Book Review

Fact and Meaning: Quine and Wittgenstein on Philosophy of Language. By Jane Heal. Basil Blackwell, 1989, £40.

'Every ism becomes a wasm'. This adage is unfortunately untrue. 'Isms' wax and wane, but few of them permanently lose their charms. At present we are enjoying or deploring a spate of works on realism and anti-realism, with much unclarity and variability in the use of these and kindred terms: behaviourism, constructivism, holism, conventionalism, platonism, instrumentalism, relativism, fallibilism, pragmatism, quietism, physicalism, naturalism. Dr Jane Heal, now a Fellow and Director of Studies in Philosophy in the College, has made a brave and admirably effective bid to set the house in order. The promise of a work of this nature and power was implicit in one of her earliest publications, an article in *Mind* on the meaning or meanings of the phrase 'theory of meaning'.

The new work, like its precursor, is professional in all the best senses, and hence runs the risk of being professional in one or two less agreeable senses. The jargon of current philosophy of language and of mind is not pretty, and there is no way of doing justice to it, and ensuring that justice is manifestly seen to be done, that does not involve complicity in its vocabulary.

The book is called *Fact and Meaning,* but might equally fairly have been called *Wittgenstein and Quine,* since it is by comparison and contrast between these philosophers that Dr Heal elucidates and answers the question whether we may be 'realists about meaning', i.e. whether, when there is disagreement about what, if anything, is meant by a certain person's utterance, there is any 'fact of the matter', whether there are determinate rights and wrongs. The exposition of Quine and Wittgenstein is patient, exact, fair-minded. It is only after more than two hundred pages of it that anything like a firm answer is offered, and the upshot when it comes is seen to lean to Wittgenstein's side:

> Wittgenstein's interlocutor at one point asks 'But if you are certain, isn't it that you are shutting your eyes in the face of doubt?' And Wittgenstein replies 'They are shut'. My contention, to put it provocatively, is that, with Wittgenstein, we should keep our eyes shut. To vindicate our realism . . . we do not have to deny that meaning ascriptions are answerable to placement in a coherent pattern or to show the existence of some strategy for discerning patterns which yields a guarantee that utterances fit together in only one way. The mistake rather is in the sceptical conclusion that is drawn from these observations about the holistic nature of the concept of meaning. To avoid the sceptical upshot all we have to do is keep our eyes shut, to ignore the possibility of alternative interpretation which the sceptic thrusts at us. And we are not to be criticized for so doing.

Dr Heal rightly observes that sceptics and their sympathisers will find this paragraph quite outrageous – 'a blatant example of the advantages of theft over honest toil' – but she and Wittgenstein are not stating dogmatic conclusions but offering careful and subtle arguments for a position, one towards which Wittgenstein was aspiring when he said that what is difficult is to retain realism without lapsing into empiricism. He thus emerges not as a sceptic about ascriptions of meaning but as the most persuasive and effective respondent to such a scepticism. The story is told with clarity, much of it through carefully chosen or constructed examples and analogies, notably the 'Mona Lisa Mosaic':

> Imagine that I am set down before a certain scene – a woman, Lisa, sitting in front of a landscape. I am supplied with a large flat tray and a box of little chunks of glass, ceramic, stone, etc. of various sizes and colours. The task I set myself is to produce in mosaic a recognizable picture of the scene. One constraint on the enterprise is that I must use, if at all possible, all of the pieces I am supplied with; I must not throw out a large proportion in order to leave myself with a handy set. Another constraint is that I must not myself manufacture pieces to fill in inconvenient gaps. I am given no guarantee that the pieces are peculiarly suitable for the job – my task is not like that of doing a jigsaw. I do not lay down in advance what size the final picture is to be, nor do I demand that I should depict the scene from the viewpoint I currently occupy or that I should use any particular style of representation. Moreover the business is open-ended, since from time to time I may be supplied with new batches of pieces which also must be used.

The analogy proves its value as a vehicle for the discussion of Dr Heal's primary themes, one that makes an emphatic contribution to the eliciting of the conclusions summarised in the last section of the last chapter under the heading 'Facts about Meaning'.

It will be evident that the book has much to teach about Wittgenstein and Quine as well as about meaning and realism. By expressing Wittgenstein's arguments and conclusions in a style and language

closer to Quine's than to that of Wittgenstein himself Dr Heal will probably induce some philosophers, who might not otherwise have done so, to appreciate the valuable relation of his 'remarks' and examples to the highly theoretical enterprise in which Quine and numerous other analytical philosophers are engaged. Dr Heal demonstrates – if demonstration continues to be needed – that Wittgenstein's thoughts can be captured in styles of argument substantially different from those he preached and largely practised. He himself failed adequately to recognise the extent to which it is possible to transpose his thoughts into the theoretical idiom that he repudiates in his famous remark that philosophers should offer only descriptions, not theories or doctrines or opinions or explanations.

Dr Heal's book is too closely packed with matter to make possible a crisp and accurate summary in a short review. It is a work likely to be found difficult by readers with little or no philosophical experience, but it amply deserves the accolades it has received from some of the severest critics in the trade. It will for many years to come continue to make its contribution to a debate that still has much life left in it.

R.B.

Book Reviews

The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby. By Michael Jones and Malcolm Underwood. Pp. xv + 322. Cambridge University Press 1992.

Although it was as the King's Mother that Lady Margaret made her mark on English history, in the pages of this journal we do well to remember – in proper filial piety – that she also numbered among her children the Colleges that she founded. John Fisher, her right-hand man and spiritual director, alluded to the grief at her death shown by students at the universities, 'to whom she was as a mother'. And in his statutes for his personal sub-foundation within St John's College, the four fellows supported by it were enjoined to pray not only for his soul but for hers, because he owed as much to her as to his own mother. The appearance of a new biography of our foundress must therefore be a cause for satisfaction, doubly so when it proceeds in large part from the pen of a member of the College, and even more when it is such a fine and finely produced book. Malcolm Underwood, the College Archivist since 1974, has joined forces with Michael Jones, now a master at Winchester College, to provide us with what we can safely assume is the definitive biography, at once comprehensive and critical. To the well-known literary sources for Lady Margaret's life (such as John Fisher's memorial sermon) they have added a wide knowledge of the fifteenth-century politics which provide the context for her astonishing career, and a subtle and skilful exploitation of her household accounts and papers. Thanks to the two new dimensions which they have recovered from these materials, they have fleshed out the traditional sketch of a royal saint into the fully rounded portrait of a fascinating person. Joint authorship is often a problematic enterprise, especially in a genre as personal as biography. But the approaches of Underwood as a social historian and of Jones as a political historian complement each other neatly, and the two authors have achieved complete agreement in their assessment of Lady Margaret's career and character. While it remains possible to guess from the chapter headings the broad division of labour between the two authors, and perhaps to distinguish the tauter and more clipped style of Jones from the more leisured and reflective prose of Underwood, the book remains clear and readable throughout. There is none of the sense of hiatus or of confusion which dogs so many co-operative ventures of this kind.

Jones and Underwood are particularly successful in showing how the matrimonial career and consequent family connections of Lady

Margaret tie in with the tangled dynastic and factional politics of the later fifteenth century. They unravel the motivation of Edmund Tudor, her first husband, in making his wife pregnant at the early age of thirteen years. Like aristocratic marriage itself in that century, it boiled down to a question of land. Under the law of the time, once a wife became pregnant, her husband obtained a life-interest in her lands and could thus retain them for the rest of his life if she died before him. In fact, Margaret survived her pregnancy, as did her child but her husband, ironically, did not, dying in November 1456 some months before his son's birth. The childlessness of her second and third marriages suggests, our authors point out, that the experience was physically and psychologically damaging. However, this was not as tragic as it might seem. In an age when child-bearing was fraught with danger, Margaret's ill-fortune may well have been responsible for her survival to the age of 66. Her second marriage, to Henry Stafford (second son of the powerful Duke of Buckingham), took place little more than a year after the death of Edmund Tudor, in January 1458. When Stafford died in 1471, Margaret was left highly vulnerable. She hurriedly arranged her third marriage, to Thomas, Lord Stanley, without even waiting for the end of the customary period of a year's mourning. Margaret's second and third husbands gave her much needed political protection during the tense years of the 'Wars of the Roses'. As the mother of a Lancastrian claimant, she was always an important piece on the political chessboard, and it was to her advantage that both the Staffords and the Stanleys were on good terms with the ruling Yorkist house in the 1460s and 1470s. Throughout this period Margaret was planning and plotting in the interests of her son Henry who was in almost continual exile. The palace coup which led to the succession of Richard III in 1483 deepened rifts within the political nation and gave her an excellent opportunity for the exercise of her talents. As early as July 1483 she was plotting an attempt to rescue the Princes in the Tower it was a fiasco. Undeterred, she was involved the following year in the bungled rebellion of the Duke of Buckingham. Only her husband's continuing loyalty to Richard III kept her from political annihilation in the aftermath. As usual, Margaret had pursued her own policy in complete disregard of her husband and had then expected him to keep her out of trouble. And still she kept on plotting. By the time Henry VII faced Richard III at Bosworth on 22 August 1485, she had won over her husband to his cause. The Stanley force of some 3000 men lined up with Henry on the battlefield, and after some initial hesitation decisively committed itself to his aid. But for Margaret's third marriage, Henry VII would never have been in a position even to contemplate giving battle to Richard.

Margaret and her son were much closer during his reign than at any time since his earliest infancy. Even her son's marriage was largely the

result of his mother's machinations. The idea that Henry might marry Elizabeth of York (Edward IV's eldest daughter) had been mooted by her even in Edward's reign, as Jones and Underwood note: the attractions of a match that strengthened Henry's rather tenuous claim to the throne are obvious. After the marriage, our authors argue, Margaret completely overshadowed her daughter-in-law. Margaret walked at her side in Elizabeth's coronation procession and sat at her side in Parliament, and the two women were admitted to the Order of the Garter on the same day. If there was any flattery in this display of equality, it was the queen rather than Margaret who was being flattered. There can be little doubt as to where the greater political influence lay. By the early sixteenth century, Margaret's household was 'the greatest in the realm after the king's', exceeding even the lavish establishment maintained by such magnates as the Duke of Buckingham. She was the only woman in the kingdom licensed to keep retainers in her own right, and was in effect the first woman to be made a justice of the peace in England (a precedent not repeated for centuries). She was a close adviser in the king's diplomatic planning, and her council administered the king's justice in the Midlands. Margaret was clearly a dominating personality, and if Henry had been a weak man, one suspects that she would have been governing the entire country.

The portrait presented is of a foundress in whom any college might take justifiable pride. Jones and Underwood nod towards Tudor Catholic and contemporary feminist hagiography, but avoid their extremes. Lady Margaret undoubtedly was a saintly and pious woman, but not in any sentimental way. When Fisher chose to weave his memorial sermon for her around the gospel account of Martha, the sister of Lazarus, he deliberately chose to canonise her as a model of the 'active' rather than the 'contemplative' life. Lady Margaret was thus fully at home in an age that witnessed the development of lay piety which was no longer simply a sort of watered down monasticism for those who lacked the good fortune to have chosen the life of the cloister. The change can be seen in the vow of widowhood according to which Lady Margaret entrusted herself to the spiritual guidance of Fisher. As Jones and Underwood observe, it was not cast in the traditional form, by which widows bound themselves to the quasi-monastic 'rule of St Paul'. Margaret was binding herself to a religious life, but the medieval identification of 'religious' with 'monastic' was no longer axiomatic for her and her confessor. Indeed, although some of her religious patronage continued to be directed towards the traditional area of the monasteries, the bulk of it was directed towards the secular clergy the priests who would staff the parishes and dioceses through the universities. Her academic patronage, from the support of individual scholars to the foundation of great colleges, was aimed at producing an educated and

well-motivated clergy the traditional objective of ecclesiastical reformers in the later Middle Ages. Yet committed though she was to the reform of the Church, family interests could compromise her patronage. It is hard to see how James Stanley, her stepson, would have become Bishop of Ely but for her influence. And she cannot have been entirely ignorant of the priorities of a worldly cleric whose reign at Ely was to be distinguished chiefly by the birth of three illegitimate children to his mistress, who presided over the episcopal palace at Somersham. Yet, as our authors rightly emphasise, the sense of family which Stanley's promotion expresses was itself considered a paramount moral obligation in late medieval England.

As a proto-feminist, Margaret is even less convincing than as a plaster saint. Although a powerful and determined woman, she achieved eminence not through questioning, still less transgressing, the conventional cultural limitations on a woman's role, but through exploiting to the uttermost the possibilities that traditional role models offered. In her single-minded devotion to the interests of her only son she was simply fulfilling expectations although to proceed by plot and subterfuge was rather less conventional. When some of her plots failed, she was able to exploit her subject status as a married woman to save herself from political destruction. Yet her marriages to Stafford and Stanley were from the start partnerships of equals. Her hand represented social advancement for both of them. Henry VII's concession to her of the legal status of 'femme sole' in 1485 gave her an unprecedented freedom of action for a married woman, although this was achieved within established legal concepts. And her novel interpretation of the traditional vow of widowhood taken within her last husband's lifetime emphasised still further the independence of her position. As a powerful and determined woman but no feminist, the Margaret given to us here is reminiscent of a more recent Margaret, whose canonisation was promoted for a while by her votary and sometime colleague, the present Master of Emmanuel. A tough, hard-nosed negotiator, married but entirely independent of her wealthy husband, dominating a council of men, 'a political survivor' and a fighter, 'efficient and at times ruthless', at times harsh, one who 'respected those whose toughness and efficiency would get things done', a woman 'of constant activity', an idealist with a gift for politics, committed to the advancement of her family – but the parallel must not be pressed too far. The Lady Margaret was certainly better loved by the academics of her day than the Blessed Margaret by those of ours. Suffice it to say that both the Countess of Richmond and the 'Countess of Finchley' have left their mark on English history. Yet if it were not for her generosity to the universities, and especially this university, and in particular to Christ's and St John's Colleges, Lady Margaret would be entirely forgotten to this day. By preserving not only

only the memory but also many documentary memorials of their foundress, the institutions she established have helped in the production of a book which is not only a readable and entertaining biography but also a major contribution to the historical study of later medieval England.

Richard Rex

A Question of Leadership: Gladstone to Thatcher. By Peter Clarke. Pp. 344. Hamish Hamilton 1991.

'Those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it'. One recurring theme of Professor Peter Clarke's *A Question of Leadership* is the analogous nature of history. *A Question of Leadership* also serves as a clear reminder that Margaret Thatcher did not forget the past – instead through 323 pages and a hundred and thirty years we trace the development of progressive politics and the creation of a society that Thatcher took a mere decade to destroy. Not for nothing is the book's subtitle Gladstone to Thatcher – though she did not share his philanthropic obsession with prostitution, Thatcher has successfully returned Britain to the days of Gladstone.

These then are the two lasting impressions one gets from reading *A Question of Leadership*, an appraisal of the different merits of the most important political leaders of the last one hundred and thirty years. Professor Clarke has adopted two main criteria for deciding which leaders are worthy of consideration – those who were successful in setting the political agenda, and those who were successful in mobilising popular support behind them. He has no interest in those leaders who reached the top of the greasy pole because it was their good fortune to be in the right place at the right time. Lord Roseberry, Andrew Bonar Law and Alec Douglas Home are rejected for this reason, as is Henry Campbell Bannerman who won the largest twentieth-century parliamentary majority (excepting the 1918 'Coupon Election'); one cannot help but wonder if history will confine John Major to this same ignoble fate.

Professor Clarke's third main theme is the 'irreducible personal and political circumstances which are a factor in explaining events'. The 'Great Man' analysis of history is not particularly fashionable these days, but an examination of modern politics through a consideration of the appropriate 'Great Men' is here extremely effective – the biographical approach is flexible enough to introduce us to peripheral figures as appropriate (the sketch of the 'middle-class lawyer from Liverpool',

Selwyn Lloyd, is typically adroit), and because it allows due attention to be paid to the trivia, anomalies and unique facts that make history so interesting, and which cognitive modelling denies us.

