his party membership in March of 1938 just as the rolls of the party began to swell with the German annexation of Austria.

As punishment for his wilful rejection of the party, the Nazi authorities forced the elder Boeselager to resign from all organizations he

presided over, including the beloved National League for the Defence of Hunting. Such intimidation, however, did not hamper him from actively assisting his Jewish neighbours, a fact that did not go unnoticed by the young Philipp. Recognizing that anti-Jewish measures were becoming more intense, the elder Boeselager warned the three Jewish families in the small community of Heimerzheim to leave. He even offered to pay the travel expenses for each family if they could obtain the proper paperwork and visas. Two of these families managed to emigrate, and arrived in the United States before the outbreak of war, while the third put their

trust in an Iron Cross awarded to the patriarch of the Moses family during the Great War and chose to stay; according to Boeselager, such misplaced faith did nothing to save the family from deportation and death.

Pre-war anti-Jewish measures also influenced Boeselager's views of the regime, but had less of an immediate impact on his decision to join the anti-Hitler resistance. Kristallnacht in particular shocked him and his fellow soldiers-in-training:

"Constructing a spirit of comradeship was more important to us than pretending to be citizens of the world. Sports were more important than political discussions."

For us, public order was non-negotiable, and a pogrom was an unprecedented violation of rights and public peace, inadmissible in a civilized country. We all agreed — perhaps with a certain naïveté — that if we had been present in town when exactions were being made, we would have cited the criminal code regarding legitimate self-defense. Our commandant assured us that the courts would take action. Later on, when we realized the full measure of the atrocities, we were for a time persuaded that the generals would act. For us, it was unthinkable that the law could be violated with impunity in Germany, without anyone doing anything about it.

Yet, such outrage was fleeting. By his own admission: "Constructing a spirit of comradeship was more important to us than pretending to be citizens of the world. Sports were more important than political discussions." Pre-war anti-Jewish actions within Germany and then

the greater Reich, therefore — the April 1933 boycott of Jewish businesses, the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, Kristallnacht, etc. — did not push Boeselager to the point of joining any anti-Hitler conspiracy at the time. In fact, it would only be the events that took place after the start of Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, which served as tipping points to send him into the camp of those plotting a coup.

The war with the Soviet Union provides the backdrop for much of the rest of the memoir. According to Hitler, Operation Barbarossa was intended to be “a clash of two ideologies ... and a war of extermination.”¹ To prosecute this campaign against both an armed enemy and an ideology, Hitler targeted Red Army political commissars, Communist Party officials, and communist intelligentsia as criminals and partners in a far-reaching Judeo-Bolshevik conspiracy. As punishment for their so-called criminality, they were to be exterminated under the cover of the military operation.² The SS (SD) and Security Police were also given “special tasks” behind the front lines to exploit and eventually exterminate Jews and other “undesirables.”

Three of the Boeselager brothers died fighting the Red Army, including Philipp’s two younger male siblings in the first five months of the campaign. The brutality of war on the Eastern Front seemed unprecedented to him. While his division followed in the path of Napoleon, he was keenly aware that little had been learned from the French emperor’s own successes and failures over a century before.

The first hint Boeselager gives about the criminal nature of some of the actions of the German military and security forces during the Barbarossa campaign occurs when he mentions “the sinister Commissar Order, which called for the execution of Soviet political commissars who had been taken prisoner ...” He maintains that the order never reached his unit, and was not applied in his area. Within the chronological scope and sequence of the narrative through

the end of 1941, however, he does not mention the war against the Jews. As a frontline cavalry soldier within the 86th Infantry Division, he only describes military operations that he and his brother Georg engaged in during the first six months of the Barbarossa campaign.

In fact, it was the eventual folly of the military operations, not the treatment of Jews, which led Boeselager to first question the competency of the German military command structure. Seriously wounded in the abdomen during intense fighting outside Moscow on 10 December 1941, Boeselager was moved to the rear, but was often left for days without care or food. It took three

weeks to get him to a hospital in Breslau, during which time he received several other wounds from attacks on the troop transport trains. According to Boeselager, “Once I had recovered, I drew from this very pessimistic conclusions regarding the ability of the military command to conduct the war.”

Such a mindset proved to be fertile ground to nurture his involvement with the military coup leaders. Upon the comple-

tion of his convalescence in the spring of 1942, Boeselager was transferred off the frontlines to the Führer Reserve; Hitler himself had even decorated him for his bravery under fire.

At this point in the narrative, Boeselager departs from the chronological and offers more explanatory notes about his motivation to join the anti-Hitler resistance. He opens chapter eight, “The Conspiracy Begins,” with the following:

Desiring the end of the regime and the death of the leader was, in the eyes of our compatriots, not only a state offense but also a stab in the back of the people as a whole, united in fighting a merciless war. The decision to join the resistance could only result from a long deliberation, which was certainly made easier by the events, scenes, and situations I had observed or experienced. ... In my case it was a combination of different experiences that led to the decision to rebel, to the point that this idea, at first difficult to accept, by 1942 seemed obvious and even obligatory. I was lucky enough to meet people

Early in the memoir, he speaks with admiration that none of his classmates became Nazis. Yet, does this mean that Jesuit pedagogy was an antidote to Nazism?

who were further along in the process, and who embodied my commitment. The education Georg and I received was certainly not alien to the evolution of our views, which advanced in tandem even though we had been separated in 1941-42, and our communications on the subject were necessarily fleeting.

Boeselager takes on Georg's involvement with the conspiracy first. By the fall of 1942, Colonel Henning von Tresckow had already enlisted Georg, who was disillusioned and frustrated by Hitler's behavior and attitudes. But for Philipp, the process of involvement in the conspiracy required much more emotional massaging and soul-searching:

If I hadn't been wounded in December 1941, if I hadn't been assigned to [Field Marshal] Kluge's staff, if I hadn't met Tresckow, that exceptional figure, and especially if I hadn't acquired the habit of confiding some of my thoughts to him, I would never have emerged from my reserve. I would have remained captive to private scruples and insoluble internal conflicts. To begin this intellectual and moral development was to embark upon a pilgrimage whose goal was uncertain. It was already to commit treason. To be sure, Hitler had failed many times to keep his word, and he had sacrificed tens of thousands of lives to his diabolical whims. Nonetheless, for a military man, for whom the first requirement was obedience, starting down this road was certainly not easy.

Little things mattered in this process, especially for one who had sworn an oath of allegiance to the Führer. The sermons of Monsignor Clemens August von Galen, the bishop of Münster, for example, resonated with Boeselager and other frontline veterans. Monsignor Galen had spoken out against the Nazi practice of euthanasia in 1941. Eventually, by the fall of 1941, the official government practice of murdering the physically and mentally handicapped was allegedly brought to a conclusion within the Reich. But some soldiers feared that, should they become amputees, or severely disabled as a result of combat wounds, the Nazi government might lump them in the category of "useless to society" and have them "eliminated" too. Figures like

Monsignor Galen, therefore, became role models to Boeselager.

An incident involving the treatment of local gypsies, however, became one of the major catalysts for securing Boeselager's involvement with those in the conspiracy. In the late spring of 1942, Boeselager was assigned as the aide-de-camp to Field Marshal Hans Günter von Kluge at Army Group Centre. This meant that he did everything from serving as office manager, report writer, and summary reader to listening in to the Field Marshal's phone conversations with Hitler and other top officials (at Kluge's request) so his superior officer was clear and understood what was expected of him. In short, he was a close and trusted confidant of the head of Army Group Centre when the war was very much in the balance. Tresckow served as operations officer on this same staff.

In June of 1942, while preparing to provide a summary of the day's events, Boeselager had read a dispatch sent to the Field Marshal from SS Obergruppenführer (Lieutenant-General) Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski about rear area anti-partisan activity. The message ended with what Boeselager called "an enigmatic and vaguely troubling entry: 'Special treatment for five Gypsies.'"

As part of "The Regulation on Commitment of the Security Police and SD units of the Army," also known as the Heydrich-Wagner Agreement, an official working agreement between the Army and the SS, the SS had the authority to engage in "special tasks" at, and to the rear of, combat operations to deal with everything from partisans and guerilla forces, to Jews and Gypsies.³ Boeselager, however, appeared confused, and told the Field Marshal he "could not explain the meaning of this expression [special treatment]." Kluge noted that he was to meet Bach-Zelewski in a few days, and Boeselager could ask for further details then.

When pressed about this expression, "special treatment" at their face-to-face meeting, Bach-Zelewski stated without hesitation that this meant "shot, executed." Boeselager reports that both he and Kluge were shocked that Jews and Gypsies caught in the Nazi dragnet were shot, "liquidated" without a military tribunal. Both Kluge and Boeselager initially,

however, passed this incident off as the “uncontrolled excesses of the SS.” Only later, Boeselager argues, did he and the Field Marshal come to understand that the killing of Jews and Gypsies behind the Eastern Front was Nazi policy.

This incident, however, completely changed Boeselager’s view of the war effort forever. Boeselager stated:

I was disgusted and afraid ... I had proof of the abomination before my eyes. It was no longer a matter of isolated acts committed by aberrant individuals. It was a rigorous plan that had been sanctioned by the highest authorities. We had to face facts: the state as a whole was riddled with vice and criminality. *And the army, by remaining silent, was making itself the system’s accomplice* (emphasis mine).

1938 had come and was long gone; nowhere in this passage do we read how sports and other activities were more important, and kept him and his fellow soldiers from focusing on the reality at hand. In wartime Boeselager doesn’t fall back this time on excuses, but rather, he soberly faces the truth and addresses those armchair historians among his readers who have too often pre-judged him and his fellow conspirators:

This situation seems to us blindingly clear, yet it was not so clear for contemporaries, who were convinced that Germany was a model of civilization and that it could not be subjected to either a dictatorship or murderous totalitarianism. ... Kluge’s altercation with Bach-Zelewski had shown clearly enough how the fruit was already rotting away from the inside.

Boeselager then reconnects events involving the murder of Jews in the area of Army Group Centre in the fall of 1941, which he had heard about, and begins to pay much more careful attention to the kinds of conversations and reports involving the treatment of Jews and Gypsies. He also begins confiding more in Tresckow, who, by this time, was one of the leading members of the resistance to Hitler among the military of Army Group Centre.

A second incident that caused Boeselager to join the resistance took place at Hitler’s Ukrainian headquarters at Vinnytsya later in

the summer of 1942. Kluge had gone to see the Führer to address security and tactical issues relating to the 9th Army in the Rzhev salient. Boeselager happened to sit at a table during lunch with Martin Bormann, Hitler’s secretary and head of the Nazi Party; few military personnel were among those at the table. Much of the conversation swirled around gossip or perfunctory matters, and included schemes to seduce the women of the Kraft Durch Freude (Strength Through Joy) group, who were visiting Vinnytsya to boost the morale of the troops.

Boeselager was furious; he had close friends and family fighting desperately in the Rzhev salient, and he found it deeply offensive and disrespectful to carry on with such wanton disregard for the frontline soldiers. He even said so to Bormann, one of the most outspoken hooligans at the luncheon. For his honesty, Bormann ordered Boeselager locked up. When Kluge finally tracked Boeselager down, he reprimanded him, and told him: “This time I was able to save you. The next time you’ll keep your mouth shut. But basically, you’re absolutely right.”

Finally, an incident involving a phone conversation between Hitler and Kluge served as the event that secured Boeselager’s participation with the conspirators. Kluge had asked Boeselager to listen in on a call by Hitler to his commanding officer in which the Führer offered his congratulations on the occasion of Kluge’s 60th birthday. At the end of the conversation, Hitler abruptly announced that he was giving the field marshal 250,000 marks to build stables at his wife’s estate as a gesture of gratitude for his service to the German people. Before he could respond, Hitler had hung up. Summoned by Kluge, the field marshal asked Boeselager for his reaction to the gift. Boeselager coolly responded: “Marshal, I admit I don’t recall that any Prussian marshal ever accepted a present from a sovereign in the course of a campaign. After a victory, yes. But during a conflict, never. If I were you, Marshal, I would give the money to the Red Cross.”

Embarrassed by his own directness, and not getting an initial reaction from the field marshal, Boeselager sought out Tresckow as a sounding board. Tresckow responded by saying he would have to strongly recommend to Kluge

that he not accept the money. Boeselager, fearing a breach of confidentiality, urged Tresckow not to speak to the field marshal about the conversation, which had been private. Tresckow's two-sentence response sealed Boeselager's involvement:

'The marshal must not make himself dependent on the Führer. We need him in our fight against Hitler.' With these words, Tresckow had unveiled himself. He had at the same time enlisted me in his group of conspirators.

The result of this recruitment was that Boeselager had once again a reason to hope, a sentiment he expressed confidentially to his brother Georg at the end of 1942.

At this point in the narrative, Boeselager provides his own profiles in courage by giving snapshots of fellow conspirators like Tresckow, whom he describes as "one of those rare individuals who combines kindness, intelligence, and effectiveness" and "a man of deep and abiding faith." His encounters with others in the conspiracy like Fabian von Schlabrendorff, Georg Schulze-Büttger (also known as Schubü), Carl-Friedrich von Berg-Schönefeld, and Hans-Ulrich von Oertzen, to name just a few, illustrate the depth of his involvement, and the precautions they all had to take to ensure that their plots would not become known to the Nazi faithful. This "Tresckow Group" consisted of some thirty officers and contained "the largest number of insurgent officers we would ever assemble."

As part of his early military education, Boeselager had received explosives training, an uncommon practice for a non-engineer. Such training proved highly valuable to the conspirators. He maintained a stock of foreign explosives without arousing suspicion, and since these types of explosives were rare and carefully monitored, his stock became extremely important. He was even able to conduct tests of the explosives and detonators, and through this process, determined that those produced by the British stood the highest chance of succeeding. As a

result, he "became the conspiracy's chief explosives expert, as it were."

Once again, Boeselager directly addresses a myth and stereotype of those in the anti-Hitler circle that many of his readers may have:

Nothing would be more misleading than to imagine us as a little group of conspirators entirely absorbed in our cause, spending whole nights consulting in smoke-filled rooms remaking the world and planning assassinations. ... [Rather] we were accustomed to concise orders and exact communications, and we seldom chatted or engaged in collective reflection.

While they did at first discuss the legitimacy of their mission to take out Hitler, they considered "at great length ... the justification for murder — for an assassination, even of a tyrant, remains a murder."

In addition, he boldly responds to contemporary critics who question the rationale and motivations of the conspiring officers. Some armchair historians argue that the conspirators simply wanted to preserve conquests in the East at any price

by reaching a separate peace with the Western Allies "that would make it possible to impose harsher conditions on the Soviets once the war effort was directed entirely toward them."

Others maintain that the conspirators wanted to re-establish Germany's 1914 borders. Boeselager responds harshly:

I categorically deny that claim. Our information left no doubt about the Allies' firm intentions; they would liquidate all the Reich's possessions outside the 1938 borders. One didn't need to be a great strategist to see that the entry of such a great economic power as the United States, spared fighting on its own soil, would tilt the scales sharply in favor of our adversaries. The war was obviously lost, and none of the belligerents had an interest in making a separate peace with Germany. The Casablanca Conference in January 1943, had, moreover, required

When Kluge finally tracked Boeselager down, he reprimanded him, and told him: "This time I was able to save you. The next time you'll keep your mouth shut. But basically, you're absolutely right."

Germany to surrender unconditionally. Finally, Hans Oster, the number two man in the Abwehr [military intelligence] and a focal point for the various conspiracies, informed us of discussions regarding the fate of German territories that testified to the degree of solidarity among the Allies. *For us, it was therefore a question of putting an end to hostilities and saving as many lives as possible — nothing more* (emphasis mine).

When Boeselager expressed frustration to Tresckow and Georg Schulze-Büttger in early 1943 about the progress of the conspiracy, Tresckow's response again highlighted a key element in the motivation of the plotters: saving lives, especially those of Germany's enemies in the East. "Gentlemen, every day we are assassinating sixteen thousand additional victims. We have no choice."

Furthermore, Tresckow and Philipp's brother Georg were at work getting Kluge's support in 1943 to set up an autonomous cavalry unit to be used in support of the coup as a mobile shock force. Despite all efforts to keep this plotting a secret, word managed to still leak out about the cavalry group. Although such leaks did not prove fatal at the time, the conspiracy showed signs of both having widespread tacit support among those who heard of it, as well as dangerous implications should someone with deep loyalties to Hitler and the regime find out about the true machinations of the plotters.

By the spring of 1943, Kluge had authorized the establishment of the special cavalry unit with Georg as its commanding officer. Referred to as the "*Boeselager Reiterverband*," Philipp took command of one of its two regiments, leaving the staff of Field Marshal Kluge for frontline duty.

At this point, the course of the war in the East had shifted; the Sixth Army had recently surrendered at Stalingrad, and the Red Army, buoyed by American machinery and new technological developments in tanks, battlefield rockets, fighter plane production, and seemingly endless new recruits, began making striking advances

into German positions. The conspirators also stepped up their efforts.

Boeselager chronicles three attempts on Hitler's life in 1943. The first involved an assassination attempt with a pistol to take place when Hitler came to visit the Eastern Front. Georg was to be the primary shooter, but he had reservations about being the lone gunman, so the plotters secured a roomful of others to back him up. The plotters decided to abort the mission, however, because Himmler was not in attendance with the Führer; they greatly feared SS repression should a void in leadership occur. In addition, Kluge felt it was also cowardly for them to

shoot Hitler while he was sitting down at lunch. The backup plan was then to use explosives to blow up Hitler's plane travelling back to Berlin. The conspirators managed to get explosives onto the plane, hidden inside a bottle of cognac. But the detonator malfunctioned due to the extreme cold in the cargo bay, and the plotters then had to retrieve the explosives immediately after the plane landed; no small task.

Furthermore, Lieutenant-Colonel Rudolf von Gersdorff, the Army Group Centre Intelligence Officer, strapped bombs to himself, and was willing to set off the explosives in order to kill Hitler, Göring, and Himmler at the Heroes' Day celebration (20 March 1943). Hitler moved too quickly, however, and did not stay in the same room with the other Nazi leaders for the plan to come to fruition.

In this chapter, Boeselager also addresses the role of the Nazi program to murder the Jews of Europe as another motivating factor for those in the conspiracy; it was believed that the death of Hitler would put an immediate end to the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question." In this light, Tresckow actively worked to thwart SS (SD) and Security Police efforts to round up and exterminate Jews in the area of Army Group Centre, which Boeselager confirms with a post-war visit to Yad Vashem.

Unfortunately numerous readers, and even some scholars, maintain that the persecution of

The summary of the Gestapo investigation into the 20 July failed coup attempt makes it remarkably clear that Nazi policies and pogroms against the Jews throughout Europe were indeed major motivating factors for the resisters

the Jews was not a central motivating factor for the conspirators. Chief among those in the academic world is Daniel Goldhagen. His 1996 book *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* makes several sweeping generalizations that have helped continue to foster some of the myths surrounding the motivation of the coup participants. For example, Goldhagen speaks about, "The glaring absence of significant protest or privately expressed dissent, especially principled dissent, with respect to the treatment and eventual genocidal slaughter of the Jews ..."⁴

Yet, the summary of the Gestapo investigation from 28 October 1944 into the 20 July failed coup attempt makes it remarkably clear that Nazi policies and pogroms against the Jews of the Greater German Reich and throughout Europe were indeed major motivating factors for the resisters:

The entire inner alienation from the ideas of National Socialism which characterized the men of the reactionary conspiratorial circle expresses itself above all in their position on the Jewish Question. ... they stubbornly take the liberal position of granting to Jews in principle the same status as every German.⁵

Moreover, Boeselager continues to speak to the doubts and judgments many of his readers have about the motivations and lack of results by those in the anti-Hitler conspiracy. During a 2004 lecture in Paris at a conference of German and French resisters on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the July 20 coup attempt, Boeselager was asked a question by a young man in the audience. "Why didn't you organize other conspiracies? Why didn't you try again and again?"

Boeselager's response seems somewhat hollow: "It was wartime! ... Our primary role, as officers, was to make sure our men survived and returned home." He explains further that while

their true objective was to eliminate the Führer and overthrow the regime, they also had operational objectives; they were involved in desperate battles with the Red Army, and they had a responsibility to the men they commanded. His bottom line: the Eastern Front consumed "virtually all our energy, our concentration, and physical and psychological capacities."

The last third of the memoir describes in detail operational successes and setbacks during the last two years of the war. More importantly,

Boeselager also covers the 20 July 1944 coup attempt from his perspective as the one in charge of bringing the autonomous cavalry force to Berlin from the Eastern Front to serve as a mobile shock group in support of the coup (*Operation Valkyrie*). He covers Georg's vain attempts on behalf of Tresckow to get Kluge, now in charge of the war on the Western Front, to actively support the coup with more than "benevolent neutrality," and surrender German



forces to the invading Western Allies.

In spite of Kluge's reluctance, the conspirators pressed on with Count Claus von Stauffenberg's attempt to kill Hitler with a valise of explosives at his East Prussian military headquarters. Boeselager had already withdrawn his cavalry forces from the immediate front, and had them almost to the eastern German border when he was abruptly ordered to reverse course and return to the front; the coup had failed.

Boeselager includes a conversation between Stauffenberg and Tresckow about the necessity of carrying out the coup attempt at such a risk if the military situation suggested that the Nazi dictatorship would not last much longer. Tresckow's response is telling about the core principles at stake:

The assassination has to take place, whatever the cost. Even if it doesn't succeed, we have to

try. Now it is no longer the object of the assassination that matters, but rather to show the whole world and history, that the German resistance movement dared to gamble everything, even at the risk of its own life. All the rest, in the end, is merely secondary.

Boeselager was never questioned why his unit withdrew, and he became one of the lucky ones not among the close to seven hundred individuals arrested, cruelly tortured, and interrogated for taking part in the coup. He did, however, receive a scare. Ordered to fly to Army Headquarters, he believed he would be walking into a trap as soon as his aircraft set down in Berlin. Upon boarding, his travel Bible slipped out, and lay open to a section in the Gospel of Luke (a part of the Benedictus) that read: "That we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear" (Luke 1:74). He took this as confirmation that he would be safe, which he indeed was. His brother Georg too escaped notice of the authorities, but he did not make it through the war, dying in battle at age twenty-nine just over a month after the failed coup attempt.

Boeselager spent the most of the rest of the war as a special officer for the cavalry based near Zossen, just south of Berlin. He worked diligently to get German soldiers out of East Prussia alive. Eventually put in command of the 31st Cavalry Regiment after earning a promotion to major, he heard the news of Hitler's suicide on 1 May 1945 while withdrawing his forces out of eastern Austria so they could surrender to the British and not the advancing Red Army. Of this time he writes:

On May 9, shortly after midnight, ... I myself crossed the bridge at Wildon. In the moonlight, I stopped my horse for a moment and went over to the parapet. ... I pulled out the little cyanide capsule that had been with me for about three years. Kluge, whose son-in-law was a physician, had given it to me one day when our airplane was almost shot down by partisans. Now I threw it into the river. Thus, this symbol of the painful end of my youth, of those years of bitterness and dread, of unspoken fears, sank silently into the water. The poison capsule was death itself, caught in the fold

of my garment. I felt lighter. The war was over. I was alive!

Home by July 1945 with his pistol and both his horses, Philipp Boeselager began a new chapter of his life. The memoir ends with a brief epilogue describing the 2004 conference in Paris, and concludes with three rules he lived with throughout his life:

1. To keep my political conscience awake;
2. To respond to the call;
3. To know how to say no.

While the narrative is both informative and engrossing, as readers, we are left at the conclusion of the memoir with several troubling questions. For example, early in the memoir, he speaks with admiration that none of his classmates became Nazis. Yet, does this mean that Jesuit pedagogy was an antidote to Nazism? That somehow what they learned inoculated them, and provided the strength to stand against the wiles of the National Socialist worldview? Did others receiving a Jesuit education in pre-Nazi Germany have similar anti-Nazi views?

Boeselager also portrays Kluge as having learned about SS crimes at the same time as he did, in the summer of 1942. Yet, Kluge saw SS crimes against Jews in Poland, and certainly was aware of the Commissar Order and the other so-called pre-Barbarossa "Criminal Orders," since reports on the execution of Red Army political officers were required to be passed along up the chain of command.⁶ Soldiers and security personnel alike carried out war crimes of varying degrees on the Eastern Front from virtually the start of the invasion, and it would be most surprising if Kluge remained in the dark that long.

Furthermore, it would also be just as surprising if Boeselager himself did not know about the fact that the SS (SD) and Security Police had received orders to conduct "special tasks" against guerillas and Jews, as the so-called Heydrich-Wagner Agreement spelled out such distinctions, and even required that the army supply the SS with provisions, including bullets used in executions ordered through the quartermaster general. Would he have completely missed

these anti-Jewish actions, which commenced shortly after the Barbarossa campaign got under way?

Moreover, this reader found some small sources of irritation throughout the memoir. The lack of citations of primary sources for cross-referencing purposes proved somewhat frustrating. For example, Boeselager quotes a conversation between Tresckow and Stauffenberg (pages 159-160), and yet never provides us with the reference!

In addition, while it is correct that Philipp Boeselager's involvement in the plot to kill Hitler was greatly aided and abetted by his brother Georg's participation in the coup, this is a relatively short memoir (186 pages), and Philipp frequently uses his older brother Georg to advance the narrative either through events he himself did not encounter, or perhaps because what his brother accomplished appeared to be more heroic. Such a technique, however, takes some getting used to. The subtitle tells us that he was the last surviving member of the group who conspired and attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler, but much of the memoir tells the story of both brothers, and in some sections, the focus rests solely on his older brother. As a reader, I can certainly understand and appreciate this special relationship, but it often feels more like a homage to Georg than a deconstruction of the inner workings among the anti-Hitler Wehrmacht officers.

That said, I would have liked to learn more about the rest of his family. His mother and other siblings are virtually absent from the memoir. Nor do we learn anything of his life after the war, and why it took as long as it did for him to tell his side of the story as one of the surviving members of the anti-Hitler conspiracy.

Nonetheless, this is a remarkable and refreshing insider's view of the German military resistance during the war years of the Third Reich. It should be required reading alongside the most comprehensive and authoritative academic works on the subject, *The History of The German Resistance to Hitler, 1933-1945* by McGill University's Peter Hoffmann (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1996) and his *Behind Valkyrie: German Resistance to Hitler — Related Documents* (Montreal: McGill-Queens, 2011). ☞

Notes:

1. Generaloberst Halder, *Kriegstagebuch* in three volumes, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, (ed.) (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1962-1964), Vol. 2, pp. 336-337. Hitler made these statements on Sunday, 30 March 1941 in the expectation of an attack against the USSR beginning in April, which was delayed by the suddenly necessary Balkans campaign; had he known this, Hitler most likely would not have informed so many military leaders so early of a secret campaign decision that was to go into effect almost three months later.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 337.
3. Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (Freiburg, Germany, hereafter cited as BAMA), RW 4/v 575, *Regelung des Einsatzes der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD im Verbands des Heeres*. A full English translation of the "Commitment of the Security Police and the Security Service in the Operational Area," is found in *Trials of War Criminals Before the Nürnberg Military Tribunals Under Control Council Law No. 10 (IMT-TWC)*, Vol. 10, Document NOKW 2080, pp. 1239-1242. Both the original German and an English translation also appear together in National Archives and Records Administration, (NARA), Record Group (RG) 238, Microfilm Publication T-1119, Roll 27, Frame Numbers 32-43.
4. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (New York: Knopf, 1996), p. 116.
5. Peter Hoffmann, "The German Resistance, The Jews, and Daniel Goldhagen," in Franklin Littell, (ed.), *Hyping the Holocaust: Scholars Answer Goldhagen* (Merion Station, PA: Merion Westfield Press, 1997), p. 88.
6. BAMA, RH 21-3/v. 423 (records of the Ic/AO III of Army Group North, 10 June 1941), and BAMA, RH 21-3/v.423 (records of the Ic of Armored Group 3) as cited in Jürgen Förster, "Operation Barbarossa as a War of Conquest and Annihilation," in Horst Boog, Jürgen Förster, Joachim Hoffmann, Ernst Klink, Rolf-Dieter Müller, and Gerd Ueberschär (eds.), translated from the German by Dean McMurray, Ewald Osers, and Louise Willmot, *Germany and the Second World War: The Attack on the Soviet Union* (Vol. IV) (New York: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 505. The original German edition appeared in 1983.

The Serious Historian as Gadfly

Graham Stewart

Hugh Trevor-Roper: The Biography. Adam Sisman. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2010.

“Hitler diary hoax victim Lord Dacre dies at 89” ran the headline of *The Times* in London on 27 January 2003. But for a single disastrous error of judgement made during a few chaotic days in April 1983, readers might otherwise have been alerted to the demise of one of post-war Britain’s greatest historians.

Headline writers, of course, are expected to demonstrate brevity alongside an ability to pinpoint the aspect of a story that will draw readers’ attention. By that criterion, *The Times*’ sub-editor could hardly be faulted, even if the result was a noticeably cruel summation of a life otherwise marked by notable achievement. A more sobering reflection on celebrity, reputations and the modern media could easily conclude that the passing of a man of such distinction would scarcely have commanded the same prominence in the news but for the human angle: how

a supposed expert who was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University from 1957 to 1980 had been humbled by a not especially competent fraudster. The downfall of Lord Dacre — as Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper was styled after taking his peerage in 1979 — was a story that was part tragedy, part farce. In this model biography, Adam Sisman depicts a man whose immense talent and astonishing breadth of intellect was handicapped by personal flaws, in particular personal pride and an obsession with academic sparring. It is a poignant and salutary tale.

In the current academic climate, a historian who wrote on both English seventeenth century ecclesiastical politics and the unravelling of the Third Reich would be considered by his colleagues something of a dilettante rather than someone of commendable intellectual range. As Sisman’s biography demonstrates, this is no recent development. In 1957 Trevor-Roper was already warning of the dangers of academics confining their careers to ever-decreasing circles of specialization without engaging in wider debate. Yet, even his extraordinary range was broadened though circumstances that were not of his making. For the subject-matter that first brought Trevor-Roper to worldwide attention was the same one that 38 years later would return to haunt him.

Trevor-Roper was already an Oxford don with a waspish and revisionist biography of the seventeenth century high church Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, about to be published, when he was recruited to the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) for the duration of the second world war. Six months after the conflict ended, there was still doubt about the Führer’s

Graham Stewart was born in Edinburgh and studied at St Andrews University, gaining his Ph.D. from Cambridge University. He worked as an assistant to the politician and diarist, Alan Clark, as a writer and historian at The Times, and writes regularly for The Spectator and Literary Review. His books include Burying Caesar: Churchill, Chamberlain and the Battle for the Tory Party; Friendship and Betrayal: Ambition and the Limits of Loyalty; His Finest Hours: The War Speeches of Winston Churchill; and Britannia: 100 Documents That Shaped a Nation. His next book is BANG! Britain in the Eighties.

fate. To the reasonable question, “where was the body?” was added Soviet trouble-making: had the Führer escaped the chaos of the ruined Berlin and gone into hiding in the West? The mystery needed solving and MI6 turned to Trevor-Roper to act as historian-detective. Not only did his interrogations of those who had been with Hitler in May 1945 yield compelling information, the resulting book, *The Last Days of Hitler*, became both an international bestseller and the accepted account of the denouement in the führerbunker. Even sixty-four years later, it remains a standard text to which subsequent research has added detail without contradicting any of its fundamental tenets. From the moment of its publication in 1947 it ensured that its author found himself in a peculiar predicament -- with a popular reputation built on the mastery of a subject that he had not gone into academia to study.

Thus it was that unlike most other history books from the 1940s, *The Last Days of Hitler* was still selling well in 1983, when the German magazine *Stern* announced it was in possession of sixty identically bound volumes of Hitler’s diaries together with other sundry papers (allegedly including the Führer’s sketches for an opera entitled *Wieland the Blacksmith*). Supposedly, the treasure-trove had been rescued from a crashed aircraft that had flown out of war-torn Berlin just as the Soviet net was closing, the precious cache having been hidden during the intervening years.

With *Stern* touting the serialisation rights, Rupert Murdoch was among the newspaper owners interested in publishing the historical scoop of the century. He naturally turned to Trevor-Roper — who was not only a Hitler expert but also a director on the board of Murdoch’s Times Newspapers Ltd — to examine the diaries and pronounce on whether they were fact or fake. Although he was scarcely given the time to make a proper examination of the contents, the eminent professor stated his belief that they were genuine, writing in *The Times*, that “the sheer volume of material was compelling evidence.” Instead of wondering how someone with Hitler’s known aversion to writing — not to mention his other pressing preoccupations - had found the time to confide so much to his dear diary, Trevor-Roper mused that “If Hitler (as he

said in 1942) had long ago found writing by hand a great effort, that may be not so much because he was out of practice as because he already suffered from writer’s cramp.”

This remarkable self-delusion was soon to end in despair. The diaries, it quickly transpired after the most basic of forensic testing, had been forged by a Stuttgart conman named Konrad Kujau who had based much of the material from Max Domarus’s published compendium, *Hitler’s Speeches and Proclamations*. The newsagent opposite Peterhouse, the Cambridge college of which Trevor-Roper was by then Master, kept its “HITLER DIARIES HOAX” news placard up for several weeks — allegedly thanks to a bribe from some of the Master’s more bitchy academic colleagues on High Table.

Academic in-fighting was one of the recurring themes of Trevor-Roper’s career, his spat with Lawrence Stone over the latter’s “Anatomy of the English Aristocracy” in *The Economic History Review* being only one of the most vicious among a series of skirmishes and full-scale confrontations. A keen and courageous foxhunter, Trevor-Roper thrilled to the chase, admitting “there is nothing so exhilarating as a good battle, I find.” It left him short of allies when he eventually needed them.

But it would be quite unfair to assume from this that he was the lone guilty party or that he was guided purely by petty personal prejudices against other individuals. To his early confrontational approach towards Catholicism, he quickly added a prolonged assault on Marxism — not only in its political manifestation but in its historicist theories which took a firm hold in history departments across the campuses of the West. Against such an approach, Trevor-Roper stood up not just for conservatism but for the rigorous search for evidence rather than the mere fitting of slanted assumptions into the patchwork of a preconceived, all embracing, dogma. “I used to think that historical events always had deep economic causes,” he confided to Bernard Berenson, “I now believe that pure farce covers a far greater field of history, and that Gibbon is a more reliable guide to that subject than Marx.”

The seventeenth century provided a fitting period in which to pit these contrasting

approaches. Even those who were not communists, like R.H. Tawney, had come to interpret the prologue to the English civil war in Marxist terms as a class conflict in which the gentry were really the bourgeoisie, gaining ground against the aristocracy. To Trevor-Roper, this contention was simply not consistent with the facts. He could find no clear pattern of the gentry gaining at the expense of the aristocracy. If anything, the revolution had been instigated not by thrusting bourgeois progressives but by conservative, backward looking landowners (whether gentry or aristocracy) who harked back to what they believed had been better times before the Stuart monarchy's attempted centralization of government and power.

It was also his fate to endure the petty jealousies of lesser colleagues who resented the exalted social circles in which he and his glamorous (but snobbish) wife moved, the Bentley parked outside college, the media recognition,

the lucrative book contracts and the fame which were all Trevor-Roper's due.

Perhaps these were mixed blessings nevertheless. Primarily concerned with "problems not periods," he was always being distracted from what should have been his legacy — the great book on the Puritan Revolution that he never ended up completing. Instead, his contribution to learning ended up being more varied at the cost of being less focussed. Among the many telling anecdotes in Adam Sisman's exemplary and immensely satisfying biography is one in which Trevor-Roper was invited to contribute ideas for a speech the prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, was to deliver to the United Nations:

"So, Lord Dacre," she began ominously, "and when can we expect another book from you?"

"Well Prime Minister," Hugh replied, "I have one on the stocks."

"On the stocks! On the stocks! A fat lot of good that is! In the shops, that is where we need it!" ❧

THE 4th NATIONAL FORUM ON CANADIAN HISTORY

SPEAKING OF THE PAST:
HOW HISTORY IS REMEMBERED
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Library and
Archives Canada
Main Auditorium

Thursday, November 17, 2011
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

For more information about
the event onsite or online visit
CanadasHistory.ca/Forum2011



CANADA'S
HISTORY
FORUM

Norman Podhoretz's Achievement

Barbara Kay

Norman Podhoretz: A Biography. Thomas L. Jeffers. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

For sixty years, Norman Podhoretz has consistently ranked amongst America's more influential, and also more controversial, political and cultural writers. And for much of that time he has been neoconservatism's premier salesman in the market of ideas.

Neoconservatism was never an ideology or a movement or a political platform. It's hard to pin it down, although many have tried. Sociologist Nathan Glazer kept it simple, describing a neoconservative as "someone who [formerly] wasn't a conservative." Neoconservatism was given a more nuanced persona by the recently deceased Irving Kristol (the "father of neoconservatism") as a "persuasion," a perspective on the broad range of cultural factors that mould a liberal democracy. Discerning the junction where culture, religion and politics meet and greet each other to mutual benefit was Kristol's particular intellectual passion, and it was to become Podhoretz's as well.

It was Kristol who coined the famous definition of a neoconservative as "a liberal who has been mugged by reality." He had been a leftist in his youth; that was part of his post-enlightenment Jewish heritage. So much evil had come from the right in Jewish history that a kind of blind faith in the left embedded itself in the cultural DNA of Jewish intellectuals. That faith persisted against all reason when the left turned out to be as perfidious where Jews are concerned as the right had been in the past. The betrayal of the left, and its alignment with deeply anti-Semitic forces was a good part of the "reality"

that Kristol felt he had been "mugged" by. Trying to convince stubbornly liberal Jews that socialism and the countercultural revolution of the 1960s were hostile to Jewish interests was a frequently-iterated theme of both Kristol's and Podhoretz's oeuvre.

More than anything else, and most controversially, neoconservatism came to be associated with a belief in America's unique adventure in democracy as a template for other nations' aspirations; a belief that demanded a commitment to stand by America's democratic, and potentially democratic, friends and to seed democracy on whatever terrain is propitious for its growth. Hand in hand with that commitment went a firmly pro-Israel foreign policy.

Before long, neoconservatism began to find favour in America's corridors of power, especially in the George W. Bush White House. Because so many of the persuaders of the powerful were Jews, it was not long before the word "neoconservative" in both far left and far right circles began emitting an anti-Semitic subtext, akin to the locution "rootless cosmopolitan," code for "Jewish intellectual" in the Soviet Union.

Neoconservatism is an ugly sound in the mouths of liberals suffering from, in pundit Charles Krauthammer's words, "Bush Derangement Syndrome." It has been spun by its enemies into something resembling a Marx-meets-the-Protocols-of-Zion conspiracy theory, with philosopher Leo Strauss, Irving Kristol's intellectual muse, posthumously cast as an Antonio Gramsci of the right, from his grave directing the march of his disciples through America's institutions in the service of Israel's interests.

Most of neoconservatism's detractors have

never read a word of Strauss. But western culture is dominated by double standards — one high moral standard for “imperial” America and Israel, and a very low one for everyone whose behaviours are motivated by grievances (real, imagined or fabricated) against them. In a post-modern intellectual void where narrative is a king, and evidence-based argument a pauper, the intellectual defence of neoconservatism has proved a rather Sisyphean chore.

Neoconservatism found its latter-day Sisyphus in Norman Podhoretz. Nobody has aimed higher or wider or more relentlessly in his ambition to restore belief and pride in American exceptionalism than he has. Through his writing — countless essays, speeches for influential political figures, many books and most importantly, through his long time stewardship of *Commentary* magazine, Podhoretz has helped to shape the discourse of the right on such disparate topics as civil rights, race relations, religion in the public forum, sexual politics, aesthetic devolution, anti-Zionism and the Iraq war.

Norman Podhoretz’s long, complex intellectual and personal odyssey has been thoroughly documented, richly annotated and sympathetically captured in Marquette University professor of literature Thomas L. Jeffers’s *Norman Podhoretz: A Biography*.

The first thing to strike the reader is the extraordinary range of Podhoretz’s contribution to America’s intellectual life. The Podhoretz gamut includes overlapping stints as: a literary critic; the editor of “America’s most consequential journal of ideas” (*Washington Post*); a political advisor and speechwriter, whose ideas and compelling rhetoric helped mould presidents’ beliefs and activities; a memoirist whose candour sparked animated debate and roiled codes of intellectual correctness amongst the chattering classes; and, of all things, a theodacist!

Second is the extraordinary passion Podhoretz brought to his thinking and writing and relationships. Persuasion, an art or a game to some, is a profoundly personal matter to Podhoretz. His convictions are swathed in emotional attachment, rooted in a deep, even mystical gratitude for his good fortune, which rested on three particular pillars: He was born in the only nation ever to welcome Jews to its bosom without reservation as full and equal citizens; he belonged

to a religion, Judaism, whose monotheistic God had provided the world with all that was needed to build a just and peaceful social order, and whose central imperative, “choose life,” was the noblest ideal possible; and he was heir to a rich aesthetic culture in which unrivalled beauty and inspiration bloomed from artistic excellence joined to high moral seriousness. Gratitude bred intense loyalty to the institutions and people and social contracts that had produced the optimal cultural environment in which his manifold gifts could be realized.

Norman Podhoretz was born in 1930, in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, to immigrants from Galicia, which during World War One had been conquered by Cossacks and occupied by Russians. All of Podhoretz’s family, neighbours and teachers were leftists in greater or lesser degree, and devotees of Franklin D. Roosevelt. His home, where his first language was Yiddish, was not religiously observant, but he was nevertheless given a rich Jewish education along with the cosmopolitan instruction he received at his Brooklyn high school.

Podhoretz showed intellectual promise very early. He won a scholarship to Columbia University and immediately achieved wide recognition for brilliance in his chosen field, literature, while at the same time attending the Jewish Theological Seminary at night to complete a degree in Jewish Studies. At Columbia he worshipped along with everyone else at the shrine of Lionel Trilling, guru to an entire generation of aspiring literary critics (he was Irving Kristol’s other great intellectual muse). Columbia was followed by three scholarship-funded years in England at Cambridge University, where he was privileged to study and hone his critical writing skills under the supervision of England’s premier literary critic, F.R. Leavis.

Podhoretz was entitled to a student exemption from the armed forces during the Korean War, but chose to enlist out of patriotism and, he admitted, as a means of testing his manhood. He didn’t see active duty, though, and was eventually posted to Germany with the Occupation forces. When a second lieutenant who was supposed to deliver a series of lectures based on a government-written “indoctrination course” (official words) keeled over with stage fright,

young corporal Podhoretz, known to be a brainy college boy, was dragooned into explaining to a sea of enlisted men the difference between Them — the communists — and Us. He enjoyed the experience immensely (“the most successful thing I’ve done in my entire life”). It combined with coincident experiences — he had met Jean-Paul Sartre in Paris and been dumbfounded by his Stalinist apologism; he had recently read and been bowled over by Hannah Arendt’s *The Origins of Totalitarianism* — to assure him he had found his métier, an analyst and communicator of ideas, and his great subject.

The opening sentence of Podhoretz’s 1967 book, *Making It*, is “One of the longest journeys in the world is the journey from Brooklyn to Manhattan.” At the time of Podhoretz’s return to America in the mid-fifties, New York was a hotbed of intellectual and cultural ferment. The Soviet nuclear threat following hard on the heels of World War II and revelations of a holocaust still too overwhelming to be assimilated, coincided with the emergence of the most intellectually gifted concentration of brain power in modern times, known as “The Family.”

The Family was a loosely defined assemblage of New York intellectuals, almost all Jewish — liberal, largely anti-Soviet and pro-Freud — who considered themselves to be at the “bloody crossroads” where literature and politics met. Emerging from immigrant households exactly like Podhoretz’s, they were great incubators of a peculiarly Jewish intellectuality. Pre-eminent amongst the magazines catering to the discerning lay reader’s appetite for “the life of significant contention,” as Trilling’s wife Diana put it in her memoir, were two magazines, *Commentary* and the quasi-Trotskyite, similarly highbrow *Partisan Review*, (although, as then-*Commentary* editor Elliot Cohen cheekily explained to Podhoretz at their first meeting, “The main difference between *Partisan Review* and *Commentary* is that we admit to being a Jewish magazine and they don’t.”)

The Family were “public intellectuals” before

the locution was invented. Their opinions mattered. And they had opinions on everything, churning out articles by the score on the relationship of Stalinist Russia to socialism, campus radicals — heroes or hooligans? — the social debt owed to Blacks and how best to pay it, and the future of marriage in a sexually transgressive age, to name a few.

Elliot Cohen remained at the helm of *Commentary* until his death in 1960. He was successful in shepherding some of the Jews who were alienated from America (a result of their immersion in Marxism) into self-identification as Americans. In 1960, *Esquire* called *Commentary* the “red-hot centre of the literary world.” Until

the *New York Review of Books* came along, *Commentary* had no real competition at the “high seriousness” end of the New York magazine market.

Podhoretz joined Cohen’s team at *Commentary* and, in due course, and for thirty-five years thereafter (1960-95) skippered what many respected observers from the right and the left praise as (or concede to be) the most rewarding monthly journal of ideas and criticism in America, and the principal vehicle for conveying neo-conservative ideas and discourse into mainstream political conversation.

You could not be a member of the Family unless you were acknowledged to be “brilliant.” To be brilliant, as Podhoretz once put it, was to have “the virtuosic ability to put ideas together in such new and surprising combinations that even if one disagreed with what was being said, one was excited and illuminated.”*

What “excited and illuminated” the *Commentary* family? Jeffers writes: “Podhoretz and his neoconservatives allies, whether wonkish or in some cases literary, [have] waged a counter-countercultural campaign that could be summed up as follows. America, for all its miscalculations in Vietnam, could and should continue the war against left-wing

* *Ex-Friends*, Encounter Books, 2000, p. 143.

totalitarianism. Individual merit, not sex, race or ethnicity, should be decisive in questions about who gets into a school, who gets a job, or who gets a raise. Aesthetic excellence, not the biological or sociological categories an artist falls into, should determine the status of his work. Above all, the freedom of the individual, whether artist, merchant, teacher, machinist, physician, or whatever, to offer his services or sell his goods in the open market was inseparable from political freedom as such — the freedom to publish, to assemble, or to send representatives into government.”

Podhoretz became famous for his own brilliant writing, which was now appearing in the *New Yorker* and anywhere else he pleased. Fame led to invitations and friendships with celebrities, and he dove into the flattering social whirl with shameless wholeheartedness. Burning the candle at both ends appealed to Podhoretz’s Rabelaisian appetite for social stimulation and career advancement.

Now married to Midge Decter, a divorcée with two daughters and herself a formidable public intellectual, he was, still in his twenties, embarked on a bourgeois course of marital and parental commitments that strengthened, rather than diluted, his self-confidence and productivity. The couple threw great parties and were invited to the best themselves. At one such party he met playwright Lillian Hellman, who rather dazzled him in spite of her soft-on-Stalinism views and “fat streak of anti-Semitism.” She eventually became an ex-friend. Jackie Onassis took a shine to Podhoretz, and once asked him to draw up a dinner list for her. He excluded his volatile and unpredictable friend, Norman Mailer from it, one of the reasons that led to their falling-out later.

Podhoretz was resented by the cultural elites of his day for his bourgeois perspective on success. Spiteful gossip raged. When his frankly boastful book, *Making It*, bruiting his pleasure in his material and social success, came out, many of his tweedy, leather-patched-elbow peers turned feral in their criticism. Capturing the general disgust in his review, Catholic novelist Wilfrid Sheed sputtered: “The words we might use to condemn him have all lost their jurisdiction overnight: from *arriviste* to apple polisher to sellout.” Thirty years later Sheed saw Podhoretz

at a social gathering and Podhoretz refused his outstretched hand, saying: “The statute of limitations has not run out yet.”

Podhoretz regarded the widespread vituperation as “unjust” and even “theological,” because the book “assume[d], in fact it argues, (paraphrasing George Orwell, whom Podhoretz revered and claimed as an ideological confederate) that “it is possible to live a reasonably decent life and maintain one’s moral, intellectual and spiritual integrity without becoming a revolutionary,” amongst left wing intellectuals “a kind of blasphemy.”

Brilliance was no help to a family member when he strayed from the party line. And that line, whether anti-Stalinist, anti-anti-communist, Trotskyite, or simply fellow-travelling, was almost always to the left of where Podhoretz felt himself being drawn. As he would elaborate in his 2000 book, *Ex-Friends*, brilliance could be used in the service of wrong ideas as well as right, and for someone who traffics in ideas, and for whom ideas are at the core of identity, friendship cannot flourish in the presence of perceived dishonour. It is because Podhoretz’s quarrels with the world were never abstract, always embodied in some or other spokesperson, that the trajectory of his friendships and their occasional unravelling provide some of the book’s most interesting material.

He would break his friendship with the beat poet Allen Ginsburg, for instance, because of the sexually transgressive obsession in his work (Ginsburg urged the idea “that the perverse was infinitely superior to the normal”) and that of other beat writers, who gave evidence of a pagan mentality, “and a willingness to look upon cruelty and bloodletting with complacency, if not downright enthusiasm.”

Podhoretz’s refusal to deal in generalities, his insistence on measuring theories and ideas against the yardstick of particular events on real ground motivated his more discomfiting essays in *Commentary*. A famous case in point is his February, 1963 article, “My Negro Problem and Ours,” written during “three hot, blissful sessions at the typewriter,” which managed to offend almost everyone — integrationists, black nationalists, whites and Jews — and which he believed might actually result in *Commentary* closing down.

The subject of Jewish-Black relations had

been churning inside Podhoretz for some time. He wanted to expose “all the sentimental nonsense that was being talked about integration by whites who knew nothing about Negroes, and by Negroes who thought that all their problems could be solved by living next door to whites.” Unlike most liberal whites, Podhoretz had lived side by side with Blacks in Brownsville. The particulars of that time and place did not square with the perception of blacks and Jews being generated by blacks themselves and a credulous media: the Jews he knew weren’t rich, they were poor; the blacks he knew weren’t persecuted; they were persecuting. Podhoretz’s childhood memories of blacks were ambivalent. He remembered bullying blacks who were also physically graceful and uncowed by authority. In a way he envied them, for they were “really bad, bad in a way that beckoned to one, and made one feel inadequate.” He remembered reciprocal fear and hostility between Jews and blacks, and therefore felt the integrationist ideal of brotherly acceptance was unrealistic and doomed to failure. He had no use for black separatism, which went hand in hand with quite rabid anti-Semitism, a fact that was continually glossed over by guilt-ridden liberal Jews. He believed America’s past sins should not translate into a permanent double standard for whites and blacks, and that assimilation to standard American values would be the solution for blacks as it had been to other cultural groups.

Such political incorrectness could not, and did not go unpunished, but the article was a watershed in terms of what had been, but would no longer be inadmissible discourse in the public forum. “My Negro Problem — and Ours” unstopped a bottle full to the point of shattering with civic frustration. It gave licence to troubled but fearful, self-censoring whites (and conservative blacks) to express their concerns about black rage and its unhealthy consequences for the common weal. Anti-American racists like Barack Obama’s pastor of twenty years, Jeremiah Wright, may still fulminate against whites, but it is thanks to Podhoretz that rational and non-racist whites no longer feel guilty about denouncing him for what he is.

On the defense of Israel as a legitimately American act of patriotism, and an existential concern for Jews, Podhoretz has been resolute,

immovable. As he told the *Jerusalem Post*, “I have an almost mystical belief that if another major Jewish community [Israel] were destroyed in this century ... it would prove that there was a will at work to wipe the Jews off the face of the earth entirely.” Podhoretz simply could not fathom the ignorance, denial and complacency of liberal Jewish alignment with the enemies of Israel. (Neither could Irving Kristol, who in 1999 wrote an article with the revelatory title, “On the Political Stupidity of the Jews.”)

Of particular interest are the friendships that resulted in Podhoretz’s indirect and direct political influence at the highest levels. Jeane Kirkpatrick came to be known as the “ambassador from *Commentary*,” because it was the publication of her essay, “Dictatorships and Double Standards” in the November 1979 issue of *Commentary* that brought her to Ronald Reagan’s admiring attention, and thence to her position as ambassador to the United Nations. When Podhoretz published his essay, “The Neo-Conservative Anguish over Reagan’s Foreign Policy,” Reagan called him to discuss it, and as well urged all Americans to “read this critically important book”: that is, Podhoretz’s, *The Present Danger*, written to promote the Truman Doctrine that promised support for free peoples. Reagan did not extend such an honour to any other public intellectual.

Henry Kissinger and Podhoretz saw eye to eye on many issues, although they disagreed on tactics, such tensions proving fruitful for both of them in as intellectual exercises. In January 1985, at the 25th anniversary party of Podhoretz’s tenure at *Commentary*, Kissinger toasted Podhoretz:

What is an intellectual to do in a society which thinks that ‘peace’ is a subject to be studied, which thinks stability is the normal condition, which has no experience with evil, which has never known irremediable disaster? ... For all these reasons, it is right and proper and crucial for all of us that Norman is an implacable nag, that he will not make compromises. I, myself, substantially agree with his analysis of international affairs. At the same time, he and I have argued forever, because he looks at policy from the perspective of a prophet and I look at policy

from the perspective of a policy-maker. He insists the truth is absolute. He is right. I believe that it has to be reached in imperfect stages.

Most rewarding of Podhoretz's friendships in high places was his long "intellectual symbiosis" with Daniel Patrick Moynihan (although it faltered when Moynihan's senatorship proved a lacklustre dénouement to his riveting ambassadorship to the UN). Moynihan believed that Podhoretz had, according to a mutual friend, "single-handed effected a change in America's political consciousness." During Moynihan's eight-month tenure as America's UN ambassador in 1975-6, his more eloquent speeches were mostly written by Podhoretz, including his formidable pièce de résistance, Moynihan's thundering denunciation of the 1975, Arab-fomented "Zionism is racism" resolution.

Moynihan's eight months in office were a triumph. Americans loved him. For a giddy (sadly illusory) moment neoconservatives like Podhoretz believed that "the long era of self-flagellation and self-hatred through which we had lived since the mid-1960s was finally reaching its end." (With a slight pause for 9/11 obsequies to the dead, self-flagellation and self-hatred amongst liberal elites has continued unabated, but at least robustly contested, thanks to Podhoretz and his disciples, to this day.)

Podhoretz was also Rudy Giuliani's senior advisor on foreign affairs during his campaign for the nomination as the Republican party's presidential candidate. And George W. Bush was a respectful and attentive student of Podhoretz's reasoning.

It was in the years following his retirement from that Podhoretz wrote some of his finest works. Between 1999 and 2002, he published *Ex-Friends, My Love Affair with America*, and *The Prophets*, a scholarly work on the Bible and the relationship between ethics and ritual. Even though he and his wife were non-observant and remarkably hands-off in educating their children Jewishly, Podhoretz really did believe God is present in our lives through the moral laws He endowed humanity with — and, he argued, there are no better moral laws than can be found in the Jewish Bible, nor any more compelling exhortations to fulfil them than the plangent, God-intoxicated

invocations of the ancient prophets, ideas he elaborated in his eponymous late-life theodical paean to them.

Post-9/11, Podhoretz wrote a long essay in *Commentary*, "How to Win World War IV," that went viral. It was turned into a book that sold more than any he had written before. On Islamofascism Podhoretz has been a fire-breathing dragon. Triumphalist Islam is for him déjà vu — Communism with a theocratic face — all over again. Ordinary people understand that the root cause of terror is terrorists. Podhoretz's diatribes against Islamism have been a rebuke to a liberal press that seems more intent on what the terrorists have been saying — listening to their so-called grievances, as if excuses of any kind were possible for such obscene disregard for innocent life — than on what they are doing and intend to do.

Norman Podhoretz's life in letters and polemics has indeed been "my love affair with America." Too much of one for many, and lately, even for his hardest fans, slightly unnerving. (He is a fan of Sarah Palin; many neoconservatives are not. He would agree with Irving Kristol that although populism can be dangerous, it can also be a "corrective to the defects ... often arising from the intellectual influence of ... our intellectual elites.")

For Podhoretz journalism is patriotism, and the task he set himself was to give those who hate America "a proper object of love — their own country, rightly understood." He assessed his mission in a kind of credo in his remarks at his tribute dinner:

I am proud that I have been able, in and through *Commentary*, to defend my own — my own country and the values and institutions for which it stands; my own people and the religious and cultural heritage by which we have been shaped. Like so many of us, I was educated to believe that the last thing one ought to be defending was one's own, that it was more honorable and nobler to turn one's back on one's own and fight for others and for other things in which one had no personal stake or interest. This has been a very hard lesson to unlearn, and I am proud to have unlearned it. ...

Commentary has defended America at a time when America has been under moral and ideological attack. *Commentary* has defended the Jewish people and the Jewish state when they too, and for many of the same reasons, have been subjected to a relentless assault on their legitimacy and even their very existence. For me there has been no conflict or contradiction in defending this dual heritage by which I have been formed. As an American and as a Jew, I have seen that distinctive new species of tyranny, totalitarianism — and especially in our day its Communist variant — as the main threat to the values and institutions of liberty. I am proud to have devoted myself so fully to the fight against that threat and the correlative fight for the survival of liberty.

Has he succeeded? I think history will record that he was instrumental in turning the tide of cultural self-loathing in America in a significant, consequential way. Podhoretz has for decades been a magnet for hatred and loathing amongst progressive intellectuals and pundits. His close friend, prominent BBC broadcaster and educationalist Huw Wheldon once told him, “If you hold out long enough, you’ll become venerable.” And he has for a solid and growing number of thoughtful Americans (and others), who for good and realistic reasons feel they are watching the sun set on western civilization in its freest and most confident and robust incarnation.

In June 2004 Podhoretz revelled in “the most wonderful honor to come my way” when he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honour that can be awarded to a civilian, by George W. Bush, perhaps the only American hated with more virulence than Podhoretz. Podhoretz wrote to a friend that “when Bush put the medal around my neck, I whispered to him, ‘I wish I could give one of these to you.’ To which he responded, ‘Well, bless you for that ... I’m only getting started, you know.’”

(There is prophecy in this bit of banter. The startling revolutionary ardour we are presently witnessing in the Middle East; the casting off of autocracy and the calls for freedom from dictatorship in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Iran can be directly traced to Bush’s insistence that “every human heart” desires freedom, and that it

is wrong to claim that any particular culture is immune from that universal law. It pains liberals too much to draw that obvious line, of course. His name and the persuasion that fuelled his sympathy for the oppressed of the region are shamefully absent from liberal commentary on current affairs.)

Podhoretz’s relationships with friends and feuds with ex-friends and walkabouts in the corridors of power reinforced his sense of mission: to re-invoke old norms in a riven culture; to defend the proposition that virtue and vice are valid concepts in a culture dominated by the voices of ecumenical niceness and moral relativism in all things. He has battled hard against all abstract ideas — pacifism, unbounded sexuality, multiculturalism — that represent a repudiation of human nature, which has fixed limitations to its plasticity: “There exists an unchanging human nature of things to which we are best off submitting.” This was a rubric Podhoretz learned from literature, his first love. Great literature illuminates the eternal verities of human nature, which is perhaps one reason why postmodernists work so hard to undermine its authorities. Podhoretz realized early in his intellectual evolution that “radicals who seek as earnestly to transform themselves as to transform society have generally been hostile to literature.”

The Family was a phenomenon unlike any we are likely to see again — how many people really care any more what intellectuals think of each other’s ideas? This biography — almost entirely uncritical, yes, but richly informative and smoothly crafted — is worth our attention. At least I found it worth mine, because in many ways I am who I am because of Norman Podhoretz. He cured me of fuzzy reasoning and sentimentalism on a full gamut of political issues. And it is *Commentary* magazine that has for the most part shaped my ideal for the critical journalistic writing that, quite accidentally, became my late-life career. Then too, my mother was American. And so I have written this review with something like the same gratitude for Podhoretz that Podhoretz has demonstrated for the blessings bestowed on him by his beloved country. And, in part, mine. Perhaps it shows. ✎

The Classicist & the Cavalier

Phyllis Reeve

“The World of Lord Falkland, Martyr of Conflict.”
Unpublished manuscript by Anthony W. Preston.

Tony Preston (1903-1991) taught classics at Bishop’s University for thirty-four years, all the while quietly nurturing the students and the institution. He officially moved into administration as vice-principal in 1964 and principal and vice-chancellor 1969-70. Born in Worcestershire, he had completed degrees at Edinburgh and Oxford before deciding to emigrate to Canada because, as he told an interviewer at the time of his retirement: “I thought that England was a bit crowded.”¹

He taught mandatory courses in Greek and Roman civilization to students in their first and second years, intending to brush them with a light classical glaze before they went on to teach or preach or manage corporations. But the glaze penetrated deeper than they knew. Filmmaker John Cook remembered “a bald little man with terrible eyesight, [who] had the gift of making the past live — it is some talent to make Mediterranean civilizations come blindingly alive for so many kids in a classroom in the gray depths of a Quebec winter.”²

In Latin class, Tony guided us through the underworld as the Sybil guided Aeneas, and proved by reciting “Evangeline” that dactylic hexameters do not work in English. Our reconstruction of Cicero’s defence of Archias ripened us for an eccentric and mind-blowing senior course in Greek rhetoric and literary criticism. With the earlier Civilizations courses, this constituted what Tony described as a “compromise with reality,” a plan of study designed to lure students who were unprepared and unwilling to learn

Greek and Latin “in the old fashioned way” into the rudiments of glory and grandeur as translated into English. He told his interviewer, “I think it is a great mistake to suggest, as purists do, that this can’t be done.”

We mused with Edward Gibbon amidst the ruins of the Capitol, and applied a detailed examination of Aristotle’s Rhetoric to the indictment of historical Christianity in chapters six and seven of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Still with Aristotle mentoring, we dissected Edmund Burke’s “Impeachment of Warren Hastings.” Classical and neoclassical personalities lived for us through their sentence structure. Term ended with a legendary party at the home of Tony and Phyllis Preston, our revels cheerfully haunted by polite ghosts in togas or wigs.

As dean of arts and science, he felt responsible for the well-being of every student. When in my final year I went for my scheduled annual interview, he assumed, rightly, that he knew more than enough about me, and used the time to quiz me about my friends in other disciplines. He wondered about one brilliant mathematician whose graduation cum laude was a foregone conclusion: “but is she having any fun?” He seemed happy to be reassured that, while she might not have been having quite as much fun as I was, neither was she in the depths of depression. Devoted to teaching and to his students and the university community, he published very little. He had however all along been engaged in research and writing, but not on the obvious topics.

In the retirement interview Tony hinted, “I have had in my mind and have written seventeen

chapters of a biography of a seventeenth-century person whom I've always very much admired." So we discovered that his magnum opus concerned none of the likely classical and neo-classical figures, but Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, an appealing if hapless casualty of the English Civil War — or the Great Rebellion, as cited in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, eleventh edition, which included among its editors Tony's aunt, Janet Hogarth. The tragic story had haunted him since early boyhood. Completed shortly before his death, the biography remains unpublished.

To the manuscript that he left behind Tony prefixed "A Personal Note." It evoked the image of the headmaster of his prep school coming to turn the lights out in the long dormitory while dressed for a costume ball as Lord Falkland. Beginning with his first home, a seventeenth century vicarage, his childhood in Worcester and Oxfordshire steeped him in history. His grandmother sang him Jacobite songs, his father read Quiller-Couch's *Splendid Spur*, the headmaster read Marryat's *Children of the New Forest*, the family drove in their new 1913 Ford to visit Lord Falkland's villages of Burford and Tew. So it went through his formative years and later. Even in Quebec he met the daughter of Falkland's biographer Sir John Marriott, and realized they had met before at his Aunt Laura's children's parties in Oxfordshire. But the history stretched much further into the past than the seventeenth century, to the antiquities uncovered and studied by his uncle D.G. Hogarth, and forward into the exotic present as he cooled his heels at the Ashmolean while Hogarth dealt with a protégé named T.E. Lawrence. The classical world dominated Tony Preston's studies and teaching career, but the Cavalier's ghost hovered. "A childhood impression," he wrote, "was the start of my romantic obsession."

Who was Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland? Matthew Arnold called him "the martyr of lucidity of mind," the epitome of sweetness and light.³ In "Elegy on Newstead Abbey" Byron judged him "godlike" and, in a note, "the most accomplished man of his age." Jonson wrote him a Pindaric ode. Disraeli and Bulwer-Lytton took his virtue for granted, and his arms are emblazoned above the entrance to an Oxfordshire pub. Yet he seems to have failed in just about

everything he tried to do outside his own home, and died unnecessarily at the age of 33. The oldest son of Henry Cary, first Viscount Falkland, lord deputy of Ireland, Lucius was born at Burford in 1610, educated at Trinity College, Dublin, went to Holland in search of a military career, returned to London to study, and retired after his father's death to his house at Tew, which he made a centre for the brightest intellects of the age. In 1639 he returned to public life in the army and in parliament and accepted the Secretaryship of State. When war broke out, he reluctantly supported the King as the lesser evil, and was killed in the Battle of Newbury on September 20, 1643. Why does he matter?

According to Tony: "In all his relationships Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland, was a martyr of conflict and thus became a mirror for the conflicts and his times. The purpose of this essay," Tony wrote, "is to describe and discuss his world and times as they are revealed in his life and in the lives, views and actions of his associates." Thus he proposed not a biography but an "extended essay" that would "reappraise Falkland in the light of what is known of him, of his associates, or his times and of his conflicts family, theological and political."

Relying on the existing biographies, most confidently on the "Character and Life" by Falkland's friend Clarendon⁴ and on J.A.R. Marriott's *The Life and Times of Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland* (1907-8),⁵ Tony Preston wondered in his reappraisal how a quiet man most often described as moderate, tolerant, and lucid could emerge from so dysfunctional a family. His father and his maternal grandfather, Sir Lawrence Tanfield, bullied everyone: the tenants, the children, and the Irish. His parents disliked each other and his mother, Elizabeth, retreated into religion and literature, writing several plays including one about Herod's wife, the first-published English play by a woman,⁶ and inconvenienced her men by converting to Catholicism.

Tony worked from a strict lesson plan, driven by hard facts and deep thought, enhanced by unexpected time-travelling connections and irrepressible mischief. Offering the disclaimer, "I learnt early in a teaching career how dangerous it is to take for granted that everyone knows or assume that they know what I regard as basic knowledge," he tossed out sly allusions which

have taken years to percolate my brain, and I am pretty sure I have not got all of them.

First, the lesson plan:

The main body of this work is divided in five separate though related parts. These parts correspond to the several stages of Falkland's development but only three of them are strictly concerned with the man himself. Part one is biographical and deals with Falkland's early life. Part three is concerned with his religious conflicts and also with a growing interest in the conflicts that arise in the establishment of sovereign power in the state. Part five comes back to the man himself as he moves from theory to practice, from observation to participation, from a flickering optimism about the political scene to a nightmarish martyrdom of despair. The other two parts come within the frame. Part two contributes an assessment of what Falkland learnt from his books and his friends about the Protestant experience in general and the ecclesiastical problem in particular. Part four directs attention to what he could theoretically learn from Grotius and Hobbes and actually observe in the agents of Thorough, Laud and Strafford, Church and State striving to perpetuate a false ideal.

Everything, including the conflict, begins with the setting: the area around Falkland's estates at Burford and especially Great Tew. Tony permits himself nostalgia in his introductory description of the English countryside, but he is already juxtaposing John Buchan and Hilaire Belloc with Gerard's *Herbal* and Parkinson's *Terrestrial Paradise*. As we slip into the idyll and teeter on the edge of sentimentality, he uses a satirical passage from Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* to remind us there are mists even in Arcadia "and a kind of melancholy which Falkland never forgot. Always he was to be involved in mists, mists which seem to lie between him and the truth." The formative years in Dublin did not dispel the mists as he groped through the Calvinism at Trinity, the churchmanship of his godfather Bishop Laud, and his mother's Catholicism. Tony diligently introduces us to the learned personalities surrounding Falkland at this time, but things get really interesting when our young hero returns to London and discovers his gift for friendship.

With his first "best" friend, Henry Morison, Falkland followed Thomas Carew into the gaggle of young poets which hung about Ben Jonson, as young poets will, as young poets of my generation hung about Earle Birney. By 1629, well past his prime, Jonson was holding court at the Dogg tavern, and recognizing his favourites, not necessarily the best poets, as "Sons of Ben." He thus rewarded Morison and Falkland and celebrated their David-and-Jonathan relationship. After Morison's untimely death, Falkland continued in the bosom of this band of poetic brothers and gigantic father figure, and acquired a new soul mate in the person of Morison's sister Lettice.

When the young couple left the city, the poets followed and evolved into the Circle at Tew. The Circle overlapped in time-frame and context with the community at Little Gidding (1625-1646), but was less single-minded, except in devotion to their hosts. Left to their own devices they were "not heavily entertained or expected to behave in an artificial or ceremonious way ... Indeed the comings and goings of their guests were not immediately known to Lucius and Lettice until they saw or missed them at meals. At these meals, and indeed at all gatherings and meetings in his house, Lucius was able to draw out his guests, get them to talk and above all make them better people in their own eyes and in the eyes of their immediate companions than they were elsewhere." Lest we begin to squirm, Tony insists: "There was no lubricity at Tew but there was no priggishness." He calls upon Clarendon's recollection of this perfect setting for the ideals, manners, and culture of the high renaissance: "one continued convivium philosophicum or convivium theologicum enlivened with all the facetiousness of wit and good humour and pleasantness of discourse." Within limits, the Cavalier could be gay and the Puritan could be severe, as long as they kept civil tongues in their heads, and a good time was had by all.

Now that he has a party assembled, Tony works the room, whispering to us his or Falkland's assessment of each poet — his work, his major virtues and failings, his politics; most important, his reasons for being invited to Tew and his reasons for accepting the invitation. The younger poet learned from Carew concentration and distillation of thought, and classical polish,

but not “obscenity and licence.” John Suckling was “altogether too flippant and too careless to remain [Falkland’s] constant companion as he turned to graver things,” but we are indebted to Suckling for “enumerating his peers in his Sessions of the Poets.” Falkland and Lovelace, the Cavalier par excellence, “do not seem to have cared greatly for each other.” Tony feels Falkland would have preferred Montrose had he known him more intimately. “Too serious then for the careless Cavalier spirit, not wholly Puritan despite his training at Trinity, not a mystic like Herbert and Crashaw, Lucius followed humbly the classical paths of Ben” and another older man, George Sandys, “even if his Muse was pedestrian.”

Falkland’s own Muse worked hard but he “was not a poet by nature and in practising the art of versification he did not grow to be any less inflexible, rigid or correct.” He was “a minor poet, without the tiresome affectations of minor poets but also without their inspiration.” The work of his younger brother Patrick survives in some anthologies of Caroline verse, but Falkland’s poetry matters only because he wrote it.⁷ In standard literary histories, he appears in footnotes or between commas to provide a context for more important literary figures, including his mother. As the mists closed in, he turned to a different sort of scholarship.

But the poets did not leave as the philosophers and theologians arrived. Many of the Circle, no matter what genre they read and wrote, and many wrote in more than one, were also soldiers and politicians. Tony discusses Edmund Waller of “Go, Lovely Rose,” who fought for Cromwell, in the same section as the Royalist statesman Edward Hyde, first Earl of Clarendon, who chronicled the Circle and enlarged the guest list begun by Suckling. The poets’ retreat expanded into something resembling a “college

in a purer air” where all shades of ecclesiastical opinion, not excepting a tentative scepticism, were represented and heard.

They thought about power as realized in church and/or state, in Latitudinarianism and Calvinism, in the theology of Richard Hooker and his later contemporaries, and as justified in deadly serious debates pitting nature vs. reason, common law vs. divine right, exemplified in the archetypal lawmen Francis Bacon and Edward Coke. I recall Tony spinning the minds



of his Greek 103 students down the labyrinthine ways of Aristotle’s unmoved mover, and sense Platonic shades behind his explication of the ideas vying in Falkland’s mind. Now as then the personalities make us pause. After appealing introductions to a half-dozen of the Circle’s minor clergy we meet the “Ever memorable Mr. John Hales” and the “Judicious Mr. Chillingworth.” Hales was based at Eton, where Falkland visited him regularly, finding relief from too much

controversy at home. For Hales believed there could be a Church of England broad enough to contain all sects, where members applied themselves “rather to heal than to exasperate sores.” He represented, Tony says, “that catholicity of sentiments which has marked the greatest Anglican minds from Hooker to Temple.”

William Chillingworth, on the other hand, was a mess of religious perplexities. He struggled with his faith through conversions and reconversions and found at Tew, especially in its library, “the security of a physical home as a framework for a spiritual conflict” while he wrote *The Religion of the Protestants*. John Aubrey in his *Brief Lives* accuses him of being Laud’s spy amongst the Oxonians, but Tony refuses to believe this: “Aubrey never loses an opportunity of getting in a dig at his subject so perhaps we may dismiss this story as spiteful fiction. We should certainly prefer to do so.” All

the more so as it was in sharing thoughts with Chillingworth that Falkland worked out his own theories of toleration and reason, to appear in his *Discourse of Infallibility*.⁸

With both his brother-in-law Frank Morison and a valued correspondent, Walter Montagu, on the verge of joining the Church of Rome, Falkland had personal as well as political incentives for publishing his thoughts and for preferring gentle persuasion to polemic. Through his extensive and intensive précis of Falkland's argument, with its sequels and corollaries, Tony shows him searching the Church Fathers and employing rational principles firmly and clearly. In the long run he proved to be a phrase-maker rather than a disputant, "diffuse and charming," reflecting the tenets of Hales and Chillingworth "attractively for others." "It is not his scholarship, remarkable though it is, that chiefly impresses us," Tony writes, "so much as his courteous tone" in an age when "the contending parties seldom bothered to be polite." Falkland deplored the pride that creates "mists of passion which do wrap up truth from our understanding," and that revealed itself equally in Roman Catholicism, Calvinist rigidity, and Laudian prelacy. Bewildered by conflict and controversy, he targeted intolerance even more than Popery. In the end his exploration returned to his first belief, "that Truth in likelihood is where her author God was, in the still voice and not in the loud wind." "Unhappily," Tony comments, "the early seventeenth century had no place for the still voice" — not in religion and certainly not in politics.

Nonetheless Falkland tried to bring his sweet reasonableness to political theory as he had to theology. He found the divine right of kings even more of a struggle than the Infallibility of the Church: "at Tew they were all monarchists but critical monarchists as became persons of cultivation and worldly experience." They read Grotius and admired his willingness to compromise, but they, especially Falkland himself, were finding their position increasingly difficult to maintain. Hobbes was circulating a manuscript which anticipated *Leviathan*: Tony imagines him injecting provocative points of view into evening discussions at Tew; speaks feelingly of the years of tutoring during which Hobbes "had been, like a modern university administrator,

obliged to give scholarship a very second place;" and dedicates a chapter to examination of his "systematic political realism." Meanwhile, beyond the library at Tew, intrigue flourished in the centres of power, and policies bore such sinister nicknames as "Thorough" and "Root and Branch." Outlines of political theory dissolve to character sketch and vignette. "James I was not an Englishman and he had no genius for compromise," Tony writes. Laud's worst fault was "his utter inability to realise how he affected other people." Thomas Wentworth, the formidable Earl of Strafford, "should have been diplomatic enough not to quarrel with all of them at once." King Charles was a man of moderate appetites "except for his inordinate passion for art." John Pym was "an administrative genius."

Events moved quickly and forced Falkland into public life. The Royal Proclamation of 28 February 1639 tolled the death knell of the Tew Circle. Falkland squelched his misgivings and, very much the dashing young Cavalier, rode off to serve his King, in Essex's cavalry. By April 1640 he had found a more appropriate form of service, as a Member of Parliament, still a political theorist rather than a practical politician, and still holding on to the ideals of Tew and the goal of a constitutional monarchy with the capacity to patch things up over the long run. Severely hampered by his ability to see too many sides at once, he had difficulty making decisions, at times almost immoderate in his moderation. Tony analyses Falkland's parliamentary speeches with the authority of an experienced judge of the debating club: "it was possible to find fault with some of the objectives raised and professional lawyers could regard with suspicion the sometimes questionable and generally amateur nature of the speaker's acquaintance with the law. The general thesis however was good." With the exception of his infamous vote against Strafford, Falkland's argument was always for compromise, employing tactics which could be construed as shilly-shallying, but were likely deliberately flexible in the face of the extreme radical demands of the Ministers' Remonstrance. The strain began to tell on the still voice:

To him the Grand Remonstrance was an un-called for and insulting provocation which could only lead to disaster and probably to the

horrors of civil war. He spoke against it with the utmost vehemence and on this occasion seems to have departed from his usual mellifluous logic for we hear of his "high thin pitched voice breaking into a scream." It was the scream of the intellectual moderate caught in a terrible moment of reality and suddenly obliged to face decision and a parting of the ways.

And it did lead to disaster and the horrors of civil war. Despite his growing realisation that both Charles and Pym were bent on war, he accepted the Secretaryship of State, and through 1642-43 continued to be a lone worker for peace. Clarendon described him sinking into depression, relapsing into silence broken only by a shrill cry "peace, peace!" But there was no peace, and Falkland was almost relieved when he found it was no longer possible, although he worked with others on draft treaties and possible stratagems for avoiding war, including Edmund Waller's plot of May 1643. He lost grip on rationality and judgment. His advice to the King was sometimes "very unlucky to His Majesty," and what had been a developing maturity relapsed into the military enthusiasm of his early youth. "Gossip said that Falkland would have the King buy peace at any price yet he had to be rebuked by Clarendon for his feverish desire for military action."

He went to Newbury as a volunteer under the command of the first Lord Byron. Conjecture remains around his conduct on the battlefield. Did he deliberately court death? Tony doesn't think it matters. In a satisfying epilogue, as measured as Falkland could have wished, he concludes a little drily:

It hardly seems possible to believe that, had he lived longer or never lived at all, it would have made very much difference to the course of history ... No, his real merit lies in the kind of man he was by environment, the kind of man he was by the education he received, the books he read and the people he met. The martyr of his own lucidity, the victim of his own humanism and the prisoner of unreasonable and bigoted men he was, very likely, *felix opportunitate mortis*, even if it is true as Clarendon said, that he died as much "of the time as of the bullet." None of this proves cowardice but rather courage in the face of utter frustration."

In this tone Professor Preston might have defended a gifted student prevented by circumstances, even by war, from fulfilling his potential. The Cavalier hero, the scholar-host, becomes a young man out of his depth. I wonder what advice Lucius might have received if he could have visited the dean's office at Bishop's as he visited John Earle's rooms at Eton?

Tony wrote of Earle: "He must have been one of those rare souls who carry great learning lightly and add to that learning a certain piquant charm. Such were Erasmus and Robert Burton and in more recent times have been Charles Calverly and Hilaire Belloc." He pays the same compliment, of carrying one's learning lightly, to John Sheldon, John Hales, and Lord Falkland. A diligent editor might want to purge so repetitive a concept. On the other hand, it could most aptly be applied to the writer himself, as John Cook pictured him feeling his way to the lectern, inspiring "callow Canadian youths" to want to stand up and cheer.

Definitely any assessment of Tony would include "a certain piquant charm," demonstrated in the memorable character sketches and in the astonishing links across time. He says of the Rev. Henry Hammond that he, "like Agatha Christie, enjoyed the consumption of apples." Of Hobbes he writes that, "like Oscar Wilde, he pretended not to be a profound student, by never admitting how much he read." And of the dreadful John Pym: "he lived in his work and for his work like Chatham in the eighteenth century? and R.B. Bennett in the Canada of the 1930s." Long after I ceased to be his student in a formal sense and had gone on to a graduate degree in twentieth century literature, Tony confessed to me his admiration for John O'Hara's evocation of the speakeasies of Prohibition-era America. The gentle learning, the piquant charm, and the surprises never stopped.

Tony insisted that his work on Falkland was not original or based on primary sources. Despite fifty pages of notes and bibliography he suspected that his extensive research had aged along with him; he had few illusions about finding an academic publisher. Still, he happily allowed some of his peers and ex-students to look into the possibility. But some of us died. Others felt out of our depth. So the book has lain fallow, occasionally

pricking Tony's daughter Sarah and myself to exchange perplexed correspondence, until in the fullness of time technology has allowed us to scan the typescript into a series of pdfs and to deposit a disk with the archives at Bishop's University. As told the Alumni interviewer: "If I can produce something that someone else might like to read, well so much the better. If not, I would at least have entertained myself and not been a nuisance to anyone else." ❧

Notes

1. Bishop's Alumni Newsletter, June 1970.
2. Michael Omasta and Olaf Möller, eds., *John Cook: Viennese by Choice, Filmemacher von Beruf*. Wien: Synema, 2006, p.151.
3. Matthew Arnold, *Mixed Essays, Irish Essays and others*, chapter 6.
4. "The Character of Lord Falkland," by the Earl of Clarendon.
5. J.A.R. Marriott, *The Life and Times of Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland*, London: Methuen, 1907.
6. "The Tragedy of Miriam," by Elizabeth Cary.
7. Falkland's poems are published in Ruth Carmichael Bellows, Ph.D. thesis, Rice University, 1991.
8. "Discourse on Infallibility, with an Answer to it: And his Lordship's Reply." London, 1651.
9. Does even Tony nod here? His reference must be to William Pitt the Younger, who was never Earl of Chatham, but was indeed a loner. William Pitt the Elder was happily married.

(Most of the foregoing sources may be found online.)

'An Epitaph Upon the Excellent Countesse of Huntingdon, Feb. 9, 1633'

The chief perfections of both sexes joyn'd,
 With neither's vice nor vanity combin'd:
 Of this our age the wonder, love, and care,
 Th' example of the following, and despaire.
 Such beauty, that from all hearts love must flow:
 Such majesty — that none durst tell her so.
 A wisdom of so large and potent sway,
 Rome's Senate might have wisht, her Conclave may;
 Which did to earthy thoughts so seldome bow,
 Alive she scarce was lesse in heaven, than now.
 So void of the least pride, to *her* alone
 These radiant excellencies seem'd unknown,
 Such once there was: but let thy grief appeare,
 Reader, there is not: HUNTINGDON lies here!
 By him who saies what he saw,

FALKLAND.

The Uses of Declinism

Gil Troy

Why America is Not a New Rome. Vaclav Smil. MIT Press, 2010.

When the United States celebrated its centennial in 1876, two of the country's greatest poets offered dramatically different takes on where the American experiment was headed. At the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition the poet John Greenleaf Whittier captured the excitement and wonder in his "Centennial Hymn":

*Our fathers' God! from out whose hand
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet today, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
To thank Thee for the era done,
And Trust Thee for the opening one.*

Gil Troy is Professor of History at McGill University and a Visiting Scholar affiliated with the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington. His books include Leading from the Center: Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents, The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction, Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s, Hillary Rodham Clinton: Polarizing First Lady, and Why I Am a Zionist: Israel, Jewish Identity and the Challenges of Today. He received his bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Harvard University.