Gladstone and Thatcher, the political book-ends of the study, are given most attention and are considered to be the most important figures both in setting the political agenda and mobilising popular support. The ironic links between the two are well documented – Gladstone's fight to increase the franchise in the 1860s which Thatcher followed one hundred and twenty years later by disenfranchising 5% of the electorate as a by-product of the Poll Tax. Gladstone and Thatcher indeed deserve to be remembered as the most important political leaders of their respective centuries.

Professor Clarke somewhat reluctantly offers Attlee as the only Twentieth-Century Alternative – he feels that Attlee deserves to be remembered as the unknown Prime Minister, showing 'no obvious talent for becoming Prime Minister' before he did so. According to this picture, he was in the right place at the right time, whereas Morrison and Dalton were not. Yet his government created the post-war consensus, providing a mixed economy, full employment, free education, free health care, and housing, built to a standard of which owner-occupiers would be proud. Professor Clarke is quick to point out the irony of Thatcher's selling this housing off some thirty years later. Moreover, Attlee only built on the foundations of the 'Welsh Wizard' David Lloyd George, who held the highest positions of state for sixteen years. Lloyd George deserves to be Thatcher's rival for immortality, yet he is relegated to sharing a chapter with Asquith – harsh treatment for a man who introduces a system of progressive taxation that it took seventy-two years to undermine, destroyed the effective power of the House of Lords, won the First World War, and was years ahead of his time in his 'virtually bigamous' relationships, keeping a wife in his constituency and a mistress in London.

Professor Clarke does however place Winston Churchill in his correct historical place, rightly concluding that he was no more and no less than a successful war leader. His decision as Chancellor in 1925 to return to the Gold Standard was disastrous, while his attitude to Indian Home Rule was imperialist and blinkeredly backward looking. He is defended as a conciliator during the General Strike, with no cold-blooded desire to see the Miners suffer – a rather strange description of a man who advocated using troops against the strikers. Yet Professor Clarke rightly points out that the 'humblest workmen', Churchill's peacetime enemies, were to prove his wartime allies in opposing tyranny, and concludes: 'He had not changed, but the context in which

he was now judged was different'. Anyone seeking to understand the great political maverick should bear in mind this astute summary.

A Question of Leadership is not restricted to considering only Prime Ministers. John Maynard Keynes, the 'academic scribbler' who contributed much to political debate, is intelligently dealt with. Sense is made of the apparent paradoxes in Keynes' work – his theories were based on ideal situations, but different answers were necessary to deal with the realities of historical circumstance. Hence Keynes' apparent acceptance of the Gold Standard when his previous work implied that he should be arguing for its abolition – he was simply trying to make the best of a bad job. Hugh Gaitskell is included, quite rightly given the enormous impact he made on left-wing politics before his premature death. Harold Wilson's victory in the 1964 General Election was the victory of Gaitskell and revisionism. The battle that Gaitskell fought with Bevan and the fundamentalist left is proof that the Labour Party did forget the past. The thematic chapter on the decline of Labourism and the demise of the SDP describes precisely what Gaitskell had fought so hard to prevent, the capture of power by the hard left and the splintering of the Labour Party. Attlee is quoted as criticising Gaitskell for being 'not as honest as he should be in opposition, regarding it as quite reasonable to take a line which he knows he would not take in government'. Yet Michael Foot's 'honesty' left the Labour Part abandoned by many of its right-wing moderates to its worst election result since the First World War. A decade later, it is still recovering, having survived, just, 'not on its merits, which were shallow, but by its roots which were deep'.

The chapter on Margaret Thatcher, which Professor Clarke had to re-write following her resignation in November 1990, is strangely the most disappointing. It does contain the sharp analysis, wry commentary and humour that we have come to expect. Professor Clarke rightly points to her luck in being elected leader in 1975, when Edward Heath's decision to stand in the first ballot prevented William Whitelaw, the 'natural successor', from standing, and to her victory in 1979 when the 'Winter of Discontent' lost the election for Labour. The need for loyalists to invent 'Thatcherism' to legitimate their leader's stance, and the irony of the 'Labour Isn't Working' election campaign (which introduced the idea of unemployment as a barometer of governmental competence), are not lost on Professor Clarke either. But to comment that Thatcher was maintained in power by a 'randomly fortuitous episode' ignores the suspicion that the Falklands Crisis was engineered precisely to maintain her in power, an electoral success paid for with lives. The Foreign Office was negotiating a peaceful handover of the Falklands to Argentina, and the gunboat stationed there by previous administrations

as a clear statement of British intent towards continued ownership had been withdrawn. But a more serious criticism of *A Question of Leadership* is that it does not consider the fertile ground of Thatcher's style of leadership, for it is not only in what she did but in how she did it that her great claim to posterity lies. The unwritten constitution would have forced any other Prime Minister to resign when caught lying to the House of Commons, as she was both in 1982 with the sinking of the Belgrano, and in 1986 over the Westland Affair. Furthermore, there is her politicising of the Civil Service, in her use of her Press Officer Bernard Ingham and in particular Charles Powell from the Foreign Office. Thatcher ran foreign affairs for most of her premiership purely with the aid of an 'impartial' civil servant and made her Foreign Secretaries obsolete. Neville Chamberlain too had handled foreign affairs personally, but he had a tame Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, to help him, not just a partisan civil servant. Margaret Thatcher was more than just leader of her party and her government, she was her party and government. And as Professor Clarke concludes, ditching her when she became unpopular was a brilliant electoral move because, 'with Thatcher gone, the opposition lost its pre-eminent target and the Conservatives surprised themselves by taking on a new lease of life'.

This criticism aside, *A Question of Leadership* is a vivid personal portrait of those who have set the political agenda over the last one hundred and thirty years. The extensive use of primary sources and the critical examination to which they are subjected, coupled with Professor Clarke's lively and witty style, make *A Question of Leadership* accurate, informative and revealing. It is never guilty of Professor Clarke's description of Gladstone – 'so far, so obtuse'.

James Staniforth

Book Reviews

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Nicholas Mansergh, *The Unresolved Question: the Anglo-Irish settlement and its undoing 1912-72*
386pp, Yale University Press, £18.95.

It takes the transposition of only one letter to alter the United Kingdom into the 'untied' Kingdom, and, in a way, the problems which have accompanied the unravelling of the United Kingdom as it existed throughout the nineteenth century provide the theme of this book. *The Unresolved Question* deals with some of the twentieth-century attempts to establish an enduring *modus vivendi* within the 'British Isles' (what the *Irish Times* carefully now calls 'these islands'). Nicholas Mansergh was almost ideally situated to comprehend the complexities of modern Anglo-Irish relations. He was born in southern Ireland when it was part of the United Kingdom. Educated in the Irish Free State and at Oxford, he spent his very distinguished professional career as an historian in England, principally in Cambridge. Yet he retained a house – and his roots – in what is now the Republic of Ireland. Coming from a family which has served both the British Crown and Ireland with distinction (not so rare a phenomenon as might be supposed), his experience of living as it were with a foot in both England and Ireland during a time when the two states drew apart politically and constitutionally, served powerfully to illuminate his understanding of modern Irish history, and in particular the brilliant series of essays in politico-historical history which comprise this work. The volume's theme is 'the making, working and final dismantling' of 'the 1920-25 Anglo-Irish settlement', which includes (as many other accounts do not) the eventually abortive Boundary Commission. Although we may question whether the settlement has 'finally' been dismantled – Ireland, after all, remains partitioned – Mansergh has succeeded admirably in dissecting the context and detail of Anglo-Irish relations from the period of the Third Home Rule Bill to the formal secession of Ireland from the British Commonwealth in 1949. To this he has

added a short chapter bringing the story up to the prorogation of the parliament in Northern Ireland in 1972.

Mansergh's scholarship is clearly informed by his own humane and liberal sympathies (nowwhere perhaps more evident than in his *South Africa 1906-61. The Price of Magnanimity* (1961); a price paid by the non-European inhabitants of South Africa). These sympathies, combined with his Irish upbringing, are apparent too in *The Unresolved Question.* Reflecting on the fundamental importance in Ireland of the threat and use of force as a political weapon, he relates this to his own experience as a schoolboy in Tipperary, close to Soloheadbeg where the first shots of the Anglo-Irish war, killing two policemen, were fired in early 1919. In a suggestive and typically elegant passage he assures the reader that

> The author may perhaps be relied upon to think of the events of those days as near realities, not as distant phenomena or as issues in high politics with but remote regard (such as is evident in records of many Cabinet deliberations) to how and why they had arisen or what they meant to those who experienced them. History was forged in sudden death on a Tipperary by-road as surely as ever it was in meetings in Downing Street or for that matter at the Mansion House in Dublin, where the Dail met coincidentally but fortuitously for the first time that same day, 21 January 1919.

There is a clear personal note, too, in the observation that 'even successful national revolutions exact a price, the nature of which later generations find it hard to remember and contemporaries mpossible to forget'. Mansergh's human sympathy, however, does not prevent him from being utterly realistic when considering, for example, the meeting between Eamon de Valera and Sir James Craig in May 1921, which is conventionally seen as having presented a missed opportunity for lessening misunderstanding by personal communication. On the contrary, suggests Mansergh, 'it is equally, if not more, probable that the better the mutual understanding the wider the gulf between the two leaders would appear'.

While violence is central to the twentieth-century experience of Ireland, Mansergh also wisely notes that 'the Anglo-Irish war was at

all times psychological over and above military'. Indeed, among the most rewarding parts of this book is Mansergh's richly perceptive analysis of the attitudes, circumstances and 'unspoken assumptions' of the principal Irish and British protagonists. The study is chiefly concerned with the constitutional relationship between Britain and Ireland and the frequently violent tensions produced by the mismatch between Irish aspiration and British concession, which was generally too little, too late. 'When the Irish wanted colonial, or dominion, status the British were unyielding; when late in the day the British came to sponsor it, the Irish, committed to a republic, were opposed to it.' In the end the Irish demand for a republic brought separation not only from Great Britain but also from the Commonwealth. Yet, even in 1949, there was no final break; Britain and the Commonwealth agreed formally that Ireland could not be regarded as a 'foreign' state. Mansergh remarks that 'characteristic of Irish relations with the Commonwealth since 1921 has been an approach towards a finality that was never quite obtained'. What for Britain was thought of as both a conciliatory gesture and a realistic reflection of the *status quo* between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic was for Irish republicans perhaps yet another insulting denial of complete Irish independence.

The Unresolved Question draws abundantly and fittingly on Mansergh's unparalleled expertise as an historian of Ireland and of the British Commonwealth. It complements his greatest works in those fields, both now regarded as classics: *Ireland in the Age of Reform and Revolution* (first published in 1940; since revised and re-published as *The Irish Question 1840-1921*) and *The Commonwealth Experience* (1969; second edition 1982). Those of us who profited personally from Nicholas Mansergh's guidance and scholarship – always generously shared – will recognise in this volume his humane clear-sightedness and firm judgement. The book is magisterial (aptly so for a sometime Master of the College) but (as was the author himself) by no means austere or intimidating. *The Unresolved Question* was published posthumously; it will stand as a suitable and impressive memorial to a great Irish historian.

(This review is a revised version of one first published in the *Times Literary Supplement*).

"There is a language in each flower": Reflections on the College precincts on reading Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), xvii, 462pp.

Flowers, as verse writers in medieval East Asia did not tire of suggesting, cannot speak; they need someone to state their case. This book is welcome because, with great erudition, it does just that, and makes accessible a delightful and historically important topic.

The book spans almost the entire history of man's known association with flowers, floral icons and gardens. It starts with the ancient Near East and proceeds through the classical Mediterranean and the Islamic world. One of its main themes is the correlation between the development of sophisticated and stratified societies and the culture of flowers. It also analyzes the influence of religions on growing, depicting and using flowers. The symbolic value of flowers in literary, religious and social usage is a counterpoint through the book. Early Christianity, following Judaism and in order to demarcate itself from other religions, resisted the use of flowers and garlands in worship. Islam did likewise, but in secular Islamic society pleasure gardens flourished. Through Moorish Spain and even through Norman Sicily, they re-entered Europe in the Middle Ages. The ornamental rose gardens of courtly Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the highly developed Gothic use of foliate and floral motifs are aspects of this revival. East Asia constitutes a very rich tradition of horticulture and floral icons and an elaborate floral symbolism in its elite literature. Largely independent until the Buddhist age, at the level of the icon it later both influenced and was influenced by traditions throughout the Eurasian landmass. The book also describes the growth of the market in horticulture and cut flowers in the nineteenth century and the development of an intricate amatory "language of flowers" in France and England. Accounts of the present day uses for flowers in Europe, North America, India and South China are all based on the author's own observation.

Jack Goody does not draw from St John's in *The Culture of Flowers* as he does so adroitly elsewhere in his writing. But the book will surely be of great interest to members of the College. For St John's has a particular affinity with the theme of the book, and our

appreciation of both our buildings and our gardens can only be enchanced by reading it. The College's involvement with flowers starts at the Great Gate. Marguerites carved in stone above the arch pun on the Christian name of the Foundress. Forget-me-nots may be a reference to her motto: *Souvent me Souvient.* The red rose of Lancaster, which runs through all the courts of the College built before the Second World War, needs no explanation. The Gothic revival Chapel of Gilbert Scott features much carved foliage; but this is imitation and it lacks the vitality of its medieval French originals (pp. 149-153). We do better with the Chapel's stained glass, for the flowers and shrubs there glow brightly on a summer's day, though it is not always possible to be sure about their species. Even the horticultural and silvicultural imagery that forms a theme in the College's Advent Carol Service has medieval origins. All these belong to the chapter charmingly entitled "The return of the rose", which takes the story to the early Renaissance in Europe.

The book's insights may also be related to the living gardens themselves. Here much of the planting owes ultimately to the period in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when French and British collectors, Cambridge men among them, travelled far and wide in East Asia in the search for new specimens. Trees and shrubs have generally been selected to grow well in the Cambridge climate and in Cambridge soil. The splendid *Viburnum davidii* and *Paeonia delavayi* which dominate the southern border of the Scholars' Garden come from East Asia. They derive from one of the most romantic periods in the history of European horticulture (pp. 213-14).

The interest in floral symbolism and particularly in changes of symbolic meaning that runs through the book is an anthropological one; it concerns both the "common cultural code of ordinary social life" and literary and religious codes (p. 179). But there are many cases where plants have meaning only to private communities. The College and its gardens, with their long history, provide abundant examples. Lady Margaret's daisies and forget-me-nots are perhaps on the borderline between public and private symbolism. Our unostentatious *Lilium martagon* is a native to Greece as well as to Siberia and much of Europe. Its presence in the Wilderness may date back as far as the eighteenth century. Of this plant a horticultural commentator wrote nearly a quarter of a century ago: "The

outstanding example [of colonizing] is in the Fellows' Garden at St John's College, Cambridge, where hundreds of flower spikes are produced each season. It is a remarkable sight and one which many gardeners long to emulate."[1] The flourishing *Anemone blanda* on the eastern bank of the Bin Brook, also native to Greece, were said to have been introduced by an Edwardian Classics Fellow. They still suggest, in the minds of some, the College's enduring commitment to Classics.

We also owe to the Fellows' Garden the unobtrusive *Epimedium x cantabrigiense.* Its parent species, *E. alpinum* and *E. pubigerum,* originate respectively in the southern Alps and the southern coast of the Black Sea, and their natural habitats are 300 miles apart at their closest. During the Second World War they were planted, with other *Epimedium* species, in a bed in the Wilderness and "had to fend for themselves untended." The hybrid, a "pleasant and interesting, though unspectacular plant", was the outcome. It was published, in botanical Latin as well as in English, by the distinguished contemporary plant taxonomist William T. Stearn.[2] But perhaps the rarest of all our plants is the reclusive Great Tower Mustard, *Arabis turrita,* a native of southern Europe, that grows in the decaying mortar in the wall at the end of the Fellows' Garden. Of this plant S.M. Walters wrote in *The Eagle* in 1950, "It seems, therefore, that in the Fellows' Garden we possess the last surviving remnants of the plant in Britain."[3] In its rarity and its liking for obscure habitats it resembles the "secluded orchid", one of the earliest members of the Chinese repertory of floral symbols. Indeed had medieval Chinese literateurs, the subject of Chapter 12 of the book, known of these Johnian plants they might well have composed long and elaborate prose-poems extolling them, perhaps for inclusion in the medieval anthology *Flowers and Blossoms in the Garden of Letters (Wen yuan ying hua).* They might have praised them as symbols of neglected worth, or in the case of the *Epimedium,* of love at last fulfilled, emphasizing their rarity and modesty and the fact that a place of learning had recognized them and ensured their transmission.