Two months later, James Russell Lowell, a Harvard-educated poet, wrote a rather sober "Ode to the Fourth of July, 1876":

*Is this the country that we dreamed in youth
Where wisdom and not numbers would have
weight,
Seed-field of simpler manners, braver truth,
Where shame should cease to dominate
In household, church and state?
Is this Atlantis?*

Even then, poised as we now know, to take off and become the great economic success story of all time, creating the first mass middle class civilization while becoming the world's leading superpower, Americans feared decline. A century later, following America's bicentennial, Americans would become increasingly convinced that Japan would soon eclipse the United States, and in 1987 an obscure Yale historian, Paul Kennedy, parlayed American fears into a bestseller with *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. Worries about the country's degeneration can be traced back to the launching of the Constitutional convention, barely a decade after America's founding in 1776. In fact, a fear of decline seems to be the perennial American personality tic.

This occasional but recurring national spasm is triggered by three main stimuli. As the revolutionary people of the New World, who established a *Novus Ordo Sæclorum*, a New Order for the Ages, Americans have always had

extremely high expectations of themselves individually and collectively. Crushing disappointments are natural companions to the soaring expectations that come with being an ambitious people, a moralistic people, a redemptive people. Related to that is the American Dream's intensely personal nature combined with American capitalism's brutal cyclical realities. Booms and busts are a regular feature of American economic life. But just as many homeowners seem to forget enough about the trauma of home renovations to try again, Americans seem to forget about busts during boom times and about booms during bust times, with the losers blaming themselves not the business cycle.

Finally, the American republic was founded in the long shadow of Rome's decline. In a telling, cosmic coincidence, Edward Gibbon published the first volume of his classic *A History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in 1776. America's founders were rooted in the classics. Although they needed no reminders that democracies are fragile flowers susceptible to declines and falls, Gibbons' work offered much finely-etched, beautifully-conveyed detail at the critical start of America's democratic adventure.

After the devastating crash of 2008, with America mired in two wars, high unemployment, staggering debt, family breakdown, sexual decadence, a toxic politics, a drug epidemic, a libertine culture, and, we are constantly being warned, a threatened global environment, speculation about decline is not just natural but logical. In his quirky but charming new book *Why America is Not a New Rome*, Vaclav Smil dismisses the over-used analogy and rejects fears of decline, but does not fall into the opposite tendency of providing a mindlessly triumphalist narrative either.

A professor at the University of Manitoba, Smil is an environmental scientist and a veteran student of Rome. In fact, the strangest thing about the book is that he devotes much more attention to Rome and is much more convincing

explaining why America is not Rome, than why America is not in decline. There is something stubbornly, eccentrically yet charmingly pedantic about the whole project, as Smil takes us on a quick but expert guided tour of Roman civilization. Focusing so much on the Roman side of the equation, in a query that piques interest mostly because readers want to know if America is on the way down, is like teaching Latin to a student who wants to learn English; the student learns something useful but there are more direct ways to achieve the stated goal.

In the preface to this well-organized book, Smil details his intentions, saying,

Pessimists invoke the Roman example to warn of a swift dramatic American collapse. Smil considers that scenario far-fetched. More likely is a slow and steady decline, relative to other countries, which he suggests has already begun.

I wrote this book to provide a corrective, not by criticizing prevailing comparisons but by concentrating on several fundamental realities: the very meaning of empire; the actual extent and nature of Roman and American power; the role of knowledge and innovation in the two states; the roles that machines and energy sources played in their quotidian lives; and their demographic and economic realities, compromising population dynamics, illness and death, and wealth and misery.

Smil then lays out his argument in three parts. Part One "America as a New Rome?" frames the discussion. Part Two "Why America is Not a New Rome" explores the nature of the two empires, the "Knowledge, Machines, Energy" in the two empires, and the dynamics in each society around "Life, Death and Wealth." Finally, Part Three looks at "Why Comparisons Fail."

That one long thesis sentence demonstrates the impressive erudition displayed throughout the text — and both the depth and irrelevance of Smil's argument. At his most profound, Smil gives what we could call an epistemological test of empire and of decline. He drills down into the essence of Roman society (and by extension American society) asking just what makes each society tick, how each one thinks — detailing, for example, just how sophisticated a culture, economics, a society the United States continues to have.

But the simpletons whom Smil disdains in his final chapter “Historical Analogies and Their (Lack of) Meaning,” just may have it right. There is a reason why, as he notes, “America as a new Rome” yielded 22 million Google hits in a recent search while “American inventiveness” only yielded 500,000. Of course, we all live more intimately every day with the fruits of “American inventiveness” than with the fear of America becoming another Rome. Still, the facile analogy has its heuristic and rhetorical uses. When a columnist or a politician or even a teacher asks if America is in decline as Rome was, the quality of the American highway system or the genius applied in creating the Internet, only allay some fears. The Rome analogy among the masses is a valid attempt to focus on two other variables — America’s power externally, regarding other countries, and America’s strength internally, especially its moral fibre. Both are legitimate areas of concern. And both discussions can sometimes be enhanced with a quick, admittedly impressionistic, even cannibalistic, return to the rotting Roman carcass.

Nevertheless, reading Smil’s book is a pleasure because he knows so much and puts it to such good use. If books could be judged by some quantitative index of fun facts and interesting insights yielded per page, this book would score very well. *Why America is Not a New Rome* provides a fascinating, easily accessible snapshot of the Roman Empire in particular, while yielding some illuminating nuggets about modern America too.

Ultimately, Smil rests his case on three important and sophisticated takes regarding modern America. First, he notes that America is not much of an empire, as empire goes. What he calls “America’s Peculiar Hegemony,” stems from Americans’ strong isolationist streak. They have frequently been reluctant belligerents. They rarely conquer and colonize as good imperialists should. To the extent that we can speak of an American empire it is more connected to what Harvard Professor Joseph Nye calls “soft power,” with questions of political influence, military supply, diplomatic sway, and cultural domination. Mickey Mouse, a GM automobile, and the Coca-Cola bottle have been to America’s Soft Empire what the centurion, chariot, and catapult were to the legendary

Roman Empire — which Smil notes has also been caricatured.

Smil’s second point is indeed often forgotten in the woe-is-me chorus warning of decline. American know-how continues to manufacture magic seemingly effortlessly, at an amazing pace. American society remains remarkably sophisticated and impressively adaptable. The doom-and-gloom crowd should marvel at the American miracle through Smil’s Rome-centered lens. Smil knows how miserable it was to live in Roman times, even if you were the emperor. He estimates that the amount of energy an average American uses for personal convenience “would have been available to a Roman citizen only if about 50 strong slaves had labored continuously (24 hours per day for 365 days) on his behalf, or if about 200 slaves had worked eight hours per day for 300 days.”

Smil’s optimism flags in the final chapter, when he identifies America’s real challenge — and highlights his visceral discomfort with the Roman analogy. Pessimists invoke the Roman example to warn of a swift dramatic American collapse. Smil considers that scenario far-fetched. More likely is a slow and steady decline, relative to other countries, which he suggests has already begun. Smil shows that the United States is losing its dominant position in a rapidly changing globe, while also detailing “signs of economic malaise ... public ennui” and “public overstretch.”

This descent may not necessarily be catastrophic, Smil speculates. The world’s power structures are changing. The rise of China and India could lessen America’s share of wealth and power without necessarily hurting the United States.

Smil knows his quest is a quixotic one. The analogies will keep on coming and the warning about imminent collapse will continue too, appearing regularly but never quite predictably, just like hurricanes. But fears of descent are not necessarily harbingers of descent. In fact, another great thinker from 1776, Adam Smith, taught that the fear of decline vis-à-vis others, also known as competition, is a great spur to creativity — and may be one of the guarantees against America’s oft-predicted but so far constantly-avoided collapse. ♣

Revisiting the War of the Conquest

Conrad Black

Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766. Fred Anderson. Vintage, 2001.

This is a very detailed and authoritative account of the Seven Years War, as it was fought in North America. The author ties it into the greater but less historically momentous actions in other theatres, in what was, effectively, the world's first world war, and in doing so, gives some excellent insights into European politics and government, even if virtually as a side-show to the actions in French and British America.

By the early 1750's, the race was on between the French, pushing down from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River and then to and down the Mississippi, and the English (Americans in practice but constantly seeking British military reinforcement when challenged), settling and exploring ever westwards, for control of the Ohio country, and the vast hinterland of North America. We learn that the Indians tended to

take the promises of the French more seriously than those of the English because the French seemed much less inclined to people the new world themselves with immigration, rather than just taking what the fur trade and other commerce would yield.

In the autumn of 1753 an enterprising 21-year-old Adjutant Washington volunteered to carry a letter to the French at the forks of the Ohio, asking them to "desist," and withdraw. The governor of Virginia sent two hundred men with Washington, who fell upon a thirty-five-man French and Indian scouting party, and killed the commander of the French unit, and nine others. Accounts differ but the engagement apparently was begun by an Indian ally of the Americans who sunk his hatchet into the skull of a Monsieur Jumonville, preparatory to relieving him of his scalp. Washington, after the astonishing precocity of carrying out an act of war of one Great Power on another, on the instructions of a governor who had no authority to order anything of the kind, then sagely retreated to a hastily constructed stockade, Fort Necessity. Under French counter-attack, Washington's men panicked and the young man, though his own behaviour was composed, was fortunate to secure a surrender of the fort and withdrawal, without prisoners being taken (including himself).

We follow the bumbling sequence of attempts to invade British and French America both ways at Lake Champlain and Niagara Falls. In 1755, General Edward Braddock, with Washington at his side suffering from dysentery and acute hemorrhoids, plunged through the wilderness toward Fort Duquesne, (Pittsburgh) his force's movements faithfully reported to the French commander. Anderson graphically

Conrad Black studied history and law at Carleton, Laval and McGill Universities. As CEO of Hollinger International, he built the third-largest newspaper group in the world, owning nearly 250 newspapers and magazines including The Telegraph and The Spectator of London, the Chicago Sun-Times, and The Jerusalem Post. He is the author of Duplessis; the autobiographical A Life in Progress; Franklin Delano Roosevelt: Champion of Freedom; and Richard M. Nixon: A Life in Full. In 2001 he was created Lord Black of Crossharbour. He was the founder of, and remains a regular contributor to, the National Post and writes for National Review Online.

describes this force of about 1,500, including several hundred civilian workers and a number of the officers' whores, being attacked by about 800 French, Canadians, and (in the majority), Indians. They infiltrated the dense forests on each side of the road and attacked without warning, disconcerting the English with the nerve-rattling screaming of the Indians and the precise accuracy of their rapid-fire sniping. The well-trained British formed into rectangles in the road, consolidating themselves as better targets for the enemies they could not see, and were steadily mown down. Braddock remained mounted, acted with great bravery, as did Washington, who had two horses shot from under him. Braddock was killed. The French took twenty-three dead Indians, and about sixteen wounded, compared to about 1,000 British dead and wounded, scores of whom were scalped by the Indians, who fortunately for the British and as was their custom, had no interest in following up on their victory beyond taking the heads and picking the pockets of the enemy and whatever could be had from their wagons.

The British did better in Acadia, and seized the French fort at the narrow isthmus connecting Cape Breton to Nova Scotia. There followed the expulsion ultimately of about 14,000 French and Franco-Indian civilians from Acadia, (mainly Nova Scotia, and what are now New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island), an eerie foretaste of some greater, but no more efficient deportations of helpless civilian populations in the centuries to come, an ethnic cleansing. The Acadians had generally refused an oath of allegiance to the British Crown, because of conflicting loyalties, a refusal to draw a hostile line with French and Indian relatives, and fear of being deprived of their right to practice as Roman Catholics and to retain their language. In about equal numbers, they were assimilated into New England, went to Louisiana and laid the base of the "Cajuns," returned to France, or to the area of their expulsion when conditions had improved. It was a shabby affair.

To this point, there had been no real plan or organizing principle behind the colonial

activities of most of the powers. The whole British effort in North America grew organically, like a bees' nest. William Pitt was the first leading British public figure to limn out a vision of a growing and flourishing British civilization on both sides of the Atlantic arising to give the British the status and strength of an incomparable giant straddling the great ocean. Even he pitched his vision, naturally, mainly in terms of ending, in Britain's favor, the great contest with France because of the scale and size and wealth the British nationality would grow into, vast and rich, and relatively secure as not having to fend off the invasions of adjoining landward neighbors.

In a long and almost unwaveringly unsuccessful military tradition, Pitt organized a series of amphibious "descents" on the French coast. The first of these was at Rochefort in September, and it failed, as did almost all such initiatives up to and including the Canadian landing at Dieppe in 1942. The brightest note, early in the war, was in India, where it was known as the Third Carnatic War. Colonel Robert Clive, the deputy commander at Madras,

had seized Calcutta, the principal city of Bengal, in early 1757, and made substantial advances from there. And Pitt created a militia, forerunner of the Home Guard, of 32,000, as a back-up force in case England were herself to see for the first time in 700 years, the campfires of a real invader. One of the celebrated (but none too bellicose) recruits to this force would be the illustrious historian Edward Gibbon. Braddock's even more inept successor, Loudoun left New York in a 100-ship force carrying 6,000 troops, the largest amphibious force ever launched in North America, bound for Louisbourg, on June 20, 1757. After a wait and the arrival of French reinforcements, the Royal Navy commander, Admiral Francis Holborne, declared the mission impossible beginning so late in the season, and the whole force returned dismally to New York. Anderson brilliantly describes the 8,000 French, Canadians, and Indians arriving at Fort William Henry at the south end of Lake George, on August 3, including artillery, spearheaded by 1,500 naked Indians gliding swiftly up the lake in their

It was European war by officers and gentlemen to the highest standard. Unfortunately, it did not conform in the slightest to Indian notions of the fruits of victory.

canoes. By August 9 the British garrison was very haggard and the walls of the fort had been smashed in several places. Montcalm chivalrously replicated the surrender terms of Minorca earlier in the summer: the British would promise to refrain from combat for 18 months, and would leave an officer behind as hostage and return French prisoners, and would be allowed to leave with their belongings, under their colours, and with a French escort, to the next fort to the east. Montcalm would take all the stores and artillery left in the Fort, and would care for the seriously wounded British and return them as their convalescent condition permitted. It was European war by officers and gentlemen to the highest standard.

Unfortunately, it did not conform in the slightest to Indian notions of the fruits of victory. The following day, on the march to the nearest British fort, Fort Edward, the Indians attacked the column from all sides and in the most terrifying manner, killing nearly 200, and capturing perhaps 500. Anderson vividly describes how Montcalm himself led his officers and men, accompanied by the temporizing missionaries, to restore order and take back the prisoners seized by the Indians. Eventually Montcalm, the French governor, Vaudreuil, and others managed, sometimes by paying up to thirty bottles of brandy per ransomed prisoner, to liberate and return to Fort Edward all but about 200 prisoners, who, except for about forty who joined Indian communities and remained there, were deemed to have been massacred. The incident was apparently concluded by a public, ritualistic, and instantly infamous boiling and eating of a British prisoner outside Montreal on August 15. The French commanders knew there would now, as a result of the massacre of prisoners, be a sense that it was time for a showdown with the French and Indians in North America, and that British and American efforts would be greatly intensified.

Amherst secured the surrender of Louisbourg on July 26, 1758, and required that the entire garrison be taken as prisoners of war, and the entire civilian population of 8,000 from the surrounding area be deported to France. This was the larger second half of the removal of the Acadians from 1755, and was outrageous. The Duke of Choiseul was named chief minister to go head-to-head with Pitt. His strategy would be to mass

the French navy to facilitate an invasion of England by the main French Army, and leave it to Austria and Russia and the Swedes to deal with Prussia, and give up the overseas campaigns as an improvident *beau geste* where France had little interest and less chance of success against the maritime-focused British.

Pitt presented a budget for 1759 that at £13 million was the greatest by far in British history and was more than half debt, with more than half the anticipated revenues paying interest. To anyone who cared to notice, it was obvious that the quantum of this debt, especially if the war dragged on at all (and Pitt might take France's castaway colonies but neither Britain, nor any other country, had any power to threaten France herself), would grow and would have to be shared by all the British, including that thirty percent of Britons in the flourishing colonies of America. This was a time bomb.

Anderson's description of Wolfe's assault on Quebec is one of the highlights of his book.* Wolfe landed 8,500 troops on Île d'Orléans, a few miles down river from Quebec, on June 28. Heavily outnumbered and isolated, Montcalm defended Quebec with great skill and agility, inflicting heavy losses on Wolfe, whose problems were compounded by acute fevers, indigestion, and depressive attacks. He was reduced to asking the opinion of his brigade commanders, whom he despised, a sentiment that was fully requited, (Monckton, Townshend, and Murray). Precise advice on how to take Quebec came from Captain Robert Stobo, one of the prisoners handed over by Washington as an earnest when he evacuated Fort Necessity in 1755. Stobo had lived as a prisoner since, though he circulated easily in Quebec society, until apprehended as a spy for a map he had drawn that was found in the belongings of the deceased Braddock after the disaster on the Monongahela. Stobo advised Wolfe of a footpath up the cliffs at what has become

* Sir Guy Carleton, later 1st Baron Dorchester, was Wolfe's hand-picked quartermaster general and engineer for the siege of Quebec. On the Plains of Abraham, he commanded the 2nd battalion of the Royal Americans (60th Foot) at the left of the battle-line, and received a head wound while pursuing the enemy (*DCB*, vol. v).

known as Wolfe's Cove. Thus arose the plan for one of history's decisive military battles.

Wolfe followed his brigadiers' advice and moved about 4,500 men on the tides up-river from Quebec, and then back down on the current in the dark early hours of September 12, and mounted Stobo's path to the Plains above, and overwhelmed a small French tent encampment. Wolfe was apparently beset by morose thoughts, as well as indecision, finding himself alone on the Plains. He ordered that disembarkations stop, but the landing officer assumed the order was mistaken and ignored it. Montcalm had been distracted by a carefully played ruse to the east of Quebec, and only arrived on the Plains to see Wolfe's men drawn up across the Plains. By 9:30 in the morning Montcalm was concerned that the British were bringing up artillery from the ships and entrenching themselves in a manner that would become irreversible if he did not act, and he ordered his men forward. In fact, Wolfe had had one of his attacks of inertia and the British were bringing up artillery but not entrenching, and Montcalm had summoned a detachment of 2,000 of his best troops from the west, whom he hoped would land in Wolfe's rear once battle was engaged.

There were about 4,500 men on each side, though the British had the advantage of better trained and disciplined forces. There is a good deal of anecdotal evidence that neither commander expected to survive the engagement about to begin. In this at least, their provisions were exact. The French attacked in rather ragged order, supported by Indians and irregular skirmishers who sniped from the sides. The British coolly held their fire, the professionalism of the redcoats paid handsome rewards, and they drenched the French with fire and pushed them into what became a rather uncoordinated but not panicky retreat to Quebec. Wolfe had been wounded early on the wrist, but was mortally hit by snipers in the chest and stomach as he joined the advance. Just before

he died he received the information that the French were vacating the field and that it was certainly a victory. Only a few minutes later, the column Montcalm had been hoping for arrived in the British rear, but the British, now commanded by Brigadier Charles Townshend, were able to deflect them. Montcalm had been severely wounded on his retreat from the Plains, in his stomach and leg. He fell into a delirium and died at 4 a.m. the following morning.

The historic importance of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, as determining the expulsion of the French from North America, amplified by the drama of the two brave and capable commanders dying on the field, mythologically immortalized by the paintings of the death scenes

The historic importance of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham, as determining the expulsion of the French from North America, ... has obscured what a close and often farcical encounter it was.

by Benjamin West of Wolfe and by Louis Watteau of Montcalm, has obscured what a close and often farcical encounter it was. If Wolfe had approached Quebec more closely and quickly and put in hand the measures to start a siege, preventing westward sorties from the city, Montcalm would have been bottled up. If Montcalm had waited an hour before attacking, his relief force would have arrived in the British rear almost simultaneously. If Quebec had held out another two days, Lévis would have mauled Townshend very

badly. Because the British would now have to spend the winter in Quebec, 7,000 troops with 7,000 civilians, in a heavily damaged town with accommodation and food for the winter of just 7,000, Murray formalized what a historic policy that would ramify constructively through centuries to come, of close and equal cooperation between the British and the French in Quebec.

Pitt's eulogy of the fallen commander remains one of the classics of British parliamentary oratory: "Ancient story may be ransacked and ostentatious philosophy thrown into the account before an episode can be found to rank with Wolfe's." The French were not so preoccupied with Quebec, but the French fleet at Toulon was blockaded into Cadiz. But the main French naval forces, at Brest in Brittany,

joined with returning forces from the Caribbean were defeated at Quiberon Bay by Admiral Sir Edward Hawke, in a victory on the scale of Drake's, and of Howe's and Nelson's to come. Pitt's strategy was triumphant, and Choiseul's, as designs based on the invasion of Britain inevitably are, was a complete failure.

Lévis made a spirited effort to retake Quebec in April, but was repulsed, and Amherst encroached on Montreal over the summer and it was surrendered, at least, honorably and with generous terms for the civil population, by Governor Vaudreuil, on September 8, 1760. Franklin and others were concerned that the British would give back Canada and retain the French Caribbean islands. Pitt would have fought to the last musket ball himself to keep Canada, and Louis XV and Choiseul felt themselves well shot of the unprofitable, inaccessible, unremitting New France that Jacques Cartier had allegedly called, on discovering it "The land God gave to Cain," and Frederick the Great's friend Voltaire dismissed as "a few acres of snow" (a description that rankles yet in Quebec, 250 years later). Even more improbably, the bountiful fisheries of Newfoundland caused Pitt to say that he would rather give up his right arm than a share of the fishing off the Grand Banks to France, and that he would surrender the Tower of London before he would give up Newfoundland. Pitt was not just concerned with fish, because access to fisheries was what bred sailors and created the personnel for a navy, and cutting France off from such fisheries would severely

have crimped its ability to rebuild its shattered navy. (Shortly after, Newfoundland settled into a long notoriety as a poor province that only ended with the development of offshore oil in the early twenty-first century.)

Peace was secured by the craftiness of Choiseul, a clever negotiator and diplomat, if an unsuccessful war strategist. He gave the British Louisiana in exchange for their return of Havana to Spain, and France washed its hands of North America, retaining its Caribbean islands and St. Pierre and Miquelon to service its fishing fleet of Newfoundland's Grand Banks. The national debt of Great Britain had increased from £74.5 million in 1755 to £133.25 million in 1763. Shortly after Franklin's return to London in 1764, debate began on the Stamp Act, which imposed a tax on printed and paper goods, including even newspapers and decks of cards, and was so called because payment of the tax was certified by a stamp on the article taxed. Britain already had such a tax domestically. Pitt's brother-in-law, George Grenville, in presenting the measure, gave the colonies a year to propose alternatives. None did so although Franklin himself did. This excellent book ends with the distant but distinct warnings of a serious tax dispute between Britain and America rumbling through its last pages. ✕

Some passages of this review were taken from the author's forthcoming strategic history of the United States, a work now in preparation.



THE BATTLE OF QUIBERON BAY: TWO MONTHS AFTER THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM, PITT'S STRATEGY WAS TRIUMPHANT.

Loyalists Through Two Wars

Samuel Pyeatt Menefee

Tories: Fighting for the King in America's First Civil War. Thomas B. Allen. HarperCollins, 2010.

Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World. Maya Jasanoff. Knopf Doubleday, 2011.

The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels & Indian Allies. Alan Taylor. Knopf Doubleday, 2010.

Changing currents can indeed cast the true believer upon strange shores. This year a tide has washed ashore a raft of Tories and Loyalists in three volumes by Thomas B. Allen, Maya Jasanoff, and Alan Taylor. These authors embrace the term “Tory” with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Jasanoff notes only in passing the term’s pejorative nature and that it became the nickname of the British Conservative party. Taylor waits to the end of his volume to identify Tories as post-1812 Loyalist members of the family compact, defenders of elite rule in Upper Canada, who viewed their reformist opponents as disloyal to Britain and who attempted to restrict the rights of those Americans who had recently emigrated to Canada. Only Allen, who takes “Tories” for his title, defines the term up front, placing it in some historical context: “Tories supported the Crown, the role of the king as head of the church, and the traditional structure of a parliamentary monarchy.” He adds: “Some people today, particularly the descendants of Loyalists, find the word ... offensive.”

Resisting the urge to hail a new addition to the lexicon of fighting words, it seems fairer to say that it was the way “Tory” was said which did or did not make it a pejorative epithet. What also seems clear is that the term has been a

moving target; the British political party that opposed the whigs was not the same as the royalists who opposed the rebel forces during the American revolution, who were not identical to the Loyalists who participated in a post-revolution diaspora, or to the supporters of the family compact in Upper Canada. Indeed, it would seem a bit of a stretch to call all the black slaves manumitted in return for fighting for the Crown “Tories” (some might subsequently have legitimately merited the term). Much less would one use to that descriptor for most of the Native American allies of the Crown (although members of the Creek tribe did offer to vacate Florida with the English when they turned that colony over to Spain). Additionally, individuals might change their allegiance with the surrounding circumstances, so that today’s Tory might be tomorrow’s rebel, and vice versa. The “civil war” mentioned by two of the titles and discussed in the third, was not just one involving the body politic, but was fought within each mind.

Tories, by Thomas Allen, who previously wrote *George Washington Spymaster* (2004) and *Remember Valley Forge* (2007), deals with that group of colonials who remained loyal to the King during the American Revolution — somewhere between a fifth to more than a third of the colonies’ population. Generally covering the period 1769 to 1783, *Tories* hits the high points in a meandering but generally chronological discussion of the course of the thirteen colonies’ rebellion. Allen is a perfectly competent writer, but his work seems a bit wooden when compared to the other two products. What is missing is, frankly, the magic. Allen’s Introduction tells the story of Stephen Jarvis, a rebel who became a Tory — fair enough. This is followed by a chapter

kicked off by a meeting of the Old Colony Club, others which note further events in Massachusetts and Boston, then he moves north, south, in fact all over the place. As set pieces, the chapters are fine, but they rarely come alive. Compare all this with Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles*, which is also episodic but never dull; one actually cares what happened to her Loyalists.

Still, Allen does have points of interest, such as General Gage's orders to his troops on what to do with rebel stocks: "The powder and flower [flour] must be shook out of the Barrels into the River, the Tents burnt, Pork or Beef destroyed in the best way you can devise. And the Men may put Balls of lead in their pockets, throwing them by degrees into Ponds, Ditches, &c., but no Quantity together so that they may be recovered afterwards." (The bullets were in fact dumped en masse into a millpond from which they were recovered the following day.) Why "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne was known as "Elbow Room," is explained, and the doggerel for Loyalist preacher (and distiller) John Troutbeck given:

*His Sunday aim is to reclaim
Those that in vice are sunk,
When Monday's come he selleth rum,
And gets them plaguety drunk.*

Allen is also the only author of the three to spend real time discussing the presence of pro-rebel sentiment in Nova Scotia and elsewhere in Canada or to discuss the desecration of the Old South Church in Boston, which dragoons turned "into a riding school, hacking and carrying away the pulpit and pews and spreading dirt and gravel on the floor. An exquisitely carved pew, with silk seats, was taken off to become a hog-sty. A stove was installed, the church library's books and manuscripts providing the kindling."

Balancing this are a few omissions. Surprisingly, Allen makes no mention of the Galloway "plan of union," a precursor of home rule proposed in 1774, which would have provided for an American parliament under the King. He does refer to the destruction of King George's statue in New York after the declaration of independence, but misses much of Jasanoff's description of the iconoclasm surrounding that event elsewhere, nor does he cover the New York loyalist petition in November

of 1776, complaining about martial law. There are references to the Ethiopian Loyalists, a black Virginia regiment raised to support the Crown, but not to their North Carolina counterpart, the Black Pioneers. Nor in his discussion of Tories in Virginia does any reference appear to Ivor Noel Hume's *1775: Another Part of the Field* (1966). Allen's discussion of the 1782 massacre of ninety-six Delaware Indians suspected of Loyalist sympathies dutifully records that their skulls were smashed with mallets but omits the detail that all were subsequently scalped by the Patriots. He does not deal with the Tory diaspora, discuss the operation of the Loyalist claims commission, or address the tradition that many Loyalists were forced to change their names slightly to differentiate themselves from rebel families (Wiswall and Wiswell, for example). And while Allen mentions Thomas Gilbert's son-in-law being placed backwards on his horse and led off to jail, nowhere is it noted that this was a form of popular punishment.

Jasanoff's well-referenced *Liberty's Exiles* deals with the one-in-forty Americans who, true to their principles, departed the United States at the end of the American Revolution to seek their fortunes elsewhere. This is not to say that all were Tory saints. William Augustus Bowles, for example, threw his red coat into the sea and went off with a group of Creek Indians before re-joining his Loyalist regiment before the end of hostilities. Other (white) Loyalists engaged in a race riot at Shelburne on July 26, 1784 as well as others in the Bahamas, while some Florida and Bahamian Loyalists fomented their own revolutions to make those colonies independent of Britain. A surviving paper notes that St. Mary's Loyalists "unanimously Resolved that in the present State of the Loyalists Mr. Cruden should be Vested with Dictatorial powers, ... until such time as another Mutiny could be held with propriety. ..." Cruden aptly expressed the Tory dilemma in a petition to King Carlos III of Spain:

Abandoned by that Sovereign for whose cause we have sacrificed Every thing that is dear in life and deserted by that Country for which We fought and many of us freely bled ... We ... are Reduced to the dreadful alternative of returning to our Homes, to receive insult worse than Death to Men of Spirit, or to run the hazard of being Murdered in Cold blood, to Go to the

inhospitable Regions of Nova Scotia or take refuge on the Barren Rocks of the Bahamas where poverty and wretchedness stares us in the face Or do what our Spirit can not brook ... renounce our Country, Drug [sic] the Religion of our Fathers and become your Subjects.

To admit all prejudices up front, this book is a true delight! As Jasanoff puts it, her work “follows refugees like Jacob Bailey out of revolutionary America to provide the first global history of the loyalist diaspora. Though historians have probed the experiences of loyalists within the colonies ..., the international displacement of loyalists during and after the war has never been described in full.” This is claiming a bit too much for the volume: while its extent may be global, its coverage is hardly as comprehensive as that. A full description of the Tory diaspora remains an unrealized goal.

Nonetheless, “since no one volume can contain sixty thousand stories,” Jasanoff writes, most of us will feel that the author has made a wise decision by concentrating on several well-documented individuals to generally illustrate what happened to Loyalists after the war. She also has the gift of choosing well. Characters spring to life like a Byzantine church mural. Jasanoff is an excellent writer, who knows how to paint pictures and embellish the biographies of those she selects. Who was aware that Anglo-Canadians in Montreal greeted news of Lexington and Concord by pouring black paint over a bust of George III (and equipping it with a mitre)? Or that schemes proposed after Yorktown included raising a large army of blacks or seizing the lower Mississippi Valley for large-scale Loyalist asylum? Or that the 1782 Treaty of Paris was influenced by Benjamin Franklin’s feelings of resentment toward his Loyalist son? She quotes from “The Tory’s Soliloquy,” a production based on Hamlet’s “To be or not to be,” and recalls one Loyalist’s shocked reaction to the British divestiture of Florida: “I shall ever tho’ remember with satisfaction that it was not I deserted my King, but my King that deserted me.” She repeats Tory petitioner Isaac Low’s request to “muster all my Friends, and to cram Mr. Anstie with Evidence (as they do Turkeys in this Country with Paste)...” and a Boston Loyalist’s opinion of Halifax (“this stupid insipid, extravagantly

dear and horrid rainy stormy hole”). Mohawk Joseph Brant’s tomahawk confrontation with an Ottoman diplomat at a costume ball is also described: the Turk thought Brant’s face paint was a mask and grabbed the Loyalist’s nose to yank it off! More substantively, Brant tried to create a Mohawk Loyalist buffer state between British Canada and New York. And there is the story of a Tory, the aptly named Robert Frogg, who failed in his attempts to wrest a new homestead from the swamps of Jamaica’s Black River. Ironically, many black Loyalists, unhappy with their life in Nova Scotia, ended up in their ancestral Africa as some of the earliest settlers of Sierra Leone. (And in an even greater irony, some of these were subsequently attacked and banished from the colony for daring to set up an independent black Loyalist government.) Some Tories even made it to India. General Sir David Ochterlony was allegedly a “hookah-smoking, turban-wearing, chutney-eating Bostonian” who “had thirteen Indian wives, who processed around the city with him every evening on thirteen elephants.”

Jasanoff seems correct in noting that, until fairly recently, Loyalists fell outside the United States’ national narrative, while in Canada “they were hailed by some nineteenth-century conservatives as the ‘founding fathers’ of a proudly imperial Anglo-Canadian tradition, and honored as ‘United Empire Loyalists.’” Most interesting is her claim that viewing the American Revolution and the Empire “from these vantage points is to see the international consequences of the revolution in a completely new way.” According to Jasanoff, the Tories and other Loyalists who departed American shores took with them cultural and political influences which cross-fertilized much of the Empire. “This ‘spirit of 1783,’ so to speak, animated the British Empire well into the twentieth century — and provided a model of liberal constitutional empire that stood out as a vital alternative to the democratic republics taking shape ...” Loyalists spurred imperial growth. One, Mario Matra, put forth the first serious proposal to colonize Australia. They were committed to liberty and humanitarian ideals: a commission giving compensation for Tory losses was “a landmark of state welfare schemes,” Jasanoff writes. They generally opposed a centralized hierarchical government. At the same time,

she notes the “numerous seeming contradictions in British policy,” which makes one wonder just how immutable the elements of her “spirit of 1783” actually were.

Occasionally, Jasanoff gets into trouble despite her sparkling prose. In describing Lord Dunmore’s qualities, she states that he ordered the removal of gunpowder from the Williamsburg magazine the day after Lexington and Concord — but fails to note that he could hardly have known of these skirmishes at the time. In her coverage of the execution of Joshua Huddy, and Washington’s related threats against Charles Asgill (discussed more thoroughly by Allen), Jasanoff does not go on to explain that Asgill’s status as a Yorktown prisoner should have prevented the tit-for-tat retaliation threatened by the future first president. Yet these seem minor drawbacks in a work that both entertains and delights. Indeed when she says the War of 1812 was “[f]ought in and among communities divided by civil war just thirty years earlier,” and “crystallized the legacies of the American Revolution for three groups of sometime loyalists: black slaves, British-allied Indian nations, and white British North American refugees,” Jasanoff could almost be setting the stage for Alan Taylor’s *The Civil War of 1812*.

Taylor’s work is perhaps most controversial, viewing the War of 1812 in the context of a civil war. At first sight, this seems a bit preposterous. It is hardly what one would expect of a Pulitzer and Bancroft prize-winning author who has specialized in books dealing with the early northern frontier. The involvement of two nations would appear to completely quash the idea of a “civil” war, leaving only one of those shrill titles, all too common today, which promises much, but on perusal produces little. Taylor, fortunately, is far more subtle. His work deals less with countries than with allegiances. One work he quotes in his Introduction notes that “it is notoriously evident that there are some in America whose souls are perfectly British, and it is believed that there are some in Britain who are Americans at heart ... It is not where a man is born, or who he looks like, but what he thinks, which ought at this day to constitute the difference between an American [citizen] and a British subject.”

Pursuing the Tory-Loyalist saga beyond its

ostensible conclusion in the diaspora, Taylor re-investigates the War of 1812 as a continuation of the Revolution’s “unfinished business.” He sets the scene by recounting the fortunes of Ned Myers, an American sailor who was born in Quebec and grew up in Halifax before emigrating, and who was thus subject to charges of treason against the Crown as an example of “the contentious boundary between the king’s subject and the republic’s citizen.” Taylor views Upper Canada as a “counter-revolutionary regime ... meant to set an example of superior stability and prosperity that eventually would entice the rebel Americans to forsake their republican experiment.” Viewed in this sense, the US-Canadian border appeared “tenuous and temporary.” Taylor offers several examples of changing loyalties and divided families, including a member of the Glengarry Light Infantry from eastern Upper Canada who, plundering an American rifleman’s corpse, discovered that it was his brother! The complexities of the post-revolutionary split were further aggravated by the arrival of Irish emigrants in the United States and the movement of “Late Loyalists” to Upper Canada, where they took the oath of allegiance and received grants of Crown land. Within the United States, the fundamental policy split between Democrats and Federalists threatened to spawn its own civil war, the Irish-American invaders of Canada continued in part fighting the Irish rebellion of 1798, while Native Americans fought each other based on their loyalties. As set forth by Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812* “attempts a borderland rather than a national history,” examining “the peoples on both sides of a new and artificial border, as they often defied the control of their rival governments.”

Events in this region are explored in depth (from about 1780 to 1830) at the expense of the Atlantic, Gulf coast, and high seas theatres. Taylor is particularly good in discussing the “Late Loyalists,” Americans attracted north of the border by free land grants, and the relationship of the Irish to these conflicts, from the use of an “Irish model” for the colonies, to the role of the Orange Lodges in Loyalism, to rows between the Scots and Irish in the context of British Canada. Along the way he introduces us to several fascinating concepts. One was the suggestion that one of George III’s younger sons become an American King. Another was the proposal for a “United Columbia” (an amalgam of Lower Canada and Vermont). We learn of

Napoleonic designs on Canada. Taylor has an ear for the catchy quote, as when Prince Edward noted that his father, King George, “is not a merchant to deal in bread and ask payment for food granted for the relief of his loyal subjects,” and when an 1807 anti-Federalist election poster proclaimed: “Every Shot’s a Vote, and every Vote Kills a Tory! Do your Duty, Republicans, Let your exertions this day Put down the Kings and Tyrants of Britain.” Such rhetoric is put in context when we learn that American Federalists had offered to send troops to help defend Canada in case of a Napoleonic invasion and that some hoped for — or feared — a division of the United States, with the north-east reverting to British control. Indeed, Madison and Monroe spent the country’s entire secret service budget for one year to purchase the papers of one John Henry, not the “steel-driving man,” but a British secret agent, who claimed to have proof of Federalist dalliance with the British. Many Americans viewed the putative conquest of Canada in terms of the North-South split. And then there is the flash of detail. Some Canadian immigrants continued celebrating the Fourth of July, others were convinced of American perfidy, because the invaders “killed at Queenstown had deeds in their pockets for all their best plantations.” News of the American invasion was tipped to a business partner by no less than John Jacob Astor, who was trying to protect the furs he had stored in Canada from seizure as a prize of war!

While excellently written, *The Civil War of 1812* does have a few drawbacks. I personally don’t like Taylor’s penchant for single word chapter titles. Only two of the sixteen are more than one word in length: Loyalists, Deserters, Blood, Invasions, Scalps, Flames — they jar like lowbrow newspaper headlines. When Taylor notes the impact of the Johnsons in Upper Canada, he states that, “They rallied their settler clients and the Six Nations’ Haudenosaunee [Iroquois] ... in a Loyalist coalition,” but neglects to give any of the family’s New York background or to explain that Indian agent and patriarch William Johnson’s third wife, Molly Brant, was a prominent Mohawk.

*So effectively did
Upper Canadian
conservatives
rebrand the meaning
of loyalism after the
War of 1812 that they
helped entrench an
abiding perception
of revolutionary-era
loyalists as
conservatives.*

So, returning to Tories, what does it mean to be one? Is it the same as being a Loyalist or loyal to the Crown? Jasanoff speaks of “the Canadian ‘tory’ vision of loyalism that took shape after 1812.” This celebrated the Loyalists, whether the United Empire Loyalists or the loyal fighters of the War of 1812 — as founding fathers of a tub-thumpingly imperial Canada. Theirs wasn’t just the British North America of light taxes and stable government many loyalists championed before 1812. Their British North America was a stalwart defender of empire, fiercely monarchical, and thoroughly anti-American. Loyalism, to them, had some of the resonances associated with the term today ..., connoting die-hard support for empire. So effectively did Upper Canadian conservatives rebrand the meaning of loyalism after the War of 1812 that they helped entrench an abiding perception of revolutionary-era loyalists as conservatives. But this portrayal was misleading at best, and captured only a subset of the opinions that American refugees might have recognized as their own.

She elsewhere notes that, “An influential interpretation of the genesis of Canadian political culture portrayed loyalists as importing American liberalism into Canada, only with a ‘tory touch.’”

Word meanings have certainly changed over time, but it still seems to this American outsider that there remains a constant. A true Tory appreciates order, supports legitimacy, and values (rather than worships) tradition. Many of the American Revolution’s Tories, the Loyalists of the post-conflict diaspora, and those who supported the Crown in the War of 1812, adhered to such an internalized code of beliefs. (I say many, because others were obviously motivated by the riches, freedoms, and preferments on offer.) “God, King, and Country!” may well express the Tory credo. But which religion, which ruler, and which nation? While Allen, Jasanoff, and Taylor’s books each partially succeed in their depiction of Loyalists, and together offer a compelling historical tale, they still fall short of fully catching Tory lightning in a bottle. ✕

1848: Pushing at an Open Door

C.P. Champion

Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine and Robert Baldwin.
John Ralston Saul. Penguin, 2010.

The grant of responsible government to the Province of Canada by the British government in 1848, depicted as a hard-won achievement by Canadian reformers, is a pillar of Liberal history. Donald Creighton, Grit whiggery's most caustic critic, described the preoccupation with 1848 as an "obsession" based on an imaginary "emancipation from British control." The further left the observer, the more likely to give credit to the rebel leaders of 1837, Louis-Joseph Papineau (who in fact sought an American-style republic) and William Lyon Mackenzie, also an Americanizer but, according to Bob Rae, the "great Canadian radical."¹ A.R.M. Lower in *Colony to Nation*, a catechism of the once-mighty Liberal faith, called the rebellions "blessings in disguise, the corner stones of Canadian nationhood"

In the heroic version, the mid-century Canadas were divided between the forces of darkness

and light. Fighting for the good were radicals and moderate reformers (Papineau-Mackenzie, Baldwin-La Fontaine), held to be selfless and heroic freedom-lovers, even as heralds of Marxist revolution. On the dark side were the British-appointed governors and the mostly English-speaking elites of Montreal and Toronto. Branded as the "château clique" and "family compact" by their political enemies, they were said to be reactionary and venal — "turkeys, or rather, Tories" in Rick Salutin's 1973 play, "The Farmers' Revolt," which is meant to be anti-American even though Mackenzie was the most pro-American figure in Canadian history. According to this class-war model, the British and their colonial clients cared for nothing but their own wealth and power while the rural proletariat (few of whom actually supported rebellion) were the embodiment of virtue. Yet whatever their faults, a side-by-side comparison of "compact" giants such as John Molson, George Moffatt, John Beverley Robinson, or John Strachan with the playwright would leave little doubt as to which more closely resembled the bird in question.

Younger historians continue to undermine these old approaches. Michel Ducharme's new study, *Le concept de liberté au Canada à l'époque des Révolutions atlantiques, 1776-1838*, finds that all factions were led by intelligent, active proponents of liberty — including arch-Tories like Robinson, Hagerman, and Boulton. Ironically it was establishment Tories who embraced the kind of property-centred freedom we think of as modern today. Another youngish revisionist, Jerry Bannister, rehabilitates the colonial leaders as genuine liberals: Robinson, he

C.P. Champion studied history and international relations at UBC and Cambridge University. He worked on Ted Byfield's history of Alberta and as a reporter and proof-reader at Alberta Report. Later he was a policy researcher for the Reform Party and Canadian Alliance, has a Ph.D. from McGill, and works as a policy advisor in Ottawa. He has written for the National Post, Ottawa Citizen, Montreal Gazette and Globe and Mail, and is the author of The Strange Demise of British Canada (MQUP, 2010) and a forthcoming history of the Canadian flag debate.

implies, could be described as a Lockean Loyalist. Such men, with an eye to stability, prosperity, and public works, were well within their rights to reject the spin of the self-righteous professional politicians and journalists who portrayed themselves as freedom's champions. After all, like all politicians, the reformers wanted to get their hands on patronage plums for their friends. The reformers were "place beggars," as D'Arcy McGee sharply remarked.² Indeed they were opportunists in more ways than one.

Oddly the rebel myth was once so important to Canadian leftists that volunteers in Spain in 1937 called themselves the Mackenzie-Papineau battalion, the Mac-Paps. It's obvious that the radical legacy is overrated. Without saying so, John Ralston Saul seems to agree in his book, *Louis-Hippolyte LaFontaine & Robert Baldwin*,³ his entry in the "Extraordinary Canadians" series of which he is editor. If Saul is to be thanked for one thing in this book, it is for displacing Mackenzie and Papineau as the sainted heroes of democracy with his own secular saints: the partnership of La Fontaine and Baldwin. Based on the commonplace La Fontaine was named attorney-general (the senior minister of the day) in 1849, the first to be technically accountable to the elected assembly rather than to the governor, Saul makes bold to call La Fontaine "Canada's first prime minister." This is cute, part of Saul's valiant attempt to dramatize the infamously dull episode of "Robert Responsible Government." But there is no need to pretend because there was a real prime minister in 1849. His name was Lord John Russell, chief executive of Her Britannic Majesty's government, and it was he who granted responsible government to the Canadas.

Saul's artful misnomer is a symptom of his failure at any time to elucidate the motives and complexities behind London's reluctance to confer earlier on Canada a replica of the cabinet system that prevailed in England. Responsible government should have been "self-evident," Saul states. But he gives no indication as to why it was not. He says, "imperial politicians ... believed in democracy and citizenship at home but not in the colonies," implying it was a simple case of hypocrisy. Saul offers no discussion of the sophisticated literature left by defenders of the constitutional order. He does not even mention the system of "harmony" in which, under

instructions from London, the governors made decisions as far as possible in congruence with the assembly, cabinet, and local advisors. One difficulty from London's perspective was how to reconcile the existence of two responsible ministries under one crown, a ministry in the colonies and another in the metropole: in the event of contradictory advice to Her Majesty which would prevail? Saul could at least have stated the anti-responsibility quandary just once in his book, even if it made no sense to him. The kicker, though, is that in practice, the Province of Canada already had responsible government by 1841. As Phillip Buckner wrote of the governor, Lord Sydenham: "nothing in his actions ... was illegal, unconstitutional, or inconsistent with the basic principle of responsible government."⁴

I can't speak to Saul *qua* philosopher, but as historian he is painfully frustrating. First there are a few howlers: Upper Canada's governor in 1836, he says, was "Edmund Bond Head." But Sir Edmund Walker Head became governor in 1854. In 1836 the colony welcomed his cousin, Sir Francis Bond Head, one of Wellington's former officers whom Saul is pleased to dismiss as an "idiot." (Thus endorsing the Salutin/turkey classloathing interpretation.) Saul also says 1848 saw Canada's "first steps as a democracy," which must be news to Nova Scotians, who elected their first representative assembly in 1758, and Upper and Lower Canadians, who elected their first assemblies in 1791.

Saul's real problem is writing as if the attainment of autonomous cabinet government was anti-British, somehow a "way out" of empire. Apparently the British empire ceased to exist after 1848 as far as Canada was concerned because La Fontaine and Baldwin "talked their way out of an empire." Theirs was a great "emancipation," as Creighton said of the old Liberal myth. Ahead of Australia, New Zealand, and later India and other colonies, Canada was the first "to extricate itself without a fight," Saul says. But Canada did not extricate itself from anything in 1848 and had no desire to do so; on the contrary.

Saul replaces the radical myth with an independence myth of his own. His anti-imperialist rhetoric echoes that of the Patriots and reformers whose speeches and fulminations he tends to take at face value. Saul forgets that his

heroes were *politicians* out to get votes. His style, like theirs, demonizes the British and the most accomplished colonials alike. What was it that prevented Canadian democracy and independence in Saul's mid-century Canada? Apparently it was the threat of being indiscriminately shot or bayoneted by British soldiers in the streets! "There were more than enough British regulars to do a professional job," Saul writes. "Properly lined up, opening fire in raking blasts, they could disperse mobs many times their own size. That, after all, is how empires are held."

That simple, was it? "Firing on the mob ... is what they were trained to do." This is the picture of "British" administration in Canada that Saul conjures up. It accords with nationalist assumptions. We were a colony; we became a proud country; therefore we must have struggled for freedom: so runs the accepted colony to nation syllogism. It is no wonder that naive reviewers have reflexively adopted Saul's anti-colonial tone. "Tough nation-builders fought powerful empire," wrote the *Winnipeg Free Press*. The reformers were "unsung heroes," wrote the *The Sun*, swallowing the bait. *Maclean's* praised Saul's "lavish detail." Even Janet Ajenstat, who should know better, indulged the anti-empire motif in an admiring blog post entitled, "John Ralston Saul: 'Out of Empire's Control.'"

It is true that shots were fired by soldiers in the Place d'Armes during the 1832 election. But they were fired to uphold, not suppress, democracy. As rioters menaced and rival mobs began chasing the candidates, troops were called in at the request of Canadian magistrates. The Riot Act was read in accordance with law. When soldiers opened fire there were no "raking blasts," as Saul imagines, but one shot at a time under officers' orders. Three rioters were killed. Still, once the votes were counted, it was the Patriot candidate endorsed by Papineau, an Irish immigrant named Daniel Tracey, who was declared the winner (though he would die of cholera before taking his seat). The episode is distorted in, among other places, the CBC's "A People's History," in which the viewer hears mass firing in the background but is not shown or told what actually happened. Oddly *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, which aspires to be definitive, is little better, citing "the intervention by the armed

forces against Canadians," a phrase that suggests "Canadians" was synonymous to "rioters." But the Riot Act in 1832 was invoked by *Canadian* judges on behalf of the electors to ensure the votes were properly counted.⁵

French-speaking reformers did not uniformly back Papineau. In reality several Patriots broke ranks with him before 1837 as his rhetoric became more violent. Louis Guy, for example, was Papineau's ally in opposing union of the Canadas in 1822-23, persuading London to cancel the plan. But unlike Papineau, Guy was level-headed, a soldier and veteran of Salaberry's defence of Montreal in 1813. Having served as a judge, as commissioner for roads and bridges, and on the legislative council advising the governor, Guy saw the folly of Papineau's course. (Oddly, Papineau regarded Louisiana as the model for French Canada, not realizing that people in Louisiana spoke English.) Alfred-Xavier Rambau, a journalist who had lived in New York, supported the government in 1837. Étienne Parent, a fervent Patriot and publisher of *Le Canadien*, also broke ranks; when violence broke out, he blamed the Patriots: "We impute to them the blame for all the blood that will be shed." In the hunter uprising of 1838, Parent switched back to the rebel side and denounced Sir John Colborne's excessive repression. Parent was arrested for sedition but his faith in British justice was vindicated when he was released under *habeas corpus*. Although few francophones fought for the government in 1837, some did. One ex-Patriot, Austin Cuvillier, took up arms in 1837 as a major and commander of Montreal's 5th militia battalion.⁶ Pierre-Édouard Leclère, superintendent of the Montreal police and founder of the *Ami du peuple* newspaper, in 1837 denounced the rebels, who "will become our tyrants as soon as they become our masters" — the outcome of most revolutions.

And yet rebel defeat continues to be conflated with "British" oppression. Joseph Graham in a recent issue of *Canada's History* writes that "British forces suppressed the uprising." But local volunteers, mostly from Montreal's English population (then in the majority), put down the rebels alongside British regulars. Far from an attempt to "throw off the colonial yoke," as

Graham states, 1837 in the eyes of contemporaries had more to do with preventing annexation to the United States. Mackenzie and Papineau were unsuccessful in part because they wrapped themselves in stars and stripes.

Here again reality is discordant with dogma. For nationalists and leftists, Canadian history must have been a struggle against imperialists. In reality, the British government in the 1830s and 1840s was looking for ways to divest itself of colonial administration, to reduce expenditure by devolving power. The uprisings had to be put down, of course, because a rabble victory “would be an open invitation to enemies to trample on British interests,” as Ged Martin put it.⁷ With peace restored, some were prepared to “fling Lower Canada overboard altogether.” British leaders expected the colonies to become independent as long as British interests were upheld — the question was how and when. England’s introduction of free trade with the repeal of the corn laws in 1846, which Canadian elites opposed because they lost imperial protection and went bankrupt, was a step towards autonomy. Toronto reformer Francis Hincks lamented that British acquaintances thought Canada’s departure “would be no loss.” There were anti-imperialists in the 1840s, but contrary to Saul et al., they lived in England, not Canada.

Even the anti-free trade riots that led to the burning of parliament are distorted by the nationalist lens. Again, an article in *Canada’s History* labels the Tory incendiaries “pro-British” — an absurdity because they were protesting *against* British policy and the elected government’s restitution of the rebels. Believing London wanted to wash its hands of the Canadas anyway, the Tories (among others including Papineau, who had by then peacefully resettled on his landed estate) signed the annexation manifesto to join the United States.

Saul gets off on the wrong foot on page one, where in 1849 the “troop of professional infantry was holding the mob back.” In another romanticized passage, Saul depicts Baldwin and

La Fontaine as impregnable fortresses of democratic stability, observing a mob run wild. But it is only thanks to British regulars that the duo could strike such a posture: it was the troops whom Saul describes elsewhere as terrifying instruments of imperialism who were protecting Baldwin and La Fontaine from the crowd. Again when La Fontaine’s life was threatened by rioters in 1849 how did he get away? Whoops! He escaped, Saul writes, “in a protective bubble created by soldiers of the Seventy-first Highlanders, with bayonets fixed.” Saul says La Fontaine was “imperturbable” despite the danger around him. Perhaps, but the reason he was unperturbed was that he stood within the empire’s “protective bubble,” two hundred men with “bayonets fixed, holding off the mob outside.”

British acquaintances thought Canada’s departure “would be no loss.” There were anti-imperialists in the 1840s, but contrary to Saul et al., they lived in England, not Canada.

Saul writes as if mob violence was something uniquely appalling in the context of reactionary Tories. But riots were a routine, if unpleasant, feature of eighteenth and nineteenth century societies everywhere with the advent of industrialization and market liberalization. In England, the Luddites smashed machinery to protest against industrial change, culminating in the Swing Riots of 1830. The prime minister, the Duke of Wellington, had his train pelted

by a mob in 1829 and the windows of Apsley House smashed. In 1839 twenty members of the mob were killed when police opened fire in the Chartist Riots in Birmingham. We should not be especially horrified, then, to find that, in 1849, La Fontaine’s house was ransacked or the governor’s carriage bombarded with rocks and offal.

The problem at Terrebonne during the 1841 election — though Saul neglects to point this out — was that troops were *lacking*. In the face of mob activity on polling day, La Fontaine withdrew from the campaign, an incident that is glorified in a *Historica Minute* as the prelude to responsible government in 1848. The nationalist version, which overlooks the possibility of self-serving theatrical motives on La Fontaine’s part, blames the English gangs only, facetiously demonizing the establishment and the governor. There were even stories in the British press that Sydenham

personally used £20,000 from the Jesuit Estates to pay mobs to disrupt polling. In fact, the governor did not have access to such funds; the smear was typical of the hearsay that lazy reporters picked up from “steam-boats and bar-rooms.”

It is true that Sydenham did not believe he should be obliged to accept majority rule on every question. (Nor do modern leftists, who are often selective democrats.) Moreover he believed the government party had a right to try to win elections. In his view, if the mobs raged unchecked it is because *Canadian* authorities, whom he urged to uphold the peace, did not call out the troops. As Sydenham observed, “Lafontaine admitted that the great bulk of his followers” were armed with cudgels; they were “at least as much prepared for a conflict as the English.” These facts do not fit into Saul’s tale of uniquely English “thuggery.” But unfortunately for him, it is this kind of detail that makes the simplistic anti-imperialist caricature untenable.

Ultimately Saul is confused about the British Empire because he shares Salutin’s doctrine. On page 69 he says the “British/European nation states were increasingly being built on the domination of one race, language, religion over all the others.” But on page 93 Saul writes, “The British Empire was built on commerce.” Saul is mistaken to polarize colonial society between what he calls inelegantly a “european monolithic/colonial model” as against a “democratic movement.” This is too black and white, too radical chic. He needs a dose of Ducharme and Bannister. A more balanced account would say that with London’s benediction British governors for the most part worked with various factions, including reformers, to devolve political power to locally elected officials when it was politically feasible and while maintaining ordered liberty, protecting private property, and checking the reformers’ political chicanery.

Saul is too preoccupied with building up his heroes to unravel the intricacies of colonial politics in the 1840s — the interplay of successive governors, councillors, and assemblymen which Saul reduces to a tale of heroes vs. idiots. He gives little credit even to Lord Elgin, who both implemented responsible government and secured free trade in Washington. (Yet he compares La Fontaine to Tolstoy and Gandhi!) It is therefore beyond Saul’s

grasp that the ultimate cause of responsible government was not colonial heroics but British policy. One would never glean from Saul’s book that mid-Victorian Canada was not a case of the mother country clinging to the colonies but of Canadians clinging to the mother country. The reformers who demonized the “compact” were in the right place at the right time to benefit from the changing political climate.

We will be closer to an accurate picture of 1848 when we accept that La Fontaine and Baldwin were not heroes but ordinary, sly and slightly ridiculous opportunists seeking power and patronage. (La Fontaine was particularly ludicrous in his attempts to coiff his hair in such a way as to make the most of a physiognomic resemblance to Napoleon.) We will more accurately understand the period when we restore agency to the British government, to the governors and particularly to Elgin, who implemented internal self-government. And when we cease to demonize the empire and the talented Toronto and Montreal elites who, for all their faults, took quite explicable positions if we care to find out what they were. We will cease inflating the achievement of reformist politicians when we acknowledge they were not charging at imperial dragons, but pushing at an open door. ✕

Notes:

1. In *Great Questions of Canada*, ed. Rudyard Griffiths.
2. David Wilson, *Thomas D’Arcy McGee*, vol. 1 (2008).
3. Saul is punctilious about spelling the name “LaFontaine” without a space, since La Fontaine tended to join the two parts when signing his name in longhand. But it was written and printed various ways including “Lafontaine.” The authoritative *Dictionary of Canadian Biography (DCB)* gives “La Fontaine.”
4. Phillip Buckner, “Charles Edward Poulett Thomson, 1st Baron Sydenham,” *DCB*, vol. vii.
5. France Galarneau, “Daniel Tracey,” *DCB*, vol. vi.
6. “Louis Guy,” *DCB*, vol. vii; “Étienne Parent,” vol. x; “Austin Cuvillier,” vol. vii.
7. Ronald Hyam and Ged Martin, eds. *Reappraisals in British Imperial History* (1975).

René Lévesque as Traditionalist

Mathieu Bock-Côté

René Lévesque. Mythes et réalités. Edited by Alexandre Stefanescu. VLB éditeur, 2008.

This collection edited by Alexandre Stefanescu stems from a conference held in the fall of 2007 at the Grande Bibliothèque du Québec, under the auspices of the René Lévesque Foundation, on the current state of knowledge and opinion regarding René Lévesque. A national myth during his own lifetime, confirmed in that status in the aftermath of his death, René Lévesque could, all by himself, fill up the pantheon of modern Quebec heroes, like the founding father of a long-imagined and always imaginary country. Except for the monumental biography written by Pierre Godin, the recent essay by Martine Tremblay titled *Derrière les portes closes* (Behind Closed Doors), a collection that appeared in the early 1990s dealing with his impact on Quebec society, and a few critical essays published during his political career, there are few reliable sources on Lévesque, and fewer still on his accomplishments. This book is therefore more than welcome: it will contribute to a renewal of scholarship on the work of a man who, as the saying goes, left a defining imprint

Mathieu Bock-Côté is a doctoral student in sociology at the University of Quebec at Montreal, UQAM, and is the author of La dénationalisation tranquille (Boréal, 2007); with Jacques Beauchemin, La cité identitaire (Athéna, 2007); and numerous articles on sovereignty, multiculturalism, the Quiet Revolution, and the liberal malaise. He is a frequent commentator on current affairs in Quebec media.

on the national conscience.

The book includes several contributions and, as might be expected, some are of great value and others hardly worth reading. But the former provide new historical insights toward an eventual history of sovereigntism, and not only from the perspective of the history of Quebec modernity, but also of what has come to be known as *la question nationale*. Those essays which are of value examine the relationship of Lévesque to Quebec conservatism and to French-Canadian traditionalism. To the extent that they undermine the absolute dominance of the received grand narrative of Quebec modernity based on the rejection and abolition of the French-Canadian historical experience, they are essential. We have all heard of the golden legend of the Quiet Revolution — that of a society that mounted a revolution against itself and liberated itself from everything in its history that prevented it from becoming modern. The best Quebec researchers are now challenging that grand narrative, whose adherents keep on celebrating the success of a society that is, in reality, falling apart.

We owe it to Xavier Gélinas for first raising the question of the relationship between Lionel Groulx and René Lévesque. As we all know, the conventional view is that the great historian and the founding father of modern Quebec had nothing in common. The two are seen as radically contradictory. It is hard to imagine a contemporary sovereigntist leader claiming to be an admirer of Lionel Groulx; the best one could say is that today's Quebec has little to do with that of Groulx. Xavier Gélinas, who has already made a massive contribution to the renewal of

Quebec's intellectual history thanks to his study of the intellectual right during the Quiet Revolution,¹ shows that this is not at all the case. His claim is that there is no lack of continuity between the nationalism of Groulx and Lévesque. As regards the political status of Quebec, the definition of "nation," the role of the state, education, and culture, the two men, separated by one generation, were implicitly responding to each other. Gélinas even suggests that the relationship of Lévesque to Groulx should be thought of in light of the relationship of the latter to Henri Bourassa who, in his own time, also provided a strong definition of the French-Canadian nation so as to establish a strategic framework for its promotion. Gélinas of course acknowledges that Lévesque's successors retrospectively shaped the image of Lévesque as a founding father of modern sovereigntism that was designed to "liberate" Quebec from its past. He nevertheless invites historians not to fall under the spell of this narrative, in order to understand better the nature of the metamorphosis of Quebec's nationalism as it became more modern. One might even go so far as to conclude that Gélinas thinks Quebec nationalists should adopt another narrative about Quebec's origins — one that would enable them to free themselves from the dead-end manner in which the Quiet Revolution is remembered.

In the same vein, Éric Bédard focuses on Lévesque's alliance with *les bleus* — those more conservative nationalists attached to traditional Quebec, whom Lévesque admired much more than the socialist separatists of the Rassemblement pour l'indépendance nationale (RIN). Far from demonizing the conventional conservatism of these "*notables de province*" who endorsed the concept of sovereignty, Lévesque thought it necessary to form an alliance with such conservatives in order to de-radicalize the ideal of independence and to hold on to those who were not overly enthusiastic about Quebec's new technomodernity. Through the Parti Québécois, a new synthesis of nationalism was being developed which made room for traditional Quebec, not only with respect to political objectives, but also

Bédard focuses on Lévesque's alliance with les bleus, those conservative nationalists attached to traditional Quebec, whom Lévesque admired much more than the socialist separatists

through the reshaping of historical consciousness. This was meant to avoid Quebec's identity becoming fully associated with the radical break-up model implicit in the decolonization theories put forth by RIN militants. In this chapter, Bédard, who does not hide his conservatism, seems to be trying to rehabilitate the nationalist synthesis worked out by Lévesque, who was not simply a man of the left. This rehabilitation would enable sovereigntism to rebuild itself on the basis of a matrix other than the leftist one we have witnessed in recent years.

These two contributions, certainly the best in this collection, are indirectly echoed in several other chapters, in particular those of Alain Noël, Marc Comby and Serge Denis, who all inversely question the relationship of Lévesque with the left — a questioning which is surely symptomatic of a baby-boom intellectual generation disappointed that sovereigntism failed to be the vehicle for a Quebec form of socialism. There is something strange in this disappointment, since the Parti Québécois' failure to achieve independence certainly did not prevent it from completing the progressivist reprogramming of Quebec society.

Was Lévesque truly a leftist? From their perspective, was he in the camp of the good? Alain Noël seems to be asking himself how he could admire a man who did not definitively throw in his lot with the left. But despite Noël's efforts, it seems that Lévesque, who loathed ideological radicalism more than anything else, remains problematic from the point of view of the socialism of the intelligentsia. Unlike people of the left, Lévesque never spent much time asking, "what is the Left" and "what should it become." He spent even less time asking what the Left "really" was, in the postmodern manner. Nor did he associate himself with the theoretical enterprises, so frequent in the 1970s, aimed at redefining society on the basis of some ideal model of socialism. It is probably Jean-Jacques Simard who, in a rather dense and half-baked contribution, gives the best definition of Lévesque, whom he

describes as an old American-style liberal and populist technocrat, attentive to the modern science of government but opposed to the bureaucrats' inclination to view society as something to be entirely planned.

As impressive as they are, Lévesque's achievements tend to hide his undeniable failure to implement the political project with which the collective mind associates him. Daniel Jacques reminds us of this in his chapter. René Lévesque drew Quebec into a regressive spiral, first by losing the referendum, then by not knowing how to manage the consequences of that failure. One could frame the problem in another way: for those who want to believe that the great historical task of Quebec has been completed, the constant reference to Lévesque implies that Quebec is henceforth a normal society dedicated to the ordinary management of public affairs. All parties have a claim on the Lévesque myth and use it most of the time to neutralize the national movement by playing down the consequences of the two referenda. Daniel Jacques thus invites Quebecers to free themselves from the sovereigntist myth that is at the core of Quebec's political fatigue and to imagine a future that is not dependent on the promise of "next time" evoked by Lévesque in 1980.

It should also be mentioned that the book includes chapters from Louis Balthazar, who reminds us of Lévesque's well-known pro-American

sympathies; from Guy Lachapelle, who not surprisingly pulls out all the stops to convince us of the modernity of Lévesque's nationalism; from Philip Resnick on Lévesque's relationship with English Canada; from Pierre Anctil on his relationship with the "cultural communities;" and from Pierre Nepveu on literature and Lévesque — an esoteric text which really does not belong in this collection, where solid contributions are generally the norm.

In short, one finds here a convincing invitation to open a new chapter in Quebec's political history, to abandon the golden legend of the Quiet Revolution, and to revisit certain connections that have so far remained unacknowledged in Quebec's national conscience and in our political traditions. Above all this fine book reveals the progressive elements of modern nationalism that have been overlooked, and invites researchers to write a history of Quebec which treats the standardized modernism of the collective mind as a "problem" to be questioned rather than taken for granted. Which leads us to one conclusion that happens to be the most important: we must interrogate Quebec's nationalism and its foundational controversies and, to an even greater extent, the complex origins of sovereigntism and of the Parti Québécois. ✕

Translated with permission from the Spring 2010 Revue Mens.

Two Solitudes

"The era in which Quebec ideas, Quebec politicians and Quebec's dominate our national dialogue can end, if the new Tory majority wants it to. Not since John Diefenbaker in 1958 — fifty-three years ago! — has any party with a leader from outside Quebec won a Parliamentary majority. ... This could (should) mark the end of Quebec's hegemony over Canadian politics, but it need not mark the end of Canada. ... Quebec need not be ignored or made irrelevant. Rather the Tories have the first chance in two generations to keep Quebec's influence over federal politics at realistic levels, proportionate with that province's share of the population. Let's hope they take advantage of that opportunity."

— Lorne Gunter (Edmonton), *National Post*, May 7

"The defeat of the Bloc is nevertheless part of a wider crisis. Quebec is undergoing a profound political crisis resulting from the exhaustion of two historical watersheds, the Quiet Revolution and Meech Lake. The polarization resulting from these is no longer politically creative. For ten years, the electorate sought to cast it off, in turn supporting the ADQ, the 'Clear-eyed vision', the Conservatives, and most recently François Legault. The NDP is the latest beneficiary of this discontent. The Canada-Quebec contradiction is still visible. The 'NDP moment' opens a new field, forcing sovereigntists to demonstrate strategic imagination. It is not clear that this new situation is to their disadvantage."

— Mathieu Bock-Coté (Montreal), *La Presse*, May 4

In Search of Quebec Conservatives

Damien-Claude Bélanger

Le conservatisme au Québec. Retour sur une tradition oubliée. Frédéric Boily. Presses de l'Université Laval, 2010.

It is often assumed, in English-speaking Canada, that Quebec's political culture is fundamentally left-leaning. The existence, in Quebec, of a state-subsidized childcare programme or the fact that a credit union, the *Caisses Desjardins*, is the province's largest financial institution are regularly cited as proof of this inclination, as are the Bloc Québécois' twenty-year dominance over federal politics in Quebec and, more recently, the NDP's extraordinary sweep in the 2011 election. The province's progressive politicians and intellectuals, indeed, often highlight these examples, and others, to confirm that the vital centre of Quebec politics lies on the left of the political spectrum.

The extent to which these claims are true, however, is debatable. Quebec childcare was set up, first and foremost, to promote natalism. The *caisses populaires* were established with the support of the Roman Catholic clergy in order to provide financial services to a population that was poorly served by Canada's largely English-speaking banking sector and that often fell prey to loan sharks and usury. The Bloc Québécois was founded, for the most part, by disillusioned Tories and even the party's core supporters did not necessarily embrace the left-wing ideas championed by Gilles Duceppe. As for the NDP's recent breakthrough, I would argue above all that it expressed a yearning among many voters, and most notably among those who had supported the Bloc Québécois in the past, to reconnect with Canada. The NDP was able to harness this desire not because it is left-wing, but

because, unlike the Liberal Party and the Harper Conservatives, it is not viewed as potentially hostile or unresponsive to Quebec's aspirations by an important segment of the electorate.

If anything, it is nationalism, not supposed left-of-centre proclivities, that accounts for Quebec's distinctive political culture. The collectivist ethos of nationalism, in fact, is often confused, deliberately by some, with progressive ideals. Quebec political culture is indeed marked by a degree of mistrust regarding individualism that is not as prevalent in Ontario, for instance. This mistrust, moreover, did not emerge with Quebec's left during the 1960s; its roots can be traced back to the conservative nationalism that dominated the province's intellectual culture from the mid-nineteenth century to the Quiet Revolution.

Quebec's conservative tradition is deftly examined in this new book by Frédéric Boily. A Quebecer and a professor of political science at the University of Alberta's *Faculté Saint-Jean*, he has published widely on the subject of conservatism in Quebec and Canada. His time in Alberta has given him a unique perspective on Quebec politics. Boily is indeed adept at placing Quebec in a wider Canadian context. He notes, for instance, regarding the supposed "unanimism" that characterizes Quebec politics, that the province is not a political monolith. "In fact," he writes, "the Canadian province that most closely approaches unanimity is not so much Quebec but rather Alberta, where more than in any other part of Canada, a single party dominates political affairs."

Boily's slender tome seeks to challenge the notion that conservatism essentially disappeared from Quebec's political and intellectual cultures

during the 1960s or that province's contemporary conservatism is a transient import from the United States, France, or English-speaking Canada. To this end, he traces the evolution of conservatism in Quebec since the early twentieth century and insists on its persistence beyond the Quiet Revolution. Boily's examination of Quebec conservatism begins with the Action Française movement, which emerged during the conscription crisis of the first world war. He describes the movement's leading figure, Lionel Groulx, as Quebec's Burke or de Maistre, as the abbé played a key role in the evolution of French Canadian conservatism and nationalism.

Boily is not wrong to insist on Groulx's importance. His mistake, however, is to begin his analysis of Quebec's conservative tradition with Groulx and the Action Française. In doing so, he fails to acknowledge conservatism's much deeper historical roots in Quebec. Conservatism emerged during the crucible of Canadian discourse, the American Revolution, when rebel and loyalist elements struggled for control over the British Province of Quebec. The appearance of republican ideas in the St. Lawrence Valley spurred a conservative counter-discourse which rejected revolution and democracy and affirmed the importance of maintaining traditional values and institutions, including monarchy. To a large extent, this nascent conservatism was expressed by Quebec's Roman Catholic clergy and its seigniorial class, groups which tended to benefit from the political and social status quo.

Their conservatism deepened in the 1790s, as many clerics and seigneurs began to argue that the British Conquest had preserved the St. Lawrence Valley from the horror and turmoil of the French Revolution. In the 1830s, conservative warnings regarding the dangers of revolutionism became increasingly strident as Lower Canada lurched towards rebellion. The republican ideals of Papineau and the Patriots were popular, especially in the District of Montreal, and clerical censure could not prevent the outbreak of the Lower Canada Rebellions of 1837-38, though it likely helped limit the scope and intensity of the disturbances.

Loyalism and a firm attachment to monarchical institutions were among the principal hallmarks of French Canadian conservatism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The nationalist impulse tended to express itself through republicanism in the lead-up to the Lower Canada Rebellions, and conservatism acted, in practice, as an anti-nationalist force. All this would change in the 1840s and 1850s. During these decades, clerical loyalism diminished in intensity. This shift was the result of two major factors. On the one hand, legislation was passed that strengthened the Roman Catholic Church's legal status and lessened, on the part of the clergy, the need to ensure the constant goodwill of the colonial authorities. On the other hand, the Union Act and Lord Durham's plans to assimilate the French Canadian population struck a hard blow to loyalist assumptions regarding British benevolence.

By the mid-nineteenth century, a new conservative nationalism had emerged. It was championed by various clerics, but devout laymen could also be counted among its leading proponents. Ultramontane ideas, rather than republicanism, now underpinned nationalism in Quebec and, for the next century or so, French Canadian nationalism was essentially a conservative doctrine. The struggle against republicanism that had absorbed conservative energies earlier in the nineteenth century continued, though it would steadily taper off in the 1880s and 1890s as republican ideas became increasingly marginal. The failure of the Lower Canada Rebellions and their disastrous aftermath, indeed, had significantly discredited republican nationalism among Quebec's French-speaking population who, in turn, increasingly embraced conservative forms of nationalism.

It was the conservative nationalism of the mid- to late-nineteenth century that laid the intellectual foundation for the emergence of the Action Française movement of the early twentieth century. Groulx, for instance, was heavily influenced by the thought of Msgr. Louis-François Laflèche, whose 1866 *Quelques considérations sur les rapports de la société civile avec la religion et la famille* ("On the linkages between civil society and religion and the family") should be listed, along with such works George Grant's 1965 *Lament for a Nation*, as one of Canada's most influential conservative texts.

By the interwar years, the conservative struggle to preserve traditional values and institutions was

in full swing. The lack of respect afforded to minority rights outside of Quebec, the influx of American culture, and the economic inferiority of the French Canadian population were major preoccupations for Quebec's right during the 1920s and 1930s. Boily notes indeed that the approach to politics that prevailed among Quebec's interwar conservatives was "meta-political" in that they sought to "win the cultural war, which was fought over values, before considering victory at the ballot box." In this regard, he challenges the work of André-J. Bélanger, who considers the conservative nationalism of Lionel Groulx and his disciples to have been essentially apolitical.

The conservative discussion of political institutions, to be sure, did not disappear with the advent of the republican challenge in the late nineteenth century. On the contrary, during the 1930s and 1940s, many Quebec conservatives embraced corporatism as an alternative to capitalism and liberal democracy. Though it was never implemented, the form of corporatism that appealed to conservatives in Quebec was very different from the top-down model of corporatism championed by fascists during the 1930s. Boily indeed draws a clear distinction between fascist and Catholic forms of corporatism and notes that the latter, by virtue of its desire to decentralise political and economic power, precludes totalitarianism.

A number of authors, including Esther Delisle, whose 1992 *The Traitor and the Jew* was widely discussed in English-speaking Canada, have argued that conservative nationalism in interwar Quebec possessed, at the very least, fascist tendencies. Boily refutes this suggestion, arguing instead that the revolutionary nature of fascism made it unattractive to Quebec's fundamentally conservative right. He does suggest, however, that intellectuals like Lionel Groulx "experienced the attraction of fascism's magnetic field," largely as a result of the doctrine's anti-communism. Boily is not wrong to point this out — Quebec's interwar right certainly believed that communism constituted a far greater threat to Western society than fascism — but, in a more important sense, he fails to acknowledge that the profound attachment to tradition and Catholic values that characterised Quebec's conservative right likely played a role in preventing the emergence of a powerful fascist movement in the province.

The 1930s witnessed the return to power of the provincial conservative party, repackaged as the Union Nationale, after almost forty years in opposition. Boily, like many other scholars, questions the extent to which Maurice Duplessis' regime can be labelled as conservative. He notes that Duplessis' economic policies and his conception of the state were liberal in the classic sense. Indeed, in the 1930s and 1940s, Duplessis' attachment to laissez-faire orthodoxy was a powerful stumbling block to the implementation of economic reforms inspired by corporatism.

Quebec's conservative intellectual movement was generally critical of Duplessis' economic policies, though it did approve of his struggle for provincial autonomy. Duplessis' betrayal of his coalition partner, Paul Gouin, leader of the Action Libérale Nationale, in the lead-up to the 1936 provincial election resulted in the intellectual right's effective exclusion from power under the Union Nationale. During the mid-1930s, many of the intellectuals associated with the conservative Ligue d'Action Nationale and École Sociale Populaire had backed Gouin's party, which had adopted the traditionalist Programme de restauration sociale (Programme for Social Restoration) as its political platform, but these intellectuals would be profoundly disillusioned by Duplessis' ability to co-opt and sideline the Action Libérale Nationale.

The disconnect between political and intellectual conservatism is indeed something of a theme in Quebec history. In 1871, the ultramontanes failed miserably in their bid to take over the provincial wing of the Conservative party. More recently, two right-wing parties, the Ralliement Créditiste and the Action Démocratique du Québec (ADQ), achieved notable successes with little to no support from the intellectual right. Indeed, few of the intellectuals associated with the *nouvelle sensibilité historique*, a loose collection of conservative-leaning scholars who, in recent years, have criticised aspects of the Quiet Revolution's legacy, openly supported Mario Dumont's ADQ.

The ADQ's populism, like that of the Ralliement Créditiste, was no doubt off-putting to the intellectual right. Moreover, the ADQ's success at the polls, most notably when the party

achieved official opposition status in 2007, was more a function of the party's charismatic leader and its ambiguous policies regarding Quebec's political future than its neoconservative agenda per se. The party's opposition to large-scale immigration and "reasonable accommodations" was relatively popular among the electorate, but many other ADQ policies, including its support for a flat tax and its desire to abolish Quebec's school boards, were not well received.

Boily describes the ADQ's ideology as "conservative neo-liberalism." The party founded by Mario Dumont and Jean Allaire thus shares an affinity with the right-wing of Quebec's Liberal party, which is hardly surprising since the ADQ, like many of the provincial political parties that have emerged since the late nineteenth century, can trace its political lineage back to the Liberal party. The Liberal party cannot be considered conservative in any strict sense of the word. However, the Liberals became increasingly comfortable with the political and social status quo in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, by the late 1970s, with the simultaneous disintegration of Quebec's two right-wing parties, the Union Nationale and the Ralliement Cr ditiste, and the rise to power of the Parti Qu b cois, the Liberal party began to occupy the right-of-centre of the province's political spectrum. Some neoconservative intellectuals, indeed, have been drawn into the party's orbit and Quebec's version of the Fraser Institute, the Institut  conomique de Montr al, has often granted tacit support to Liberal policies.

It should be noted, however, that the Parti Qu b cois also possesses a conservative faction, whose leading figures in recent years have included Joseph Facal and Fran ois Legault. Boily underlines that one of the key characteristics of contemporary Quebec conservatism is indeed its lack of cohesion. Quebec's conservatives are involved in a number of competing parties and groups, which inevitably lessens the impact and influence of conservative ideas. The national question, to be sure, complicates the political spectrum in Quebec and has

prevented the emergence of a united conservative party or movement in recent decades.

Nationalism has created a distinctive political dynamic in Quebec, as has the province's Catholic heritage, though few observers understand or are willing to accept the extent to which the latter has exerted an enduring influence over the province. English-speaking Tories are often puzzled by contemporary Quebec conservatism. Quebec's conservatives, indeed, often embrace aspects of statism and regulation. The spirit of corporatism, moreover, has left an imprint on Quebec's political and intellectual culture. Neoconservative individualism will not

readily find fertile ground in a historically Catholic society that has experienced significant discrimination and economic marginalization. Quebec conservatism does not draw its historical roots from Bay Street or the Orange Lodge, and alliances between English- and French-speaking conservatives have historically been shaky in Canada.

Boily's overall assessment of Quebec conservatism is spot on. Though politically divided, the movement is alive and well. The

2005 conservative manifesto, *Pour un Qu bec lucide* ("for a clear-eyed vision of Quebec"), which Boily unfortunately does not discuss in his book, will help frame political and social debate in Quebec for years to come. Quebec's conservatives, moreover, are not servile imitators. The ADQ is not the *Front National* and the *nouvelle sensibilit  historique* is not a neoconservative import. Both draw much of their inspiration from domestic sources. The *nouvelle sensibilit *, for instance, bears the notable influence of Fernand Dumont, an intellectual who often self-identified as a socialist, but whose attachment to Catholicism and critique of the Quiet Revolution manifested a conservative soul. Quebec's conservative tradition is not unrelated to those of France, the United States, or English-speaking Canada, but it is also distinctive in many regards. Quebec conservatism, in short, cannot be understood (or harnessed) without taking nationalism into consideration.  

Quebec's conservatives are involved in a number of competing parties and groups, which inevitably lessens the impact and influence of conservative ideas.

An Australian in ‘Harperland’

Greg Melleuish

Last November I came to Canada to speak at the National History Forum in Ottawa. It was a most agreeable experience. Canadians are very nice.

It was my second visit to Canada, the first having been to Victoria in 1999. It must be said that Canada does not figure very much in the average Australian’s view of the world. There are a number of reasons for this state of affairs. One is that outside of the Commonwealth Games Australians rarely encounter Canada on the sporting field. Canada is a Commonwealth country but it plays neither cricket nor rugby at a senior level, nor even netball. Australia spends a lot of its time in sporting competitions with New Zealand. It plays cricket against India. And, of course, it has played test cricket series against England for the Ashes for well over one hundred years. The Poms are described in Australia as the “old enemy” and I spent some of the time in Ottawa discussing cricket with the English guest speaker at the Forum, Peter Furtado of *History Today*. He even sent me an email after the

Melbourne Test in January reminding me that England had just retained the Ashes. Not that this worries me particularly as the Australian cricket team now has a reputation for aggressive and boorish behaviour, a reputation that diminishes them and makes one wish for days gone by when cricketers actually behaved properly.

Another reason is that Australia has always thought of itself as the “next America.” However, like Canada, much of Australia is either uninhabitable or able to support only a few people. Once upon a time, Australian politicians had fantasies that the country would support one hundred million people. They even wanted to gag Griffith Taylor (who ended up in Canada) for saying that much of Australia was useless for development.

However, the fixation with America remains. The Australian constitution that came into being in 1901 was a fusion of the Westminster system and American federalism. The Australian founding fathers never looked to Canada as a model, primarily, I suspect, because it had a nominated upper house and Australia’s men of the 1890s were enthusiastic democrats who introduced the referendum as the means of changing the Australian constitution, little realizing that the mechanism would turn out to be a conservative principle that makes formal change to the Constitution very difficult.

Even after the first world war, as Australia became less enthusiastic for things American, it simply meant that Australians became more interested in being British, at least at the level of high culture. American popular culture has always been important in Australia. What this means is that while both Britain and America

Gregory Melleuish is associate professor in history and politics at the University of Wollongong and is the author of Cultural Liberalism in Australia (Cambridge University Press, 1995, rpt. 2009) and The Power of Ideas: Essays on Australian History and Politics (Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2009). He was invited to speak about Australia’s history curriculum at the third National History Forum in Ottawa on November 18, 2010. He is an honorary fellow of Champion College, a post-secondary classical liberal arts institution outside Sydney.

receive considerable coverage in the Australian media, Canada rarely makes it into the Australian news. But, to be fair, neither is there much coverage of New Zealand affairs in Australia. But there are a lot of cheap reality shows on Australian television that are made in New Zealand.