Nowadays the College gardens have to compete for attention against a runaway commerce in flowers that is literally on a global scale (pp. 225-232) and against a culture of garden centres that promotes novelty, ostentation and instant results. As a good

anthropologist and ethnographer, Jack Goody observes, documents and analyzes and passes no judgements. But those who read this fascinating book will surely be led to appreciate flowers and gardens, whether in St. John's or elsewhere, with greater discrimination and a keener awareness of their provenance.

D.L.M.

1. Lanning Roper, "Mass Plantings in Nature and in Gardens", *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society* LXXXV (1960), p. 389.

2. William T. Steam, "A New Hybrid *Epimedium (E. x cantabrigiense)*", *The Plantsman* I (1979), pp. 187-190.

3. S.M. Walters, "On *Arabis Turrita* L. in the Fellows' Garden", *The Eagle* LIV, No. 237, pp. 148-150.

A Guest at Cambridge by George H. Guest, Orleans, Mass., Paraclete Press, 1994.

The cover-photograph is a good start, for besides the great choirmaster and his great choir it shows to any Johnian who has never had a proper look (i.e. most, I bet) the excellent beauty of the tiled floor of the sanctuary of the College chapel. And if only we could have those stone angels painted and gilded – you can see them dimly behind the choir, and they are all playing instruments, actually – as George often said he wished we could, that would be something, indeed.

I have used strong words – a great choir and a great choirmaster – without irony or apology. For if it is the wish of Johnians to be able to claim St John's as a 'centre of excellence', they they must be clear that in nothing, in the second half of the 20th century, has the College been more excellent than in its choir and choral repertoire (the latter very important: George has become a champion of advanced modern music): a model all over Europe and America and beyond, the features with which the College's name is especially connected and its choirmaster besought, all over the world, to come and impart some inkling of his secret.

Well, in this gallimaufry-book there are, indeed, some clues, more than at first you might think. Influences, for example: musicians are always conscious of the tradition in which they lie, and George, in quick sketches, recalls the people he learnt from and has worked with. Then, lists, many of them, hardly the kind of thing for continuous bedside reading but arising from the author's proper concern that the materials for the history of all he was involved in should be somewhere kept. So, chronological lists of the College's Organists and Organ Students and (selectively) Choral Students and Choristers; of the recordings made by the choir in his time; of the specifications of the Chapel organs from Walmisley's time to the just-completed latest rebuild; of the music commissioned or written for the choir; of the tours undertaken (three chapters, replete with anecdotes); of the choral repertoire.

More straightforwardly can an eminent musician's *credo* be discerned in the chapters entitled 'An Approach to the Intangibles' and 'Some Basic Choral Techniques'. Thus (p. 142) '... aiming at his idea of the perfect performance... but, at the same time, being forced to realise that this perfection... is always just out of his reach'; (p. 146) '... the daunting realisation that *no two consecutive notes should ideally have the same degree of emphasis'*; (p. 166) '... to impart the basic human emotions of sorrow, joy, excitement, even scorn, into our singing'; (p. 225, from the Commemoration Sermon) *'all* music in churches and chapels is or ought to be regarded as an *adornment of the liturgy,* not as an end in itself', and 'We try always to remember that the *words* (and this will perhaps sound strange coming from a musician) are *always* more important than the music'.

The *credo* is also to be discerned in George's four Presidential Addresses to the Royal College of Organists in 1979 and 1980, reprinted here, in which he brings up practical issues of the day, about teaching and examination standards and the place of History of Music in the syllabus, and so on, but always pleading for the encouragment of 'the reflective mind' and always inspired by the hope that (p. 240) 'our own feeble efforts will miraculously, somehow be helped by a much more skilful Conductor in another place.' And that's it: the glean in the eye of the great bringer-into-being of music (George talks about Boris Ord's eyes, which 'were magnets', and I experienced that, and George's own glance is

conveyed in the portrait-drawing of him by John Ward in the Small Combination Room and the present members of the choir tell me that the music is implicit in Christopher Robinson's eyes). To me it recalls John Boys Smith's insistence upon the 'single eye', but also Plato: the glimpse, beyond this actual performance, of the ideal performance, of the Music of the Spheres.

Welshness has been very important to George, and comes out here in numerous quotations, in some nice proverbs (I especially like (p. 236) 'It is persistent blows which break the stone', which sounds just like Bethesda Quarries), in a couple of ode-epigrams made about him, in a long quotation from the material address he gave at the service for the composer William Mathias, and in another, from *The Eagle* of 1903, from the obituary of the composer of *Aberystwyth,* Joseph Parry.

Another thing very important to him has been Plainsong; and his ability to play that upon the instrument of the College choir has been seminal in the revival the art has begun to undergo. He imbibed it at Solesmes, the very fount. He says a little about it here (pp. 180 and 242): it is 'a form of art so subtle as almost to defy notation'. It demands a plasticity of rhythm and dynamic that few have in them, let alone can communicate: watching George conduct, you can see that plasticity in his gestures – which goes with another passage in the book (pp. 145-9) about 'phrasing', about 'approach' to an accent and about 'shapely and not jerky movements'.

George tells us some of the great stories – familiar to us who've been around, but other Johnians will love them: Paddy Hadley and the drawing-pin (I was there at that choral trial, because each College used to send a Tutor to see that the musicians didn't do something daft, so I can absolutely vouch for the tale); James Bezzant and '...only His Earthly representative'; the pop-following of the choirboys in Japan by not three but thirty little maids from school. And in these pages you will also find the history of the Ascension Day carol; the crucial history of how the battle was won to save the College's choral tradition from going the way Trinity's had gone a generation sooner; a fascinating piece of historical material in the shape of a long quotation from Garrett's account of the Chapel services published in the *Eagle* for 1890; and a shorter excerpt from W.E. Dickson's *Fifty Years of Church Music* of 1894.

It is the necessary character of executant musicianship that what it creates is here and now, that the glimpse of the 'Idea of the Good', if achieved at all, fades inexorably back into silence. But creativity it is, nonetheless, without which the primary creativity of the composer would remain dumb on the page; and to the masters who can by their creativity bring such moments into being, so that the rest of us may have the chance of a glimpse of something 'like nothing on earth' (p. 32), the tribute is due of taking seriously both how and why they do it. Actually, a lot can be learnt about the pride and the humility of musicians and the relation between composer and executant and between page and performance from Maurice Duruflés's letter, quoted here (p. 98), when the choir had recorded his *Requiem:* 'My thanks and my sincere congratulations for the excellent recording which you have been good enough to make of my *Requiem*... If you have occasion to direct my *Requiem* again, can I say that I prefer the baritone solos to be sung by all the basses and the second tenors? It was a mistake on my part to give those bars to a solo voice'.

George has achieved in these pages the recollection of emotion in tranquillity, except for one episode which still has the power to send him into a rage (pp. 78-9). To find out what that was, and, oh, for a host of other reasons, do read his book.

J.A.C.

Book Reviews

Codebreakers: the inside story of Bletchley Park edited by F. H. Hinsley and Alan Stripp, Oxford, O.U.P., 1993. Pp. xxi, 321.

This is a remarkable and in some ways unique book. The story of the growth of Bletchley Park from the evacuated nucleus of what had been the old First War decoding Room 40 to become the dominant force in Allied Wartime Intelligence is now known since security restrictions were lifted and especially since Sir Harry Hinsley's official history was published. To have the story told for us, as it is here by participants in one volume, ought to make the book a best-seller for discriminating readers.

For those of us who lived through those war years the revelation of Bletchley's crucial role in so many of the operations from the North Atlantic U-Boat campaign, the defeat of Rommel in North Africa, the Normandy invasion to the halting of the Japanese in the Indian Ocean has a fascination all its own. (And if operational commanders, notably Montgomery, failed to appreciate Bletchley's intelligence at crucial times that was not the fault of 'BP'.) A younger generation, too, especially those brought up in the computer age, should be fascinated to trace the archaeological origins of computer modes of thought and procedure (even terms still in use such as 'menu', let alone 'Colossus', one of the first digital computers).

Much of the subject matter is technical, recondite, even arcane; but the contributions are so arranged in sections as to give the general reader a grasp of the way in which radio traffic was intercepted, its codes mastered (especially the all-important Enigma cipher), messages decoded, emended, translated and, with the help of elaborate indexes of accumulated enemy data, subjected to analysis which turned them from raw to redefined, significant Intelligence (the barely to be mentioned Ultra), ready to be transmitted to, and discussed with, Whitehall and operational commands. One learns how this was organised in functional units working in tandem, first housed in huts the names of which became historic: Huts 6 and 3

(Army and Air Force) Huts 8 and 4 (Navy). All this emerges lucidly as one reads these reminiscent accounts.

It is also a very human story: a vivid account of the way in which the first, small eclectic groups of likely young people settled into a novel and improvised existence cut off from their normal worlds, buried away in a Bedfordshire country house and its accretions of huts, lodging in a miscellany of digs, working a twenty-four hour, three-shift system in cramped conditions, learning on the job and sharing a communal quasi-collegiate life with service people and civilians cheek by jowl. It was remarkable how, in response to the ever-growing volume of traffic, their community grew from a hundred or so to over seven thousand organised on specialist production lines.

To an outsider one of the most striking features of this close community was their necessary, but extraordinary, discipline in security. Any hint at all of what was going on at Bletchley would have jeopardised the whole operation. Thus it was that colleagues often knew little beyond what they 'needed to know', spouses were kept in the dark and even well after the War, as a young Cambridge don, I was largely unaware that a number of my colleagues and acquaintances in the University belonged to the silent freemasonry of Bletchley.

The book's vivid immediacy owes much to the fact that its twenty nine contributors, with hardly an exception, were writing not only freshly from personal memory but as articulate university-educated people. The styles vary. Some of the code-breakers working on Enigma write in a mathematical mode which is sometimes hard for this layman to follow; but even here cheerful shafts of personal light break the academic austerity; and those with literary or historical training write directly and well.

Most of them shared a common background of Oxford, Cambridge or a London college, the majority of the early intake from Cambridge. Their stories of how they came to be chosen and their induction to 'BP' make an amusing set of vignettes: a sudden summons to an anonymous floor of an office building over St James' Park Tube Station; an unexplained signal posting a junior naval officer from Iceland to a mysterious destination in England; a tank gunner at Tidworth ordered to report, still in battle dress with rifle and kit bag, to a strange address in Bedfordshire; a group of newly fledged WRNS, given travel warrants, who had to ask the engine driver of their (unscheduled) train at Euston where they were going, to be told only that 'the WRNS get out at Bletchley'; a schoolboy up at a Cambridge college to sit the scholarship examination; a girl student interviewed at Grosvenor House by 'a formidable woman compared with whom Miss Buss and Miss Beale were puny wraiths' who said nothing about the work except the pay was low, the hours long and night work probable, but asked suspiciously why her father had been born in Paris. Another interviewee was asked: 'Do you have any religious scruples about reading other people's correspondence?' Several more, understandably, were asked about their interest in chess and crossword puzzles and, less obviously, about their proficiency at Latin and Greek or an ability to read an orchestral score. There was shrewd method in all this. These were urgent, if looking back halcyon, days before the concept of an 'old boys net' let alone of 'head hunters'. When bright young people were needed in a hurry it was natural for A.G.Denniston, the Head of the Government Code and Cipher School, to look to Oxford and Cambridge. At Cambridge his recruiting contacts were two classical historians, F.E.Adcock of King's (who had worked in the famous Room 40 in the First World War) and his friend and colleague Martin Charlesworth of St John's: thus the disproportionate number of early Cambridge recruits. They ranged from a distinguished academic like F.L.Lucas of King's (author of *The Romantic Agony*) who became a backroom guru working on intelligence problems, to young graduates. The Johnians included several established scholars such as N.H.Bruford (also a veteran of Room 40) who was to become Professor of German and Max Newman, the gifted mathematician who led an outstanding section called the Newmanry which worked on the cryptanalysis of Fish. There were also several young students. Among these was a third year undergraduate who was invited by Martin Charlesworth to his rooms in Third Court to be interviewed for Bletchley. His name was Hinsley.

Harry Hinsley contributes three illuminating chapters including a judicious introduction assessing the value of Ultra to the Allied victory; but as co-editor and an outstanding Bletchley figure his

influence informs the whole book. He first made his name at Bletchley studying German naval wireless traffic. This brought him into contact with Admiralty Intelligence, a liaison so intimate that a signal from Home Fleet querying some item 'What is your source?' received the one word reply 'Hinsley'. This close relationship between Bletchley and the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre, which extended to capturing German trawlers for their cipher machines, led to the breaking of the all-important naval Enigma cipher; and Hinsley's recognising the significance of a particular signal proved crucial to sinking the *Bismark*. He more than once visited the Home Fleet to explain Enigma to the Commander-in-Chief and he was a key figure in Hut 4 where his ability to sense, from tiny clues, that something unusual was afoot in the enemy camp was uncanny. I shall end this review by quoting a characteristic word picture of him written by a fellow member of Hut 4 at the time of the famous Channel dash of the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau* and *Prinz Eugen*:

> There was a great commotion in the hut and cries of 'Where's Harry? Harry will be furious'. Indeed he was. Harry Hinsley flew in late in the afternoon scattering smiles, scarves and stimulus in every direction, exclaiming 'It's happened again: whenever I take a day off something blows up.'
>
> Frank Thistlethwaite

David Johnston originally read Classics and was awarded a PhD in Roman Law in 1986. A Fellow of Christ's College, he is currently Regius Professor of Civil Law at the University of Cambridge and an advocate at the Scottish Bar.

J. A. Crook, *Legal advocacy in the Roman world*, Duckworth, London, 1995. Pp. vi + 225.

In an earlier book, *Law and life of Rome* (1967), John Crook aimed to put Roman law in its social context: to show how its rules made sense (if they did) in the light of Roman society. That attempt was

novel, since the traditional concern of Roman lawyers had been the jurisprudential intricacies of the rules rather than the mundane question whether they actually made sense for, or were of use to, the people who lived by them. In this new book what Professor Crook seeks to do is equally novel: his subject is advocacy in the Roman law courts, but underlying that theme is the notion that for Romans, great or small it was not enough to have the rules of law on your side; in order to obtain justice it was often necessary to have an advocate to put your case. This therefore is a book which attempts to place not the law but justice itself in its social context.

Roman practice distinguished sharply between jurists, who in the developed law confined themselves to giving opinions on points of law, and orators or advocates, who presented cases in court. Their role was to persuade the court of the merits of their clients' cases; their training and experience was not in law but in how to persuade a court; in other words, in rhetoric. Although there were some jurists who practised as advocates, this division of labour was very much the rule. In modern scholarship the divide persists: lawyers study the contributions of the jurists; rhetoric is at best disdained: in works by distinguished scholars on Roman law we can read of the 'noisome weed of rhetoric' and that the orator was 'an upstart battling for riches and advancement, often of dubious moral qualities.'

This book challenges that picture. It is at least in part a rehabilitation of rhetoric. Such restorative treatment necessarily involves removing the law from its lofty pedestal. Lawyers (such as this reviewer) will, and are intended to, protest. Sometimes it may be thought that Professor Crook, having absorbed from his material rhetorical tricks too many to number, presses his case against lawyers a little too hard: examples he gives (on p. 179) of delightful legal obscurities in which the jurists pointlessly persisted might equally be presented as cases in which the jurists did introduce modern institutions (such as trusts and formless conveyances) to satisfy modern demands. But if lawyers receive no special favours in this book, it is because the balance is in such urgent need of redressing in favour of rhetoric.