The same is true in such areas as the study of history. Australians have virtually no interest in either Canadian or New Zealand history. What this means is that knowledge of Canada in Australia is not great, and I must confess that I am as guilty of this failing as anyone.

The fascination of going to Ottawa, then, was in discovering a society and people and political system about which I was very ignorant, although being very aware that both Australia and Canada shared an inheritance from Britain. The fascination lies in the similarities and the differences, as when two siblings grow up and follow their own particular paths.

Consider the way in which politics is conducted. Canada became a confederation in 1867; Australia became a federation in 1901. Both have bicameral systems and share power between a central government and state or provincial governments. That seems to have been the preferred system for new versions of Britain in the nineteenth century. But perhaps these similarities mask profound differences. The whole history of Australia since 1901, or more correctly 1922, has been one of the centralisation of power in the hands of the Commonwealth government. There are reasons for this related to the Constitution and the behaviour of the High Court. But it is probably also the result of Australians being reluctant federalists who love the idea of national unity.

Coming to Canada, one thing that amazed me was the lack of an Education Department at the federal level. In Australia education initially belonged to the states but over the years the Commonwealth government involved itself in such things as funding private schools and

universities. It has moved to the stage where it can now call the shots in matters of education policy. And Australians, by and large, love the idea.

In Canada, it struck me, there are obstacles to such centralization of power. The most obvious one is Quebec. To an outside observer Quebec looks like a giant indigestible lump that is stuck in Canada but which will never be absorbed. Although this may be the cause of a chronic political malaise it also may have genuine benefits for the other Canadian provinces. It puts limits on

the amount of centralization that can occur. Provinces are not threatened with becoming mere political ciphers in the way that Australian states are. Whatever one might think of Quebec, it is a good thing that local and provincial customs and habits are given an opportunity to survive and hopefully prosper.

In Australia the great god of standardization is worshipped. That was why I was in Canada, to talk about the new standardized Australian history curriculum, the attempt to produce a homogeneous product in all parts of the country. To be sure, Australia has an equivalent of Alberta in the shape of Western Australia (and, to an extent, Queensland) but its presence can only soften the impact of centralization, not stop it in its tracks.

And the odd thing is that Australian federalism is sliding into centralization even though the Australian Senate is an extremely powerful upper house while Canada combines a more robust federalism with a comparatively weak Senate. Of course it all has to do with when such institutions came into being. In the nineteenth century a nominated upper house was favoured because of a fear of democracy, as in the Canadian provinces. New South Wales had such an upper house while the Victorian one was elected on a restricted franchise. Both are now elected by universal suffrage.*

However, the fact that the upper house was not elected became a source of its weakness. In

I was astonished to learn that Harper was accused of the same sort of sins of as Howard. In both cases there seemed to be some sort of war between a prime minister who expresses populist sentiment and an older liberal establishment that believes in keeping the people in their place.

1881 the Legislative Council of New South Wales debated an Act designed to restrict Chinese immigration to the colony. Many speakers of the highest integrity and good liberal principles refused to oppose the Bill because it had the support of the “people” and they themselves had not been elected. I mention this because as I arrived in Canada the Senate had knocked back a Bill on climate change and was attacked because of its lack of democratic credentials. To my mind it was a wise move; the government did not support the Bill and it could have crippled Canada’s economy. What is the point of having an upper house if it cannot do anything? And in any case judges who like to act as unofficial legislators are equally unelected.

Australia and Canada have gone along different paths, though beginning with the same nineteenth century model of responsible government, the Westminster system. Immediately one notices the differences in terminology. Such terms as “throne speech,” “ridings,” and even “proroguing parliament” are not used in Australia. Watching the House of Commons on television I was struck by the fact that the prime minister and leader of the opposition do not sit separately from their colleagues at benches in front of their parties. In Canada there are no cross benches; every party not in office is part of the opposition.

However there was one very great similarity that did catch my eye. Stephen Harper seemed to enjoy the same relationship to Canada’s cultural and establishment elites as John Howard endured with their Australian equivalent when he was prime minister. On the way home I read Lawrence Martin’s *Harperland* and was astonished to learn that Harper was accused by that establishment of the same sort of sins of which Howard had been accused. In both cases there seemed to be some sort of war going between a prime minister and government that expresses a certain amount of

populist sentiment and an older liberal establishment that believes in keeping the people in their place. Both Harper and Howard have been accused of what might be termed “sharp practices” and of centralizing power to excess in their own hands.

Even more interesting is the similarity between the Australian and Canadian electoral map, with support for political parties being geographically concentrated. Just as Alberta votes Conservative so Western Australia and Queensland, Australia’s resource states, are dominated by the small-c conservative Liberal-National Coalition. This regional strength appears to be a feature of the contemporary Anglophone world. The Conservatives dominate England but barely exist in Scotland while the Republicans are powerful in particular parts of America.

Is this perhaps a sign that there is a single culture war going on right across the English-speaking world? But in Canada, of course, this is complicated by the presence of Quebec. Harper’s opportunity to take the offensive is limited by the fact that he runs a minority government and he somehow has to manoeuvre around the problem of Quebec. In Australia, Howard could do things because he knew that although he might alienate his more liberal supporters there were not enough “doctors’ wives” to cost him seats.

Some twenty years ago Australian conservative thinker John Carroll wrote an essay in *Quadrant* on the virtues of the lower middle class and praised its traditional values and moral sense. It seems to me that both John Howard and Stephen Harper rode to power on the bedrock of the lower middle class and its desire to preserve its world in the face of seemingly relentless change. Howard always appealed to the common sense of the Australian people, although what he really meant by the people were those inhabiting the suburbs and rural regions of Australia.

When I look at Harper, including the appeal that he has for practising Christians, and

The real problem for conservatives is to discover a foundation on which to preserve tradition. ... What remains is the common sense of ordinary people. But even that is under threat from those who would thrust modernity down their throats through state-sponsored education.

his support for Israel, I see something similar to Howard. The real problem for conservatives in the contemporary world is to discover a foundation on which to preserve tradition. The problem seems to be more acute in the Anglophone world as many traditional institutions have simply caved into modernity, ranging from the universities to the Anglican Church. In Australia much of the backbone of contemporary conservatism comes from a connection with the Catholic Church — which was once the case in Quebec but not so much in English Canada.

What remains, elusive as it is, is the common sense and intuitive sense of justice of the ordinary people. But even that is under threat from those who would thrust modernity down their throats through state-sponsored education. The battle lines have been drawn and one can see them on the electoral maps of most English-speaking countries.

Now it may be complained that during his eleven years in office Howard achieved less than many conservatives might have desired. In minority government the same might be claimed of Harper. Certainly it appears that his task has been much more difficult than was that of Howard. As I wrote at the beginning of this essay Canadians are very nice people. Perhaps they are too nice. I was asked in Canada as to what I saw as being typically Canadian and to me it is the character of Erica in “Being Erica.” She is so very nice. The show appears on Australian television but on minor channels and has no real following.

I do not think that anyone would call Australians “nice.” Australians are a bit like Ricky Gervais at the recent Golden Globe awards. They love to take the mickey out of you. It’s all in good fun but there is a streak of the mongrel in it. When you think that our nearest neighbours are Indonesia and other small states striving to achieve the status of “failed” perhaps that is not a bad thing. The world looks a much more diffi-

cult place from where Australia sits than where Canada does. There is a lot out there that is not nice as Australians discovered with the Bali bombings in 2002.

The culture of Anglophone countries would seem to be headed down the road of niceness. There is nothing wrong with niceness in itself. It is a mark of civilized living. But as the Chinese discovered in the thirteenth century, a high degree of civilized living is no protection against barbarians. Both Canada and Australia have progressed quite a way down the road of niceness, and its institutional form, the nanny state,

but it seems to me that Canada has gone one step further.

In Ottawa I visited the Canadian War Museum and my group was taken around by a professorial sort who seemed to devote most of his time talking about the evils of war. It seemed to me that when such matters come up in Australia there is far more discussion of such things as heroism and sacrifice. War may be a terrible thing but it is a reality of the human condition, and given that resources on this planet

are scarce we may be seeing more, rather than less, of it in the future.

I suppose it all depends how close one stands to the front line in these matters. Australia is much closer than Canada, which remains protected by its large neighbour. Every so often there is a reality check in Australia which brings out the mongrel and suppresses the niceness. This is why Australia sometimes seems somewhat harsh when it comes to boat people. The charm of Stephen Harper is that, I suspect, he may have a degree of mongrel hidden behind his somewhat bland and nice outward demeanour. Even in our civilized age that is not a bad thing. ✕

* Canada’s provincial upper chambers were abolished: that of Ontario in 1867, British Columbia in 1871, Manitoba in 1876, PEI in 1893, New Brunswick in 1958, Nova Scotia in 1928, and Quebec in 1968.

The world looks a much more difficult place from where Australia sits than where Canada does. There is a lot out there that is not nice as Australians discovered with the Bali bombings in 2002.

AUSTRALIA

The Long Search for Australian Identity

Harry Gelber

In Australian discussions of current affairs one can often detect an element of doubt that strikes outsiders as odd. It is a vague but powerful amalgam of three overlapping questions: “Who, actually, are we?”; “Where in the world do we belong?” and “By what right do so few of us own this large continent?” It seems curious that this should surface in so many forms and in relation to so wide a spectrum of domestic and foreign relations, from Aboriginal policies at home to refugee issues to the politics of foreign alliance.

Not all these questions, or the fears they reflect, are new. From the time of first British settlement until after the first world war they did not really arise, as Australians saw themselves comfortably as part of a worldwide British family, their security guaranteed by Britain in general and the Royal Navy in particular. No doubt some of that was based on the fact that the British empire enjoyed something like global dominance. In any event, that Australia should become anything very different seemed inconceivable (except, perhaps to some Irish Catholics). Yet as early as 1905 the First Lord of the Admiralty in London remarked that if, for any reason, the Royal Navy should in future lose its supremacy in Asian and Pacific waters, the Australians would have no alternative but to turn to their American cousins. His name was Winston Churchill. Three years later, when the American “Great White Fleet” toured the Pacific, it was welcomed in Australia with universal enthusiasm.

Much of that persisted until long after 1945. In the 1920s and 1930s the Australian representative in London could claim a seat at British cabinet meetings. In 1939 Prime Minister Robert

Menzies broadcast that “Great Britain has declared war ... as a result, Australia is also at war.” Two years later the Australian Minister to Washington, Richard Casey, was by unanimous agreement of President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill appointed British Minister in the Middle East. As late as the 1960s the late Tom Millar recorded, “I recall being with two fellow officers of the Australian component of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan in 1946 when we were asked by an American: ‘Why don’t you break away from the British?’ We replied in chorus: ‘But we are British.’” In the 1960s many Australians still automatically referred to England as “home.”

There is no doubt, though, that the second world war shattered many of the old certainties. In 1942 the Royal Navy was helpless to prevent the fall of Singapore and the Dutch East Indies to Japan or the consequent threat to Australia. In the same year it was the US Navy that defeated the Japanese, in the Coral Sea and at Midway, in the process securing Australia and its approaches. Under General MacArthur’s command, US forces used Australia as a major base for the subsequent US advance to the Philippines and towards Japan.

It was not just the war and the new American ascendancy that saw the role of Britain and “Britishness” in Australia sharply decline. The entire three decades or more of British history, starting with the fall of Singapore in 1942, were a story of rapid economic, political and imperial decline and, with it, of Britain’s diminishing relevance to the economy and major political interests of Australia. From the Singapore collapse

to the British withdrawal from east of Suez in 1967 the loss of a British capacity to influence, let alone defend, Australian interests was all too obvious. So was Britain's growing anxiety to join the European common market. To be sure, many important ties remained: in finance, trade, the theatre, the arts, in education and sport. But the relevance of Britishness shrank quickly, the more so given the postwar policy of immigration from non-British sources. Practical Australian interests, whether in trade or strategy, shifted progressively away from Europe and the Atlantic world; though winning a Test cricket series against England became, if anything, more satisfying than ever.

The decline of Britishness in Australia's politics and consciousness came at many levels. The sixty years or so since 1945 have seen not just a tripling or more of Australia's population to some twenty-two million, but at the time of writing there is lively discussion about a prospective population increase to anything from thirty to forty million. It has meant the growth, as a percentage of the population, of numbers from racial, ethnic and cultural groups very different from the people of the British Isles who had created modern Australia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This rate of growth inevitably brought huge increases to Australia's major cities, promoted the growth of new industries and, with them, new economic and political interests.

The war also raised, or revived, many much older fears. One was the partly subconscious fear that had haunted Australians from the beginning: small Australia's fear of "Asian hordes." Together with that came ethnic and racial worries encapsulated in the old White Australia policy. Together they helped to produce the immediate postwar mantra of "Populate or perish." That led to an explosion of immigration, not only from Britain but, at first, mainly from Italy and Greece. But in spite of the tripling of the country's population by the end of the century, much of the sense of overhang remained as population numbers in Indonesia, India, Vietnam and, above all, China tripled too.

In domestic politics, the changes were also substantial. By the later 1960s the long Liberal (centre-right) ascendancy of Robert Menzies and his immediate successors was clearly

drawing towards a close. A new generation of students began to emerge from the raft of new universities Australia created during the 1960s and went on creating for some time longer. Few of these students were interested in foreign relations. Instead, most of them were deeply concerned with Australian politics and reforms at home. Indeed, at one point in 1970 the three Victorian universities, Melbourne, Monash and La Trobe, had between them seven professors of politics or government. All seven professed to be specialists in Australian politics. Even more startling was the impression (no statistical assessment seems to exist) that for a time, in the early 1970s, very large percentages of the best masters and doctoral candidates in history and politics appeared to be solely interested in studying topics in Australian politics, leaving classical disciplines like political philosophy or institutions or diplomatic history neglected.

At popular and political levels this inward-looking trend largely continued. The Vietnam war, and Australia's role in it, caused fierce controversy and stimulated anti-American opinion. So did the establishment of joint US-Australian intelligence facilities in Australia's north-west. But the bulk of the population remained content with the insularity of Australian political life and attitudes. As late as the 2010 federal election it was striking that no party so much as mentioned any concerns or issues beyond the country's shores. Insofar as the outside world mattered, the country took it as read that almost the only issue, one that virtually constituted foreign policy, was trade. Here, the figures were instructive. By 2010 Australia's three biggest two-way trading partners were China (13.2% of Australia's trade), Japan (12.3%) and the USA (10.3%).

Even so, after 1945 the cold war almost immediately transformed the content and direction of Australia's foreign political, trading and other economic links. It is not surprising that in such an environment of doubts and questioning there should have been, at least for a brief period, a number of suggestions — of greatly varying plausibility — about where Australia might find a new "home." Some people even thought about the possibility of a "reversement des alliances" by abandoning the USA and Europe and allying

Australia with China. Others again mentioned, more vaguely and only slightly more plausibly, a kind of membership of and dependence on “Asia” or a never clearly specified Asian community.

Governments, foreign policy professionals and serious observers naturally took a very different view. Australia had to come to terms with sweeping changes in the entire strategic geography of the world. Both short and long-term strategic interests required one or more close and reliable friendships with powerful partners, and all Australian governments after 1945 built steadily on the friendship with the United States that the war had created and nourished. The wartime intelligence arrangements were continued and elaborated. The relationship was formally underpinned in 1951 by the ANZUS treaty and extended during the six decades that followed, by Australian-US co-operation in wars from Korea to Afghanistan, by diplomatic complementarity, by strong two-way investment, but also by a host of other common interests, from popular travel to the conclusion of a free trade agreement in 2005. By then, what seemed to be emerging was nothing less than a fairly stable three-country bloc of the USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Before the end of this period the notion of Britishness had been virtually replaced by another idea, one much more appropriate for the new conditions: multiculturalism. Here was a notion evidently in accord with the flow of history. It would, for instance, parallel the civil rights movement in the USA and similar trends in Britain and parts of Europe. It had a number of practical advantages, too. It would help rapid population increase. It would greatly widen the pool of potential immigrants, especially ones with needed skills. It would therefore increase and improve the available workforce. It would widen the range of people, tastes and preferences in the general population, making Australia perhaps a livelier place. It would fit in with the globalization of economics and information and increase trade (even with those

regions of the globe that enthusiastically practised their own ethnic separatisms). Much more importantly, the increase in Asian and African immigrants would distance Australia from an old White Australia policy likely to offend states and peoples in the third world. By 1967 Australia started to abandon that policy as likely to attract hostility, especially around Asia. At the same time, emphasis on immigrants with the most desirable skills and knowledge turned out in very many cases anyway to mean people from the English-speaking world. It is said that Julia Gillard once described her parents as the “right” sort of immigrant.

The effect of these foreign and domestic pressures was that, on the one hand, Australia remained a solid member of the Anglosphere and its formal and informal connections. The senior policy-making classes, whether in politics or business, continued to be recruited, with few exceptions, from people of Anglo-Saxon heritage. But, on the other hand, the new and vocal dedication to “multiculturalism” and loud hostility to any kind of “Europeanism” quickly

became a staple of Australia’s new ethnic sensibilities. They also, and conveniently, dovetailed with deep-seated Australian views about “equality”— of both opportunity and outcome — and were quickly elevated to the level of moral principle, to the point where even discussion of ethnic, racial and cultural differences, however carefully phrased, was liable to attract the label of “racist” and social ostracism.

However, multiculturalism, while providing an acceptably liberal moral posture, created various problems for private and public policies. There were three in particular.

First, what should be the proper balance between managed migration, based on the skills and aptitudes of migrants, and the country’s attitudes, on the grounds of human kindness, to the ever-growing streams of refugees around the world?

Second, what should be the balance between assimilation of new arrivals and freedom for them to nurture their own culture and habits?

At popular and political levels this inward-looking trend largely continued. The bulk of the population remained content with the insularity of Australian political life and attitudes.

How does one manage the dictum of that poet, lifelong francophile and founding president of Senegal, the great Léopold Senghor, who urged his people to “assimilate, not to be assimilated”? After all, people come to Australia for any number of reasons. Many but not all want to settle and become Australian citizens. Even some who do might change their minds and go “home” later. Others, even after becoming citizens, have a mobile or international lifestyle or profession that can make nationality a secondary matter. Others again might develop an Australian hyper-patriotism and come to oppose later streams of immigration.

There was a third problem that did not make its appearance for two or three decades. It stemmed from the fact that immigrants tended to congregate in or close to the major cities, especially Sydney and Melbourne. But among these immigrant groups, perhaps especially among non-English-speaking ones, the patterns of social expectations and political opinions turned out to be rather different from those of older Australians, as well as from each other. At the latest by the turn of the century those differences led political opinions and voting into directions measurably different from those in the rest of the country.

All that came together with other, more subtle and perhaps more profound questions. Almost everywhere in the advanced world, and in the half-century after the second world war, there were new and more urgent questions about the form, role and composition of that central political construct: the state. Almost everywhere, these decades saw an unprecedented growth in the role and power of the state vis-à-vis its citizens and in its intrusiveness into the smallest capillaries of society. That came together — whether as cause or effect — with the individualisation or fragmentation of large segments of society. That had many causes. One was the increasing variety of location of workplaces, especially for white-collar groups. Another was the replacement of older patterns of a single breadwinner per family by economic and taxation pressures for both parents to enter the workforce, which also tended to break up established family patterns. What emerged were more varied arrangements of partly or wholly separated or single-parent

families, often depending on the state, whether for money or for child-caring. Together with the more varied careers and locations of work they also strongly contributed to the breakup of the old extended family.

To cope with this kind of, now inevitable, heterogeneity, Australia developed a growing and increasingly complicated system of laws, regulations and official social norms to ensure that, irrespective of sex, religion and so on, people would be treated appropriately and, in a general sense, equally. But life is not confined, or even always subject, to official regulations. If your parents came to Australia from Scotland or Sri Lanka you do not cease to be a Scot or a Sri Lankan simply because you went to an Australian school and some government official gave you a document called an Australian passport. What was always likely to matter much more was that the Scottish child was the heir or heiress, knowingly or not, of a European civilisation stretching from Socrates via Christianity and the *cinquecento* to the Scottish Enlightenment, the French Revolution, Beethoven, Wagner and Picasso to the European Union, while the Sri Lankan was apt to have entirely different and largely incompatible religious ideas, assumptions, historical memories and, not least, languages imbibed at his or her mother’s knee long before the start of formal education. Given the deeply rooted assumptions, preferences and habits of established Australian society — not to mention the impact of Australian schooling on immigrant children — the balance was bound to tilt towards assimilation. And that was a process which the Scottish migrant was very likely to find easier and more comfortable than the Sri Lankan.

The historical record strongly suggests that those countries and empires where multicultural living had, for whatever reasons, long since become an unremarkable daily fact have been altogether more successful, most of the time, than those in which multicultural association has been a matter of political focus and debate. Media rhetoric about “celebrating differences” tends to disguise reality. If the differences are expressed by something as innocuous as a folk-dance or cuisine, they may be interesting or quaint but in any case harmless and without significant social or political consequence. But

once they become a focus of political dispute and competing claims for money or status or land, they can become a source of friction and even hatred (as has clearly happened in the case of the Aborigines).

Official attempts to impose mutual good will, for instance by banning speech that might be thought offensive, are a sure way to stifle mutual accommodation, since the feelings so repressed will merely find expression in other and more subterranean ways. For example, the idea that only Jews are allowed to make jokes about Jews and only the Irish are allowed to mock the Irish, while no one is allowed to make jokes about Africans or Arabs, is plainly counter-productive. Strong official encouragement and top-down promotion of "multiculturalism" is quite unlikely to lead to genuine peace and harmony; and once mutual dislike between groups has reached a certain pitch, some social separation may turn out to be the only reasonably peaceful solution.

In the meantime it is pointless to try and wish away the profound differences among societies in culture and outlook. One may live in Japan for thirty years but will not thereby become Japanese. The Chinese Han certainly do not think they are at all the same as Tibetans, Uighurs or Manchus (or even as people in the next province). In Iraq and Turkey the Kurds continue to fight for independent statehood. So do the Pushtuns in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The point can be replicated all over Africa, Latin America and most of Asia, not to mention Europe. The weight accorded to ethnicity varies greatly between countries and, with that, the nature and subtleties of allegiance to state and government. From the point of view of social and state cohesion, the statement of Tariq Ramadan, an Oxford scholar who describes himself as "Swiss by nationality, Egyptian by memory, Muslim by religion, European by culture, universalistic by principle, Moroccan and Mauritanian by adoption" is wholly unhelpful. Differences between socio-economic groups and

networks within existing states may also be hugely important.

The fact that Tariq Ramadan is the Swiss-born grandson of Hassan al-Banna, a founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, may not matter. But that he is a prominent academic is significant. Elites, including journalists and academics, almost never appreciate how eccentric ("off centre" in the original meaning of the word) their community is within society at large. They are constantly surprised by the evidence of their distance from general and mainstream public opinion. But the point goes far beyond

such networks and is greatly strengthened by evident, and possibly growing, fragmentation of post-industrial societies and polities. It has to do with the decline of party or class or even wealth or profession as a guide or measure of political allegiance. Instead, political opinions and allegiances tend to vary much more between smaller and more separate social-professional networks, not only regional ones but those of doctors or lawyers, tradesmen or small business owners,

actors or retirees, and certainly of immigrants, especially ones with separate racial and cultural origins and language. It is within such social groupings that opinions tend to develop and, most importantly, can become accepted as representing the views of the general thinking public. That alone is apt to make political differences more acerbic and uncompromising.

In any event, national feelings and networks remain a fact of life, and their strength or weakness tends to drive the relationship between the citizen and the state. But it is hardly open to dispute that in the contemporary world, in Australia as elsewhere, the underlying principles have been seriously challenged by various kinds of trans-border travel and settlement. For instance, at the time of writing there are some 16 million Muslims living in the European Union, including three million Turks in Germany, an even larger number of North Africans in France and several

In the absence of a strong and shared sense of cohesion, based on the reality of a nation with its own faith, unspoken assumptions and language, and rooted in some particular place, what happens to the state?

hundreds of thousands in Britain. In major areas in several large cities people live in the accustomed styles of their old Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi regions, children are educated accordingly and the relationship with the surrounding regions, and especially the British or French state, tends to an uncomfortable extent to be merely a formal and legal one. In such cases, the notion that the processes of immigration will in time dissolve nationalism and tribalism, not to mention the anthropological illiteracy of the general population, can be merely wishful thinking. The point is, of course, not confined to Muslims or Hindus. It would apply equally to other strangers, whether Congolese or Chinese if they settled in large clusters. Or, for that matter, to the British in their cantonments in the old India.

But then, in the absence of a strong and shared sense of cohesion, based on the reality of a nation with its own faith, unspoken assumptions and language, and rooted in some particular place, what happens to the state? What seems to happen, among other things, is that what was an organic, even instinctive relationship tends to become supplemented, if not replaced, by a relationship altogether less profound and emotional. Laws are no longer obeyed because they are the legitimately devised laws of “our” community. This is a vastly important point, going far beyond the reach of Western or Christian civilization. “Consensus” is, after all, one of the four canonical roots of Islam. Instead, laws are obeyed merely because they are called “laws” or “regulations” and failure to obey them might be punished. Custom is replaced by legal and regulatory texts. Not just one text, either, or a dozen, but a multitude of confusing and often contradictory texts which give to an increasingly impersonal officialdom a wide choice as to which line of what regulation is to be interpreted, in what way, in any particular instance. Especially given that officialdom is apt to be dismissive of people who are, all too obviously, not “one of us.” Even President Obama

Elites, including journalists and academics alike, almost never appreciate how eccentric (“off centre” in the original meaning of the word) their community is within society at large. They are constantly surprised by the evidence of their distance from mainstream public opinion.

has spoken, in an unguarded moment, of “little people” and their “antipathy towards people who aren’t like them.”

That implies a subtle but important change in the relationship of state and citizen. The person who came to Australia from, say, Iraq two years ago may now be, in legal terms, a citizen with exactly the same rights and expectations as someone whose parents left Europe in the aftermath of the second world war or a man whose great-great-grandparents created a New South Wales property in the nineteenth century that his family have farmed ever since. But what about

non-legal ties and commonalities, especially for groups rather than just individuals? Have they ceased to matter? Can it be seriously argued that instinctive patriotism or, even more, a sense of patriotic duty, is likely to be found equally in persons of such different backgrounds? And what about the differences within and between migrant groups themselves? Do such considerations create pressures going far beyond the physical problems — housing, transport and the like — that come with immigration? Of course,

such pressures, and the associated social changes, might be no bad thing for the promotion of economic growth in GDP terms, let alone for social engineering or the pursuit of egalitarian ideals. But they can contribute to a fairly radical change in the nature and practice of democracy since legal and even civic “equality” is unlikely to be enough to cement a community.

If Australia is indeed becoming a “Patchwork Nation,” what does or should hold it together beyond general talk about “values” or a “way of life”? Nor is that all. There have been growing demands that the membership of a parliament should, instead of merely representing territorial segments of society, mirror the composition, including the ethnic or gender minorities — not because gender or ethnicity has any particular connection with parliamentary or administrative competence, but because justice requires

equality of representation. Might such ideas come to change the forms of representation in parliament? And, if so, might large clusters of migrants play a role in such reforms?

Obviously, the nature and scale of any change will be critically affected by the numbers involved. For Australia, the consequences of having one or two families from a non-English-speaking, non-Christian and non-European background settling into an average Australian environment are likely to be very different from those of having a substantial group of such migrants settling in a context they will find very odd, and whose outlook, customs and preferences may be very distant from their own. In the first case the families will, on average, find themselves on the road to integration, even assimilation, within a generation or, at most, two. In the second case the outcome may well be the development of a group ghetto. The sometimes unfortunate consequences of such developments have become apparent in many places, including France and the UK.

In Australia now, unlike the days of the 1950s, absorption can be made even more difficult by the creation of a welfare state. As the economist Henry Ergas has written: “nothing saps integration more than the welfare state, which can make it optional for migrants to find their way in the local society and labour market”. In any case, it is not obvious just what numbers of immigrants from any one ethnic or religious group might be acceptable for any one Australian township or suburb if the evolution of a ghetto is to be avoided. Nor is there only the question how such a ghetto might fit into the larger Australian community but how its presence — and any subsequent frictions — might affect Australian relations with the “home country” of the groups involved. In recent years India and Malaysia are only two of several countries that have expressed a supervisory interest in the

fate of their citizens who are living, working or studying in Australia.

Amid these conundrums, migration policies have been reasonably cautious and pragmatic. They have recognised, in practice, Professor Judith Sloan’s point that “there are limits to a country’s annual capacity to absorb new migrants without undue adjustment pressures” — and, she might have added, without unduly alarming public opinion. Accordingly, immigration policies continue to give preference to utility: skills useful to Australian social and economic

needs, with the unsurprising result that quite a lot of incoming migrants turn out to be members of the Anglosphere and all of them have had their trade training or post-secondary education elsewhere, at other countries’ expense. Even so, there is a limit on numbers which tends to allow for recurrent popular worries as well as practical feasibilities.

Moreover, the ethnic and political phenomena so briefly mentioned here are most unequally distributed within the Australian population at large. Until the second world war the population of one part of Australia

was not easy to distinguish from that of another. Economic development, migration and the problems of race and ethnicity have changed all that. New arrivals, and the advantages or problems associated with them, not to mention their voting patterns, are heavily concentrated in Australia’s few major cities. Discussion and debate about such developments are even more heavily concentrated in the media and intellectual elites in these centres — which adds a further element of division and dispute to the new Australia. No wonder the issue of “identity” preoccupies many who remember the “old days.”

These subtleties and complications cannot be briefly summarised, but a few concluding remarks may be in order. A relatively high rate of immigration will surely continue, for unavowed

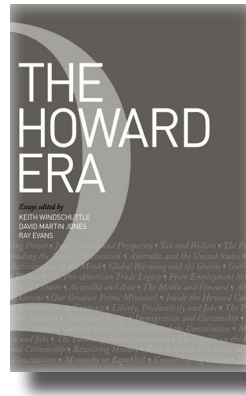
Impatience has grown with the postmodern academic game of pretending that all cultures are equal and that the eye of the observer is the only true basis for value judgments. ... The days of an organic and instinctive sense of cohesion may have gone for good, especially in the major cities, to be replaced by something much more impersonal and mechanical.

strategic reasons, as well as for avowed ones of staffing Australia's expanding industries—and, perhaps most important, creating and staffing new ones in the interests of moving Australia away from undue dependence on raw materials and energy exports. Since past rates of growth have brought huge increases to Australia's major cities, and changes in their population profiles, the days when different regions and towns of Australia were much alike are presumably gone for good. The social differences as well as differences of outlook between the major cities and the rural areas have increased, are increasing and ought perhaps to be diminished: a process which the internet and better transport might help to promote.

Impatience has grown with the postmodern academic game of pretending that all cultures are equal and that the eye of the observer is the only true basis for value judgments. That is not to deny that immigration has been valuable. But the days of an organic and instinctive sense of cohesion may have gone for good, especially in the major cities, to be replaced by something much more impersonal and mechanical. Social fragmentation will extend to socio-economic groupuscules of unpredictable shapes and sizes. Meanwhile governments at all levels, presenting themselves as “servants” and “enablers” of the citizenry, are sure to continue to try and expand their powers of detailed control, management and the shaping of society, just as the Commonwealth government will continue to try to undermine the powers and functions of the states. Yet governments will also have increasing difficulty in managing the increasingly self-willed bureaucracies required to manage the subtleties of a modern patchwork nation in the established Australian context. As the state and its bureaucracies continue to grow, they will also expand their own political constituency in the growing number of people who find their income, security, status and power in working for, or depending on, “the public sector.” Whether, in such a context, the creation or revival of a flourishing civil society can be hoped for and whether, if so, that might encourage amity or hostility between different ethnic micro-groups, is a matter of guesswork. ✎

HOW GOOD WAS JOHN HOWARD?

An in-depth study of one Australia's most successful and controversial prime ministers.



THE HOWARD ERA

\$44.95 Hb
ISBN
9780980677812
December 2009
538 pages
Edited by Keith Windschuttle, David Martin Jones and Ray Evans.

“For Edmund Burke, political instinct, a recognition of the legacy of the past and our ‘inherited freedoms’ for political conduct in the present, was more important than abstract ideological speculations. Or as Howard put it, ‘a conservative is someone who does not think he is morally superior to his grandfather.’”

- from the Introduction by David Martin Jones

- Was he “Australia’s greatest prime minister”?
- Does he deserve “comparison with Thatcher and Reagan in forcing opponents to shift ground”?
- Was he ineffective in countering the bias of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation?
- Was tapping into the aspirations of the lower and middle classes the secret of his success?
- Was his “greatest failure” the “unfinished business” of Muslim immigration?
- Was he a poor judge of character?

ORDER DIRECT FROM
QUADRANT BOOKS:

www.quadrant.org.au/store

Teaching History as Self-Doubt

By “Rhetor”

*A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.*
– Alexander Pope, “Essay on Criticism”

It is heartening to see national history curricula for schools the subject of lively debate in Australia and the United Kingdom. This is not happening in Canada, where interest is confined to a few enthusiasts: *Canada’s History* dedicated a special issue to teaching last year, but many educators are not well-trained and the provinces consign history to the muddle of social studies. Australia, by contrast, has made history one of four mandatory pillars (math, English, science and history) nationally from K to 12 — a status achieved largely by one man’s passion: John Howard, the former prime minister, relaunched the “history wars” in 2006, calling for a “root and branch renewal” and systematic teaching of Australia’s proud story. Since 2007, the Labor government has decided to proceed with a national history curriculum, but one that is built around “complex environmental, social and economic pressures, such as climate change” — a theme the conservative opposition has already vowed to “scrap.”

In Britain the debate is driven by history buffs in the centre-right coalition government, including its education secretary, Michael Gove, and by the Tory press. Like Howard, Gove wants students to master a patriotic narrative, in part to shore up an eroding sense of national identity in a realm formerly renowned for its Churchillian pluck. Gove invited television-savvy historians Niall Ferguson and Simon Schama to enliven the curriculum. Their efforts have been opposed

with bemused condescension by the liberal-left.

Richard J. Evans in *The London Review of Books* mocked Gove’s enthusiasm for Britain in an article called “The Wonderfulness of Us: the Tory Interpretation of History.” Evans is correct that a heroic narrative already comprises the set curriculum that is compulsory to age 14, but he misses the point. Likewise for Bernard Porter, writing in *The Guardian*, Ferguson’s gung-ho punditry is exactly why narrative is the wrong approach: “Children need to be taught analytical skills, more than ‘big stories’ or facts ... to be taught to be critical, before anything else,” Porter believes. The Australian left’s agenda is similar: under Stuart MacIntyre, a former communist appointed by Labor to rewrite Howard’s curriculum, a morally critical approach has trumped Howard’s colonial and military narrative. Instead, Labor has substituted a relativist “world history” that is light on facts and heavy with guilt about aboriginals and immigrants. One right-of-centre blogger wrote that, according to MacIntyre’s curriculum, “the struggle for individual liberty started in 1945. Because that’s when the United Nations was founded.”

Most agree that history teaching should consist of more than just unreflective memorization. How to think and to learn, how to follow an argument, draw distinctions and make reasonable deductions from facts, should be the foremost objectives of education. However, the left has lost sight of this and puts the cart before the horse. What Evans, Porter, and MacIntyre call “actual skills” and “specialized topics” means in practice is a roomful of adolescent reflexive moral relativists with a weary

contempt for learning. Indeed some university lecturers find their students *proud* of their lack of knowledge and reading. Referring to schools, Evans quotes Acton's maxim to "study problems, not periods" — forgetting that Acton taught undergraduates, not children. To inculcate cynical questioning and anti-patriotic attitudinizing too young is a medicine worse than the disease; it breeds ignorance not wisdom.

Students need no encouragement to be critical. Gregory Melleuish, an associate professor at the University of Wollongong, has panned MacIntyre's revised curriculum for overemphasizing ethical criticism: "The moral judgment and empathy element demands a level of sophistication that is in excess of what might be expected of teenagers," Melleuish told *The Australian* newspaper. "That is something the professional historian may engage in, but you are talking about kids aged twelve to sixteen. That's always been the issue: whether kids of that age can do much more than get the facts right."

The tendency on the left, as Evans, MacIntyre, and Porter's remarks reveal, is to reduce history to an exercise in condemning past wrongs; that is what "critical skills" amount to in practice. MacIntyre's colleague, Tony Taylor, thinks the point of studying the middle ages is to condemn the Crusades and the Conquest of the Americas; a presentation of Christianity that is "not only unhistorical" but "dishonestly antagonistic," says conservative blogger Chris Berg. Never mind that the most significant renaissance in world history began in twelfth-century Italy and France and the concept of limited executive government in thirteenth-century England.

Here in Canada the preoccupation with victimhood has mostly centred on Japanese Canadians and residential school "survivors." Peter Seixas in *Teaching Canada's History* (pp. 18-21) thinks children should be encouraged to condemn Caucasian writers who used terms like "Eskimo," "primitive," and "pagan." What Seixas, a professor of education, seems not to

appreciate is that schoolchildren are too young for this kind of academic pseudo-complexity and that their worldview is warped by pretentious classroom efforts to "heal the wounds." Indeed what he advocates is what we have already had in many locales for a generation and counting.

Experts who want students to "be engaged" forget to distinguish among different age groups. Children learn differently at different stages. Students can only properly discuss things that they know something about. One compelling model that appears to have a small but significant following is championed by the

classical education movement. Educators who disdain this vibrant subculture would learn much from a robust online guide such as "What is Classical Education?" by Susan Wise Bauer, co-author of *The Well-Trained Mind*. Or from Laura Berquist's *Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum*, among many such books. Prescribing solid intellectual formation more adequately than most public and private curricula, these educators generally propose three stages of learning: grammatical, logical, and

rhetorical — a modern version of the trivium that was once partially embraced by Marshall McLuhan.

In its more recent form, the classical model proposes that various integrated fields from science and math to English and second or classical languages should be covered at three stages (hence "trivium"), each time to a deeper, more systematic and engaging degree. For example, one approach for history could look like this, in four fields: (1) classical antiquity, (2) medieval-renaissance, (3) modern history, and (4) national, regional, and local history. Taught as a trivium, each of these four fields would be covered three times between grades one and twelve. Students today complain about repetition, but that is because they are tortured repetitively with the same introductory material by different

If the goal is to equip grown-up students with critical skills, the beginnings of political judgment, and the ability to form and express sound opinions, teachers must have laid the foundations beforehand, and schools must not get priorities backwards.

uncoordinated teachers — rather than going into the subject more deeply and systematically as they grow older and more capable. As Anna Clark wrote in her 2008 paper on history teaching in Australia and Canada, “There is little point mandating the subject if it does not engage students and teachers.” Textbooks should be used as a guide not a crutch, as classical educators have long maintained.

According to the classical model, in the grammatical stage song, poetry, and literary prose such as Andrew Lang’s Fairy Books enable children to memorize far more names, dates, and quotations (as well as times tables) than they are given credit for. Narrative historical chronology can be established quite solidly by means of time-charts, maps, and captivating folklore. Retained together with stories and legends integrated in school plays and with other subjects, history comes alive for the young and becomes a lifelong romance. (It does not matter what academics and journalists believe about the inaccuracy or datedness of such folk tales; Porter’s “critical analysis” and Seixas’s “questioning” can follow at a later stage.) On this model, grades one through four would mark children’s first exposure to history from ancient times to more recent, enriched by substantive literary treasures.

Pupils at the poetical stage in Britain, for example, should learn what Michael Gove presumably has in mind: the traditional Protestant narrative of blue woad, Caesar, Arthur, St. Augustine, Alfred, William the Conqueror, Becket, Magna Carta, the Armada, Guy Fawkes, Cromwell, Waterloo, the Blitz. There is plenty of time later to weigh Bernard Porter’s pros and cons of whiggish history but not in grade two. Catholics, for example, view Henry VIII and Elizabeth I in a completely different light, a goldmine for debate in later years. Many on the left disapprove because they are antagonistic to traditional culture, from which they would prefer the young to be alienated; hence their preference for vaguely-defined “critical approaches” that generate angst and self-doubt. The odd thing is that the left should agree with teaching the Protestant narrative and its rich folk tradition in elementary school — because it would provide a substantial architecture for consciousness-raising teachers to undermine later on.

In the classical model, continuing to build

their knowledge base in junior high school, students in the logical stage learn to define and distinguish concepts and systems such as tyranny, oligarchy, democracy, and related institutions and positions — which belong in a historical and literary context. They can make sense of kingship, the growth of parliaments in France and England, basic military strategies and political decisions, and the concept of law vs. blood feud or anarchy. A systematic, integrated curriculum would have students reading fiction in English class and in a second or classical language that synchronizes with the historical period under study. This logic stage would mark the second time students covered the four survey periods from ancient times to the present, including national and local history in a more challenging way. Thus in grades six through nine, students would learn about systems and concepts while retaining and deepening the chronology and beginning to understand the life of ideas and to ask “how” and “why” such-and-such occurred.

Grade ten through twelve students are then ready to develop critical and expressive skills: the rhetorical stage. Tracing the survey periods systematically a third time with greater sophistication and depth, students can now study different versions of the same event — because they are already aware of the events and concepts in the first place. They can develop an informed critical perspective and learn to present and exchange arguments (hence “rhetorical”). If the goal is to equip grown-up students with critical skills, the beginnings of political judgment, and the ability to form and express sound opinions, teachers must have laid the foundations beforehand, and schools must both start and finish properly, not get priorities backwards. A three-fold approach makes sense if students are to be given the chance to “drink deep” rather than bounce over the same dreary material several times lightly.

It is generally accepted that effective teachers are a key to success: if the teacher is not classically-trained, even a solid curriculum cannot compensate. However, if the poetical and logical groundwork have been properly done, the senior teacher can “teach the whole story, not just ‘warts and all’ but as an inquiry or an argument,” as Christopher Hitchens put it in his 1998 *Harper’s*

essay, "Goodbye To All That: Why Americans Are Not Taught History." "When there is a basic grasp of narrative and evolution, and a corresponding grasp of the idea of differing views of the same story," Hitchens writes, "it will become apt to consider theories and interpretations."

What was the influence of Pericles' funeral oration on the Gettysburg Address? This engrossing question, open to any mind of average ability, cannot even be asked if, as was recently discovered, the majority of America's school-children don't know in which century the Civil War was fought.

With adequate preparation in earlier years, "The doors of the storehouse of knowledge should now be thrown open," Hitchens continues, "They can handle questions such as, 'Was the Civil War really fought to free the slaves? Why are Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points unthinkable without Lenin's dissolution of the Constituent Assembly? Was the Great Depression caused by too little government intervention or too much?' ... Each of these questions admits of several answers, many of them equally 'valid.' In such cases, what matters is how you think and not what you think."

Some teachers are thrilled by their own undergraduate discovery of "deconstructing history." Others are dazzled by the achievements of non-western cultures because they are only superficially acquainted with the Western tradition. Either way they are too keen to transmit their sophistry to young children. Critics tend to equate compelling and memorable narratives and stories negatively and reflexively with "Boys' Own-style tales about the British charging into the jungle and jolly well sorting out the natives," as Laurie Penny put it in the *New Statesman*, mocking Niall Ferguson's apologias for empire. History, she said, "properly taught, should lead young people to question and challenge their cultural inheritance." That is "the entire purpose of history."

But is the "entire purpose" of history really to instil anti-Western attitudes, a parlour

partiality to the wretched of the earth? Should history be primarily a tutelage in self-doubt? Penny implies that any dissent from her preferred approach is "bigoted discourse." Really? More sane was the response of historian Anthony Seldon, master of Wellington College: "We have to look at it from the perspective of those who were colonised as well as from the British perspective." How odd that the progressive-minded, such as Ms. Penny, do not see the value of examining more than one point of view. There is a time and a place to do this: in senior high school, not in grade four.

We have all seen the schoolbus with some banal motto painted on the side such as "On the Journey of Learning." Most parents may never realize what this really means: "On a Journey to Nowhere in Particular."

We all have far to go. First, the evidence suggests that effective historical memory work is haphazard and un-systematic in public and many private schools. Students arrive at senior grades fundamentally culturally deprived and ignorant of facts. Even if narrative history is "compulsory" in Britain to age 14, in practice pupils lack "chronological understanding," according to Ofsted, the agency that inspects school standards. Teachers have failed "to establish a clear mental map of the past." Students "knew about particular events, characters and periods but did not have an overview." In Canada, social studies curricula in the English-speaking provinces reveal a similar prevalence of disconnected, episodic case studies. In England (and presumably elsewhere), as Michael Gove's critics admit, "The real problem is not with the curriculum, but with the schools' failure to deliver it."

Secondly, "critical skills" are introduced too early. "Where ignorance and scepticism meet, a course on British history becomes a course on running Britain down," remarks one *Financial Times* writer: "By age 16, students will have as much cynicism and 'distance' as any educator could wish." In Canada, a typical curriculum (Alberta's) prescribes "historical thinking" in grade nine, "a process whereby students are challenged to rethink assumptions about the past." But how can students "rethink" something they haven't learned in the first place?

Regrettably, the British curriculum downgrades history to an elective after age 14, a premature cut-off that sabotages the three-stage process that classical educators promote. It reduces history to an elementary subject. It's similar in Canada: after children are immersed in relativist "traditions and celebrations" (grade two in Ontario), they jump around in grades three to seven social studies from settlement in Upper Canada backwards to the middle ages; backwards again to antiquity, followed illogically by first nations and explorers and a survey of Canada. After grade seven, as in Britain, history becomes an elective. We have all seen the schoolbus with some banal motto painted on the side such as "On the Journey of Learning." Most parents may never realize what this really means: "On a Journey to Nowhere in Particular."

Writing in the *Toronto Star*, Rick Salutin ironically shares the same goal as Michael Gove: a collective understanding of a shared culture by the end of high school. There is, of course, a difference: Gove wants traditional British patriotism, Salutin yearns for "community and democracy." A relativist, Salutin thinks it's fine that children at a typical Toronto school

observe Gandhi Day, Dia de la Raza, International Women's Day, name it. ... For the Remembrance assembly, students in hijabs and teachers in saris

recited "In Flanders Fields" and sang "Where Have all the Flowers Gone." Thus does a sense of community expand to include national history. ... The kids will build all that, along with hockey, into their notion of Canadian, which is what they're becoming. They're cobbling together an innovative sense of community. (*Toronto Star*, 8 April 2011)

Salutin's *sumum bonum* is post-Trudeauian Canada. Would he feel the same if the "shared identity" in question were something more traditional and classically-grounded? Probably not.

Like leftists in Britain and Australia, Salutin wants students "developing their ability to think," not memorizing facts or cramming for the test. As he puts it, "What you're taught matters less than how you're taught." What is curious is that Salutin and his confrères believe that memorizing a traditional, relatively patriotic chronology and learning to think are mutually opposed. Surely knowing and discussing are both stages of a good education.

Why not teach history as the classical revivalists suggest, in three waves between grades one and twelve: first memorize, then analyze, and (from grades ten to twelve) learn how to present arguments based on sound knowledge. Since the advent of quasi-universal public education in modern times, it's the only approach that has never been tried. ✗

Debating History

Readers of the *National Post* will have noted a series of public debates during the past eighteen months at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, opening statements from which were reproduced in the newspaper. The prototype was a debate between Jack Granatstein and Bernard Landry on 11 November 2009. The subject: "Was General Wolfe's victory over General Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham in September 1759 ultimately good for New France?"

Following that debate's popular success, Granatstein and Michael Bliss borrowed from Australia the term "History Wars" to entitle a series of formal debates on historical topics with current interest. They partnered with Patrick Luciani, co-founder with Rudyard Griffiths of Salon Speakers, the ROM, and the Donner Canadian Foundation to produce a series of well-attended exchanges on resolutions such as, "The Monarchy is a Dangerous Relic of the Past" (January 22), "Multiculturalism has put Canada on the Wrong Course" (February 22), "Pierre Trudeau was a Disaster for Canada" (March 22), and "Louis Riel Deserved to Hang" (May 5). Debaters included David Frum, Tom Flanagan, John Fraser, John English, Haroon Siddiqui, and Pat Martin MP. The events drew audiences of 700 at \$25 per ticket and Granatstein was pleased to observe "genuine enthusiasm."

Next season "History Wars" will resume at the ROM and, it is planned, a few venues in other cities. Topics will include Medicare, Canada-U.S. relations, political corruption, and Quebec. ✗

Graphic Novels and the Burdens of Enjoyment

Randy Boyagoda

The Book of Genesis, Illustrated. R. Crumb. Norton, 2009.

No one actually enjoys reading graphic novels. We admire and laud the most important creators of them — Canadians Chester Brown, Guy DeLisle, and Seth; Americans Will Eisner and Art Spiegelman; and Marianne Satrapi of Iran all immediately come to mind — and we absolutely love the idea of them. But we don't actually enjoy reading them. Of course, anyone asked will insist to the contrary and recite a litany of their virtues: they're cool, they're different, they're idiosyncratic, and all by comparison to the stale, prosaic norm. More substantially, and in part keying into an older tradition of disseminating works of value and relevance through comic book editions, they've become important elements in contemporary book culture. Because, it's assumed, they're distinctly able to revive stories and histories that have long since become familiar to the point of indifference, even invisibility, particularly for young people who, it's also assumed by old people in the fields of education and publishing, absolutely love these things.

The main reason young people purportedly love graphic novels is that, by their very design, graphic novels respond to and reflect the pre-eminence of the visual, over and to a large degree against the written, as the predominant mode of knowing and enjoying ourselves and the world around us today. And to be sure, beyond comic book versions of *Moby-Dick*, and also leaving aside other not implausible ancestors, like nineteenth-century illustrated books from Britain and even the mediæval tradition of illuminated

manuscripts, and the more complicated question of the contemporary (Western) graphic novel's relationship to the longstanding Manga tradition in Japan, the form is not without some specific historical precedent — as confirmed, for instance, by the Library of America's 2010 publication, in two volumes, of Lynd Ward's sestet of wordless, visually striking, if bleakly modern graphic novels dating from the 1930s and 1940s, introduced and edited by Spiegelman. Yet even the timing of this edition, from the canon-minded, canon-forming Library of America, speaks to graphic novels' being very much of a piece with our current moment: they have achieved this status ostensibly according to the criteria noted above, with respect to the power and allure of the visual over the written. Upon some considered reflection born of recent, well-intentioned experience with a major graphic novel, however, I'd contend that what makes graphic novels so popular-seeming today, and contemporary-feeling, are its resonances with one of our age's leading and flawed imperatives: to want to have things both ways while ignoring the contradictions and even double failings that can come of such desires and efforts. By this I mean the contemporary graphic novel, by its very nature, seeks to combine the easy playfulness and inviting ephemera of comics with the singular authority and demanding gravitas of traditional books. But the actual reading experience, by and large, is neither playful nor authoritative because graphic novels are inviting, in truth, in unexpectedly demanding and ultimately unwelcome ways, to young and old readers alike.

Much of my thinking about the flawed promises and premises of graphic novels comes by way of a spectacular failure: I recently decided to

assign a graphic adaptation of the Bible, Robert Crumb's *The Book of Genesis, Illustrated* (2009), to some one hundred and fifty first-year students at my university, whom I was teaching in an introductory English class. My motives were as pragmatic as I thought they were strategic and salutary. I was teaching one of those broad-gauge courses whose mandate is to introduce students to a variety of writings and genres from a variety of cultural traditions, historical periods, and geographic locales: the opportunity to teach a selection from a sacred text that for millennia has been at the very core of world civilization would thereby allow me to introduce students to complexities unique to sacred texts as a genre — complexities surrounding the nature of transmission, authorship, authority, exemplary figures, and the status of myth, genealogy, and history in the making of sacred narrative. Teaching this particular edition of Genesis would also allow me to introduce students to the vital glories and dramatic capacities of the English language itself as the 1611 King James edition of the Bible offers as none other can (by comparison, Shakespeare's unquestionable glories are assuredly less than Divine in their source and summit), which Crumb adopts with some occasional additions from Robert Alter's 1997 translation. The book would also offer students the chance to encounter representations of human experience emerging from tribal and nomadic Middle Eastern cultures dating back almost four thousand years, and thus, I predicted, by way of keying into their predictable, reflexive valorization of any kind of apparent primitivism, I could subtly challenge young people in the throes of the hothouse secularization process known as the contemporary university experience to encounter representations of people willing and able to live out their lives as if God existed. This is, of course, a God to which these young people possess, whether privately or publicly, personally or culturally, polemically or prayerfully, some kind of meaningful relationship that, through intensive reading, lecture and discussion, I hoped, they might be able to question, deepen, and refine. Finally, not only could

The problem, I think, was that young people are comfortable with passively consuming visual material, but by no means at reading, let alone analyzing and evaluating it.

I achieve all this in teaching a selection from the Bible, but in choosing R. Crumb's edition of Genesis for this project, I could also fulfill the course's mandate to include at least one visual text and, simultaneously, be assured of accruing all-important coolness marks and street credibility from my students while disarming their scepticism at having to read the Bible at Ryerson. After all, we were reading a graphic version! And not just any graphic adaptation, but one from an artist, R. Crumb, who has enjoyed long-standing critical acclaim and no little notoriety for his often satirical work and willfully unglamorous depictions of human beings in their hairy grittiness and stumpy fumbling.

Why, then, was teaching R. Crumb's *Genesis* such an unmitigated failure? Why did it leave students so entirely indifferent? In retrospect, I think that distributing packets of a dense-print, conventional prose version would have more assuredly provoked melodramatic eye-rolls and blunt yawns, but also more conscious engagement, whether on the level of curious-minded analysis or reactionary argument. Any of these would have

been more welcome than the plain non-response this graphic (and, in another sense, graphic) rendering of Genesis elicited. The disappointment, I could tell, was not mine alone: the students, told again and again how visually-focused they are as a generation, were clearly expecting the reading experience of a graphic edition of the Bible to be more enjoyable and compelling than it actually was; operating from the same playbook, and keying into the all-important imperative, amongst contemporary academics, to meet a younger generation where they were apparently more adept and comfortable — in this case, the visual over the written — I was expecting the students to be more responsive to the illustrations as well. I thought their visually-intensive sensibilities, focused on Crumb's interplay of his images with the sacred words, would serve as a natural gateway into the complex wonders of Genesis itself, around the book's double and interrelated status, as an both account of God's

creation of the universe and His plan for humanity, and as a practical, daily manual for how to lead an ultimately good life when faced with various challenges, difficulties, responsibilities, and opportunities of daily life.

The problem, I think, was that young people are comfortable with passively consuming visual material, but by no means at reading, let alone analyzing and evaluating it or, for that matter, the variously complementary, competitive and contrasting relationships between word and image that are the primary source of any graphic novel's aesthetic and intellectual entertainments, effects, and meanings, and particularly when those words are as rich and demanding as the Bible's. I cannot, however, fault my students for their underwhelmed response, because in unexpected ways, I shared it. Reading Crumb's graphic edition of Genesis for my own interest and pleasure — a great deal of the pleasure, I must confess, came from telling colleagues I was reading this edition, which never but failed to impress — prior to reading it for teaching purposes, my own critical and imaginative capacities were unproductively split by the nature of the word and image's double pulls in this particular instance.* The words, so profound in and of themselves, felt too often adjuncts or pretexts for illustrative expressions that, in and of themselves, seemed less to recall medieval illumination than passing, throwaway entertainments I associate, nostalgically, with the back pages of old newspapers, or the inky smelling, cheap-sheeted comic books of childhood, and yet the physicality of the book itself — oversized, hardbound, expensive, felt more important, even more imposing, than any old brick of a Bible. In short, R. Crumb's graphic edition of Genesis is at once too serious, in its written text and its formal textures, and not serious enough in its core element, its visuals. As such, the book demands

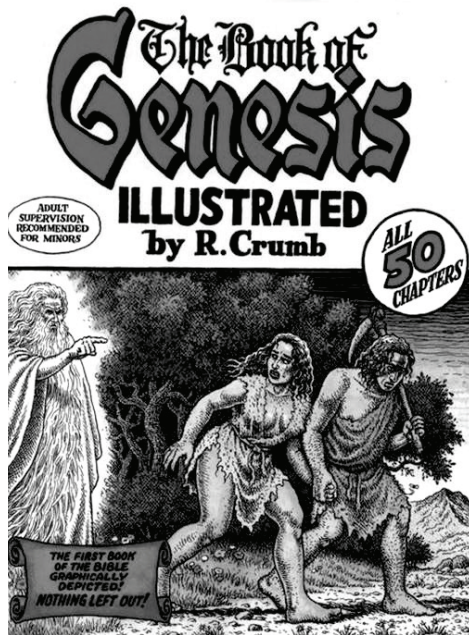
a kind of integrative work that it simultaneously undermines.

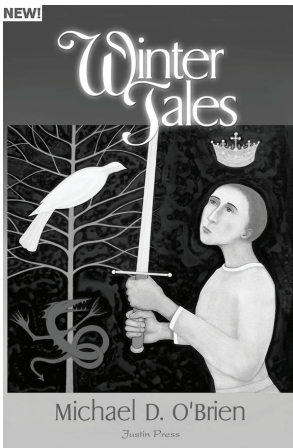
To be sure, you could argue an illustrated edition of *Genesis* is an unfair test-case for the goods of graphic novels more generally. A young graphic artist like Boston-based Karl Stevens — whose works are as autobiographical as they are gritty in how they take seek out and depict, often with great artfulness, blasé virtues at play in an ironic, slouchy, mumbling, disenchanted approach to contemporary life — might seem more plausible,

or at least more representative, if not symptomatic, of the form's being particularly attuned to certain kinds of human experience today: where the reader of such material is likely seeking confirmation of an already accepted, decidedly narcissistic worldview closed off from those deeper sources of purpose and flourishing. Thus, in reading such works, such readers experience a meager kind of enjoyment reflective of a meager expectation of themselves and the world. Whereas for millennia, our highest expectations of ourselves and

our world have found their objective correlative in the Bible and, by association, in our endless ways of representing and sharing out portions like Genesis. Unfortunately, as I discovered both through reading and teaching it, R. Crumb's 2009 effort at representing human experience in its most sacred form, when our highest searches, reaches, and encounters reveal ourselves in our immediate and ultimate relations to God, is too much of a piece with its current age and intended audience: too serious in some ways, and not serious enough in others. ☞

* I thought, of course, that these were my failings, coming out of a too conservative valorization of the traditional book. I was certain my visual-minded students would reveal the book's many goods to me in ways I couldn't see on my own.





WINTER TALES

Michael D. O'Brien

Four stories from the many worlds of Michael O'Brien's imagination. None of these is the one we inhabit, yet each is founded on the same ultimate realities that underlie our own. In each the fault-line between good and evil runs not only through the world but through the hearts of the characters. The stories are illuminated by four of the author's hauntingly suggestive paintings.

"Each visual image and each work of prose is an incarnation of a word, a statement of faith...It asks the questions: what is most noble and eternal in man? who is he? why does he exist? and what is his eternal destiny?"

Michael D. O'Brien

Canada \$9.95



BY REASON ALONE

Jacek Bacz

"Bacz has come up with a particularly fine metaphor for the process of finding one's way spiritually: the puzzle. In a lively, quick-flowing narrative that is both objective and personal, the author engages intellectual challenges that a modern mind faces when confronted with the issue of religious truth. Readers will enjoy and learn from Bacz's account of finding the pieces of the puzzle and fitting them together to form a spiritually sustaining worldview."

David Williams, Ave Maria University

Born in Kraków, Bacz has a doctorate in electrical engineering and has worked in Poland and Algeria. Since coming to Canada in 1983 he has worked as a research engineer and as a consultant in electronics and software design. His interests include music, languages and history. Philosophy and religion are his passion.

Canada \$19.95



THE ANNOTATED QUOTABLE DAWSON

Edited by John Gay

The greatest Catholic historian of the twentieth century, Christopher Dawson remains the final authority on the relation between religion and culture and is one of the most original thinkers of the modern era. Notes from the writings of contemporaries G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc provide further insight and perspective on matters of enduring importance to any reader with a concern for the past and future of humanity.

Canada \$25.95

JUSTIN PRESS

730 Parkdale Avenue, Ottawa, Canada K1Y 1J6

Tel: 613-729-2247 email: info@justinpress.ca

<http://justinpress.ca>

Chivalry in Small Packages

Christine Schintgen

The Gift for Girls. Sally Norton, Sally Jeffrie, Gemma Reece, Juliana Foster, and Tracey Turner. Illustrations by Katy Jackson, Amanda Enright, and Nellie Ryan. Michael O'Mara Books, 2009.

The Gift for Boys. Guy Campbell and Martin Oliver. Illustrations by Simon Ecob, David Shephard, and Nikalas Catlow. Michael O'Mara Books, 2009.

The last decade has seen a spate of books oriented towards children of one or the other sex and brimming with ideas for fun and zany activities. Perhaps the best known of these are Conn and Hal Iggulden's *The Dangerous Book for Boys* (2006) and its companion piece, Andrea J. Buchanan and Miriam Peskowitz's *The Daring Book for Girls* (2007), both published by William Morrow. These books have spawned a litter of imitations. What's refreshing about this



phenomenon in general is that it recognizes the simple fact that boys and girls are different, and that on the whole their preferred activities fall into sex-specific categories, albeit with some overlap. Any parent of a boy who woke up one day suddenly and unaccountably obsessed with anything on wheels will confirm this basic truth.

A recent contribution to this publishing trend is Michael O'Mara Books' little pair of books, *The Gift for Girls* and *The Gift for Boys*. And let me start by saying that when I say "little" books, I mean really little. At sixty-four pages each, these tiny volumes measure a mere 2¾ inches by half an inch by 4½ inches — roughly the size of an iPod, only a bit thicker. They are priced accordingly at a modest \$5.95 each. Apart from being small, the appearance of these hardcover volumes is quite neat and attractive, with jolly coloured soccer balls on the masculine cover and cheerful bright hearts on the female one.

As far as content goes, both books contain a sufficient number of worthwhile suggestions to earn their price. Some, such as "How to play a toilet roll [kazoo]" (Boys) and "How to make your own luxury bubble bath" (Girls) can be completed alone, whereas others, such as "How to set up a fitness assault course" (Boys) and "How to play wink murder" (Girls) would make great party games. The age group most likely to enjoy the activities described in the books is roughly seven-to-ten-year-olds.

Christine Schintgen has a doctorate from Oxford University. She taught Literature at the University of the United Arab Emirates in Al Ain before becoming Assistant Professor of Literature at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy, a post-secondary classical college in Barry's Bay, Ontario. Her research interests include criminals and prisons in Victorian literature, as well as the intersection of faith and writing from Dante to contemporary times.

Now, in contradiction to my point in the first paragraph, I have to admit that I, a female reader, actually preferred the boys' book. While the girls' book did have some fun activities, the best ones seemed to revolve around food, such as "How to make ice cream from snow," "How to make chocolate pecan fudge," and "How to make your own herbal tea." The ones geared towards beautification, such as "How to make your own lipgloss," and "How to look beautiful tomorrow" seemed like more trouble than they were worth.

The boys' book, on the other hand, offered some really useful tips, on such topics as "How to build a survival shelter" and "How to make a code grid" (I would have loved that last one as a kid). Less useful was a section on "How to avoid piranhas."

Another reason I slightly preferred the boys' book is that it occasionally made suggestions of real moral worth; for instance, under "How to be a modest hero" we read that "Actions speak louder than words. Always do your fair share of the really unpopular tasks so that everyone sees you're prepared to pull your weight" (p. 50). The girls' book, on the other hand, can be faulted for sometimes seeming to encourage deceitfulness. Under "How to explain why you are late for school," girls are instructed to consider saying "I came all the way to school before I realized I still had my pyjamas on, and had to go home and change" or "When I got here my teacher wasn't in the classroom, so I went out looking for her." There are also several sections on how to be secretive.

But maybe I just need to lighten up.

Speaking of levity, there is some quirky

humour in the books, as evidenced by the following couple of examples from the boys' book: In "How to survive a zombie invasion" the authors inform us that "The living dead are easy to spot because, as their name suggests, they are dead people whose bodies have come alive again. Look for staring eyes, green skin and a smell of rotting and decay" (p. 33). This line from "How to be a modest hero" had me grinning: "Give your seat to older people on

buses or trains — it shows you are both kind and considerate. Help an old lady safely across the road whenever you can (but only when you're sure she wants to be on the other side)" (p. 50).

A slight problem I would mention is that because the books were written in the United Kingdom there are a few instances in which differences in language usage could create confusion for youngsters. Girls

are told to use a "torch" (flashlight) to deliver messages in Morse code (p. 45) and they are instructed on "How to make sure your trainers [running shoes] smell really good" (p. 38). Boys are asked to turn a lid "anticlockwise" (counter clockwise; p. 17), and are invited to use a "pound coin" (p. 23; perhaps it would be a Euro now?). But these differences are minor enough and shouldn't present a serious obstacle to completing the tasks.

On the whole, I like these books because they get children away from the computer and the television and involve them in hands-on, stimulating activities. These little books are less than half the price of the "Daring" and "Dangerous" books and are thus an inexpensive way to enjoy the current fad. ✕

What's refreshing about this phenomenon in general is that it recognizes the simple fact that boys and girls are different.



Canada's Missile Defence Folly

Adam Chapnick

James G. Fergusson, *Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence 1954-2009: Déjà Vu All Over Again*. University of British Columbia Press, 2010.

It does not take long for even a casual follower of the missile defence debate to recognize the importance of this book. Before James G. Fergusson, no scholar had ever attempted to trace the history of Canadian decision-making, or lack thereof, when it came to participation in American efforts to develop and operationalize a North American strategic ballistic missile defence program. And Fergusson has done more than just try: he has provided readers with a comprehensive history of the on-again, off-again negotiations which have thus far left Canada on the outside looking in, as Washington gradually expands its efforts to develop its continental missile defence capabilities. Extensive archival research, frustrating yet often successful access to information requests, interviews with relevant Canadian and American actors, and the benefit of personal experience have made

Fergusson “Mr. BMD in Canada.”

The basic argument is in the title. *Déjà Vu All Over Again* is an appropriate summary of what Fergusson, a University of Manitoba professor, concludes have been a series of poor policy decisions made by successive governments when faced with the opportunity to collaborate more closely with American defence planners. As he states rather bluntly in the preface,

In the end, this study is about much more than just the question of Canada and ballistic missile defence. It is really about a nation and its governments and bureaucracy over time trapped within a fixed mindset about its place in the world and the means through which to manage foreign and defence policy requirements in response to the actions of others. It is about a national group-think that affects and determines the manner in which policy is conceptualized and processed.

The organization of the book is revealing. Rather than chapters, Fergusson divides his story into “acts,” making obvious his frustration with the theatrics that have, in his view, largely displaced rational discussions of national interests in successive debates over Ottawa’s involvement in US missile defence plans. These acts are framed chronologically by US policy decisions. Act one introduces the idea of mutual assured destruction (MAD), an approach to maintaining international order that was at first only of indirect relevance to Canada: Ottawa had rejected developing its own nuclear capability shortly after the second world war. It describes early thinking about the values and drawbacks

Adam Chapnick has a Ph.D. in History from the University of Toronto and is deputy director of education at the Canadian Forces College and assistant professor of defence studies at the Royal Military College, Kingston. He is the author of Canada's Voice: The Public Life of John Wendell Holmes (2009) and The Middle Power Project: Canada and the Founding of the United Nations (2005). His essays include "Peace, Order, and Good Government: The 'conservative' Tradition in Canadian Foreign Policy" (2005).

of constructing a missile defence system, noting that proponents of MAD originally opposed missile defence because it threatened the capacity of nuclear weapons to assure the complete destruction that was so critical to the US-Soviet balance of power. In one of the clearest and most helpful sections of the book, Fergusson explains what he rightly labels “the great irony and paradox”: “Ensuring the prospect of suicide became central to self-defence in the nuclear age. Defending against the prospect of suicide became an anathema to self-defence.” To put it another way, “Stability came to revolve around a guarantee that neither side would develop the capabilities to eliminate the other’s ability to retaliate.” The act ends in 1971 with the signature of an anti-ballistic missile defence (ABM) treaty by the United States and the Soviet Union. As for Canadian policy throughout the period, Fergusson notes convincingly, “While no one said so, the Canadian preference was for missile defence in general, and subsequently ABM in particular, to go away.”

Act two focuses largely on Ronald Reagan’s strategic defence initiative (SDI), a research and development program that became politicized in Canada and, to Fergusson, “served to drive the public debate in Canada to the margins of the real issues facing the Canadian government.” Admittedly, SDI left open the possibility that the United States would eventually pursue weapons in space, a policy that would have contravened international law in a manner unacceptable to Ottawa and the Canadian public, but that possibility was remote, argues Fergusson, and the benefits of a mature conversation over Canada’s potential contribution were lost once and for ever.

The third act takes the reader through the first George Bush era, and the global protection against limited strikes (GPALS) discussions. This short-lived attempt to develop and deploy ground- and space-based interceptors ended with the victory of Bill Clinton in the 1992 presidential election, but the GPALS negotiations were not without their consequences for Canada. At the bureaucratic level, the pace of the rise and fall of GPALS convinced some Canadian officials that the missile defence debate in Washington was over, and that Ottawa’s increasingly frustrating attempts to gain the security and

economic benefits of involvement in US research efforts without committing publicly, or privately, to support American strategic interests, could be forgotten. Fergusson, however, draws from primary Canadian and American source material to demonstrate that missile defence was not going away. Indeed, “GPALS indicated a growing drift toward US unilateralism in continental defence — the very behaviour that Canadian decision makers had long hoped to avoid.”

The story then moves to the Clinton-Chrétien years and national missile defense (NMD). And it is here where the Fergusson’s research begins to be based primarily on interviews as opposed to documents. As a result, the narrative changes: it becomes more personal. Fergusson’s frustrations with Canadian foreign policy under (Liberal) foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy in particular are more than clear as he explores what happened after Canada’s 1994 defence white paper provided Canada with a missile defence policy that was inconsistent with Axworthy’s virulent opposition to Canadian participation. Even though the government had officially expressed its willingness to engage in discussions that would have (should they have met a series of caveats) led to formal participation in a continental missile defence program, Axworthy and his supporters clashed intensely with their colleagues in the department of national defence and essentially paralyzed Canada’s ability to move forward.

Fergusson launches an aggressive defence of NMD in the pages that follow, explaining away technological and cost challenges in particular as part of the price to be paid for the development of new, complex resources intended to preserve the security of North America. His arguments will be utterly convincing to proponents of missile defence, and less so to their detractors. What he later makes clear, however, is that for Canada, the arguments should have been irrelevant. The United States was going to pursue a missile defence program regardless of whether the technology would work, and regardless of whether Canadians approved. What was most important for Ottawa, he maintains rightly, was to determine whether being closer to the inside of the process was in the national interest. To Fergusson, the answer is obvious —

of course it was: “Faced with the inevitability of a US missile defence system for North America,” he writes, “the strategic logic that has implicitly or unconsciously guided Canadian defence policy since the end of the Second World War dictated Canadian participation in some form or another.”

Act five, which covers the period from 2001-05, finds Fergusson at his most frustrated. As a proud Canadian nationalist, he sees his country’s interests being sacrificed for the sake of political expediency — on both sides of the border. Ottawa’s repeated failures to position itself within Washington’s missile defence infrastructure threatened the future of NORAD, and technological advances had begun to make it possible for the United States to defend itself without taking into consideration Canadian concerns. What is more, in a great turn of phrase, Fergusson explains that by 2002, “The United States had caught the Canadian sovereignty bug. Many of its officials were as concerned about the political implications of Canadian military forces crossing the border to help the United States during a crisis as Canadians were concerned about the inverse.” Popular Canadian opposition to George W. Bush was exacerbated by Bush’s foolish decision to bring up missile defence in two speeches on Canadian soil — comments that are far less excusable than Fergusson lets on. Compounded by the challenges of managing an unstable minority government during a period of scandal at home, Bush’s faux pas made Prime Minister Paul Martin’s decision to announce that it was cutting itself off from participation in Washington’s ground-based midcourse defense (GMD) plans almost inevitable.

That the president, who had been warned repeatedly about the political sensitivities in Canada to the missile defence issue, would raise the topic explicitly while in Canada, twice, speaks to his profound ignorance of the dynamics of Canadian political culture. No world leader should be excused from showing such poor diplomatic tact on the soil of a valued ally.

*Canadian
indecision on
missile defence has
consistently harmed
Canadian interests.*

*... Canadian
sovereignty is
undermined by
ceding the defence
of Canadian cities
to the United
States.*

The epilogue offers a summary of what Fergusson views as one of the great strategic failures of Canada’s international history: “Canadian indecision on missile defence has consistently harmed Canadian interests,” he writes:

Canada is unable to expropriate missile defence resources relative to its own defence interests. Canadian sovereignty is undermined by ceding the defence of Canadian cities to the United States. Canada has at best limited access to US missile defence operational planning and US research and development. There are few, if any, means for Canada to ensure its interests are injected into the planning process and obtain opportunities to influence the operational system. Finally, Canada has fed US unilateral proclivities by undermining its commitment to the joint defence of North America.

To Fergusson, the future will bring more of the same. With ballistic missile defence now a given, the next debate over continental security will focus on the weaponization of space. Inevitably, Washington will pursue weaponization. Canada will object, Canadian officials will seek to avoid making any decision on involvement and participation, the United States will move forward, and Canada will be left behind: it will be déjà vu all over again.

At one level, it is hard to disagree with much in this book. As one passes from act to act, one cannot help but be struck by the way that history has indeed virtually repeated itself. Much of Fergusson’s frustration is understandable. His critique of the Canadian diplomatic establishment is, more often than not, convincing. Fergusson’s analysis complements the excellent work of Joseph Jockel on the Canadian experience in NORAD, and his conclusions are largely consistent with (albeit much more critical than) those of Brian Bow and Phillipe Lagassé in their recent assessments.¹ Moreover, his description of the Martin government’s decision to say no to GMD in 2005 is far more believable than the

self-serving memoir published in 2006 by peace activist Steven Staples.² Nevertheless, the argument here is at times not quite as tight as it might have been.

Fergusson never denies his personal interest in the missile defence debate, nor does he attempt to hide his strong support not only for Canadian participation in the US defence program, but also of the program more generally. Indeed, he goes so far as to concede in his prologue that “as a proponent of Canadian participation, my analysis is not entirely neutral, as no study can be. Nonetheless, to the best degree possible, this book offers a balanced account of the debates inside and outside government over time.” Early in the book, particularly as he covers the years in which he was not an active participant in the debate, he remains largely dispassionate. The later years are much less open to contrary points of view. Rather than slowly and meticulously dismantling Staples’ self-congratulatory writings, for example, Fergusson fails to acknowledge that Staples has written a book at all. Moreover, he paints the so-called “peace movement” no differently than he does the “punditocracy,” a group of analysts who he claims “generally get it wrong” in their assessments of Canada’s strategic interests. Such statements are patently unfair. Fergusson neglects to mention, for instance, that Jennifer Welsh, ghost-writer of the Liberals’ international policy statement, came out in favour of missile defence in her 2004 book *At Home in the World: Canada’s Global Vision for the 21st Century*.³ So did the Atlantic Council of Canada, a home of the punditocracy if there ever was one.

In both cases, Fergusson’s main concern seems to be that the pundits have only followed him halfway. They have recognized the inherent foolishness of Canada denying itself access to strategic discussions on North American security, but they have not endorsed missile defence as a source of greater national and continental security. Fergusson’s passionate advocacy therefore at times does his book a disservice. The real point of *Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence* was

to provide interested readers with a comprehensive assessment of the evolution — or lack thereof — of Canada’s strategic decision-making process as it related to a continental issue that could not be wished away. At such a level, this book is beyond reproach. Fergusson acknowledges the dilemmas faced by policymakers, the strategic and operational implications of Canadian decisions, and rightly concludes that policy coming out of Ottawa over the last 55 years has been largely wrong-headed. When he tries to do more — to paint critics of missile defence with the same brush as critics of Canadian policy; to portray advocates of Canadian adherence to

GMD as a distinct, almost persecuted, minority; or to suggest that US expenditures on missile defence are necessarily in Ottawa’s (and Washington’s) strategic interest — he stands on much less firm ground.

If Fergusson’s basic assessment is right that the missile defence debate will arise again and that Canada will in the future make the same poor strategic choices that it has made thus far, could a critic not go further and suggest that, just as

was the case during each of the first five acts, there will also be no lasting effects to this decision in terms of Canadian national security? If Ottawa’s avoidance of the issue thus far has not had a tangible effect on Canadians’ safety, what is to say that the government will not get lucky again? Moreover, one must be careful not to exaggerate the impact that Canadian support might have on any future missile defence project. Fergusson notes with legitimate disdain “naive beliefs that Canada could truly influence the decisions of its superpower friend and ally, if not the global community, by saying either yes or no” to missile defence. But he also claims that in spite of Canada’s lack of influence, participating in missile defence could somehow “ensure its interests are injected into the planning process” and could provide Canada with “opportunities to influence the operational system.” The former statement is much more convincing than the latter. The United States

Fergusson notes with legitimate disdain “naive beliefs that Canada could truly influence the decisions of its superpower friend and ally, if not the global community, by saying either yes or no.”

makes continental security decisions based on its own interests. It is sufficiently powerful that it can choose to ignore Canada even when Canadians are entitled to legitimate representation, and it has indeed done so on more than one occasion during the life of NORAD. This is not to say that Ottawa should throw its hands up in despair; rather, it is to remind even the strongest proponents of BMD that their most convincing case in favour of Canadian participation is not what it would do for Canada, but that even if participation results in no tangible gains, the costs will be so relatively minimal that it is worth the diplomatic investment.

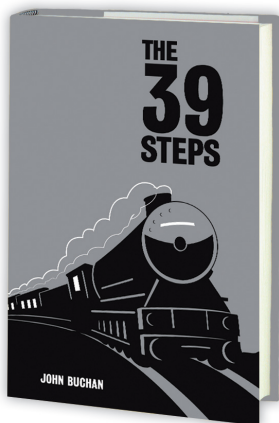
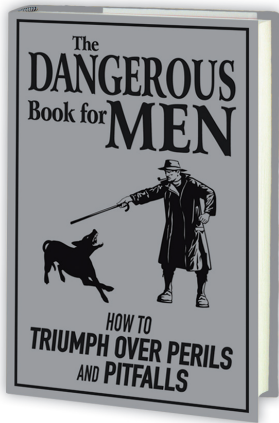
Perhaps the latter argument would have been clearer had Fergusson spent more of this book on Canadian domestic politics and less on military and security developments in the United States. Indeed, this book would be more appropriately titled something along the lines of "Ballistic Missile Defence and Canadian decision-making." This book teaches the reader much more about defence than it does about domestic Canada, and it is at its best when it explains complicated technical military

challenges in terms that casual readers can easily understand. Like Fergusson, this reviewer can only hope that policy practitioners will read it as well. ✂

Notes:

1. Joseph T. Jockel, *Canada In NORAD 1957-2007: A History* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); Brian Bow, "Defence Dilemmas: Continental Defence Cooperation from Bomarc to BMD," *Canadian Foreign Policy* 15, 1 (Spring 2009): pp. 40-62; Philippe Lagassé, "Canada, Defence, and Strategic Stability: A Retrospective and Look Ahead," *International Journal* 63, 4 (Autumn 2008), pp. 917-37.
2. Steven Staples, *Missile Defence: Round One, An Insider's Account of How and Why Canada said no to George W. Bush – and Why this Issue Won't Die* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 2006).
3. Jennifer Welsh, *At Home in the World: Canada's Global Vision for the 21st Century* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2004), pp. 226-233.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING & ADVENTUROUS TITLES



from Michael O'Mara Books



Islamist Angels of Death

John C. Thompson

Bombshell: The Many Faces of Women Terrorists. Mia Bloom. Penguin, 2011.

The central conundrum in the study of terrorism is the understanding of motive; what compels somebody to engage in terrorism. Why did they choose to behave this way? Now, some forty years or so after terrorism again became a salient problem, we are still no closer to a full understanding of the motivations of terrorists than physicists are to a universal field theory.

We try to dissect motive with inexpert tools and seldom really get a fully comprehensive examination. Imagine trying to repair an automobile and the political scientists show up with a carpentry kit, the behavioral psychologists come with a watchmaker's tools, the sociologist with a sledgehammer, the reporter with mismatched screwdrivers, and the historian with a bundle of rags for cleaning. The job may get done, but neither quickly nor well. In the meantime, like the Dark Arts in a Harry Potter novel, terrorism keeps shifting and changing its nature on us.

Trying to understand why men commit terrorism is bad enough, but a growing number of women are getting involved too. Women

— as Rudyard Kipling famously pointed out in his poem “The Female of the Species” — are not immune to participating in violence, but usually harness it to more basic survival concerns. The motivations like attracting peer respect or Maslow’s “self-actualization” that seem germane for men do not seem to apply so strongly.

And yet ... Ulrike Meinhof is no longer alone. From the Chechen “black widows” to Tamil “Freedom Birds,” sisters are blowing themselves up. Even the hardcore male chauvinists of the Islamic triumphalist movements are now occasionally attracting women — something like 1% to 2% of arrested homegrown aspiring jihadis in Europe in the last decade have been girls.

It is the normal reaction of human males to assume that violence is a masculine province. Looking at the long history of war, anthropology and primate behaviour (our guide to insights about prehistoric violence), females are not supposed to fight but they are supposed to be fought over. Nowadays, this might be taken as a very old-fashioned attitude but the weight of the evidence is there over centuries of history and millions of years of evolution.

Yet from Boadicea to Joan of Arc to Russian master-sniper Lyudmila Pavlichenko, there are plenty of exceptions. Perhaps these exceptions are not so unusual — as an interesting aside, Inanna was the Sumerian goddess of sex and war while the only deity concerned with berserk battlefield fury was the crow goddess Morrigan of the Celts. At some level, men always remembered that women are capable of violence; and one wonders why the appearance of women terrorists should now be a surprise.

Female terrorists are a growing problem and another dimension of terrorism that awaits

John Thompson served for thirteen years in the Canadian Forces, spent five years with the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies and twenty-one with the Mackenzie Institute, a think-tank for the study of political instability and organized violence including terrorism, political extremism, warfare and organized crime. In twenty-six years he has given over 7,500 lectures and media interviews, and written hundreds of columns and reviews.

more misunderstanding; and so enters the perspective of Mia Bloom, who is an associate professor of international studies and women's studies at Pennsylvania State University. Bloom has already blasted a way onto the bookshelves of most collections on terrorism with *Dying to Kill: The Allure of Suicide Bombing*; and now she is widening her breach. Resistance is futile for both books are worth reading.

Bloom's outlook on terrorism is curious and yet conventional. She has arrived at the centre of the study of terrorism with the same conclusions and attitudes as many of the specialists who have been drawn into the subject area. However, it is clear she has come in from a different direction, being a Gen-Xer and having come through a more "progressive" academic gestalt (women's studies) than many former police and military in the field.