From classical authors such as Cicero and Quintilian the importance of advocates in criminal law was already abundantly clear. The core

of this book is an argument that advocacy was employed as a matter of course not just there, but in private and administrative law too. This universality of advocacy is a new insight, gleaned from a study of the Egyptian papyri. Chapter 3 catalogues and comments on a large number of them, ranging in date from 7 BC to AD 350. In them advocates plead the most various cases, from a dispute between villages about irrigation channels, to taxation, to assault, to repayment of a mortgage. In many of the cases the issues involved are minor, and this provides a solid foundation for the argument that advocacy was universal in another sense: it was not restricted purely to the city of Rome and the circles of the affluent. Although litigants could present their own cases if they wished, advocates were engaged as a matter of course, much as they are nowadays in the higher courts. Fees were charged, even though the service was notionally gratuitous. Even in modest cases a party sometimes engaged more than one advocate; while this occasionally seems to be because of a division of expertise, in others it is hard to explain. Much the same, however, could be said of our own system, where the need for more than one advocate on each side is not always clear. A curious difference, however, between ancient and modern practice is that, in spite of the absence of legal aid in antiquity, we never hear the hint of a suggestion that litigants were denied access to the courts for want of the means to pay an advocate.

These papyri also offer a fascinating glimpse of practice in the ancient court room. Some seems familiar and some is strange: lengthy interruptions of one advocate by the other are tolerated to a degree quite remarkable by modern standards, where interrupting is the prerogative of the judge. It is striking too that in a number of the cases recorded the 'justice' meted out is of the rough variety: for example, a creditor who delays 40 years in suing on a receipt has his receipt destroyed by order of the court; the end to an interminable property dispute is reached when the judge orders confiscation of the property of all the parties.

Advocacy has traditionally been thought to die out with the disappearance of the juries and lay judges who were putty in the hands of a skilled advocate, and their replacement by stern professional judges immune to persuasion by anything other than solid legal reasoning. It is a central claim of this book that that picture of Roman procedure is entirely wrong. It is not true of the provincial practice attested by the papyri, where official judges and advocates coexist; nor is it true of Roman practice, as the literary authors show. The claim that advocacy continued in this professional culture seems unassailable. In modern courts too, with professional judges, it plays its role, and books with titles such as *The art of the advocate* and *The technique of persuasion* are still written and read. Nor would their concerns seem desperately foreign to the ancients. Quintilian is full of good advice about the importance of knowing your judge and the sorts of arguments that will appeal to him. The rhetorical sophistication of the ancients comes as no surprise, but its practical importance is clear only now that John Crook has done justice to advocacy.

Book Reviews

Keith Hart read Part I Classics and Part II Archaeology and Anthropology, graduating in 1964. He is currently Director of the University of Cambridge Centre for African Studies, and Lecturer in Social Anthropology.

GOODY, Jack. *The East in the West* x + 295 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. ISBN 0 521 55360 1

Jack Goody's career spans the entire post-war period in which Africans won their independence from colonial empire and saw their hopes for economic development dashed; and in which East Asia came to be perceived as the likely centre for the next phase of capitalist development. More important, it was the period when for the first time food production became the occupation of a minority and the world took a decisive shift to the city as humanity's normal habitat. Jack Goody is the only anthropologist who has addressed these events on the global scale they warrant; and this book is the clearest expression of what he has been driving at all these years.

He began as an ethnographer of Northern Ghana, a vocation which has stayed with him up to the present. This phase culminated in his masterpiece, *Death, Property and the Ancestors* (1962) – three themes which coincide in his main preoccupation, writing itself. About this time he launched a project of African precolonial history which met the needs of the new independent states and became a cornerstone for the fruitful collaboration of historians and anthropologists that has marked African Studies in recent decades. Then he published in 1971 his first direct comparison between Europe and Africa, *Technology, Tradition and the State.*

In this short set of essays he concluded that a profound divergence of social and political forms between the two regions was rooted in demography (less people than land in Africa) with immense consequences for the balance between technologies of production and technologies of control. Much of the last quarter century has been taken up with an extraordinarily prolific attempt to explore this

insight further. Ever since *Production and Reproduction* (1976), this has been founded on explicit recognition of the identity of Europe and Asia (usually referred to as Eurasia) in opposition to Africa. The present book has as its principal target any lingering pretensions to western exceptionalism.

The West has indulged in the idea of its own exceptional trajectory, stressing Greek rationality, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment as sources of a knowledge revolution which underpinned the creation of unique institutions (capitalism, science, the conjugal nuclear family etc.) endowed with a universal superiority. This western triumphalism seemed justified in the nineteenth century, when European imperialism unified world society; but Jack Goody, unlike so many of his postwar contemporaries, has responded to the rise of the nonwestern peoples in the twentieth century by challenging these myths of the West's origins and uniqueness. In the process he has mapped a vision of world society in which the East and West are broadly seen as equals and the South's (Africa's) distinctiveness poses immense questions of global inequality.

Apart from anything else, this book explodes the division between the West and the Rest by showing how closely bound together are the historical trajectories of Europe and Asia; and that both are separated from Africa by their common heritage in Mesopotamia's urban revolution 5,000 years ago. He seeks to demolish the cultural relativism of our century by emphasising the general consequences of fundamental changes in production, reproduction and communication which far outweigh the short-term advantages won by the West in the last few hundred years. This is an exercise in historical materialist argument which belongs with those of Morgan, Engels and Childe; its target is the frothy idealism of a latterday intellectual class which imagines its own mentalities to be the motor of human development.

Jack Goody has several tactics for undermining his opponents. Above all, the characteristic institutions of urban society were invented in Asia and the attempt to drive a wedge between the Greeks and the rest of the Eastern Mediterranean was an invention of Victorian racism. He disposes of the 'we create/they imitate' argument by pointing out that the time taken for Britain's industrial revolution to

be adopted in India and Japan was less than that taken by early economic innovations to diffuse from Italy to North-western Europe. What is often taken to be the modern 'rise of the West' was no more than a rebirth of practices which flourished continuously in the Mediterranean, Near East and Far East. Features thought to be unique to non-western societies are found in the West when ideal types are exposed to social investigation. In the historical long-run the recent period of western dominance was exceptional and short-lived, as we can now see.

The main substantive contribution of the book is to offer an insightful summary of some key features of western intellectual and social history and an impressive survey of Asian economic achievements, especially India's. The usual suspects are exposed to view – rationality, book-keeping, commerce and business, the family, individualism, the forms of production and communication – and in each case an opposition between East and West is shown to be untenable. These may well seem commonplace to regional specialists; but Jack Goody's reputation and writing style will bring them to the attention of a broader audience.

As I have indicated indirectly above, it is odd that Jack Goody makes no reference to Martin Bernal's *Black Athena* (a book which seeks to reverse the Victorians' separation of ancient Greece from Africa, specifically Egypt), perhaps because he does not want to be lumped together with him. Bernal's argument exposes a problem for Goody's attempt to separate black Africa from the urban revolution of the Near East. This raises in turn a question about Jack Goody's hostility to Cartesian dualism (he calls it binarism). His deep struggle with the structuralist legacy of Claude Levi-Strauss, nowhere expressed more clearly than in *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977), lies at the heart of the present book. Yet his own use of the opposition between Africa and Eurasia over the last two decades has been a prominent example of this same trait.

The East in the West shows how much we need to look at our own institutions in the light of comparative evidence and it is a triumphant vindication for Jack Goody's style of anthropology. As I see it, this book makes an appeal for us to abandon constructions of the Other. There is no here and there any more; just all of us here

on an increasingly integrated planet. That is what I take his message to be. But it leaves open what happens to Africa.

A final point. The modern revolution in social anthropology took off from a repudiation of Sir James Frazer's compendious writings undertaken from the security of his Trinity College study. The battle cry was for fieldwork and the lived experience of ordinary people as our distinctive subject matter. Jack Goody could hardly be accused of sitting still in his study; the evidence of his tireless travels and encounters with real people pervades this book. Yet the project he has devoted so long to has involved a method of literary compilation which seems to have abandoned the Malinowskian tradition. A materialist Frazer in St John's? I wonder.

WYATT, John. *Wordsworth and the geologists.* xiv + 268 pp. Cambridge Studies in Romanticism 16. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. ISBN 0 521 47259 8.

As the corrosive fog of materialism reduces our mental and spiritual word to grey, etched shadows, even the early nineteenth century seems to shrink to remoteness. Was it really true that within the memory of my great-grandparents the newly-appointed Woodwardian Professor of Geology in Cambridge, Adam Sedgwick, could ride across the sunlit Fells of his native Northern England, secure in the knowledge that for our world there was indeed a Divine Plan. Not only that, but Sedgwick was entirely confident that he and his close colleagues would play no small part in reconciling this Plan with what was revealed by the new science of geology and the insights it gave into the history of the Earth. Only later, towards the end of the nineteenth century, did the almost universal fascination and acclaim at the headlong advance of science change, in some quarters, to suspicion and even repulsion. Such a process has continued to the present day. Nevertheless, despite the ministrations of defenders of science, perhaps most famously in the form of that cultural apparatchik C.P. Snow, and card-carrying atheists, notably Richard Dawkins and Peter Atkins, the interest in the search for some sort of link between science and an Ultimate Explanation shows no signs of exhaustion.

Since Sedgwick's day geology as a science has become largely parochial. Now the focus of interest has shifted to the realms of high-energy physics, the grandeur of cosmology, and the baffling world of quantum mechanics. The Universe is so odd that few doubt there must be connections at a deep level, but in contrast to the confidence of Adam Sedgwick we seem to have almost entirely lost our way. The enigma of the Big Bang and the vanishingly small probability that the starting conditions of the Universe would lead to anything remotely like the organization we see around us do indeed lead to feeble flickers of theism. And at not infrequent intervals some aspect of cosmological observation, such as the minute variations in the apparently isotropic background radiation, is stated to reveal 'the Mind of God'. The banality of such pronouncements is breathtaking. But if we accept the Universe has a moral structure, then what part can science ever play in its elucidation?

This remarkable and enjoyable book is a cogent discussion about how the early geologists, largely based in Cambridge, not only were entirely serious in using their work in the search for a moral meaning to the Universe, but looked to William Wordsworth above all the poets as their guide, touchstone and mirror. This relationship was not entirely one way: Wordsworth's friendship with these geologists meant that his scientific knowledge, while by no means professional, allowed him to read landscapes in new ways. But the intellectual current flowed much more strongly in the other direction. As John Wyatt emphasizes, Wordsworth far from being some sort of trembling aesthete, was in fact an acutely sharp observer, with an extraordinary sense of detail. His was a rich intellect, who saw further and as Coleridge put it: 'Wordsworth's words always mean the whole of their possible meaning'. The geologists, convinced that science and specifically their chosen discipline would provide a conduit to seeing the goodness of God as manifested in creation, took Wordsworth as not just their talisman, but as a seer with a preternatural vision who could unite the mundane landscape of actuality with that of the mind.

These early scientists were not only deeply religious, but were ever-willing to place their beliefs, which covered a wide spectrum of Christianity, into a remarkable range of intellectual interests. Such individuals did not read (or sometimes write) poetry to improve

their minds. Rather to them it was the apotheosis of intellectual enquiry, to which their work was a complement and support. Of these individuals perhaps the most remarkable was William Whewell. His greatness is today largely forgotten, and John Wyatt is to be thanked for placing Whewell in such an important context. His abilities as philosopher, poet, physicist and politician combined to make a formidable intellectual. He succeeded Wordsworth's brother, Christopher, as Master of Trinity, the college at which Adam Sedgwick was also a Fellow. In Oxford, the great William Buckland was laying the foundations of English palaeontology, although he had perhaps a greater interest in the historical processes, whereas in Cambridge geology was governed more by the mechanistic and mathematical precepts that stemmed directly from Newton. Even today this difference between Oxford and Cambridge is discernible

To most readers of *The Eagle* the view of the world that Wordsworth shared with Whewell, Sedgwick and others will, I suspect, seem at best misplaced, perhaps quaint, and possibly even ludicrous. But is it just nostalgia that makes some people look back to this seemingly vanished world where it was seriously suggested that science and religion had a common ground, the former feeding the latter? What have we lost or forgotten? The differences between today's practitioners of science (I speak of the majority, not all) and the close colleagues of Wordsworth are revealing. If pushed, the former must admit that all their interests and actions are without ultimate consequence or significance. To be sure the work undertaken may be psychologically satisfying and may, in chosen circumstances, alleviate human suffering. Nevertheless, without a final meaning this work is surely futile: our species is doomed to extinction, the Sun will die, and even the Universe itself has a finite life. Compared with his earlier confidence Sedgwick saw a much darker vision in his final years. If, as he saw, the science of geology could no longer act to bridge the material to the moral then humanity's future was bleak and would sink 'into a lower grade of degradation than any into which it has fallen since its written records tell us of its history'. Sedgwick appears never to have lost his faith, but science today has. Despite its towering successes, the great ship is rudderless, drifting on an ocean whose water is without taste and beneath a sky whose stars are an irrelevance.

What then did the scientists, inspired by Wordsworth, believe, and are their systems of belief and operation of arcane, historical interest only? The first point to grasp is the subtlety and range of their thinking. It is surely a sign of our own insecurity that when the argument from design is invoked, then the attitude of these early scientists is reduced to near-parody. To read the apologia by such individuals as Richard Dawkins or Stephen Jay Gould one would assume that when considering the evidence from Design the pre-Darwinians had no other guide than Paley's Evidences. It is certainly true that as a textbook this treatise had a remarkable life, but how many academics today continue to recommend texts they know to be dated and of questionable relevance? As John Wyatt points out, however, the early geologists were perfectly well aware of the limitations of Paley's system, and to imagine they spent their time wandering around commons and heaths looking for discarded watches and other immediate clues to the presence of a Designer is absurd. For these theologically inspired scientists, who were far more than deists, inhabited a complex world, much removed from the ranting of fundamentalists. For them the world of knowledge was either a spiral or ladder. As one soared or climbed so there were not only emotional rewards, but more importantly moral gains. Wordsworth's genius lay in revealing how inner truths were accessible via the material world. John Wyatt explains how Wordsworth uses the human eye. Despite its inherent clarity, too often it is locked on to the inanimate, whereas its true purpose is to convey 'beauty to the soul'. His poetry reveals that understanding rests on several levels, each one of which is effectively an illusion once the underlying truths are perceived. For Wordsworth and his friends the interpretation of the world was many-layered, rich in metaphor. What they understood so clearly was that although their specific work necessarily aimed at a particular, they never lost sight of the search for unity. They were also alert to the nuances of how the material world really could provide a vehicle towards the transcendent. Take John Wyatt's intriguing example (p.117) of water and rivers. Neither by some dreary Freudian signposts nor by the hydraulic rhetoric of such writers as Simon Schama, but by a series of haunting oppositions and images the apparent clarity of explanation actually reveals the depth we sense but are afraid to know. And behind this was a transcendental vision of 'A Land' where whatever was good would be made better. This vision was something with which Wordsworth's geological contemporaries

could find immediate and deep empathy, and even today one may run across geologists whose familiarity with a region provokes an emotional response that evades simple articulation. But the link is now tenuous. John Wyatt summarises (p.132) the differences between now and then, using the Solitary from *The Excursion*. 'The sin of these narrow scientists is to divide and to partition and, worst of all, to carry out their task as dull-eyed observers rather than participants in the universal system of nature. Their view of the world is one of naming of parts. Such scientists inhabit a broken universe which they have themselves divided by their analytical methods. The Wanderer [of *The Excursion*] is at pains to persuade his listeners that impressions and separation in the physical world are misleading. The underlying unity of all life is there to be seen .... In the future, scientists will be admitted to enjoy this vision, but they must approach as servants not as masters.'

If we could relearn these lessons, then there might be some prospects of transforming science from the juggernaut it is into a chariot we so much desire.

Simon Conway Morris

BOOK REVIEWS

Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-1990*, pp. 454, Allen Lane, 1996, ISBN 0-713-99071-6.

I am the wrong person to review this book for two reasons. First it fits perfectly a passion, a prejudice even, of mine that a successful piece of history must combine high scholarship with fine writing. And *Hope and Glory* is squarely within the tradition that runs from Macaulay via A.J.P. Taylor to the present day.

Secondly, Peter Clarke bears the special imprint of a John's-reared historian – learning lightly worn, love of a good story and 'a pretty taste for a paradox' as W.S. Gilbert would have put it. And, as I was lucky enough to be brought up in the same place and raised, stylistically and intellectually, by almost the same group of people, I am bound to think that we learnt our craft in the finest place to be in the middle years of the post war period.