By way of example, Bloom's instinctive sympathies swam up into easy sight when discussing Mairead Farrell of the provisional wing of the IRA. Farrell's conduct in an Ulster prison would certainly attract the admiration of a professor of women's studies. Farrell's death — she was shot to bits by the SAS in Gibraltar in the apprehension that she and two colleagues were about to ready a car bomb — likewise comes in for a brief perfunctory condemnation. However, Bloom also condemns the Enniskillen Remembrance Day bombing, something a true progressive would support if they mentioned it at all.

Professor Bloom's unthinking stance on various issues initially suggests a reflexive progressive mindset, yet her research and analysis then takes her to much more orthodox positions. In many ways, this is reassuring. If we can approach an issue from different directions and meet on the middle ground, then we must be all doing something correctly. This result also argues to her common sense and an open mind, rare traits nowadays and not just among academics.

Female attackers, particularly suicide

bombers, still have the power to shock wide audiences even more than male attackers can do. Women, as many have learned to their sorrow, can also be extremely effective in delivering their attacks, taking us back to the point that Kipling made about the gentle sex being merciless and deadly efficient when they decide to undertake violence.

This is underscored by the natural disinclination of most police and soldiers to feel threatened by a woman. A lone young man approaching a military checkpoint on foot on, for instance, the West Bank will almost invariably kindle the suspicion of troops on duty. A pregnant woman will not bring on the same reaction, and can therefore get close enough to detonate her bomb to deadly effect. Certainly, Rajiv Gandhi's bodyguards (and Gandhi himself) were blind to the approach of a female Tamil suicide bomber at a 1991 election rally.

Women can also do reconnaissance and conduct other support tasks where a man would arouse suspicion. One of the more surprising aspects of Bloom's book was

her recounting of the ways women have become heavily involved in Jemaah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia. The women who were married to core members of the terrorist group often played key roles in facilitating logistics and communications. Most were raised as pious Muslims and were married accordingly, but the irony is that Indonesian women are more likely to be involved in public life than their heavily-suppressed sisters in Saudi Arabia. One wonders if these Indonesian women really understand what they are working towards, but illogic is no stranger in terrorist motivation.

Bloom's exploration of the subject of female terrorists falls naturally from her earlier work on suicide bombing; and also seems to be contributing to her forthcoming book on rape in war (which will also no doubt end up on this reviewer's shelves in due time). Bloom had initially supposed that women who became terrorists

Revenge or the need for redemption (particularly in Islamic societies) are powerful motives: the import of being a victim of rape is enough to irredeemably "spoil" a woman for life. Some terrorist movements have been known to recruit women as suicide attackers so they can "redeem" themselves.

must have been coerced or manipulated in some way — which is a widely held belief. While this situation is indeed common, it does not explain most, or all, of the phenomenon. The supposition did not long endure during her exploration of the issue.

Moreover, the question of abuse is interesting. Police and soldiers that use rape or sexual harassment to break the spirit of the community they are confronting may soon find that they are themselves generating their next set of attackers. As Bloom points out, revenge or the need for redemption (particularly in Islamic societies) are powerful motives: the import of being a victim of rape in some societies is enough to irredeemably “spoil” a woman for life. Some terrorist movements have been known to then recruit women as suicide attackers so they can “redeem” themselves and restore family honour.

The Russians, who are quite brutal when it comes to counter-insurgency, have frequently engaged in rape in Chechnya, while Bloom’s interview subjects in Sri Lanka allege that the Sri Lankan Army may have made a habit of sexual

harassment. Bloom takes her Tamil interview subjects with more credibility than they probably deserve, and the LTTE was more prone than most terrorist groups to routine fibbing.

In Iraq, Bloom also recounts the story of how the Al Qaeda franchise set women up to be raped so that they could then be recruited as suicide bombers. This was among the examples of conduct that led to the so-called Anbar Awakening and the rejection of the jihadists by many Iraqi Sunnis. But then, Chechen women are not raped only by Russian soldiers; Chechen guerrillas are capable of the same thing (or issuing a “disgraceful” quickie divorce) to induce women to give up their lives for the cause.

Women are also entirely capable of consciously recruiting themselves for a cause and offering to participate fully. This seems particularly true of those that elect to embrace an ideology — such as some of the women in the provisional wing of the IRA — who seek to earn the respect of their peers and the community that backs them. Revenge for fallen family members or the search for approval from somebody with whom the woman is in a relationship are also powerful motives. ✘

Timeline of female suicide attacks

April 9, 1985 - The first known female suicide bomber, 16-year-old Sana’a Youcef Mehadli (Sana Khyadali), drove into an Israeli Defense Force convoy in southern Lebanon, killing two soldiers.

May 21, 1991 - Thenmozhi Rajaratnam of the Tamil Tigers assassinated Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in a suicide attack at a campaign rally in Tamil Nadu.

June 2000 - Two Chechen women drove a truck-load of explosives into an army base at Alkhan-Yurt, west of Grozny. At least 27 Russian special forces soldiers were killed.

April 12, 2002 - A female suicide bomber blew herself up at Jerusalem’s Mahane Yehuda market, killing six and wounding 90.

Aug 31, 2004 - A female suicide bomber blew herself up outside a Moscow metro station, killing ten and injuring 51.

Dec. 6, 2005 - Two female suicide bombers killed at least 27 police officers and students and wounded 32 in an attack at the Baghdad Police Academy in Iraq.

Feb 1, 2008 - Two female suicide bombers killed 99 people in attacks blamed on al Qaeda at two popular Baghdad pet markets, the city’s worst attacks in six months.

March 17, 2008 - A female suicide bomber killed at least 27 people and wounded 47 at the Shi’ite holy city of Kerbala in southern Iraq.

Feb. 1, 2010 - A female suicide bomber blew herself up among Shi’ite pilgrims starting the Arbain pilgrimage to Kerbala, killing 41 and wounding 106.

March 29, 2010 - Two female suicide bombers struck Moscow metro stations during rush hour, killing 39 people and wounding 71.

SOURCE: REUTERS

The Rifle in American History

Gary Mauser

American Rifle: A Biography. Alexander Rose. Delta Trade Paperbacks, 2009.

American Rifle tells the fascinating story of the development of the modern rifle. The rifle was born in the unique challenges of the North American frontier. In early encounters natives were easily frightened by the smoke and noise of firearms. In 1609 Samuel de Champlain led a raid against the Mohawks near the Ticonderoga peninsula. A few volleys from his arquebus scattered a numerically superior force. Within a few years, however, Indians managed to get over their initial fears. Early firearms were simply less practical in frontier skirmishes than bows and arrows.

Frontier warfare changed dramatically when the flintlock was introduced a few decades later. Indians quickly saw its advantages and were eager to trade furs for firearms and other European goods. This resulted in competitive trading alliances, pitting English colonies against French, and these occasionally degenerated into violence. Combat on the frontier consisted of skirmishes in the forest, not set-piece battles between armies as in Europe. In engaging fashion, Alexander Rose tells the story of subsequent events. By the late eighteenth century German immigrants in Pennsylvania had developed the “Kentucky rifle.” The basic principle of grooves (*riffeln*) inside the barrel had been known as early as 1450 in central Europe. The success of the Kentucky rifle stemmed from small but important innovations, such as longer barrels. Longer barrels not only meant greater

accuracy but also higher velocity. This was a breakthrough because by increasing the velocity, the calibre could be reduced from .75 to .50 without endangering stopping power. A hunter could also get more shots per pound of lead. Such advances were crucial on the frontier.

These technological improvements had profound political consequences. Firearms in Europe were reserved for the nobility, but in North America gun ownership became part of the common experience. Anyone interested in the implications of citizens owning firearms in the United States should read *Armed America: The Story of How and Why Guns Became as American as Apple Pie*, by Clayton Cramer. As the rifle supplanted the musket, the importance of marksmanship increased. By the early eighteenth century, Rose explains that an American way of warfare had developed which combined Indian practices, such as “skulking” (or what would later be known as guerrilla warfare) with European organization and discipline. Such strategies emphasized frontier values such as individual initiative and self-reliance.

A prominent theme for Rose is the enduring tension between marksmanship and firepower. Should a rifle be designed for accuracy so that it is capable of reaching out and hitting targets at long range, as hunters and snipers would desire? Or is firepower more important, so that many shots can be fired quickly in short-range battles? Obviously, militaries face a mix of battlefield conditions, and arms that work best in one action may not be effective in another.

Should soldiers be equipped with a variety of tools (e.g., handgun, rifle, submachine gun, hand grenades and grenade launcher) or is it possible to design a rifle that could perform multiple tasks adequately?

Back room political battles in Washington have long determined military procurement. Rose brilliantly describes the frustrations facing innovators, such as John Hall, who attempted to convince the Ordnance Department in the early 1800s to replace slow and inaccurate muzzleloaders with his innovative breech-loading rifle. Hall's rifles were more accurate than muskets, and, as breech-loaders, they could be fired six times a minute, when the rate of fire for muskets was half that. Unfortunately, officials saw these very advantages as undermining traditional military discipline. They feared that soldiers armed with rapid-firing rifles would no longer be precisely controlled by their commanding officers. Bureaucrats in the Ordnance Department blocked Hall's hard work and lonely experimentation at every turn for more than thirty years until he died. Despite the obvious potential of breech-loaders, officials preferred traditional muzzleloading muskets. Hall would not be the last innovator to be stymied by the Byzantine politics of the bureaucracy. In the 1850s the breech-loader faced a rival technological innovation, the Minié bullet. Its improved shape meant that rifles could be loaded from the muzzle almost as rapidly as muskets, giving rise to the rifle musket. The bureaucrats had discovered another reason for rejecting the breech-loader. During the Civil War not even President Lincoln could prevail over the bureaucracy's choice of the rifle-musket. Some officers wishing to use a breech-loading Sharps had to purchase their own.

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw the Americans fall behind the Europeans in rifle development. Much of this was due to the sclerotic policies in the Ordnance Department. In 1893, the Americans finally adopted their first service weapon using smokeless powder, the .30 calibre Krag, which replaced the .45-70

single-shot Springfield. Meanwhile in Europe, Ferdinand von Mannlicher and Peter-Paul Mauser were competing with the French Lebel for dominance.

The English were the beneficiaries of perhaps the most egregious example of American blundering. In 1881, James Paris Lee, a Scottish Canadian, managed to get the US Ordnance Department to test his design, the first detachable-box magazine-fed rifle. Despite the endorsement of General Sherman, the bureaucracy rejected Lee's innovative rifle with its five-shot magazine. Britain's Small Arms Committee adopted the Lee in 1887 as the service rifle of the Empire. Subsequent modifications resulted in the Lee Enfield and the .303 British cartridge, which proved to be one of the most successful rifle-and-cartridge combinations of the twentieth century. For more information about the Lee Enfield, see Skennerton's excellent book, *The Lee Enfield Story*.

During the Civil War not even President Lincoln could prevail over the bureaucracy's choice of the rifle-musket. Some officers wishing to use breech-loading Sharps had to purchase their own.

Rose describes the way Teddy Roosevelt's commitment to marksmanship lay behind the adoption of the Springfield Model 1903 and the .30-06 cartridge. While with the Rough Riders in Cuba during the Spanish-American war, Roosevelt had been impressed by the 1893 Spanish Mauser and its 7x57mm round which had a higher velocity than the US Army's .30 Krag. Roosevelt decided that the Krag should be replaced with a rifle that combined "rapidity with accuracy." The result was the M1903 that borrowed heavily from the Mauser rifle. One of the features of the M1903 was the "charger loading" system, which was a magazine loaded from five-round stripper clips. The original .30 cartridge for the M1903 did not live up to expectations, so in 1906 the government lengthened the case and adopted a Spitzer bullet to create the famous .30-06 round. This round saw use in both world wars, Korea and Vietnam, and is still highly prized by marksmen — becoming the all-time favourite hunting round in the United States. How many readers would know that the US paid almost a

million dollars to German firearms manufacturers for violating their patents on both the M1903 and the .30-06?

After the second world war the National Rifle Association's commitment to civilian marksmanship played an important role in the adoption of the M14 as the American rifle. Rose recounts the bitter battles that determined NATO's choice of the T65 cartridge (7.62x51mm NATO) over the .280 British. NATO would agree upon a common cartridge in 1957, but split over which rifle to use. Europeans and the Commonwealth preferred the FN-FAL to the M14.

The M14 almost immediately ran into problems in Vietnam. It was too unwieldy for jungle fighting yet too light to easily control in fully-automatic fire. Rose explains how concerns with firepower dominated marksmanship in the search for a replacement. Even before the M14 had been adopted, support was gathering for a smaller cartridge which meant a smaller rifle. Infantrymen could easily carry much more ammunition. ArmaLite soon developed the AR-15, shooting a variant of the Remington .222 that could propel a .22-calibre bullet at 3,250 feet per second. When the AR-15 was field tested in South Vietnam by the special forces, they were enthusiastic about its effectiveness on the battlefield partly because the rifle's light and fast round inflicted devastating wounds. The barrel's rate of twist in its rifling destabilized the bullet, which caused it to tumble and wobble once inside a target, producing a surprisingly massive wound cavity. Rose touches only lightly on the question of "internal ballistics." For more information about how bullet characteristics influence the severity of wounding, the reader could consult *Hatcher's Notebook*.

In the 1960s, firepower again trumped marksmanship despite the NRA's objections. Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, ordered the adoption of the M16 in 1964 using the 5.56x45mm NATO cartridge. Unfortunately, the

hurried introduction of the M16 created its own difficulties in Vietnam. Fouling problems caused the M16 to jam, resulting in needless G.I. deaths on the battlefield. But these were soon corrected with design changes and better training in cleaning the weapon, and the M16 became one of the most successful battle rifles in American history.

In the concluding chapter, Rose relates the current difficulties facing the Pentagon in replacing the M16. The choice between the M4, SCAR and HK416 depends upon experiences in

Iraq and Afghanistan as much as battles among suppliers such as Colt, FN Herstal, and H&K. Rose concludes by saying American success on the battlefield continues to rely upon skilled riflemen.

Rose's focus on American military rifles ignores some historically important firearms. Perhaps the most important of these are the semi-automatic (i.e., self-loading) handguns invented by John Moses Browning. The Browning legacy is described well in *John M. Browning, American Gunmaker*. Rose

gives only passing consideration to European rifle developments. Readers interested in learning more about Mauser rifles should consult John Walter's *The German Rifle*. Rose's description of the tension between marksmanship and firepower goes far in illuminating the controversy surrounding Canada's Ross rifle during World War I. *The Ross Rifle Story*, edited by Roger F. Phillips, Francois J. Dupuis, and John A. Chadwick, does a superb job of relating the problems and politics that plagued Canada's innovative rifle.

Rose's book is engagingly written and does not lose the reader in technical trivia. The stories of the labyrinthine bureaucratic politics behind historic battles ring true for anyone attempting to understand current decision-making in Ottawa. The author's website includes an expanded bibliography for those interested in digging deeper into this fascinating story. ♣

The hurried introduction of the M16 created its own difficulties in Vietnam. Fouling problems caused it to jam, resulting in needless G.I. deaths on the battlefield. But this was soon corrected with design changes and better training.

Don't Mess with Parliament

John Robson

Against Reform. John Pepall. University of Toronto Press, 2010.

John Pepall's *Against Reform* is a sparkling, nay stinging, defence of Parliamentary institutions as they have evolved historically against the schemes of projectors that makes short, nay minuscule, work of virtually every proposal for parliamentary reform, showing how they will throw the organic system out of whack. It is not itself a historical work and it stands solidly on its own as a contemporary polemic. But it stands solidly because, like its subject, it rests on deep foundations.

The essence of Pepall's argument is that every currently trendy proposal for reform of our political institutions, from voting systems like Proportional Representation or the Single Transferable Vote to suggestions for diminished party discipline, is based on a misunderstanding of how Parliamentary self-government works, why it works that way, and how well it attains its ends. Voting, Pepall insists, is about letting citizens choose governments able to govern, and no reform that undermines that goal is desirable, whether it meddles directly with voting so elections pursue other ends than letting voters choose governments, or meddles indirectly by changing institutions so that governing becomes more difficult.

He unfolds his arguments with such wisdom, wit and brevity that on page after page you encounter passages that, once written, seem so obvious you not only won't ever forget it, you can't believe you didn't come up with it first. Yet generations of pundits and popularizers have covered the topic without making this point in this way, such as: "All votes in Parliament are already

free votes, but they are votes with consequences — consequences MPs are often loathe to face."

Pepall's central point is that Parliamentary institutions are about responsible government, that is, government responsible to citizens for producing a coherent program that is on balance desirable. Thus on proposals to loosen party discipline he writes: "Legislating, administering, taxing, and spending governments must try to act coherently. The free-for-all, everyone-does-his-bit model promoted so that MPs can feel better about themselves could never do it at all. It would be a case of too many cooks and no chef." Too many cooks and no chef. I wish I had written that. At least I can quote it. And think about it.

As for the notion that too many things are considered confidence measures, he writes "Why, ask the advocates of free votes, must the government fall if it is defeated? Because the government is a not a series of isolated measures."

This compelling grasp of why we vote enables him to make short work of any number of proposals for changing how we hold elections, often distilling an entire argument into one unforgettable sentence, as in this demolition of a key argument from enthusiasts for proportional representation: "The dogma that parties should have seats in proportion to the votes they get is not argued for but assumed. The insistent claim of advocates of proportional representation that it is fairer simply begs the question; what is fairer about it? Each party gets its fair share of seats? But is politics for parties? Is it not about government? Can government be broken up and handed out like cake? Elections are not about sharing. They are about the people deciding." Can government be broken up and handed out

like cake? The metaphor is irresistible because the analysis is so trenchant.

He spots the surface absurdities in arguments with enviable ease. The argument of reformers that under the current voting system “parties somehow get in the way of voters choosing the individual they would like best to represent them” is simply not credible after he notes that, “If the party label, however, were all that mattered, a lot that goes on in politics would be inexplicable. Why do parties seek star candidates if candidates do not matter? Why do incumbents relentlessly curry favour with voters if all that will matter on election day is their party affiliation?” But he does not stop there. Rather, as elsewhere in the book, Pepall goes right to the roots in pulling up PR.

For instance, he concedes that it would produce parliaments in which parties were represented according to their share of the vote. But, he rightly notes, “The question why it should do that remains unanswered.” He goes on to ask whether anyone wants to adopt policies in proportion to their share of the vote, then answers his own question decisively:

If 50 per cent of the people oppose capital punishment and 40 per cent support it and 10 per cent are undecided, why should we not give five out of ten murderers a life sentence, hang four, and keep one on death row until the undecided make up their minds? To govern is to choose.... Government is not a jumble of discrete choices, of which some people could make some, and others, with different ideas and interests, could make others. The choices must fit together. This is most obvious in a budget.

It is now.

Moreover, he comes back time and again to his central contention that voting is about choosing governments responsible to voters and “under proportional representation,” he states with devastating bluntness, “the voters do not choose the government.” As he goes on to document, it took very nearly half a century before a single government in West Germany was voted out. And this is typical of PR systems: “In the fifty years after 1945 in 103 elections in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland, the major governing

party was thrown from office only six times.” And in 47 governments in Italy in this period “the Christian Democrats dominated them all.” Furthermore, under Germany’s PR system the Free Democrats have actually had a grossly disproportionate share of cabinet seats whereas in Britain as in Canada parties get to govern roughly in proportion to their share of the vote.

He’s not done yet. He also explains that because it guarantees seats to party insiders skilled at climbing the greasy pole, under PR, “The internal workings of parties, which, however broad their membership, always involve obscurely only a small minority of voters, become dangerously important.” Further, he points out that reformers present themselves as concerned to make MPs more independent, “But the logic of proportional representation reduces MPs to mere party tokens.” Finally, he says, people criticize our current electoral system “because it does not yield proportional representation of parties, as if the purpose of Parliament was to serve the parties. But it is the other way around. Parties were formed to allow Parliament to work and to support a government.”

As he also devastatingly observes, “If their [electoral reformers’] arguments are sound and proportional representation or the STV is ‘the thing,’ as reformers believe, the results of every election in Canada’s history have been monstrously wrong and only the enthusiasts for reform have noticed.”

He brings the same combination of insight and acidity to proposal after proposal, from citizens’ assemblies to senate reform to referendums, recall and initiative, which he calls “the *reductio ad absurdum* of reform. ... In practice it is impossible for there to be in Canada a groundswell of support for a measure sufficient for a successful initiative that would be ignored by government.” Thus, “Like recall, initiative, where allowed, is not likely to be much used or to get very far. But if it did get off the ground, it would be a bad thing. It involves taking a single issue in isolation out of the hands of government without regard to how the promoted measure may sort with the rest of what government is doing. If it turns out badly, who will be held responsible?”

Responsible government is the touchstone of his critique and rightly so. Thus he gets off

a series of great one-liners, for instance about making MPs more influential, but always in service of serious analysis.

He does not merely say “The fault, dear reader, is in our MPs, not in our institutions, that they are underlings.” He explains that, “Backbench MPs are not without influence. But that influence is mostly exercised privately, in party caucuses. There they have to be team players and can get no public recognition. It is not enough for some. More scope for private member’s bills is only an indulgence of MPs’ vanity. It will do little harm. It will do no good.” And the reason it will do no good is that in a Parliamentary system the ministry is responsible not just for passing individually meritorious or at least popular bills but, far more importantly, for ensuring that the entire mass of laws and regulations, and the associated spending and taxes, amount to a coherent goal.

This understanding of what responsible government means informs critique after critique in the book. Thus of one trendy proposal, for parliamentary committees to play a significant role in confirming executive branch appointments,

If parliamentary confirmation became effective ... the responsibility of the government would be eroded. If an official confirmed by Parliament turned out badly, the government could fairly say, “Don’t blame us. We had a better candidate but could not be sure of confirmation.” And to whom would appointees be answerable; to the government whose second or third choices they were or to Parliament who confirmed them?

These are not questions lightly to be brushed aside.

It is on the basis of this deep grasp of why our system works and how that he is able to frame such trenchant warnings as: “Democracy cannot always give the people what they want. It can only make government answerable to the people for what it does. So long as people wrongly think government can give them what they want, they will pursue futile and harmful efforts at reform.”

Pepall does know his history and inserts it deftly from time to time, noting for instance that while Britain’s House of Lords was formally nearly equal to the Commons until 1911, “In practice there was always a way to get around the Lords, if it did not restrain itself,” because the monarch could create new peers at will. This not only secured passage of the Parliament Act but, before it, the crucial 1832 Reform Bill. “In 1711 Queen Anne created twelve new Tory peers to overcome a Whig majority in the Lords that had been obstructing her Tory government’s moves to make peace with France.” How many critics, or defenders, of the present Canadian

senate knew that? I didn’t.* And he is not merely a successful collector of pertinent historical anecdotes. In a key passage he writes:

Much of the push for parliamentary reform seeks, wittingly or not, to confound the distinction between Parliament and government. In its origin, Parliament had nothing to do with government.... Over the centuries, as governments came to be drawn from and dependent on the support of Parliament, the relation between government and Parliament became intimate. But their roles remained distinct. Eighteenth-century theorists and the authors of the United States Constitution in severing the executive and legislative branches misconstrued this distinction, but it is fundamental. Governments are drawn from Parliament and must have its support, but Parliament does not govern, cannot.

These are deep constitutional waters. But Pepall gives us a vantage point from which they are also clear. Historically minded readers will find such passages both gratifying and frustrating; gratifying for their grasp of history and its importance; frustrating because we would enjoy and profit from a much more detailed exposition of this idea

* In 1990 Brian Mulroney appointed eight supernumerary senators in order to pass the GST. The CBC called this “unprecedented” which, of course, it was not. —eds.

It was once understood that our political institutions were a primary part of who we are and an object of pride. How and why our existing institutions came to be and why thoughtful people in the past defended them is hardly taught in schools and universities.

about the developing relationship between government and Parliament.

Pepall is not to be faulted for failing to present that exposition here; it is simply not his purpose in *Against Reform*, which could not have remained a scintillating monograph if he had allowed himself thus to be diverted. But it would also not be the solid work it is if he were not possessed of an erudition all the more impressive for being worn so lightly.

Pepall vigorously defends our current voting system, although he strongly dislikes the term “first-past-the-post” and offers an ugly alternative: “single member plurality voting (SMPV).” His point is that, while “it is not the device of a theory, but simply seemed the natural and obvious way from the start,” it “tends to produce two competing parties as parties form in accordance with their purpose of forming a government or an alternative government.”

One flaw in Pepall’s book is his contempt for the American system. He’s quite right to remind proponents of recall that it doesn’t work well in the United States, noting that the case of California Governor Gray Davis in 2003 was the first of thirty-three such attempts to succeed in the Golden State and only the second to succeed anywhere, the first being in North Dakota in 1921. And he might have added that California’s budgetary debacle under Arnold Schwarzenegger didn’t exactly vindicate the hopes of the recall forces. But he is flip and unfair to state baldly that “The system of government provided for by the United States Constitution, for good or ill, largely for ill, is entirely different from Canada’s,” or that “American elections do no [sic] work well, and the extraordinary advantage of incumbency is stark evidence of that.”

In the first place, Americans do get considerably more dramatic choices than Canadians at election time. And in the second, the American system of government was expressly designed to preserve crucial virtues of the old British constitution that seemed to be in grave peril in the eighteenth century and that succumbed to a different, more populist, threat in the twentieth, both there and here in Canada.

Here his history lets him down and it is a shame. But he can be forgiven this failing in a

book that, on its actual subject, provides so much instruction and entertainment in one absolutely compelling package including a staunch defence of our institutions, their history, and the rapidly vanishing understanding of that history.

Thus he notes that Canada went through decades of serious upheavals and major political issues without people blaming the institutions:

But a century and more of content with our political institutions is forgotten in the general oblivion of Canada’s past. Behind Canada’s experience with our existing political institutions lie centuries of political evolution in Britain. Very little of this was the result of conscious political theory. By a process of trial and error, institutions were developed that provided effective government answerable to the people. Two generations ago that history and the achievements of the governments it led to were well known in Canada. They too have passed into oblivion. It was once understood that our political institutions were a primary part of who we are and an object of pride. In the remaking of Canada, at once aggressive and surreptitious, in the last forty years this understanding has been suppressed. How and why our existing institutions came to be and why thoughtful people in the past defended them is hardly taught in schools and universities.

In this sense, *Against Reform* is a historical work without dwelling on history. By its compelling demonstration that parliamentary institutions are not merely good, they are good because they consist of a coherent and interlocking set of institutions and practices that have generated workable answers to the conundrums thrown up by events over centuries, it points us toward an examination of the history of Parliament to understand what it is meant to do and how and why. And those of us who regard informed study of history as invaluable preparation for the dilemmas of the present will cheer heartily at his crushing formulation that “those who call for reform see no farther into the future than they do into the past.”

Against Reform is a contemporary polemic, a work of deep historical understanding, a primer on political theory, a collection of one-liners, short, sweet yet acidic, and a must read. ✕

Tory Civil Wars 1987 - 2003

"It is easy to forget ... that just eight years ago, Stephen Harper was sitting somewhat forlornly as the head of what called itself the Canadian Alliance, ineffectually crooning "Wherefore art thou, Joe Clark?" to the immovable recycled leader of the diminutive rump of the Progressive Conservatives."

— Conrad Black, *National Post*, May 7

The Dorchester Review invited representatives of the mainstream small-c conservative movement to revisit from an historical perspective the "civil wars" on the political centre-right that ended with the party merger ratified in December 2003. — eds.

Hon. Hugh Segal

The anger [in the West] over the CF-18 contract, the anger that was still there over the National Energy Program was such that people who were angry, specifically because the West is so wealthy, had two choices. One choice was "The West wants out." And they would have had the money and the clout to make that happen. But instead, Preston Manning and Stephen Harper at the beginning of the Reform movement, built on another frame. They built on "The West wants in." [The phrase was coined by Alberta Report founder Ted Byfield. — eds.] That, in my judgment, helped save Canada and preserve it because that forced voters to reflect. ... That Harper could reach out to [former PC leader Peter] MacKay and pull the ... Reform Party and the Progressive Conservatives and the Alliance all into one family, have a negotiation in one summer in which people like Bill Davis, and Loyola Hearn and Gerry St. Germain and Scott Reid could with [Don] Mazankowski and [Ray]

Speaker negotiate basic principles of coming together for a new party and have a referendum which passed with over 90% in both parties and then have a leadership and then win a seat in Parliament all within a period of 14 months is a remarkable historical feat.

I think [that] whatever the prime minister's achievements or failures will be over the next little while, the fact that he did that will be one of a huge piece of his historical contribution to Canada. I'm talking now as someone who's an old Progressive Conservative who really disliked the Reform Party — but I understand now that it wasn't about us. ... Harper has achieved that balance that had been lost for the thirteen years when the Conservative Party was too busy fighting with itself to actually fight with the enemy and give Canadians a real option.

— *Reproduced with permission from an interview with the Hon. Senator Segal by Bea Vongdouangchanh, published in The Hill Times, 28 February 2011.*

Bob Plamondon

Having won three successive elections and a robust majority government, it is hard to imagine that just seven years ago conservatives were engaged in a deeply destructive and pointless civil war. But over the summer of 2003 the conservative movement united, became disciplined and laid the foundation for a possible Tory dynasty, something not seen since the days of Sir John A. Macdonald. The potential for political restructuring should not be lost on Harper's opponents who collectively vie for a fractured vote on the left side of the political spectrum.

Conservatives in Canada have a history of division and disunity. Their ruptures have been organic and structural nature — the Progressive Party in the 1920's; the Reconstruction party in 1935, Social Credit from the fifties through the seventies; and then the Reform Party beginning in the late eighties.

Many people still believe the Reform Party was a response to the inadequacies of the Mulroney government. But the Reform Party of Canada was really launched in 1967 by Ernest and Preston Manning, some seventeen years before Brian Mulroney came to power. As Preston Manning said, "Rather than participate politically ... through either of the traditional political parties, I would wait ... and become politically active again if and when the winds of the Western reform tradition once more began to blow."

Except for the Kim Campbell disaster, Manning's project might never have taken hold. Going into the 1993 campaign, Campbell led in the polls and Manning was an afterthought. But she was a disaster as leader, while Manning, along with his sidekick Stephen Harper, became the only real conservative voice and they picked up huge support in the West.

For his part Harper wanted to build a principled conservative party — not the populist movement Manning wanted to lead. Frustrated, Harper left the Reform Party caucus before his first term in Parliament was up.

Reform was never able to attract voters in the East. And so long as Manning was around there was never going to be any form of merger. But a merger, or the death of one of the parties, was inevitable.

With two conservative parties on the ballot Chrétien won three majorities without breaking a sweat, because there was no opposition for him to fight. He was never tested. The biggest political battle at the time was within the Liberal Party where the country was held hostage to the feud between Chrétien and Paul Martin. They helped to tame the deficit, but our standard of living and world ranking went into steady decline because they deflated the dollar. After the Reform Party had turned into the Canadian Alliance, Harper came back to politics saying he wanted to lead a united conservative party: "What we've got to do is turn this party into an

institution," commanded Harper. "It's too often been viewed as a popular protest movement or a regional fragment or a leader-centric vehicle or a coalition thrown together for a single election. I think the way to address that is to show people that we are prepared to build a permanent professional political institution, one that they can dedicate their loyalty to on an ongoing basis."

In the meantime Alliance and PC MP's got to know each other better and concluded they were really not that different. Peter MacKay won

Having never formed a government, the Reform Party has to be judged by history as a failure. Worse, perhaps, its existence was futile, because its goals were never achievable. For conservatives to win, they must fight as a team.

the PC leadership thinking a merger might happen — perhaps after another election or two. But within a hundred days of being elected as leaders, MacKay and Harper had set in motion the structural change that led to the formation of a single Conservative Party.

More than anything, the merger happened because of the leadership of these two men — Harper for compromising in ways no one thought possible, letting MacKay dictate every term of the agreement to the point he could not say no — and MacKay for surrendering the leadership of a national political party before ever being tested in a national campaign.

MacKay discussed what he should do with Brian Mulroney, who told him emphatically, "Bring the family back together. This civil war, that then turned into the cold war among conservatives, has got to end."

It took two elections for the party to gel and for Stephen Harper to develop the will to win. He learned the art of coalition-building and of political compromise. The party had to show its maturity and discipline to the voters before they were willing to give Tories even a modest mandate.

Some might judge it remarkable that the Reform Party rose so quickly to become Her Majesty's loyal opposition. But if there is anything Conservatives are good at in Canada, it is being in opposition. The ultimate goal of any political party is to form a government. Having never formed a government, the Reform Party has to be judged by history as a failure. Worse, perhaps, its existence was futile, because its goals were never achievable. For conservatives to win, they must fight as a team. Any faction that goes out on its own will undermine the entire movement.

It does not matter if the Conservative leader comes from the East or the West, is French or English, a Blue Tory or a Red Tory. To think it does is to miss the point. No Conservative leader can hope to succeed by preferring one faction over another. A successful Conservative leader bridges the gaps, inspires unity, and draws the party together in common cause.

United, moderate, inclusive, national, mainstream, visionary, and conservative — these are the qualities that made Conservatives Canada's natural governing party in the nineteenth century. They could reclaim that mantle again in the twenty-first if they learn the lessons from the past.

But then again, the Liberals, NDP and Green Party could take a page out of Harper's playbook and combine to thwart a Tory dynasty. If nothing else, a coalition of left and right would give Canada something it has not achieved for thirty years: a strong government and a strong opposition.

Bob Plamondon is the author of Blue Thunder: The Truth about Conservatives from Macdonald to Harper (Key Porter, 2009), and Full Circle: Death and Resurrection in Canadian Conservative Politics (Key Porter, 2006).

Tim Powers

Canadian conservatives' most vitriolic warfare has often occurred among family. Today's party was born in December 2003, the resolution to a sixteen-year feud. The party birthed by Harper and MacKay is the most recent iteration of conservatives' long and frequently fractious efforts to find periodic mutual accommodation to unseat their principal

historic opponent, the Liberal Party of Canada.

As the period from 1987 to 2003 illustrated there is no homogeneous conservative identity. Regional economic and cultural factors, seat distribution and demography, along with historical interpretation (accurate or otherwise), infused with personalities, remain part of the alchemy of the movement. From 1987 to 1998 the Progressive Conservative Party went from political dominance to the ditch. The emergence of Preston Manning's Reform Party in 1987 and Lucien

Stockwell Day's tenure was marked by one controversy after another, devaluing the brand of the newly revitalized party. Under Day the Alliance looked incapable of running a competent political organization, let alone a country.

Bouchard's Bloc Quebecois in 1990 put an end to the PC Party's winning conditions.

As the Mulroney coalition began to unravel, the PC Party failed to acknowledge the winds of change. The party establishment took a dim view of the grievances fuelling the Reform Party's rapid growth and wrongly identified them as a temporary headache rather than the first wave of a game-changing set of forces. Consequently, it appeared the PC Party was whistling past the graveyard. As Sheldon Alberts, then the *National Post's* top reporter on right-of-centre politics, recalled, "The old Tory Party misunderstood the concerns of a western conservative base that felt disenfranchised for a variety of reasons — from the CF-18 contract to what was perceived as a disproportionate power from central Canada in the halls of Parliament. Manning and other Reform founders gave voice to that. ... They met a demand that was already in the marketplace."

The 1993 election decimated the PC Party, reducing the largest majority government in history to two seats. A healthy segment of disenfranchised voters propelled the upstart Reform Party to an overwhelming romp in Western Canada, winning 52 seats. Jean Charest would serve as PC leader for the next five years, trying to find

the formula for the magical revival. Meanwhile Reform would seek to find their legs in Parliament — struggling at times to determine their own boundaries. Reform's best fiscal ideas were often co-opted by the Liberals, which also made it difficult to get traction.

Charest represented Quebec, a province which did not factor into Reform's agenda. So cooperation in any form was not a real proposition. Key activists in Ontario and elsewhere were still involved with Charest and the PC Party, while key architects of Mike Harris' Common Sense Revolution like Leslie Noble and Alistair Campbell, also co-chaired Charest's 1997 platform.

The temporary resurgence of the PC Party in the 1997 election netted 20 seats and saw a return to official party status, reinforcing in some a belief that miracles were possible. However, outside the Party structures all manner of activists were agitating for change. From the 1996 Winds of Change conference to the two-year United Alternative process that began in the spring of 1998, parties were playing catch-up to the people they were supposed to represent. Manning embraced the current of change and tried to make it his own; Joe Clark would not.

Joe Clark's return in 1998 undoubtedly delayed any wave towards unification. Clark, whose entire professional identity was wrapped up in the PC Party, would not be the one to tear the house down. He was a product of political romanticism and a nostalgic sense that the party would rise again.

Emerging from the 2000 election with official

party status and with it new money and resources, Clark and others resisted any formal reconciliation. Mulroney, who remained the party's spiritual leader and godfather, told an interviewer: "The Alliance is the child of the Reform party, that's all it is. ... If you were from Quebec or you were a French Canadian, you were out."

Stockwell Day's tenure as leader of the Canadian Alliance was marked by one controversy after another, devaluing the brand and the reputation of the newly revitalized party. Under Day's leadership the Canadian Alliance looked incapable of running a competent political organization, let alone a country. The arrival of Harper as leader of the Alliance and MacKay's ascendancy two years later, signalled a true generational change. Henceforth the fulfillment of current and future political ambitions — as opposed to the maintenance of historical legacies — became a driving force for each leader. The bloodlust for beating the Liberals became more primal than conservative cannibalism.

The PC victory in the May 12, 2003 by-election in Perth-Middlesex, in which the Alliance candidate barely finished third, "illustrated the weakness of the Canadian Alliance in Ontario and propelled [Harper] toward seeking closer cooperation with the Progressive Conservatives," according to Tom Flanagan. "The road to merger began in Perth-Middlesex"

Behind the scenes, Mulroney began pushing the two sides together. Unlike Clark, Mulroney had the ability to bring about real change, particularly given MacKay's father's close relationship with the former prime minister. (Mackay Sr.

The West Is In

"It is more than worth recalling that Preston Manning — one of the great political and intellectual forces of modern Canadian times — started all this. Far earlier than others Manning saw the weaknesses of the Liberal party; he — correctly — pushed for a place for the West at the national table; and he had the courage and foresight to start a political movement that in 20 years (with some changes) has displaced the natural governing party, and forged new realities for Canadian politics. Manning should be recognized for this: like another leader he never got to see

what he most made possible. ... The West is not only "in" and at the table. It owns the table. That's a real accomplishment — the dissatisfactions of the Western provinces were a real and dangerous fault line in this country."

— Rex Murphy, *National Post*, May 6

"And the big winner last night ... Preston Manning. When Preston created the Reform Party in a Vancouver hotel in 1987, he set out to remake Canada, and to challenge a Progressive Conservative party he felt was more progressive than conservative."

— Mark Leiren-Young, *The Tyee*, May 3

in 1983 had given up his seat in Central Nova to bring Mulroney, then the party's newly-minted leader, into Parliament.) Mulroney's involvement removed the last impediments to unification.

What Tory historian Donald Creighton called "character and circumstance" led to the Conservative break-up in 1987 and restoration in 2003. The cycle could repeat itself again when the dominant forces of this era vacate the scene. A reading of Conservative politics since the time of Confederation, not just the period of 1987 to 2003, suggests that is a good bet.

Tim Powers is Vice-President of Summa Communications in Ottawa. He has worked as an assistant to cabinet ministers, a policy advisor for the Progressive Conservative Party, and an Indian affairs negotiator for the federal government. In the Canadian Alliance he worked on the Tom Long leadership campaign. He is a frequent commentator in the media.

Jack Hughes & Goldy Hyder

Any honest appraisal of the factors which led to the merger of the Canadian Alliance and the PC Party in 2003 must include an assessment of the role played by the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark. As PC leader from 1998 to 2003, Clark was a central figure in Canadian politics, and, as such, we cannot ignore or discount his contribution to the debate about the future of the conservative movement.

How one assesses Clark's role will be a matter of perspective. For a supporter of the former Reform Party or the Canadian Alliance, the conventional wisdom would be that Clark sought to frustrate all attempts to unite the right. For a supporter of the former PC Party, it could easily be argued that his efforts were actually, albeit perhaps ironically, integral to its ultimate success.

Without question, Clark was personally opposed to the various initiatives advanced by Manning and, later, by Day — just as he would ultimately oppose the merger negotiated by Harper and MacKay. But it would be both unfair and inaccurate to describe him, or his supporters, as being against any effort to unite the right.

Clark worked hard to bring conservatives together, but he believed that PC Party was the only viable vehicle through which to do so. To that end he worked tirelessly to safeguard and strengthen the PC Party during that crucial period. Had he not done so, the party could not have entered into the eventual merger with the CA as a full and equal partner.

The fact that it did was absolutely crucial. If progressive conservatives had felt they were a junior partner or, worse, a victim of a hostile takeover, few would have voted for the merger or supported the resulting Conservative Party. The fear that the PC Party would be overpowered by Reform or the CA was among the most important reasons why the right remained divided for so long.

That fear only grew when Jean Charest left Ottawa for Quebec City in the spring of 1998. Few believed that the leadership race to replace him would attract high-profile candidates, and many of the most prominent refused to run. Joe Clark's unexpected return to public life, only five years after leaving office, gave members hope and the party a measure of increased credibility with both the press and the public.

Clark worked hard to bring conservatives together, but he believed that PC Party was the only viable vehicle through which to do so. ... The fear that the PC Party would be overpowered by Reform or the CA was among the most important reasons why the right remained divided for so long.