There is perhaps even a third disqualifying factor. Both of us are products of that mid-twentieth century consensus which put down the king of meritocratic tarmac that enabled us to tread the road to our College. For these and other reasons neither of us reaches for our intellectual revolvers when the names of Beveridge and Keynes are mentioned.

All that said, this book succeeds on several levels. It is absorbable with both value and pleasure by the general reader, sixth former, the undergraduate and the specialist in twentieth century British history. Those with little prior knowledge will neither get lost nor be put off reading to the end.

The specialist will savour those special Clarke gifts – the careful treatment of political character and the circumstances in which characteristics are displayed; his rare ability to both master political economy and to make it comprehensible to those for whom neither macro nor micro economics cause the pulses to run.

It is a brave scholar, too, who tackles a 90-year span that embraces a past of total wars, a social revolution or two, the transition from global super powers (albeit one on the slide) to a rather scratchy medium-sized entity ill at ease with the regional grouping into which an underperforming economy and an unforgiving geopolitics have engineered it during the long retreat since VE Day. Peter Clarke has managed this feat in a fashion that ensures the great synthesising tradition of British historiography will reach the twenty first century not just intact but flourishing.

If the remainder of the new Penguin History of Britain series matches the volume, the publisher will have a goldmine on his hands comparable to the early postwar series which fired-up so many of us in the 1950s and 1960s. If it does not, no matter. *Hope and Glory* needs no collective prop. Like its subject matter in 1940, it stands alone.

Peter Hennessy

Paul Sussman, *Death by Spaghetti*. pp. vi + 154. London: Fourth Estate, 1996. ISBN 1 85702 496 6

As he himself admitted to readers of the last number of *The Eagle* ('It's All Gone Horribly Wrong . . .'), on his twentieth birthday Paul Sussman wrote a letter to himself in his garden shed. To those of us who had been charged with the custody of Paul at the time this came as no surprise. By then, the end of his first year, Paul had already established a reputation as someone absolutely to be relied upon for a tasteless remark when it was least needed. The rest of that piece of his recorded much that had gone sort of right for him since. Much but not all. For example, the Sussman reticent on the subject of his deathless, Widnes Macbeth, not to mention his private detective work, his (also Widnes) Oedipus and his labours as an insurance salesman in parts of Balham, all of which, laid end to end, necessitated the establishment of a new sub-department within the Careers Service, and much of which goes some way towards accounting for the incongruity between the title of 'It's All Gone Horribly Wrong. . .' and its content. Then there is its

weakness on chronology, evidenced by its failure (it still rankles) to record the coincidence of that twentieth birthday and his Director of Studies' forty-forth. Then there is the headline to the piece: 'Paul Sussman read Oriental Studies, graduating in 1988.' Well, 'graduating in 1988' (two years after his time in the shed) is certainly right. As to what Sussman was actually reading between 1985 and 1988, my understanding of it at the time . . . . But never mind about that – though ten years on it begins to explain some of his essays. Perhaps he really was reading Oriental Studies all the time. Perhaps while I thought we were discussing clause 39 of Magna Carta, Sussman was actually in Peking or already at Dunsinane.

As all current purchasers of the *Big Issue* who remember Paul's earlier exploits are aware, the claim to acquaintance with our hero entitles them to an up-to 95 per cent discount on the purchase price. Thus challenged, many vendors of that admirable mag. will gladly shell out to you, gentle Johnian, rather than be subjected to a recitation of the side-splitting *contes* of the old conteur of the Cam. For those whose sides have not been split already, however, *Death by Spaghetti* provides an antidote. With his reports of murderous melons, Mr Yasujiro Kikowo's Patent Toilet Bicycle, lethal coconuts, Professor Tribulus's tribulations, horrible things happening to delicate parts, and other such tales either culled from the world's press or dredged up from his own murky depths, with this collection of his previously published *Big Issue* pieces Paul Sussman has almost certainly established himself as one of the abiding wits of the class of 85.

Peter Linehan

Peter Linehan. *The Ladies of Zamora*. pp. xvi + 192 Manchester: Manchester University press, 1997. ISBN 0 7190 5044 8.

In July 1279, Bishop Suero Perez of Zamora crossed over the River Duero in order to carry out a visitation of Las Dueñas, a community of Dominican nuns on the southern outskirts of the city. The Bishop claimed that his visit was prompted by rumours concerning 'the many

quarrels and discord dividing the said nuns'. From the depositions of the thirty-four women interrogated by the episcopal visitors, it is hard to believe that the Bishop's primary concern was with reconciling the community. One by one, the nuns were invited to articulate all their grudges and to tell tales on one another. There were standard indicators of conventual disarray, for example that certain nuns 'would not eat in the refectory with the other nuns'. There was less standard evidence of discord and outright cruelty among the nuns, such as the case of Mirovida, who 'had a row with another nun after compline, and when María Martínez went to separate them Mirovida squashed her between two doors and made her bleed'. But it is in the nature rather than the content of these 'nuns' tales' that the full extent of conventual bitchiness and back-biting is revealed: the accusations and counter-accusations which make this sort of evidence so problematic and also so much fun for historians to use.

When Peter Linehan discovered the transcript of Bishop Suero's visitation in the archive of Zamora Cathedral in 1966, it seems he was uncertain quite what use he would put it to. He provided a summary account of it in his work *The Spanish Church and the Papacy* of 1971 and expected that, with the existence of the documents out in the open, other scholars would hurry to publish and discuss their contents. We can only be grateful that this did not actually happen, forcing Linehan back to Zamora to revisit this extraordinary case. But if historians of medieval Spain hung back from interpreting the events with which this book is concerned, it is perhaps understandable; so too that Linehan pondered his findings for some twenty-five years before embarking on the task. For the historical evidence which is available amounts to a minefield of contradictions. Steeped in clerical corruption, those who fashioned the primary sources sought more often to obscure than to illuminate the truth. The same tradition of obfuscation has pervaded secondary accounts of the religious orders. Well into the twentieth century, the history of the Dominicans has been written with a view to protecting the reputation of the order, and to smoothing over the cracks. Linehan's commitment to setting the story of the *Ladies of Zamora* in full historical context has required him to wrestle with over 700 years of myth-making.

So what was the context of the nuns' quarrels in Zamora in 1279? The immediate cause of division was over the presence of friars within the convent. According to one nun, Sol Martínez, 'the root of the problem was that the friars wanted to deprive the bishop of his jurisdiction over the convent and give it to themselves'. Yet, as Sol Martínez develops her observations, it becomes clear that the question of jurisdiction was not the only aspect of the friar problem:

> The friars came frequently to the convent and had talks with the young nuns privately. Brother Munio threatened those who took the bishop's side that he would have them taken and chained up for ever. [. . .] Brother Juan de Aviancos stripped off in front of the nuns. Brother Martin Picamillo and another brother held conversations in the nuns' dormitory [. . .] Brother Domingo Yuañez and brother Gil were in the dormitory too, and also bared themselves, after which the girls dressed them [. . .] Doña Stefanía said that she had brother Gil's trousers and kept them with her by night for love of the said friar.

Gil's trousers would perhaps bear more extensive unzipping than we are given here but the author does not suffer too much wallowing in details of this sort. For Linehan, these episodes belong to a plot of wider significance.

Take brother Munio, for instance, who 'threatened [the nuns] who took the bishop's side'. This was surely also the Munio referred to by the prioress of Las Dueñas in a letter of 1281, addressed to the Spanish cardinal, Ordoño Alvarez, in which she complained, 'Apart from all the other things they did, brother Munio and the Dominicans often told the nuns not to observe the promises they had made to the bishop'. He turns out (almost certainly) to be the same Munio of Zamora who became Master General of the Dominican Order in 1285 and who was dramatically removed from his office in 1290. This is the same Munio whose career was rehabilitated in 1294, when he was appointed Bishop of Palencia, thanks to the interventions and bribery of his protector King Sancho of Castile. And perhaps brother Munio was also in the background when King Sancho had authorized a payment of 30 000

maravedís to the aforementioned Cardinal Ordoño in 1285, just one month after the Zamoran friar had been elevated to the position of Master-General. Pursuing Munio, his friends and his enemies, from Zamora to the papal Curia over a twenty-year period, Linehan shows how events in a Castilian nunnery could influence high politics in the medieval church.

This book presents an impressive kind of narrative history, which weaves the big stories in with the little stories. Linehan's mastery of the provincial archives, combined with his enormous learning, equip him for this sort of enterprise. There are those who would have settled for containing the nuns' tales within a tidy microhistorical framework, missing a wealth of broader implications. But, as Linehan himself affirms, the nuns are also 'of interest to the historian of medieval morals and manners'. Musing on some of the bizarre revelations contained in the 1279 visitation – for example, the funeral ritual acted out by a group of nuns following the exclusion of their beloved friars from the convent – Linehan asks whether it is not 'the ministrations of the social anthropologist that the Ladies of Zamora require'. Well, perhaps. But in the meantime, we have an account which is scholarly, insightful and a pleasure to read – which is enough to be going on with.

Mary Laven

Robert Hinde. *Relationships: A Dialectical Perspective*. pp. Xxi + 586 Psychology Press 1997. ISBN 0-86377-706-6.

Roland Barthes once wrote 'Love's atopia . . . causes it to escape all dissertations'. In 'Relationships – A Dialectical Perspective', Professor Robert A. Hinde attempts not merely to elucidate the complex factors which affect the ways in which we love, but establishes a theoretical framework by which we can embark upon a science of all human relationships. The key to understanding human relationships lies in what Hinde calls (and represents diagramatically as) the dialectical relationship between various levels of social complexity. These levels include not only the individual in terms of his 'psychological processes', 'individual behaviour' and 'interaction' with others but also encompass larger levels of influence – 'group', 'society', 'physical environment' and 'socio-cultural structure'.

The need for dialectic in a science of relationships emerges when one begins to understand the nature of the interactions between these levels. Relationships are influenced not only by current local context (individuals' psychology and behaviour) but also by previous history (of individual, group and society) and these factors influence the nature of future relationships. Crucially however, (and this is why the notion of dialectic is so important) changes in the nature of relationships feed back to influence the nature of the various levels of complexity. Any science of relationships, states Hinde, will need to encompass these dynamics.

Having established this perspective in the first part of the book, Hinde embarks upon a scholarly account of the studies of the various aspects of relationships (referencing over 1600 titles). He begins with those which have focused primarily on the description of, rather than the processes involved in, relationships. Hinde organises these studies according to categories of dimensions of relationships, beginning with the objective aspects of relationships – the content of interactions (what people do), the qualities of interactions (how they do what they do), the diversity of interactions and the frequency and patterning of interactions. Studies concerned with the subjective aspects of relationships are then considered, such as intimacy, interpersonal perception, satisfaction and commitment.

The proceeding section is devoted to an account of those studies which have addressed the principles underlying the dynamics of relationships, considering issues such as the effect of cultural values, attributional styles and quality of early maternal interaction on relationships. These principles are often referred to by Hinde as 'processes' – indeed, he emphasises that relationships themselves are processes not entities. The use of the word process is salutary – it reminds us that because of the dynamic nature of the subject matter at hand, a science of relationships will need to be more than a search for a few underlying psychological or

behavioural mechanisms which may operate with regularity across relationships, cultures and time. It will need to be eclectic by drawing from a number of disciplines and imaginative in integrating its diverse findings. As a result of the insights shown by Professor Hinde, this book will become the seminal work in a much needed science of relationships.

Kate Plaisted

Nicholas Mansergh. *Nationalism and Independence: Selected Irish Papers*. Edited by Diana Mansergh. pp. Xvii + 264 Cork University Press, 1997. ISBN 1 85918 106 6.

The writer of this review recalls attending, as an undergraduate, a meeting of the College History Society at which a 'brains trust' of College historians answered questions put to them by the more precocious among us. The only person I can clearly recall as having been on the panel was the then Master, Nicholas Mansergh. No doubt there were others, perhaps a Young Turk (it was some years ago) like Peter Linehan, and an ever-reliable guide like Henry Pelling. But Nicholas Mansergh remains in my mind for one specific answer to a question posed about the historian's working method. Having written a piece of work, he said, he liked to 'leave it in a drawer for a year or two' before revising it (or not) and offering it for public consumption. This procedure seemed amazing at the time, when one's life was dominated, if only intermittently, by the desperate struggle to cobble together a weekly history essay. Today, moreover, such a leisurely approach to publication is so grotesquely out of kilter with the compulsive research-assessment-based publishing frenzy which characterises contemporary historical activity that one regards it with a sort of bemused wonder. It testifies to a more spacious scholarly world and an altogether more civilised academic environment. The past is indeed 'another country'.

Nationalism and Independence reflects the virtues of humane scholarship which Nicholas Mansergh himself exemplified. And if not all of the pieces in the book by any means spent very much time in a drawer before being given to the wider world, like really good wine they have

all aged well. Gathered together here are a range of papers which reflect Mansergh's own rubric for the study of history: it 'requires not only detachment, but detachment with sympathetic insight'. One revolutionary Irish nationalist, with whom one would suppose Mansergh had very little in common, thought his high quality as a commentator on Irish affairs was underpinned by his being 'an Irishman with no political axe to grind'. This, of course, was only true in a narrow party-political sense, for Mansergh certainly had a political vision in which, as Professor J. J. Lee (of University College Cork) in his admirable foreword writes (quoting David Harkness, of Queen's University Belfast), he 'held firmly to certain basic values, especially tolerance, a sense of justice, and a sense of fairness'; in short, 'the essence of civilised society'.

The papers in this volume, which are drawn together from published and unpublished work written over nearly forty years, reflect not only Mansergh's Irish interests, but also his work as a leading historian of the British Commonwealth. The implications of 'dominion status' for Ireland are explored, as is the changing relationship of independent Ireland, both in and with the Commonwealth. Particularly to be welcomed is the republication of his important 1976 Commonwealth Lecture, which lucidly dissected the concepts and aims which lay behind partition in Ireland and India. Of especial interest is the previously unpublished material. This includes notes of conversations with leading Irish politicians, including Eamon de Valera and John A. Costello. It is fascinating to see information from these 'research notes' coming through in subsequently published work. A wonderful occasion-piece (perhaps prepared for another College History Society meeting?), 'Letters that we ought to burn', is included as an epilogue.

There are also some extracts from Mansergh's diary between 1934 and 1939 – would that there were more! They demonstrate a familiar and attractive lack of any particular self-regard. Reflecting on some Anglo-Irish Ascendancy types who had come to lunch at his home in Tipperary, he wrote that 'with rare exceptions the products of the 'gentry' here seem to me the most incompetent, the most critical and in many instances the most idle people I have met', adding, 'I am one of

them myself.' There is an unhappily resonant comment about Northern Ireland when in 1935 a professor at University College Dublin warns him against going to meet violent politicians in the North. 'There are people up there', he said, 'whose politics are no more intelligent than the beating of an orange drum'. This bleak, if apt, observation, all too abundantly reinforced by the events of recent years in Northern Ireland, sadly contrasts with the easing of political passions in the mid-to-late 1960s which Mansergh noted in a 1968 piece. He remarked that everyday life in Ireland was 'no longer overshadowed by the consuming demands of an all-pervasive militant nationalism'. That this proved not to be the case – especially in Northern Ireland – was due in no small measure to the intransigent orange attitudes observed in the 1930s. On the other hand, the establishment of civil, indeed civilised, and amiable relations between independent Ireland and the United Kingdom as sovereign states owes much to the work of Nicholas Mansergh himself (a 1948 paper here republished received the attention of the British Cabinet) and the 'quiet, calm deliberation' he employed in helping to disentangle the Irish (or Anglo-Irish) knot.

A personal diary note was struck when he reported in April 1939 'tea with Diana Keeton'. The footnote, exemplary as they all are, reveals: 'Wife and Research Assistant of Nicholas Mansergh, December 1939-1991 and editor of this volume of papers'. In the last sentence of the epilogue-piece, Nicholas Mansergh suggested that 'historians should not now, and still less in the future, overlook the unwritten, the mislaid, or the destroyed'. We have Diana Mansergh to thank that the papers in this volume, neither unwritten nor destroyed, cannot now easily be mislaid.

Keith Jeffery

BOOK REVIEWS

Jack Goody, *Representations and Contradictions.* Ambivalence Towards Images, Theatre, Fiction, Relics and Sexuality. P 293. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997. ISBN 0631 205268.

Why is a statue representing the sovereign of an ancien régime safe in a museum in 1793 but not in the adjacent parks? Why does a Kabul militia burn films in a public spectacle and yet allow reporters to photograph the event? The very cover of Jack Goody's most recent book, showing a Taliban soldier throwing film rolls onto an open fire before a male audience, goes to the heart of the problem, people's paradoxical attitudes towards images, sculptures, and other kinds of representations.

In order to express themselves or to communicate with others, societies and cultures throughout history have used representation, be it mimetic, pictorial, written or spoken word, or figurative. The author draws his examples from a rich background which ranges from African Mangbetu sculpture, medieval mystery plays and classical Greek art to Buddhist stupas, Balinese theatre and the English novel. Various societies and cultures have, however, also done the opposite. The author reminds us that Rousseau rejected fiction in Émile. Calvin inveighed against relics. Cistercians considered stained glass a decadent luxury. Chinese writers criticised sumptuous funerals. Representation has been deplored from Muhammad to Sartre.

Jack Goody tries to explain why representations are so unevenly distributed among human societies, either geographically (what is acceptable for cultures of the Ivory Coast might not be in Ghana), or diachronically (the absence of permanent, purpose-built public theatres in England between the late fourth and the late sixteenth century). To that purpose, he considers theoretical models. New Historicist thought is met with disapproval, being criticised for establishing esoteric connections between widely disparate phenomena (the 'casual lumping together of saints, shamans and Jesuits' and Stephen Greenblatt's criticism being the key issues here). He contrasts this with a 'psycho-

genetic universal' view as he sees it advanced by Jonas Barish. If I may put it bluntly, we have neither an iconoclastic gene waiting to be activated in times of crisis, nor can the transmission of cultural traditions by education, social interaction and learning entirely explain what prompts people to burn libraries.

The study ends with a host of possible solutions operating on various levels of abstraction, not unlike the African sculptures the author describes. The most mechanistic example in this book is the explanation for the popularity of anthropomorphic art in Western Nigeria and the Cameroons: the artists just responded to early colonial demands. Sculptures, fetishes and masks were what the Europeans wanted and what they got (so much for the naive conception of African art as indigenous, produced by prelapsarian tribes untainted by capitalist Western influence). A less concrete answer as to why the Senufo in Ivory Coast are filled with horror by the idea of portraying a living person is that they regard it as a threat, a curse invited on the person depicted. As art becomes more abstract, so does the anthropological model. Dead ancestors represented too precisely might become too life-like for comfort, hence it is considered safer to depict them in an abstract way.

At the end of explanatory logic contradiction looms, since representation is what it is not. In Dr Johnson's Rasselas, we read that we as readers become something we are not, by absorbing fiction which pretends to be life-like and which assumes reality in our minds (at least as long as we turn the pages of our book). Don Quixote is perhaps the most prominent casualty of narrative representation, suffering an identity crisis from reading too many old-fashioned courtly romances. The ambivalence between identity and representation, the 'canker in the rose', is what intrigues both iconoclast and art lover. To let the author have the last word, 'culture includes a kernel of doubt, its own critique of itself that may lead to the adoption of opposed forms of behaviour.'

Barabara Ravelhofer

Geoffrey Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and its Speakers*. pp xxi + 393. London and New York (Longman Linguistics Library), 1997. ISBN 0-582-03191-5.

No need to say that this is a marvellous, major book: more important to say what it does. George Thompson at Birmingham, virtually two generations ago, first insisted that in his Department Greek was to be Greek was to be Greek, from Homer to Cavafy. And now the large émigré Greek communities round the world want learned study to go on of their whole linguistic, literary and cultural patrimony. We who have loved the Classics have reaped in only a small corner of a vast field, have, indeed, looked down on Hellenistic Greek, the Septuagint, New Testament Greek, Byzantine Greek, 'Erotokritos', 'The Bridge of Anta', as fallings-away, and have often not even tried to learn contemporary Greek. But there the Greek language still is: there are still native speakers of Greek, as there are not of Latin. How shall this vast continuity/development be accounted for, analysed, put properly in the framework of invasions and conquests and migrations ('. . . and its Speakers')? How different is modern Greek, and how and when did it get like that? Answering those questions is what this book does.

And what we who've read some Homer and some Greek Tragedy have been at least just a bit aware of is that there never was at any given time only one Greek language (quite apart from dialects - we're not concerned with those here). This *diglossy* is not unique to Greek, but Greek is an extreme case of different 'registers' of language coexisting at each given time; and it goes right back: the language we read in Homer was never spoken by any native speaker, nor the 'Doric' language of the choruses of Greek tragedy, nor the 'Ionic' of Herodotus. Then the formal register of the Athenian speech developed, through imperialism, into a 'Koiné' (itself having spoken as well as written versions), but always 'high' language and 'low' language differing, the literary and the vernacular always - though not always the same distance - apart. Already in the Hellenistic period, before the Christian era, 'many changes characteristic of modern Greek were *already* beginning to take effect in the more popular spoken and *written* varieties of the language' (reviewer's italics). In Byzantine times the gap was huge: high Atticism,

unintelligible to most, sought to minister to the Greeks' national definition of themselves; but then, as the Byzantine empire contracted, the vernacular language offered a new way of defining cultural nationalism. That same theme is echoed in the late 19th century, when the first wave of proud antiquarian Greekness after the liberation broke up in the need for Greece to have its own modern culture, and that produced the impassioned 'language question' from the end of the century, just about resolved (so G.H. tells us) only now, when 'the language spoken by the averagely well-educated population of the major cities is accepted as 'standard'.

If those few, and inadequate, sentences convey anything of the excitement of being presented with the volatility of this ever-old, ever-new vehicle of some of the finest products of European thought, in the pages of G.H.'s truly big (but not easy) book, they will send the reader to borrow it, maybe, rather than buy it, for the hardback is £48: oh, but there's a paperback.

John Crook

John Kerrigan, *Revenge Tragedy: Aeschylus to Armageddon*, Clarendon Press: Oxford 1996. Pp.xv + 404. Paperback 1997, £13.99.

One of the later chapters of *Revenge Tragedy* - 'Medea Variations: Feminism and Revenge' - ends with a discussion of 'Edge', apparently Sylvia Plath's last poem, dated six days before she committed suicide, leaving bread and butter and two mugs of milk out for her children. John Kerrigan quotes the beginning:

> Her dead
>
> Body wears the smile of accomplishment,
> The illusion of a Greek necessity
>
> Flows in the scrolls of her toga,
> Her bare

Feet seem to be saying:
We have come so far, it is over.

Each dead child coiled, a white serpent,
One at each little

Pitcher of milk, now empty.

Like Medea, Plath's self-immolating mother 'seeks to become more a mother' by killing her children. And after making his analysis Kerrigan comments: '"Edge" manages its iconography with classical decorum. It is the work of someone who has read the Tragedy paper at Newnham.'

The Tragedy paper is one of the constants of the English Tripos, and indeed one of its differentiae. As many readers of *The Eagle* will never forget, candidates must write one essay on Greek tragedy, another on tragedy in the age of Shakespeare, and a third on modern tragedy - or else they can attempt just one question, and undertake the awesome task of demonstrating command of all three fields and their interrelationships in a single monster essay. *Revenge Tragedy* hints in its title at *Hamlet* and **The Spanish Tragedy**, while the sub-title joins antiquity with modernity. It is the work of someone who has been teaching the Tragedy paper at St John's.

The sub-title also makes another connection - between literature and life, or at any rate our fears and fantasies about life and (more particularly) violent vengeful death, as reinforced by (for example) stomach-turning reports of what the Vietcong did to the Americans and what the Americans did to the Vietcong: apocalypse now. *Revenge Tragedy* is a statement as far removed as one could conceive from the self-referential post-modernism that was yesterday's fashion - which has nonetheless perhaps done something to spark the book's intellectual pyrotechnics and black wit.

So are we back with something more like Dr Leavis? Well, Kerrigan's first page unashamedly refers to the great tradition of European literature. As we read on we are left in no doubt about the identity of

that tradition: Kerrigan writes about the *Iliad*, the *Oresteia*, *Oedipus Tyrannus*, *Medea*, Seneca, *La Chanson du Roland*, the *Roman de Troie*, Spenser, Shakespeare, Calderón, *Don Giovanni*, Dostoevsky, *Moby Dick* - but also about Count Dracula, the detective novels of Nicholas Blake, the theatre of cruelty, Sylvia Plath . . . Kerrigan's canon may have its classics, yet they are counterpointed with dozens of lesser lights (some you will know, some I didn't[1]) gleaming fitfully through the centuries. Authors examined are mostly Western, although *Gilgamesh* and Japanese theatre and the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe are at various points introduced into the argument. And as well as Watson, 'gripped by the kind of existential lassitude which manifests itself in the consumption of late breakfasts', and Holmes, and again Grenfell and Hunt (from Tony Harrison's *Trackers of Oxyrhynchus*), other non-tragic characters like Ford in the Merry Wives and the Queen of the Night make brief appearances. Nobody in the least obvious, in fact, is excluded from the party, except - so far as I could think, and no doubt because no book can go on for ever - Lorca and Sean O'Casey. Mills and Boon get a mention; and not only does 'Man bites dog' (*The Sun*, 27 October 1987) launch a chapter, but the relevant page is reproduced along with Delacroix's Medea (and several other Medeas) in a select sequence of photographic plates. I'm afraid Leavis, despite Kerrigan's sometimes thinly disguised moral seriousness, would not have been entirely happy.

This exuberant, sombre, complex, accessible, readable, scholarly and astonishingly learned work is in essence a picaresque meditation on some penetratingly simple propositions about the nature of revenge and its literary representation. When B gets his own back on A for something A has done against B, B is already at once telling and enacting a story about himself and his enemy. (Real-life revenge is therefore inevitably imagining and histrionic and rhetorical; and Kerrigan argues that these features of revenge carry over into the modern system of justice, and into our conceptions of what legal punishment does and should consist of.) Often, however, the original B is dead, so unless he returns as a vampire or has transfixed A with a curse, revenge has to be conducted by a B-substitute such as Orestes or young Hamlet, who must suspend his own identity, and then - burdened with a terrible memory - try to

cope with a quest for 'psychic balance as well as ethical equivalence'. The B-substitute may not actually know who A is. Hence Chapter 3, 'Sophocles in Baker Street': the attempt at revenge may require not just violence but tracking and analysis, intellectual passion, and the subterfuges of an antic disposition echoed by Sherlock Holmes and Lord Peter Wimsey. No wonder that the play within a play is a favoured device of revenge tragedy, or that 'hypocrisy, deception, and mild derangement (standard instruments of comedy for a clown) are natural adjuncts of the revenger'. Trackers and analysts like to think they are mastering the causal process. But by a paradox of revenge the B-substitute knows his predicament is imposed upon him, and it may be he that is in the end himself mastered by processes he intentionally but unintentionally sets in train. The classic example is Oedipus: the A he is after turns out to be himself.

Revenge Tragedy is not a book that bothers much with 'theory', but Kerrigan has drawn inspiration particularly from Aristotle's account of tragedy. His first chapter finds in the *Poetics*' treatment of action, character and intellect as three main ingredients the clue to what is vital for understanding revenge tragedy: retributive causation shaping the plot; the characteristically anguished and divided personality the revenger becomes; and 'verbal pragmatics which . . . join yet divide A and B'. His final chapter looks at some of the moral philosophy contemporary admirers of Aristotle such as Bernard Williams and Martha Nussbaum have tried to extract from tragedy. Here Kerrigan is much less persuaded. He is not unsympathetic to their anti-Kantian interest in showing that whether a person is good or bad or behaves well or badly turns not just on the extent of their obedience to the categorical imperative, but on luck, too. Nor does he object in principle to their recourse to literature to find examples to make the point - e.g. the choices and tragic regret of Anna Karenina, a character whose moral meaning to the reader is a function of her highly contingent situation, and indeed of bad luck in a notoriously literal form. Kerrigan's reservations relate instead to two other aspects of these philosophers' approach to tragedy. First, he diagnoses a secular liberal deafness to the sense of revenge and retribution as moral constants of the human condition shared by writers otherwise so unlike as Tolstoy and

Euripides, notably in the *Hecuba*. Second, and I think relatedly, there is as Kerrigan perceives it a fatal flatness and abstraction in the readings proposed by Williams and Nussbaum. They 'have a way of turning dramatic personae into philosophers'. If we want to be latter-day Aristotelians, we do better - he suggests - to turn to Jean-François Lyotard, for recognition that A and B may be so circumstanced that the language of A can only be made intelligible in the language of B at the cost of B's thereby conceding all that was at stake. And that is a point about life, not just about literature. 'To think about revenge tragedy', Kerrigan concludes, 'is to approach an understanding of forces which drive behaviour across many levels - always including the linguistic; forces which, for better or worse, are unlikely to be "purged" from the human sphere.'

Revenge Tragedy, first published in 1996, is now available in paperback, beautifully presented by the Clarendon Press. The book has been warmly received by the critics; and it won the Truman Capote Prize for 1997. Those who are reading for the Tragedy paper, or who once read for it, or who have a sneaking feeling they would like to have read for it, or who simply want to think about revenge, will all need their Kerrigan.

Malcolm Schofield

[1] At first I thought 'Horestes' in the title of Chapter 7 ('"Remember Me!": Horestes, Hieronimo, and Hamlet') must be a questionable joke, until discovering that there really was a Tudor *Horestes* by one John Pykering, itself developed from Lydgate's Horrestes in his *Troy Book*.

Alexander Monro, *The Professor's Daughter: An Essay on Female Conduct (1739)*, transcribed with Introduction and Notes by Dr PAF Monro, 1995. pp. Cxlvii + 171. ISBN 09525 490.

The most well-known domestic correspondence of the Eighteenth Century is almost certainly the Earl of Chesterfield's letters to his son, of which Dr Johnson famously remarked "They teach the morals of a whore

and the manners of a dancing master". The correspondence under review presents a very different set of educational values. More high-minded and academic. Alexander Monro's *Essay on Female Conduct* reveals both the twin strains of moderate Calvinism and scientific rationality that are so redolent of the Scottish Enlightenment, as well as the sensitive and pragmatic concern of a father for his daughter's well-being.

Alexander Monro was the first Professor of Anatomy at the University of Edinburgh, serving from 1720 until his retirement in 1758. He was born in London in 1697, the son of an army surgeon, and, as was customary, followed his father into medicine as his apprentice. Between 1717 and 1720 the young Munro travelled to the Continent, studying at Paris and lecturing on anatomy at Leyden. By the time of the 1739 *Essay on Female Conduct* he had become an important figure in Edinburgh's burgeoning Enlightenment, serving as Secretary to the Society for Improving Philosophy and Natural Knowledge, later the Philosophical Society.

The 1739 Essay was written as a series of *Letters from a Father to his Daughter*, the young Margaret Monro, who could not have been much more than thirteen years old at the time. They were not intended for publication, but rather as a personal guide for Margaret's education. The current volume has been reconstructed from what remains of Monro's original manuscript (1739), and from two transcriptions: the earliest by Margaret herself (1739) - it was one of her father's wishes that she transcribe the work twice so as to learn 'Readyness and Correctness in Writing' - and another later transcription (1799-1800) for Sophia Hoome, Alexander Monro's great-grand daughter, and the present transcriber's great great grand-mother.

The *Essay* begins with an exposition, "Of the Education of Girls". Monro rejects the narrow and exclusive teaching of "women's work" - dancing, music, reading, sewing and the like - in favour of a more extensive curriculum, including history, languages, politics, geography, book keeping and marketing, and natural and revealed religion. These he offers to his daughter 'With the Design of Acquaintances and to be beloved by your Relations . . .'. Here we see the marriage of the public

values of the Enlightenment with traditional views of gender and domesticity; that a woman might use the tools of Reason and Virtue to enhance her private position. For the latter part of this quote indicates that, although Monro could contemplate a considerable change in the *nature* of a girl's education, the underlying *purpose* would remain largely the same.