Moreover, as the only person to have ever defeated both Preston Manning (1988) and Pierre Trudeau (1979), Clark had the perfect pedigree for a party engaged in a two-front war with the Liberals and Reform. He also retained a reputation for personal honesty and integrity that was both unmatched and untarnished by his more than twenty years in elected office.

Immediately after winning, Clark undertook

a punishing travel schedule designed to bolster and build an organization that was a shadow of what he had inherited from Bob Stanfield in 1976. He did not stop for more than a year. The results were clear: the PC Party's support rose in successive public opinion polls in those first twelve months. It was those early polls which allowed him to withstand outside pressures.

Despite these early signs of progress, and contrary to what his critics charged, Clark always remained a realist. When he was once asked whether the Tories under his leadership could defeat the Liberals in a single election, he dryly noted: "I'm Joe Clark, not Clark Kent."

Clark also knew that those same polls showed that the second choice for many of its supporters was the Liberal Party, not the Reform Party. To cite a tangible example of this fact, the four Members of Parliament who chose to leave the PC caucus between the 1997 and 2000 elections — Bill Matthews, André Harvey, Diane St. Jacques, and David Price — all crossed to the Liberal, not Reform, benches.

Clark's first mission and greatest challenge was therefore to keep his party together, even as his caucus and party members — not to mention voters — were being actively and aggressively courted by not one, but two, political adversaries. To do so, Clark needed to leverage his personal popularity, which consistently outpaced public support for the party he led, to retain old loyalists while attracting new converts.

This also meant declining overtures from both Reform and the Alliance. Some have suggested this was evidence of personal stubbornness or, worse, a betrayal of conservative principles. In fact, it was a vital component of a deliberate strategy. Far from trying to exclude Reform and Alliance supporters, he was determined to bring conservatives together, but in a different way.

Arguably the best evidence of this was the coalition caucus which Clark established when several high-profile MPs left the CA after the 2000 election in opposition to Day's leadership. The PC-DRC coalition, which included Deborah Grey, Chuck Strahl, Gary Lunn, and Jay Hill, worked closely together for almost eight months. The group was extremely effective at opposing the Liberal government in Parliament while developing conservative policies

that were mutually acceptable. Even though the coalition disbanded after Harper won the leadership of the CA, its legacy was to demonstrate that the two groups could work together and to dispel many of the myths that had prevented reconciliation.

When Clark announced that he would step down in the summer of 2002, he remained an enormously popular figure. More importantly, he left with his unparalleled personal integrity still intact. The PC Party had endured a series of trials in the preceding five years, but it had survived them, and by its continued existence defied critics who had said it was a spent force.

One final example of the party's resilience under Clark's leadership was the May 2003 by-election victory in Perth-Middlesex, a game-changer that convinced sceptics in the Alliance that the PC Party simply wouldn't die.

The merger was an idea whose time had come. But it would not have come to pass when and how it did if Clark had not preserved the PC Party and its brand during his tenure as leader.

Jack Hughes is a lawyer with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP and served as executive assistant to Joe Clark from November 1998 to November 1999. Goldy Hyder is senior vice president with Hill & Knowlton and served as chief of staff to Clark from 2000 to 2001. Both are active members of the Conservative Party.

Scott Reid MP

It is tempting to use rose-coloured glasses when reviewing the process that brought the two "legacy parties" together and created the new Conservative Party. But this version of things would not merely be inaccurate; it would remember things as being utterly different than they actually were.

The merger was the culmination of a series of attempts arising from the realization that neither party could simply wipe the other off the electoral map. The war of attrition that led to this realization was in turn, so it seems to me, the result of a series of missteps by the Reform Party and subsequently the Canadian Alliance, which was the more successful vote-gatherer and had the larger caucus throughout the 1993 to 2003

period. The Reform Party and its Canadian Alliance successor also had, by a wide margin, the larger membership.

This article will review the process by which Reform and then the CA frittered away its considerable advantages, forcing its final leader, Stephen Harper, to accept a merger with the PCs on whatever terms his opponent was prepared to demand. The PCs can hardly be said to have enjoyed stellar success in the grinding war between the rival parties, but on the whole (to

The war of attrition was the result of a series of missteps by the Reform Party and Canadian Alliance, which was the more successful vote-gatherer and had the larger caucus throughout 1993 to 2003 ... a process by which the party frittered away its considerable advantages, forcing a merger on whatever terms the PCs were prepared to demand.

switch metaphors) they did a much better job of playing the unfavourable hand that they had been dealt, with the result that they were able to dictate terms.

(The story of the 2003 merger negotiations, in which I was an active participant, deserve to be accurately recorded, but that is, as they say, a story for another day.)

The Reform Party was founded almost entirely by disenchanted PC members who felt that their old party had lost its way. So it is not surprising that on many issues, the two parties were very close. This was particularly the case after the elections of 1993 and especially 1997 had delivered nearly every seat in Ontario to Chrétien's Liberals, making it abundantly clear that the split on the right was the key to his ongoing partisan success. Both parties understood that, at least in principle, members who had been lured away from the PCs could be lured back, or alternatively, that further members could

be lured to follow. Thus, both parties made efforts to move towards the invisible point on the policy spectrum that could be regarded as being the ideological centre. The PCs, for example, re-wrote their party constitution to become much more populist in structure. For the first time, the party moved to direct election of the leader, as opposed to delegated conventions.

The PCs also moved to having a written policy statement voted on by delegates at party conventions. Prior to this, the party had had no written policy documents. This change was more important than it might sound at first; back in the 1980s, the lack of any rooted policy had been the primary reason why I lost interest in participating in the party. And in 1990, when I had briefly considered rejoining, I was repelled by the notion that I would be expected to defer to the ever-changing policy direction of the leader, rather than to a written set of principles. Given that this involved an expectation that I would support the Meech Lake Accord, I gave up in despair and left. Only later would I discover that, far from being a unique experience, this was typical of the process that caused individuals to migrate over to the Reform Party throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s.

If the changes made by the PCs in the post-1997 period were meaningful, the changes made by its rival were yet more dramatic. For starters, prior to 1999 there was no Canadian Alliance. The entire party was created *de novo* for the sole purpose of serving as a vehicle to unite the political right, after the 1997 election had definitively demonstrated that the Reform Party would not be able to simply supplant the PCs.

The process of reinventing the Reform Party was somewhat tortured and certainly very slow, consuming most of the time and an alarming percentage of the energy of the party during the two years that followed the 1997 federal election. As the Reform caucus' Senior Researcher at the time, I began to wonder if the internal renewal process that Preston Manning had initiated under the title "United Alternative" would have the effect of rendering our party incapable of actually being a stand-alone alternative to the Liberals. Many Reform MPs felt that the problem was not that the Reform Party was insufficiently attractive to PC voters, but rather that the wrong

person was at the head of the party. This led one frustrated Reform MP to print buttons that read, "Change the Leader, Not the Party." One of these buttons (perhaps the only one that still survives) is in my collection of political memorabilia at my constituency office.

The United Alternative eventually evolved into a plan for a new party, which was named the "Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance." The very name hinted at the temporary and tentative nature of the party, which would, by definition, be successful only if it attracted Progressive Conservatives. To better attract the political centrists who were assumed to be at the heart of the PCs, a party committee was struck with the task of watering down the party's policies. I found this process distasteful and refused to participate. Ultimately, the watering-down would prove to be a disaster, as much of the subtlety and many of the carefully-crafted mitigating words and phrases were removed in the process, leaving the party open to charges of having a more radical hidden agenda. This would do much to wound Stockwell Day in the 2000 election.

But I did participate in the committee that drafted the constitution for the Canadian Alliance. In this one respect, the party was an improvement over the Reform Party, which had had no mechanism for electing a new leader. By the time this committee started to meet I had moved to Australia, so I had to participate in teleconferences at very odd hours of the night. My attention focused almost entirely on the leadership selection process; direct election seemed the only way of ensuring that this would not be subject to the kind of manipulation and deal-making that makes such a mess of delegated leadership conventions.

At the same time that Reform was self-consciously transforming itself into a deliberately incomplete vehicle that would depend upon external approval (specifically, migration from the PC camp) for its legitimacy, the PCs were taking actions designed to frustrate this effort. Immediately following his election as leader in November 1998, Joe Clark set to work to establish that the PCs would be a permanent fixture on the Canadian right. Tasha Kheiriddin and Adam Daifallah

describe this well in their 2005 book, *Rescuing Canada's Right*:

All the while, Joe Clark and the federal PC brain trust tried relentlessly to trip up the UA process. The Tories ostracized members who advocated co-operation, and they endorsed a constitutional amendment at their October 1999 convention mandating PC Party candidates in all 301 ridings. The measure had no purpose other than to prevent non-aggression pacts between the two parties' riding associations. Clark even launched his own pallid attempt to end vote-splitting called the Canadian Alternative. In reality this was just a recruitment exercise for the Tories and, not surprisingly, it went nowhere.

Indeed, under Joe Clark, it was the PCs who were (or who ought to have been) heading nowhere. The party had risen to 20 seats in the 1997 election for the 36th Parliament, but it fell back to twelve

The watering-down in the United Alternative process would prove to be a disaster, as much of the subtlety and many of the carefully-crafted mitigating words and phrases were removed, leaving the party open to charges of having a more radical hidden agenda. This would do much to wound Stockwell Day in the 2000 election.

seats in the 37th Parliament and lost one-third of the popular vote it had won in 1997. According to an article published by Greg Weston four years later, even Clark's own win in Calgary Centre was suspect, as there may have been a vote-trading arrangement (of precisely the kind that Clark was trying to prevent, when the CA was involved) between PCs and Liberals in Calgary and in Liberal minister Anne McLellan's Edmonton riding. Whatever the merits of that particular rumour, twelve seats were just barely enough for the PCs to maintain party status in the House of Commons.

This was as promising a moment as any for the PCs to reject Clark's take-no-prisoners approach and to adopt the stance that Harper would later take: a deal at any price. But at this moment, forces within the CA loyal to Preston Manning rebelled against Stockwell Day's leadership, and the party split into two factions — one of which then joined in an independent alliance with the PCs.

A year later, the split in the CA would be healed by the arrival of Stephen Harper as party leader, but by then enough damage had been done that the anti-merger forces in the PCs were considerably reinforced. At its 2002 convention, which I attended as an official CA observer, the PCs re-adopted the "301 rule" precluding local cooperation. Clark was edged toward the exit, but the candidates to succeed him did not, for the most part, articulate clearly pro-merger positions.

Harper had devoted considerable effort at the 2002 CA convention to emphasizing that the party was "here to stay," but in May 2003 the PCs placed first and the CA placed third in an Ontario by-election. He gloomily predicted to me that this would lead to a self-fulfilling media narrative that the CA had lost its momentum and that the PCs were now the primary right-of-centre alternative to the Liberals. Under such circumstances, the PCs could win the media air war, countering the stronger CA ground game, and the war of attrition between the parties would grind on for at least another electoral cycle, ensuring the marginalization of both parties in the face of the Liberals under Paul Martin, whom we all assumed to be a nearly-unstoppable "juggernaut."

It was in this atmosphere that merger negotiations — possible at last with the departure of Joe Clark — commenced in the summer of 2003. In the coming months, Harper's willingness to concede all the ground on more or less every point in the negotiations was striking to those of us who were actually doing the negotiating.

But really, what is far more remarkable was the willingness of the CA membership to endorse a merger on such one-sided terms. Fully 96% of CA members endorsed a merger deal that consisted of adopting the Conservative name (minus the word "Progressive"), the entire PC policy declaration to the exclusion of every single CA policy, and a wildly undemocratic leadership

selection process designed to devalue the votes of CA members as much as possible.

Under these leadership selection rules, it is possible for a candidate to win the leadership with far less than half the votes, as long as his or her support is concentrated in ridings with few members. Given the highly uneven distribution of party members across the country in the immediate post-merger period, it seems obvious that if the former PCs had put forward a remotely credible candidate, rather than Belinda Stronach, that person would have defeated Stephen Harper in the subsequent leadership race, notwithstand-

Harper's willingness to concede all the ground on more or less every point in the negotiations was striking to those of us who were actually doing the negotiating. ... What is far more remarkable was the willingness of the Alliance membership to endorse a merger on such one-sided terms.

ing the fact that he was the preferred candidate of a strong majority of party members.

All of this was widely understood at the time. This means, of course, that this show of near-unanimity in favour of the merger was a reflection of the enormous confidence that the CA membership had in Stephen Harper. But — and this is the point — it was also a sign that the membership had completely lost the confidence that it had once had in the Canadian Alliance (and before that, of the Reform Party) as a vehicle for unilaterally gaining power. ✗

Scott Reid is the Conservative Member of Parliament for the Ontario riding of Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington. He was senior researcher for the Reform Party, an organizer and speech-writer for the Stockwell Day leadership campaign, and was elected to Parliament with the Canadian Alliance in 2000. He is the author of Canada Remapped and Lament for a Notion: The Life and Death of Canada's Bilingual Dream and was a lead negotiator of the party merger.

CONTENTIONS

How the English Invented the Scots

C.P. Champion

“When I find a Scotchman to whom an Englishman is as a Scotchman, that Scotchman shall be as an Englishman to me.” — Samuel Johnson

Mr. James Kerr, Keeper of the Records: “Half our nation was bribed by English money.”

Johnson: “Sir, that is no defence: that makes you worse!”

How the Scots Invented Canada. Ken McGoogan. HarperCollins, 2010.

A Fleeting Empire: Early Stuart Britain and the Merchant Adventurers to Canada. Andrew D. Nicholls. McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010.

The Invention of Scotland: Myth and History. Hugh Trevor-Roper. Yale University Press, 2008.

How the Scots Invented the Modern World. Arthur Herman. Random House, 2001.

The Scots rank among history’s great self-mythologizers, mostly at the expense of the English. Much of the bluster is quite tolerable. The vainglorious “here’s tae us” refrain, to which the rest of us are subjected, is almost endearing. Yet the mighty Scot is now credited not only with devising golf, bagpipes, whisky, curling, and haggis but with “inventing the modern world” and “creating” or “inventing” Canada. Ken McGoogan’s *How the Scots Invented Canada* is not the first iteration. In 2003, Matthew Shaw wrote *Great Scots: How the Scots Created Canada*. This was followed by an academic collection under the more temporizing title, *Kingdom*

of the Mind: How the Scots Helped Make Canada in 2006, the same year as Paul Cowan’s *How the Scots Created Canada*.

The obvious, belaboured role played by Scots in shaping Canada is really a facet of their wider role as empire-builders. They not only scaled the Heights of Abraham for General Wolfe, but laid siege to Bangalore, Saringapatam, and Pondicherry before charging the gates. Despite McGoogan’s ten pages devoted to William Lyon Mackenzie as an ostensible “maker of 1867” (a curious anachronism), Mackenzie was not the only Scot in the 1837 rebellions. Scots did their part to *suppress* the rebels too: at least one Montreal volunteer regiment wore tartan stripes on their trousers. According to a fellow Scot, Robert Sellar of the Huntingdon *Gleaner* (overlooked by McGoogan), “It is safe to say that had Lyon McKenzie been a resident of Montreal instead of Toronto, he would have shouldered a musket to put down rebellion instead of leading one.”*

Few would dare deny that Scots invented their share of machines and techniques, that they braved oceans, rivers, and wastelands, and turned vast colonies into loyal and prosperous federations. What these authors are less keen to say, presumably because it would sell fewer books, is that Scots did all these things in ardent (and self-enriching) service of the larger British project; hence the title of Tom Devine’s *Scotland’s Empire 1600-1815*, published in 2003. When, as Herman notes, Scots produced an

* Robert Sellar, *The History of Huntingdon, Chateauguay and Beauharnois from Their First Settlement to the Year 1838* (1888), p. 502. Thanks to Phyllis Reeve for the quotation.

ambitious English-language encyclopedia they did not call it “Caledonica” but *Britannica*, a detail Herman omits.

Even so, the ingenious Scot manages to shift any blame for the sins of conquest and empire onto the shoulders of Englishmen, all the while assuming the air of victim of primordial highland spoliation. What gave the much-abused English his due? After all, for every Scottish inventor, there was at least one English pioneer: James Watt’s path was blazed by English steam-engine inventor Thomas Newcomen (or by another Englishman, Thomas Savery, as McGoo-gan observes), and so on.

The intertwined history of Scots and English suggests that if misery can make for strange bed-fellows, so too can shared interests. This dates back at least as far as the middle ages, brought to the masses by the “great big steaming haggis of lies” that was Mel Gibson’s “Braveheart,” as a *Guardian* reviewer described the film in 2008. When Scottish armies defeated Charles I in 1640 in what turned out to be a prelude to the English Civil War (the one that ended with the king losing his head in 1649), the king’s enemies — both English and Scots — joined in celebration: “We must now stand or fall together,” declared the Treaty of Ripon, for “We are Brethren.” Once the civil war had played out, however, Cromwell’s English republic proved to be no friend to Scots.

The formal Union in 1707 (whence the United Kingdom) under Queen Anne, a Stuart and a niece of Charles II, imposed a practical *modus vivendi*. Lowland Scots had long since transformed themselves into collaborators, Samuel Johnson’s “crafty, designing people, eagerly attentive to their own interests.” But whatever the benefits, many Scots mourned the loss of independence: “As for the embodying of Scotland by England,” lamented one, “it will be as when a poor bird is embodied in the hawk that hath eaten it up.”

But while the Union ended independence, and doomed the ancient highland culture and the Jacobite cause, it did not destroy Scottish identity. It might not even be too much to suggest that for all its subordination and subordination, the impact of English rule in fact *generated* much of the Scottish identity that we know today. Herman admits as much on page 119: “Far from leading educated Scots to abandon

or forget their Scottish identity, Anglicization seems to have encouraged them to keep it alive and intact.”

Since Britain’s empire was also Canada’s, it is no surprise that confederation in 1867 was a high-water mark of Scots influence, with Scots predominating among the founding fathers in Canada’s transcontinental enterprise, supported and financed by London. What’s odd — and typical of missing the British forest for the Scottish trees — is that McGoo-gan has written a 400-page book without much to say about this collaborative reality. The “How the Scots did such and such” genre is lucrative because readers seem to crave being told they did it all on their own. But if the Scots invented Canada, they did so in a kind of junior partnership with the English. And we should not lose sight of the prerequisite: that the English had invented the Scots.

As with the parade of inventors, for every Scottish trader, soldier, and settler who followed the path to America there had already been a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century English adventurer blazing the trail — a Raleigh, Guy, or Gilbert; a Falkland or Calvert. Even the Cabots were English by adoption, men of Bristol hired by local merchants. English trailblazing shines through the Scotch mist in Andrew D. Nicholls’s *A Fleeting Empire: Early Stuart Britain and the Merchant Adventurers to Canada*.

Nicholls charts Anglo-Scottish cooperation under King James VI and I, the first to rule both kingdoms as King of Great Britain, and under his son Charles I. The collective security of the British Isles and the subjugation of Ireland by Anglo-Scots Protestants provided two sources of unity under royal patronage. “Opening up English overseas ventures to Scottish investors and participants marked a third way of encouraging greater co-operation,” Nicholls writes. Sir William Alexander, planter of New Scotland in 1621 as a complement to New England, sought to “forestall further French ambitions” in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In turn Lewis, David, and Thomas Kirke’s quasi-piratical English syndicate was chartered by Charles I in 1627 as the Merchant Adventurers to Canada; they achieved the first (temporary) conquest of Quebec in 1629.

Nicholls criticizes the whiggish tendency of

historians to narrate events in light of how they ultimately turned out, portraying seventeenth-century conflicts as merely “foreshadowing” the emergence of today’s nation states. This teleology reduces the Kirke brothers and their adventurous contemporaries to the role of fore-runners. Nicholls concludes that British ascendancy over the French in America might have come a century earlier had Charles I seen fit to hold and build on the gains made during his father’s reign. He does not mention the obvious what-if scenario, namely: had English control of Quebec been secured by the 1640s, before most French settlement took place, it is hard to imagine there would be a French-speaking province in Canada today.

Later, as Scots lowlanders prosper in the emerging British isles, the north presents a tragic foil: rebellion in the highlands between 1715 and 1745 threatened the integrity of the Union. The “barbarous” old society would be uprooted, the clans dispersed, hereditary lines broken or coopted. The Gaelic tongue was suppressed, the tartan and the philibeg banned for civilian use by the 1746 Dress Act until 1782.

Yet what was this tartan philibeg? Even in the midst of destruction, England’s impact was inventive. It is now better understood that what highland Scots typically wore previously was not the characteristic outfit that so many Canadian regiments wear today. More likely it was similar to what one Scottish minister described seeing on Jacobite soldiers in 1715, a long homespun tunic of one colour, draped over one shoulder, enrobing the wearer below the knee, and belted at the waist. Other sources depict more than one colour.

It has been forty years since an iconoclastic English historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper, revealed the fraud of “the ancient traditions of Scotland” in a chapter in a 1983 collection edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*. The short kilt worn round the waist, Trevor-Roper concluded, the epitome of Scottish habiliment, was invented by an English Quaker. When industrialist Thomas Rawlinson

set up his iron works in Scotland in the 1720s, he found his highland labourers encumbered by their traditional “plaid,” the toga-like “great kilt.” Rawlinson proposed separating the lower part to give his labourers greater freedom of movement — and thus the kilt was born.

Whether Trevor-Roper was correct in every detail or not, England’s tartan ban did not apply to soldiers. About the same time kilts made their first appearance, in 1725 the British army began recruiting men from the highlands, forming the first highland regiment in 1740, the Black Watch. Unlike civilians these embryonic regiments were permitted to wear highland dress. This meant, at first, the full-body cloak

or belted plaid, which in time gave way to the more practical kilt. Whoever invented the short kilt, it is the (English) army’s innovation of highland regiments that perpetuated and popularized it.

Many of the tartan patterns and colours that we know today, as Trevor-Roper documented, were the ad hoc creation of a Bannockburn-based company, William Wilson & Son, which assigned “certified” patterns to various clan chiefs in preparation for the Royal Visit of 1822. That event seems to have played a larger role in the fabrication of “traditional highland dress” than any other. Descending upon Edinburgh the King himself, George IV, was got up in sash, kilt and sporran, large plumed Tam-o’-shanter, and tartan hose (argyle socks). It was for this occasion that Sir Walter Scott was enlisted to recruit highland chiefs and to “bring half-a-dozen or half-a-score of clansmen.” He urged them to dress the part, to make a colourful impression, for “Highlanders are what [the King] will best like to see,” as Trevor-Roper recounts in *The Invention of Scotland*, an expanded version of his earlier work, published in 2003 after his death.

Apart from the few people who actively dislike them, most would agree that the pipes, drums, and other paraphernalia are a brilliant and enduring creation. As Trevor-Roper noted, while some twentieth-century folk revivals manifested themselves as murderous ideologies (such as the German *Herrenvolk*), by contrast

The “How the Scots did such and such” genre is lucrative because readers seem to crave being told they did it all on their own.

Britain's Irish, Scots, and Welsh folk legends were domesticated into innocent ritual. Thus the invention of the Scot is a largely benevolent English achievement.

More to the point is the integral role played by Scots in promoting the larger British civilization to the detriment of its rivals. As Niall Ferguson, an Atlantic-leaping Scot, put it in his 2003 apologia, *Empire*: in an imperial context "Scotland's surplus entrepreneurs and engineers, medics and musketeers could deploy their skills and energies ever further afield in the service of English capital and under the protection of England's navy." By the 1750s only one-tenth of the British population lived in Scotland, but Scots accounted for half the agents of the East India company; nearly half the directors' clerks in Bengal; half the free merchants, half the surgeon recruits. Warren Hastings, England's proconsul, called the staff his "Scotch Guardians."

Ferguson cites Scots' greater willingness to try their luck abroad. McGoogan goes further, claiming Scots were "more egalitarian, flexible and pragmatic than the English" towards Indians and French Canadians – a claim embellished by John Ivison in the *National Post* as "a cultural intermingling that laid the foundation for Canadian diversity. That mindset resulted from the liberal ideals of the Scottish Enlightenment." And yet something else was in play: an English genius for deploying others' individual and collective self-interest and professional pride in Her Majesty's greater service.

A popularizer like Simon Schama could refer to the Union as a "hostile merger." But what began as a takeover "would end in a full partnership in the most powerful going concern in the world." If the Scots invented the modern world, they did so within the political, military, economic, and intellectual structure of England's empire. What is at issue is not so much Scots "beat[ing] the English at their own game," as Herman puts it. If Scots were able to transcend their remote parochialism and go on to re-found Canada and much else, it was because, ironically perhaps, they were given a platform and a *raison d'être* by the English. In short, if the Scots invented the modern world, it was because the English had already invented the Scots. ✎

FILM

'In here, it's better if we're equals'

Bruce Patterson

"The King's Speech." Directed by Tom Hooper, starring Colin Firth, Geoffrey Rush, and Helena Bonham-Carter.

Any film based on a historical subject mixes fact and fiction to a greater or lesser extent: timelines need to be adjusted, focus has to be brought on some individuals and not on others, and events themselves have to be created. This is certainly true of "The King's Speech," the spectacularly successful 2010 film that examines the relationship between King George VI (the Duke of York in the early part of the film) and the speech therapist Lionel Logue.

Judging such historical films are two groups of viewers with very different criteria. History buffs will assess how successfully the film conveys the essence of the subject matter, and how honest the treatment is. There is also, of course, curiosity about how the film depicts familiar figures and events.

The other group is the movie-going public with little knowledge of the period being dramatized, and they are, as H.W. Fowler would say, "the vast majority, & are a happy folk, to be envied by most of the minority classes." They seek entertainment, a well-told story and compelling performances.

The success of "The King's Speech" as a movie is very evident: it has received solid reviews, many awards (including the Oscar for Best

Bruce Patterson is Saint-Laurent Herald and Registrar of the Canadian Heraldic Authority in the Office of the Governor General. He was formerly a director at both the National and Toronto Branch levels of the Heraldry Society of Canada. A graduate of Trinity College and a former teacher, from 1994 to 2000 he edited the Toronto publication Hogtown Heraldry.

Picture), a gross of close to \$400 million, and an enthusiastic response from the public, including in the United States, where mid-twentieth century English history would otherwise have a limited audience.

Screenwriter David Seidler claims that he and director Tom Hooper attempted to be as historically accurate as possible, a strange boast in light of the many liberties they took, some justified for the sake of telling the story, others unnecessary or just odd. Among a number of historians, Andrew Roberts has given an excellent overview of these inaccuracies, most of which I largely will not restate, although some are quite revealing of what the film-makers thought would make an appealing movie.

"The King's Speech" is, not surprisingly, a 2010 treatment of events that took place in a very different era, made accessible to modern audiences not only by the alteration of events and situations (most notably in the seeming ubiquity of Winston Churchill), but also in the way it adheres to current preoccupations about class conflict and the undesirability of emotional restraint. The tension that is created between the Duke and the aggressively egalitarian Lionel Logue — evident in his insistence on addressing the Duke as "Bertie," which Logue's grandson and many historians insist was certainly not the case — can be justified for the sake of the drama; however, the film's reliance on this fabricated conflict and the facile psychological explanations linking the King's stammer to his relationship to his father and older brother, do limit its usefulness as a reliable portrayal of its time.

To be sure, George VI makes an odd subject for Dianafication, but it is evident that such a narrative proved too tempting to the film-makers: yes, he's of the Royal Family, but he's also a victim of its system, struggling against the pomposity and self-interest of the establishment (represented most notably by the sinister figure of the Archbishop of Canterbury), as well as a repressive family environment that has always stifled him and isolated him from the public. Even the sympathetic figure of the Duchess of York is a prisoner of such emotional limitations when

she informs Logue early on that "We don't talk about our private lives."

Geoffrey Rush's Lionel Logue, on the other hand, is a down-to-earth outsider who is not afraid of putting the powerful in their place, for they are class-obsessed bullies who sneer at his Australian origins. Even the Duke of York lashes out at him as a "jumped-up jackaroo from the outback. A nobody," something Andrew Roberts notes the real person would never have uttered. Of course, the cliché of English condescension to the dominions has long been a staple of the popular narrative about the first world war, as is abundantly clear in the recent Canadian film "Passchendaele."

*The cliché
of English
condescension
to the dominions
has long been
a staple of
the popular
narrative about
the first world
war.*

Does this populist take on the English class system extend to the monarchy itself? Although hardly an examination of the role and responsibilities of a constitutional monarchy, the film does at least touch on several important issues for the monarchy in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. First is the idea that even though political power is no longer exercised by the Crown, the Sovereign has a vital role to play in bringing the country of empire together, shown to great (some might even say excessive) effect in the film's climactic scene of the actual speech, an address to the Empire as it prepares for war. This scene of the King reading his script with the assistance of Logue is intercut with shots of Britons from all walks of life listening intently.

The fact that the King makes a radio broadcast indicates that a monarchy needs to adapt, however cautiously, to the changing realities of its society. In a short but vital scene, Michael Gambon's King George V admonishes his son the radio is an invention that the Royal Family must accept and master.

As for the limits to the powers of a constitutional monarch, at one point the audience is treated to a frustrated George VI crying out "I'm a king; where's my power?" as if the King had grown up with misapprehensions about the English constitution. Strangely enough, the film manages to deprive him of powers he actually possessed, such as in the curiously

imagined scene of Stanley Baldwin resigning as prime minister (over his misreading of Hitler, apparently), during which he matter-of-factly informs the King that Chamberlain would be the next prime minister.

There is a fondness in the way the monarchy is shown in the film, especially in its affectionate depiction of George VI and Elizabeth (and their young daughters), who are contrasted to the dangerously deluded Edward VIII and the deliciously and comically overdrawn Mrs. Simpson. At the same time, there is a tone of irreverence which can sometimes be genuinely amusing, and at other times predictable and even tiresome.

Much of the success of the film hinges on the performances of its three principals. I am not sure that I ever quite accepted the idea of Colin Firth as George VI, but I cannot deny that he does an admirable and moving job of conveying the character's vulnerability, frustrations and agonies. Geoffrey Rush demonstrates a good-humoured and madcap confidence in what he does, but he too is shown to be vulnerable when he is rejected by those whose acceptance he seeks. Helena Bonham-Carter's task was particularly challenging, as her character would have been familiar to many watching the film. She hits all the right notes, though, capturing Elizabeth's warmth, humour and poise.

Although a historical subject, in the end, "The King's Speech" is really a film about friendship and about overcoming obstacles, and it is certainly one of the better examples of this "triumph of the human spirit" narrative. The great events that surround it are ultimately secondary to the more intimate drama. The fact that the King confronted his problem certainly aided him in his duty, and the monarchy benefitted from what he achieved by putting his trust in Lionel Logue; however, the story is not quite "how one man saved the British Monarchy," as the recent companion book on Lionel Logue ludicrously claims. Bringing a nation together at a critical time through the media is an important aspect of modern monarchy, yet the fact that the Royal Family stayed in London during the Blitz was surely worth dozens of speeches. The strength of "The King's Speech" is that it is an engagingly told story of a notable personal drama, a drama that took place at a significant juncture in modern history. ✕

NOTES & TOPICS

Will Spain Exhume the Caudillo?

"We have made mistakes," Spain's Socialist prime minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, said on April 2, announcing he will not run for a third term next year. With unemployment at 21% and the prospect of a massive conservative resurgence at the polls, Zapatero is cutting his losses. Yet some outsiders dismiss five million unemployed as a footnote, compared to Zapatero's record in reopening the historical ledger on the civil war of 1936-39, and in tearing down the last remaining statues, plaques, and street signs bearing the name of the former dictator, Francisco Franco. "When the arcane details of his government's economic policies have long since been forgotten," says the *Irish Independent* (without irony), "Zapatero's success in helping his countrymen come to terms with their bloody past will almost certainly prove to be his outstanding achievement."¹

There are Spaniards who believe the scars were already healing when the Socialists took power in 2004 — and that reopening the wounds was a mistake. Zapatero judged otherwise. He and Baltasar Garzón, the prominent leftist judge, offered closure to aggrieved families of anarchists and communists killed in the war or executed in its aftermath. They dug up mass graves with much media fanfare. In 2007 Zapatero passed the Law of Historical Memory to redress what the left saw as decades of institutionalized approval of the Franco regime.

Centre-right opinion thought Zapatero's approach savoured more of political opportunism, catering to the far left's desire for vengeance — to re-fight a war lost generations ago. Perhaps, wrote one conservative columnist, if the government had limited itself "to finding and giving proper burial to ancestors on one side or another, all citizens would have understood. But they have gone much further."² They seem to want not only to rebury the dead but to deny the Francoist past altogether.

One of the Socialists' targets remains the Valley of the Fallen, the grandiose mausoleum near

Madrid, dedicated to the dead of both sides of the war. Leftists have always hated it, constructed as it was in part by convict labour that included partisans of the defeated Republic — and because Franco was later entombed there. “I want what was in reality something like a Nazi concentration camp to stop being a nostalgic place of pilgrimage for Francoists,” Senator Jaime Bosch told *The Times* in 2004.

Zapatero promised in 2007 to transform it into a “centre of memory and reconciliation.” Political rallies were banned. In 2009 the doors were closed to visitors on the pretext of much-needed repairs. Those who entered to pray were handed leaflets reminding them that their presence was permitted “for religious purposes only.” In 2010 the resident monks who offer Mass daily were obliged to worship outside: three thousand people attended. The doors have since been unlocked.

Leftists are generally pleased. “Old wounds have been reopened,” wrote *The Guardian* in March 2011: in one village, “a trio of elderly women broke into pro-Franco songs as the bones of long-dead, but still-hated, republicans were lowered into the ground.” But outsiders seldom ask *why*. Since Franco was obviously a fascist, they say, why would it matter what provoked the coup of 1936 — namely, militant unionism, anarchist triumphalism, strikes, state restrictions on religious practice; “barricades ... anti-clerical disturbances and church burnings,” as pro-Republic historian Paul Preston put it. The Socialists’ push for “truth” overlooks the outrage felt by Spaniards between 1931 and 1936 at the Republic’s legislated suppression of public religious expression, closure of Catholic schools and prohibition of religious instruction, fines for criticizing government policy, dissolution of religious orders, forfeiture of church property — all in the name of “public health” and the “march of history.”

The judgment of history is sometimes forgiving, as Jan Morris wrote of Preston’s 787-page biography of the Caudillo:

It may well be that posterity will be more forgiving of Franco. He was an unpleasant little man, his motives were unlovely and hundreds of thousands of people suffered from his policies. History may conclude, all the same, that it worked. Having escaped the miseries of world war (of Stalinism, too), Spain has successfully rejoined

the rest of us, and caught up. The monarchy is back. Democracy seems to be thriving. The Spaniards moderately prosper. The civil war is just a memory for old people in chimney-corners.³

That held true until Zapatero took office. The hard left say they will not be satisfied until Franco’s body is exhumed and returned “to the family.” Some want the basilica church and giant cross destroyed by “controlled blasting.” When the last public statue of Franco in Madrid was jackhammered down at two a.m. one night in 2005 on “secret orders” (without notifying the mayor and council), the government promised to replace it with “a monument to concord between Spaniards.” But new monuments on such terms, or a supposedly “neutral” cross-free Valley of the Fallen, convey not “reconciliation” but something approximating the militant leftism of 1931.

Zapatero wants to close this “turbulent chapter” before relinquishing power, says *La Vanguardia* (April 5). His left flank doubts his sincerity. Judge Garzón was suspended in May 2010 for overstepping his authority. The moderate centre-right People’s Party, courting Catholic support, has drawn a line at state infringement of religious freedom. “In any case, the Benedictine community would not accept restriction, limitation or ban on the free organization of worship,” the monastery’s abbot told the conservative *ABC* newspaper (18 November 2010).

Now that the Socialists’ end is nigh, some left-wing columnists appear to be getting desperate. Antonio Pérez Omister of the *Diario Siglo XXI* likened the People’s Party leader, Mariano Rajoy, a moderate conservative, to Franco: “Rajoy wants nothing more than to ... ‘get the country back on track.’ Franco said something similar in his speeches.”⁴ Given the left’s hyperbole — and apparent desire to win the civil war and overthrow the dictator retroactively — it’s small wonder the Caudillo’s ghost refuses to fade away. ∅

1. “Spanish inquisition looms” *Irish Independent*, 9 April 2011.
2. Manuel Ramirez, *ABC*, 21 December 2010.
3. “Visionary dreams of a vindictive sneak,” *The Independent*, 20 November 1993.
4. Antonio Pérez Omister, “El silencio de los corderos,” *Diario Siglo XXI*, 28 April 2011.

AUTHORS

Barbara Kay (“Norman Podhoretz’s Achievement”) writes a weekly column for the *National Post* and was editor-in-chief of *FirstFruits*, an annual anthology of writing by Montreal secondary students. She has degrees from the University of Toronto and McGill, where she was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, and taught English Literature and Composition for twenty-six years at Concordia University and several Montreal Cégeps. She was a contributor to and served on the board of *Cité Libre*.

Phyllis Reeve (“The Classicist and the Cavalier”) was born in Fiji and nurtured in Quebec, and has lived in British Columbia since 1962, excluding 1967-8 in California where she was brainwashed by Pacifica Radio. A graduate of Bishop’s University and UBC, she is the author of three books of personal and institutional history, and essays and reviews on local history, the book arts, and the politics of Gabriola Island; and a co-editor of *Witness to Wilderness: the Clayoquot Sound Anthology*. She is a director and curator of the web-based Islands Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies and a member of the Alcuin Society. Formerly a Red Tory, she now votes Green.

Samuel Pyeatt Menefee (“Loyalists Through Two Wars”) is a senior associate of the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia, and Maury Fellow of the Center for Oceans Law and Policy. He is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute (FRAI), the Royal Geographic Society (FRGS), the Royal Asiatic Society (FRAS), and the Society of Antiquaries (FSA [Scot.]). He is the author or editor of four books including *Trends in Maritime Violence* (Jane’s Special Reports) and over 130 scholarly articles. While unabashedly American, Menefee, a former Rhodes Scholar and a graduate of Yale, Oxford, Harvard, Cambridge, and the University of Virginia, served as Chairman of the Tory Party in the Yale Political Union.

Damien-Claude Bélanger (“In Search of Quebec Conservatives”) is an assistant professor of history at the University of Ottawa. A graduate of the Université de Montréal, he has a Ph.D. from McGill University. He is the author of *Prejudice and Pride: Canadian Intellectuals Confront the United States,*

1891-1945 (University of Toronto Press, 2011.) His areas of interest include Quebec intellectual history and Canadian-American relations.

Harry Gelber (“The Long Search for Australian Identity”) is emeritus professor of political science at the University of Tasmania. He has been visiting professor at Harvard, Yale, Boston University and the London School of Economics, and his most recent book is *The Dragon and the Foreign Devils: China and the World, 1100 to the Present* (Bloomsbury). A longer version of his article appeared in the November 2010 issue of *Quadrant*.

Soharn Randy Boyagoda (“Graphic Novels and the Burdens of Enjoyment”) is Professor of American Studies at Ryerson University and the author of two novels, *Governor of the Northern Province* (Penguin Canada, 2006) and *Beggar’s Feast* (Penguin Canada, 2011), which is set in Sri Lanka, from which his parents immigrated to Canada in 1967. He has written for *The Walrus*, *Globe and Mail*, and *National Post*. He is writing a biography of Richard John Neuhaus, which will be published by Random House (US).

Gary A. Mouser (“The Rifle in American History”) is professor emeritus at the Faculty of Business Administration and the Institute for Urban Canadian Research Studies at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby. He has a Ph.D. from the University of California at Irvine. For the past 15 years, he has researched and spoken in New Zealand, Australia, Great Britain, and in North America on the politics of gun control, the effectiveness of gun control laws, and the use of firearms in self-defence. He is a member of the Firearms Advisory Committee for the Minister of Public Safety, and of the B.C. Wildlife Federation.

John Robson (“Don’t Mess with Parliament”) is a columnist, commentator with Sun Media and CFRA, and invited professor of history at the University of Ottawa. He has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Texas and has taught at UBC and the University of Calgary. He was a policy analyst at the Fraser Institute, a researcher with the Reform Party, and an editor at the *Ottawa Citizen*. From 2006 to 2010 he was a policy analyst with Breakout Educational Network and afterwards managing editor at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.



Subscribe and Win!

Full contest details online at CanadasHistory.ca



Enjoy a trip for two aboard the Ontario Northland's **Northlander** and **VIA Rail's Sudbury-White River** trains.

Experience the fall colours and historic attractions of Northern Ontario.

Your getaway package includes:

- Return air transportation for two to Toronto (some conditions apply)
- 5 day, 4 night roundtrip rail tour from Toronto
- Daytime rail trips and hotel accommodations every night
- Trip highlights include: Dionne Quintuplet museum, Dynamic Earth historic Nickel Mine Tour, Northern Ontario Railway Museum, Chapleau Museum, and more
- See pristine parts of the Canadian Shield from the Rail Diesel Car remote rail service and experience "A Bear Named Winnie", a live presentation on the same platform in White River where this now famous bear cub was first adopted.

A prize package valued over \$3000.00.

Every subscription order is automatically entered to win*



CANADA'S
HISTORY
TRAVELS

* Sign up for, renew, or purchase a gift subscription of Canada's History. Subscribe online at CanadasHistory.ca or by phone toll-free 1-888-816-0997. You will automatically be entered to win this once-in-a-lifetime trip for each subscription purchased. For full contest details, visit CanadasHistory.ca. No purchase necessary to enter. Entries must be received by August 15, 2011.



more entertainment

more opinions

more politics

more culture

more international news

more stories

MACMORE

More coverage, more insight, more content.

More reasons to subscribe.

Now available on your iPad.

www.macleans.ca

MACLEAN'S

Make sense of it all.