In accordance with this, the great bulk of the Essay is given over to a woman's duty as woman, wife, mistress, and mother. Two chapters are devoted to "the Government of Servants" and "the Management of Children". The chapter "Of the general Conduct of Life" is concerned with behaviour and good manners, and offers a catalogue of womanly virtues - honesty, good nature, modesty, chastity, generosity - as well as of vices - anger, envy, bashfulness, vanity. Moderation is preached in all things, it being argued that an excess of a virtue can be as great a vice as want of one.

The chapter "Of Commerce with Men" is also largely in the form of a catalogue, this time categorising the types of men to be avoided. Although Monro argues that the natural state of men and women is that of help-mates, there is a tendency for him to see male-female relations as something of a war of the sexes, and his long list of unsuitable suitors - ranging from fools and "foplings" to rakes and "whore-masters" - cannot have given poor Margaret much heart. Her father, however, was far from a heartless man, insisting that above all Margaret should marry the man she loves, and suggesting that she should accept the list as a counsel of perfection:

> Don't think, Child, that I have made so many Exceptions to your accepting an Husband as may debar you from one forever . . . There are a bundance of Men neither too far above nor too much below your rank that can secure you in the Conveniences of life which your Station requires - My moral man is not one who never sinned but one who has not been a notorious or habitual Transgressor - By excluding those who have violent Passions I did not demand that they could never be moved - Though I can not advise you to take a Fool, a Ninny or a froathy Coxcomb, yet

> I did not put my negative upon all who were not consummately wise and witty. I pretend to no more for you than a Lad of a middle rank, Age, Person, Fortune, Morals and character.

Moderation is also the key to Monro's position on religion and politics, the two subjects which conclude the *Essay*. In the highly charged politics of the early Hanoverian period Monro advises his daughter to steer a middle path, noting objections to the claims of both sides, and suggesting she put the safety and interests of her family above party politics. Nevertheless, he was himself a moderate supporter of the Hanoverian succession, believing that the Stuart claim to Divine Right and their Roman Catholicism were a threat to Britain's internal peace and external security. But above all he wishes his daughter to make up her own mind on these matters. The chapters on government and religion - more so than those previously - are constructed around the contemporary debates and are concerned to persuade and convince. Monro's aim was not to create in Margaret an unthinking partisan in either politics or religion, but rather to provide her with the tools whereby she might come to her own judgements and determine her own position. It is Monro's fair-mindedness and thoughtful concern for his daughter's intellectual development which comes out most consistently in the correspondence.

Dr Peter Monro has provided a great service in bringing us these letters. The transcriptions and accompanying essays and extracts have been thoroughly reconstructed from the existing fragments and manuscripts and expertly situated - both textually and contextually - by Dr Monro's introduction and notes. This is particularly so of the sets of notes on the sources and structure of the manuscripts, and in the notes to "Of the Education of Girls", where Dr Monro's familiarity with contemporary sources and literature proves an essential guide, especially for the less qualified reader. Altogether he has produced a valuable source for the scholar of Eighteenth Century British intellectual and cultural history and for the interested general reader alike.

Damien A Browne

Henry Pelling, *Churchill's Peacetime Ministry*, 1951-55. pp. ix +216. Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press Ltd. 1997. ISBN 0 333 55597 X.

This book, which Henry Pelling self-consciously intended as his last, is a dual testament to the determination of the elderly. Dr Pelling himself, although confined to his familiar electric buggy, in his final year published a work which represented a fitting end to a distinguished career; and its subject is Winston Churchill, who, weeks short of his 77th birthday, took the highest office once more, and, despite his infirmities, for a further three-and-a-half years firmly resisted all attempts to retire him. Yet it is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the book's creation was a more edifying episode than the events it chronicles.

Churchill's refusal to give up the reigns of power, even after his stroke in June 1953, has long been a stick in the hands of those who wish to demythologise him. Lord Moran, who helped cover up the Prime Minister's illness, was one of these; he scrupulously (or unscrupulously) recorded all Churchill's ailments, and published an account of them in 1966. Dr Pelling implies that Moran's claims were hyperbolic and alarmist, exaggerating Churchill's unfitness for office. Certainly, the old man could still rise to the occasion when it was demanded of him. As we are reminded, his public speeches often showed the old brilliance, and his private remarks the familiar wit. Selwyn Lloyd, taken aback to be offered a post in the Foreign Office, objected that he had not been abroad in peacetime, did not like foreigners, and knew no foreign languages. 'Young man,' Churchill replied, 'these all seem to be positive advantages.'

But a lot of the force was gone. Did this lack of dynamism matter? The PM's colleagues, including many familiar faces from the war, got on with the business of government with a measure of quiet competence. 300,000 new houses were built, as had been promised, albeit at the expense of industrial investment. The Conservative backbenchers showed more independence than usual, to no major ill effect. In the absence of a constructive strategy for dealing with increasing wage claims, the Minister of Labour, Walter Monckton, bought industrial peace by giving the unions the rises they wanted. And, if this record is not exactly distinguished, it must be pointed out that when Anthony

Eden at last inherited the premiership, his very different style of government soon helped drag him to disaster. It took Eden's successor, Harold Macmillan, to finally combine the stolidity of Churchill in his final phase with a whiff of the Eden dash.

Dr Pelling does not remark on these questions directly at length, preferring to let the facts do the talking. Thus, apart from the occasional very dry remark, authorial comment is largely absent. This slight disappointment is underlined by the fact that the book's best, indeed outstanding, chapter is the one where the author feels able to give his views free reign. Entitled 'Privatisation', this cleverly links the denationalisation of the Road Haulage and Iron and Steel industries with the debate over the introduction of commercial television. Dr Pelling clearly demonstrates the modesty of the former measures, and also that, with regard to the latter issue, Churchill himself opposed the ending of the BBC's monopoly. He comments mordantly: 'If this was 'setting the people free', then the phrase had a very limited meaning in the legislation of the early 1950s.'

It was over foreign policy, however, that the government's record was murkiest. 1954, Eden's *annus mirabilis*, brought triumphs for British diplomacy in South East Asia and in Europe. But the approach of Churchill himself was flawed. In thrall to past triumphs, he continually relied on the memory of wartime associations to achieve what Britain's diminished power by itself could not. This did not really wash with the Americans. It was even less successful as far as policy towards the USSR went. The Prime Minister's proposal of an early summit meeting alienated both his US ally and his own cabinet: he was only 'saved from further humiliation by the clumsiness of Soviet diplomacy', we are told. Things were as bad, if not worse, over the Middle East. On the one hand, an often truculent Churchill increased the oversensitive Eden's fears of seeming to appease the Egyptians, dismissing his Foreign Secretary's emollient stance on negotiations as 'appeasement': 'he never knew before that Munich was situated on the Nile'. On the other, he in practice allowed what has been called the 'Descent to Suez' to develop more or less unimpeded under Eden's aegis; and fully escaped the political consequences himself.

This book brings in new evidence on these questions, both from material in the Public Record Office, and from the private papers of cabinet ministers, in particular those of Eden. Reading these sources, together with the other, more familiar evidence also quoted, one is drawn to two conclusions. First, in spite of his flaws, Churchill was in 1951 still an asset to the Tory Party, and indeed, it seems unlikely it would have been elected without him. Second, he remained in office after his stroke only because the public were deceived about the seriousness of his illness, and the rest of his term was a pathetic travesty of his former greatness. Perhaps this sad end was inevitable. For, as the late Enoch Powell, surely something of an expert in these matters, once observed, all political careers end in failure. Henry Pelling's last book, however, is reassuring evidence that all historical careers need not.

Richard Toye

BOOK REVIEWS

Patricia Morison, *J T Wilson and the Fraternity of Duckmaloi*. pp474. Rodopi Press, Amsterdam 1997. ISBN: 9042002468

Part of a series in the History of Medicine sponsored by the Wellcome Institute and Trust, this book helps set the record straight on James Thomas Wilson. Wilson, in the midst of a distinguished career at Sydney University, was recruited to Cambridge in 1920 as Professor of Anatomy and Fellow of St John's. Morison recreates the life and elevates the significance of this man through a careful accounting of his significant meetings, scientific achievements, and political battles. Several of his colleagues are far better remembered than Wilson himself, such as his student Grafton Elliot Smith the great neuroanatomist and anthropologist, Anderson Stuart the powerful university politician who founded the medical school at Sydney and recruited Wilson, and Wilson's protégé, Johnny Hunter, who shot to fame after his early death. In the first accounts of the period, challenged by this history, Wilson's contributions to research, teaching, and Sydney University were eclipsed by these men; surprising considering the extraordinarily high regard he was accorded by his contemporaries and students.

A Scot by birth and lifelong inclination, Wilson trained in Edinburgh under William Turner, Britain's leading anatomist in the 1880s, and after some time as a ship's physician, became demonstrator and soon thereafter Professor of Anatomy in Sydney. In Sydney, Wilson made his reputation as one of the leading evolutionary anatomists by taking advantage of the local fauna, particularly the platypus, and investigating its 'beak' and then its embryology with JP Hill, another Edinburgh trained Scot. Their findings, that these embryos show characteristics of cleavage, gastrulation, and nutritional supply common to reptiles on the one hand and to eutherian mammals on the other, helped solidify the pattern of successive evolution among the mammals. Accompanying Wilson, Hill and Smith in their exploration of biology of the Australian fauna, was C J Martin the physiologist and pathologist who later made his fame with his investigations of viral

epidemics and as director of the Lister Institute. These four, whose lives were tied together by friendship and endeavour, formed the fraternity of Duckmaloi, the name of the river where they hunted the platypus. Each of the fraternity was awarded an FRS for their work in Australia and each went on to remarkable careers in biomedical science. In addition to his work on the Australian marsupials and monotremes, Wilson also made substantial contributions to the homologies and variations of particular animal and human muscles, especially with respect to their innervation. He was a master of anatomical sectioning and staining techniques, publishing about as many methodological papers as scientific issue papers.

This book also tells the story of Wilson as a man whose career was interrupted by years of dedicated service as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Australian special service during the war, work for which he was awarded but rejected an OBE. In addition, it is the story of a loving father and husband whose spirit was challenged by the untimely death of his first wife soon after the birth of their first-born, and the stroke that left his second wife incapacitated while the six children from this marriage were still young. The strength of his character seems to have come from his deep belief in the Protestant Free Church and a lifelong study of philosophy. These traits fuelled a carefully considered, practical idealism that gave all his writings weight and merit.

What is perhaps most significant about this history of Wilson is that it chronicles not only his life but also an important era of medical biology from the perspective of an important, if not central, figure. This distance gives a perspective to the fields of experimental embryology at the time of His, Roux, Harrison and Streeter, of neurobiology in the time of Sherrington, Golgi, and Langley, and of cellular biology, biochemistry and genetics at the time of the rediscovery of Mendel's laws in the context of Darwin's theory of evolution. Though himself a classical anatomist, and not at the centre of these developments, Wilson critically incorporated these scientific achievements in his work and his teaching. His aim as a teacher, university leader, and particularly as a Professor of Anatomy was to promote the scientific rather than clinical training of medical students. Doctors would get plenty of clinical training

throughout the duration of their careers, he argued, but only during their early University training could medical students be trained scientifically. These ideas, under the pressure of Wilson and his like-minded colleagues, led to the revision of medical school curricula in Sydney and Cambridge, with the emphasis on preclinical scientific training. Many of the fights that Wilson fought are still being fought at Medical Schools throughout the world where traditional courses and clinical work battle with training at the advancing frontiers of scientific understanding.

William A. Harris
Professor of Anatomy

Guy Lee, *Horace: Odes and Carmen Saeculare*, with an English version in the original metres, introduction and notes. Pp. xxiii + 278. Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1998. ISBN: 0 905205 94 4.

Poetry, according to the celebrated dictum of Robert Frost, is what is lost in translation; and the more tightly knit the poetry, and the more urgent its appeal to the resources of its own language, the more challenging it is to translate. Given the cultural and ideological gulf between modern English and the Latin of Horace's Rome at the end of the first century BC, as well as the intense elaboration with which the resources of literary Latin are exploited in his lyric poetry – 'this mosaic of words' (as Nietzsche said of the *Odes*) 'in which every word diffuses its force by sound, position and idea, right and left, over the whole' – it is obvious that the translator of Horace is faced with a formidable task.

Over the years Guy Lee has translated a wide range of Latin poetry, from Virgil to Persius, with uncommon control of tone, inimitable sensitivity to the Latin language, and a striking respect for his poetic originals. In particular, he has developed a distinctive kind of close translation, in which the English corresponds to the Latin in its shape and progression, and especially in its rhythm, and where the English is set facing the Latin, not just for ease of reference, but to enable the reader to have contact with the correspondence. Lee's *Horace* is an encounter of this kind. Its evident aim is not to replace, but to reveal,

Horace, and it does so through a finely-tuned translation, confronting the Latin text.

The hundred or so short poems in the Horatian lyric corpus present a striking variety of tones. These are rendered by Lee with great precision – from the elevated dignity of *Carmen Saeculare* 45-46,

> di, probos mores docili iuventae,
> di, senectuti placidae quietem . . .
>
> Gods, to willing youth give a sense of duty,
> Give to uncomplaining old age contentment . . .

to the sharp defamiliarizing of II.18.15,

> truditur dies die
>
> Day shoves yesterday aside

and the elusive irony of I.5.1-2,

> quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa
> perfusus liquidis urget odoribus . . . ?
>
> Who's the slip of a boy in a large wreath of rose
> Drenched with liquid pomade pressing you . . . ?

This last from the celebrated Pyrrha ode: note here the felicitous 'slip'/'large' for the juxtaposed 'multa gracilis', and compare and contrast Milton's famous, but humourless, 'What slender youth, bedewed with liquid odours . . .?'

Milton's 'liquid odours' (for 'liquidis . . . odoribus') exemplifies one kind of closeness to the Latin. The kind that Lee achieves is well represented by the final lines of III.26 (11-12):

> regina, sublimi flagello
> tange Chloen semel arrogantem.
>
> Queen Venus, raise your whip and touch up
> Chloe – once only – the high and mighty.

Here the word order (or, more strictly, the order of the semantic units, with or without syntactic adjustment) meticulously follows the Latin: 'regina'/'Queen Venus', 'sublimi'/'raise', 'flagello'/'your whip and', 'tange'/'touch up', 'Chloen'/'Chloe', 'semel'/'once only', 'arrogantem'/'the high and mighty'. Meanwhile, the assonance in 'Queen Venus' faithfully recalls the sound structure of 'regina, sublimi', while, more largely, the whole sequence reproduces the syllabic pattern (the 'scansion') of the Latin, down to the closure on 'high and mighty'/'arrogantem'.

While Horace's syntax often requires substantial reworking, often again Lee succeeds in capturing even the supra-syntactic hints that the Horatian 'mosaic' creates. Thus, from the end of I.37 (30-32), Cleopatra's defiance in death:

> saevis Liburnis scilicet invidens
> privata deduci superbo
> non humilis mulier triumpho.
>
> And loth, no doubt, that barbarous Liburnians
> Should bring her here dethroned for pompous
> Triumph, a woman but not submissive.

As if to his own surprise, the Roman pays the queen of barbaric perversion a compliment by acknowledging her calm courage at the last. And the Latin word order, at the last, with its distracted juxtapositions, seems grudgingly to grant Cleopatra its own tribute, with a hint of a paradoxical triumph in defeat. What the Latin suggests by displaced word order ('mulier triumpho'), Lee's English suggests by juxtaposition with enjambement ('Triumph, a woman'). Elsewhere Horace himself praises the 'callida iunctura', the ingenious collocation. This is a characteristic instance, felicitously dealt with.

In his admirable succinct introduction Lee suggests that 'English cannot hope to match the concision, dignity and sonority of Horace's Latin, let alone its convoluted word order'. One may think he is guilty of a certain modesty here, but in any case what is essential to his version is that it does not seek to 'match' the Latin, if 'matching' means

competition. His English invites us, rather, to feel our way back into the Latin that it derives from. Guy Lee's *Horace* is a remarkable *tour de force*, and not in the sense of Pope's Homer or FitzGerald's Omar Khayyám, where the translator seeks to reproduce the autonomy of the original. It looks back to an earlier tradition, one most fully represented, perhaps, in the medieval period, where translation is often closely associated with exegesis, and where (in Rita Copeland's words) 'translations announce themselves as translations by calling attention to their dependence upon – and service to – the original text'. In this spirit, Horace could not ask for a more faithful servant, nor Horace's readers a more illuminating guide.

Michael Silk

Thomas Robert Smith, ed., *InPrint: A Magazine for Critical and Creative Work*, twice yearly (Lent and Michaelmas). First Issue, Lent 1999; 48 pp.

Literary magazines have a long history in Cambridge. The oldest I'm aware of, *The Student* (which haled originally from Oxford), started in 1750, and it included among its contributors Samuel Johnson, Thomas Warton, and the young poet Christopher Smart. Few of its successors have attracted such a promising line-up, but Thackeray cut his teeth as a satirist in the Cambridge-based *Snob* and *Gownsman* (1829 and '30) while *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, which ran for only twelve months in 1856, was stuffed with original work by William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edward Burne-Jones, and other stars of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Anyone interested in the development of literary taste during our own century could do worse than turn to *Granta* and *The Cambridge Review* between the wars, where such precocious opinion-formers as the undergraduate William Empson can be seen getting to grips with modernism.

Now a new generation has weighed in with a magazine based at St John's. To judge from the lively first issue, *InPrint* is a journal to watch. It mixes critical essays with a wide range of poetry and prose. Some of the verse it includes is unmetred and involvingly morbid, in the manner

of Sylvia Plath; some of it clips along in couplets, and follows Roman satire in being urbanely savage about professors and committees (its author works in the Old Schools). In prose, Sophie Levy's 'Mycenae' shows how a modern sensibility, with a cinematic imagination, can transform the ancient story of Agamemnon's return to his palace – and Clytemnestra's axe – after the fall of Troy. By contrast, Alan Macdonald's 'The Sound of Insects' uses fragmentary, half-surreal episodes based on everyday life (travelling by bus, watching teletext) to explore a number of indeterminate obsessions and alienations. The issue is rounded off by Ralph O'Connor's bleakly lyrical translation of *Fingal Rónáin [Rónán's Kin-Killing]*, a medieval Irish story preserved in the Book of Leinster.

In place of the usual editorial, Thomas Robert Smith starts the issue with a memoir of his happiest day so far. He recalls an occasion during his gap year, when he was a teacher in Nepal, climbing a hill with a group of children in order to bring down timber for the school roof. It is a nicely managed narrative, which says something subtly true about the impossibility (at least for a writer) of grasping pleasure in the present: 'Even in that moment when my smiling was as simple as the children around me, I saw my happiness within the future of its telling.' And although it is not a manifesto, it does suggest that writing provides a means of reorientation and connection between distinct points in our lives which can, these days, be a world apart: by the end of the piece the memory of writing home from Nepal is inextricable from the process of writing an editorial which evokes Nepal from Britain.

Smith also contributes one of the issue's two critical essays: a thoughtful, oblique study of the imperfections which Thomas More builds into the ideal society imagined in his *Utopia*. You could put this piece quite safely into the hands of your maiden aunt, but Jenny Woodman's discussion of 'Women, Sin and Childbirth in Medieval and Renaissance Literature' is not for the squeamish. A feisty, feminist essay, it doesn't flinch from reporting some luridly misogynistic descriptions of women's genitalia (that place of 'secret filth', that deep pit dug by the devil using a sharp-edged spade). Woodman doesn't give the full picture of pre-modern attitudes, but she covers an impressive amount of

ground, from Julian of Norwich to Milton; and anyone inclined to believe that, in days of old, when knights were bold, women were viewed with chivalrous delicacy, ought to read her forceful corrective.

Other readers will have different favourites, but the pieces which I returned to were Levy and Macdonald's prose narratives, plus O'Connor's blood-chilling translation. It is really very difficult to bring Greek myth alive in detail using the resources of the novel and romance, but Levy's 'Mycenae' is sharply focused and imaginative. She has an acute sense of how intimately Greeks of the Homeric era must have been exposed to the natural energies of wild creatures and vegetation. And she handles the supernatural with immediacy and risky humour. It's an especially bold stroke to end the tale with the murdered Cassandra crossing the threshold of death to be greeted by the god Apollo saying 'I never asked you to mend my socks.'

Macdonald's territory is more familiar to readers of modern fiction – a city childhood, cancer, puking up in the woods – but he makes the routine bizarre, and he is even bolder than Levy in claiming for his prose the expressive powers of poetry. At times it is as hard to know just what he is saying as it is to ignore its potency. Here, for instance, are three full paragraphs from his conclusion:

> Sun ripe first sweet insect, my only love.
>
> Morph this winter, and it's all implications.
>
> Ghost light. Light me up. Set me ablaze. I'm way too close. It's all about his judgement, and he hasn't been here for some time.

When writing gets as unmoored as this, there's a risk of pretentious vagueness. But Macdonald earns his flights by his narrative acumen elsewhere, and by his intuitive management of figurative leaps and transitions.

As for *Fingal Rónáin*, it has in O'Connor's version (almost the first to be published) a piercing directness which gets a fraught situation across with minimal dilution. The story is archetypal: a variant on the legend of Phaedra. When the young wife of King Rónáin of Leinster has her

advances rejected by his heroic hunk of a son, she tells the king that he has been pestering her and so causes him and two of his men to be murdered. Mael Fothartaig's dying protestations of innocence are easily sustained, and in the violence which follows the immediate kin of the wife (who finally kills herself) are slain. The narrative is so harsh that it cuts into the bone of tragedy. It takes quite something to shock an audience weaned, nowadays, on Tarantino, but I challenge anyone not to squirm when reading how Mael Fothartaig's fool makes Rónáin's servingmen laugh one last time by 'twisting his lips' into a grimace as a raven pulls out his entrails.

Granta is the journal for *InPrint* to beat or join. Now a prestigious outlet for new writing, published by Penguin Books, it started as a parish-pump magazine in Cambridge. The contents of its first issue are much less interesting than those of *InPrint*: a series of 'Motley Notes' on the university eight, the Mastership of the Cambridgeshire Hunt, events at the Pitt Club, and other such matters of the day (including, *plus ça change*, an item on tuition fees and college contributions to the university); a quantity of leaden light-verse; a couple of would-be humorous letters; 'Specimen Dialogues' from the smoking room of a Cambridge club; and a parody of Greek Tragedy which works academic jokes into the dialogue. That first number appeared in 1889, and it took *Granta* a century to break out of its provincial shell and achieve international distribution. *InPrint* should be in bookshops near you in rather less time than that.

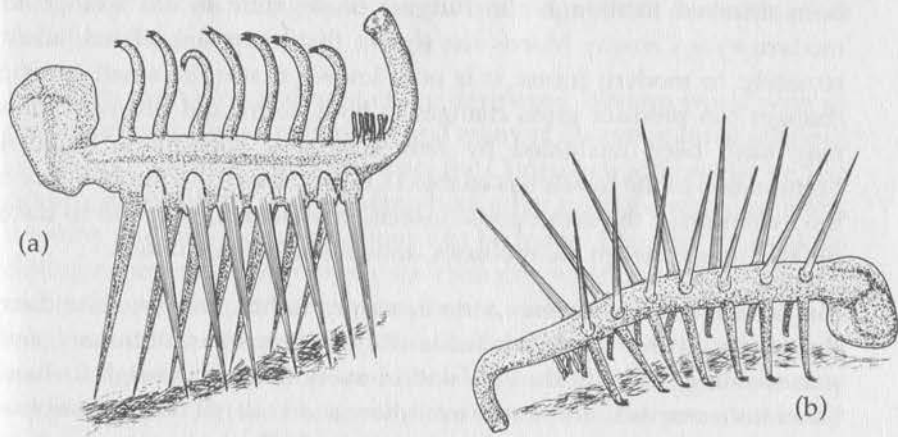
John Kerrigan

Simon Conway Morris, *The Crucible of Creation*. Oxford University Press 1998. Pp xxiii + 242. Hardback £18.99.

A book about fossils could sound like dry stuff. But it isn't. In this account of the Burgess Shale animals Simon Conway Morris conveys the excitement of empirical discovery and academic controversy against a background of palaeontological techniques and evolutionary theory. His writing style and a comprehensive glossary ensure that it is readily assimilable by the non-biologist.

The first animals to appear in the fossil record, the Ediacaran fossils, lived about 570 million years ago. Because of their strange appearance and plant-like form, they were regarded as an evolutionary dead-end. They seemed to be quite unrelated to the diverse and even more bizarre forms which appeared about 30 million years later in the so-called "Cambrian explosion" of animal types. However clues to these puzzles have now come to light as the result of work on the "Burgess Shale". This is a formation in the Canadian Rockies where a rich deposit of fossils was first found in 1909, though their significance has been realised only in recent decades. Their initial interpretation was largely due to Harry Whittington, Woodwardian Professor in Cambridge, and his colleagues, amongst whom Simon Conway Morris has played a leading role.

Conway Morris established a link between the Ediacaran fossils, a Burgess Shale fern-like frond *Thaumaptilon*, and the modern seapens, colonial animals related to the corals. But more importantly, the Burgess Shale, and similar deposits subsequently discovered in other parts of the world, yielded a host of extraordinary fossils which appeared to be



(a) Original reconstruction of Hallucigenia sparsa, *with the animal depicted as walking on its seven pairs of stilt-like spines. (b) Revised reconstruction, with the spines now forming a devensive array above the animal.*
(Reproduction of Figure 19, 'The Crucible of Creation')

quite unrelated to any other known form. Such fossils posed enormous problems to the palaeontologists. They were found only in very remote places, the preparation of the fossils was a time-consuming task of great delicacy, and their interpretation incredibly difficult. Conway Morris describes some of the mistakes that were made – for instance how he interpreted one of the fossils (*Hallucigenia sparsa*) upside down; it is still not clear which is the front end (see Figure).

The diversity of these fantastic animals led Stephen Gould, a populariser of biology, to propose a novel type of evolutionary mechanism involving macroevolutionary jumps consequent upon chance events in the past. Conway Morris shows that this hypothesis is both unnecessary and improbable. The Burgess Shale and related deposits were unusual in that special conditions permitted the preservation of soft-bodied animals: it is probable that related soft-bodied animals were around much earlier but were not preserved. The abrupt appearance of skeletal remains in the Cambrian can be ascribed to the evolution of protective coverings consequent upon the appearance of predators: many of the fossils show evidence of having been attacked. Although the Burgess Shale animals are strange to modern eyes Conway Morris has shown that many are related, albeit remotely, to modern forms: it is now known that quite small genetic changes can produce gross changes in body form, and diversification may have been facilitated by new ecological conditions. Detailed examination of the fossils has enabled Conway Morris to throw light on the evolution of the arthropods (insects, crustaceans, etc.) and to trace the relations between the molluscs, annelids and brachiopods.

The book is vividly written – a trip in a time machine serves to introduce the reader to the Cambrian fauna. Key figures in evolutionary and palaeontology are introduced – and in many cases dismissed. Richard Dawkins's atomistic account of evolution is seen as not only incomplete but also as lacking a "sense of transcendence". The author sees humans as unique, and as having a duty to investigate their origins and to preserve the diversity of life by reducing their profligate consumption and degradation of the environment.

Robert A Hinde

Robert Hinde, *Why Gods Persist*, Routledge: London 1999. Pp. viii + 288. ISBN 0-415-20826-2 (pbk).

We are heirs to a long tradition of reflection on religion, on its intellectual credentials and on the benefits or otherwise of its adoption. Robert Hinde, in his latest book, carries on this tradition but in a distinctive fashion. His aim is to see what light is thrown on religion by recent ideas in biology and social science. Hinde writes as a scientist and as one who does not hide his sceptical orientation to some particular religious dogmas interpreted literally. But he writes also as a concerned human being. His aim is not to add to the critical and destructive literature aimed against religious claims but rather to look sympathetically at religious systems from a scientific standpoint. His first question is this: What can biology and the social sciences tell us about the human psychological capacities and propensities which underpin the development of religious systems and about the factors, both individual and social, which make for their persistence? His book also poses, although it does not answer, another important question: If religious belief provides benefits to individuals and to societies, are there ways of continuing to secure the benefits without commitment to the discredited dogmas?

He writes from the standpoint of the developed Western world with its predominantly Christian heritage and many of his examples of religious beliefs and practices are drawn from the Christian tradition. But he also draws extensively on observations about other religions where, as often, it seems that valid generalisations can be made. Early in the book he distinguishes usefully between six elements which, in varying forms and with varying relative prominence, interact to constitute any religious system. These are structural beliefs, narratives, rituals, a moral code, religious experiences and social aspects. At this point he also explains succinctly the background assumption of the project, namely that many features of socio-cultural systems can be explained as the upshot of pan-cultural human psychological propensities, interacting with each other and with existing social and cultural frameworks.

In subsequent chapters Hinde takes the six elements of religious systems and considers each of them in turn, drawing upon fascinating

empirical studies from a very wide range of the human sciences. He shows how the formation of religious beliefs conforms to general strategies of belief formation (e.g. postulating animate causes for unexpected events), how they contribute to subjectively satisfactory states for the believer (e.g. feeling in control, providing comfort in the face of difficulty and distress, giving unity to a self-conception) and how, like other comforting and threatened beliefs, they may be maintained in the face of counterevidence by evasive strategies of selective attention and tendentious reinterpretation. We see how the impressiveness of rituals exploits features of the human perceptual system and how engaging in rituals promotes feelings of solidarity and belonging. We are led to reflect on the evolutionarily-shaped emotional responses which make possible the development of moral codes and on the role of religious systems in giving force to such codes. We consider the possibility that experiences taken as revelatory of the transcendent are strikingly similar to certain intense and difficult-to-verbalise non-religious experiences and that a religious reading is imposed on them by their cultural context. Hinde sketches how the structures of power and authority in a society, combined with the various interests and psychological propensities of the individuals in that society, will make likely the survival of well-entrenched religious systems.

The upshot which Hinde hopes for is that, even if we remain agnostic or sceptical about religious belief, we nevertheless appreciate its attractions. We see how natural it is for us to adopt religious outlooks and what benefits, as measured from a secular point of view, immersion in a religious system can bring. Some crusading atheists might think that his view is altogether too kind to religion. They would urge that as an intellectual construct religious belief is more ramshackle than Hinde allows. And perhaps the unconscious motives for some religious belief are more thoroughly discreditable, more bound up with envy, self pity and concealed cruelty, than in the picture he gives. Or perhaps some of its consequences, in terms of guilt, bigotry, self-righteousness and persecution, are more malign. Hinde is aware of these possible moves. He would, I think, reply that these viewpoints have been given adequate airing while his concern is precisely to redress the balance while still remaining within the province of science.

It will, I hope, be apparent from the above that Hinde is not engaged in any crude 'science vs religion' debate. What the book brings out is how many distinguishable issues there are in the area of the relation of science and religion. Science may come into conflict with particular religious pronouncements if they are taken as as quasi-scientific claims about causes in the spatio-temporal world. Also science may, by calling upon certain general psychological characteristics, explain the attractions of religious systems. (This is Hinde's project.) Further it is possible that, when evolutionary studies are more advanced, science may throw light on the appearance of the kinds of psychological capacity and response which human beings must possess if a religious outlook is to be so much as attainable by them. It is however, however, a quite different move from any of these to claim that scientific discoveries require us, if we are intellectually honest, to abandon religious convictions, for example those of a highly general character (e.g. that the universe has a benevolent creator, that the recognition of value makes claims on us which are not just the illusory projection of our likes and dislikes out on the world). To suggest that a belief may exist, in part at least, on account of factors which are independent of its truth is not at all the same thing as showing that it is not true.

While we are fully immersed in our familiar practices we cannot at the same time step back to think about their origins, underpinnings and wider setting. To look at them sometimes from the detached viewpoint of an anthropologist or scientist provides a disconcerting but salutary new perspective. This stimulating and wide-ranging book opens up questions of great importance and provides us with an excellent starting point for further reflection.

Jane Heal