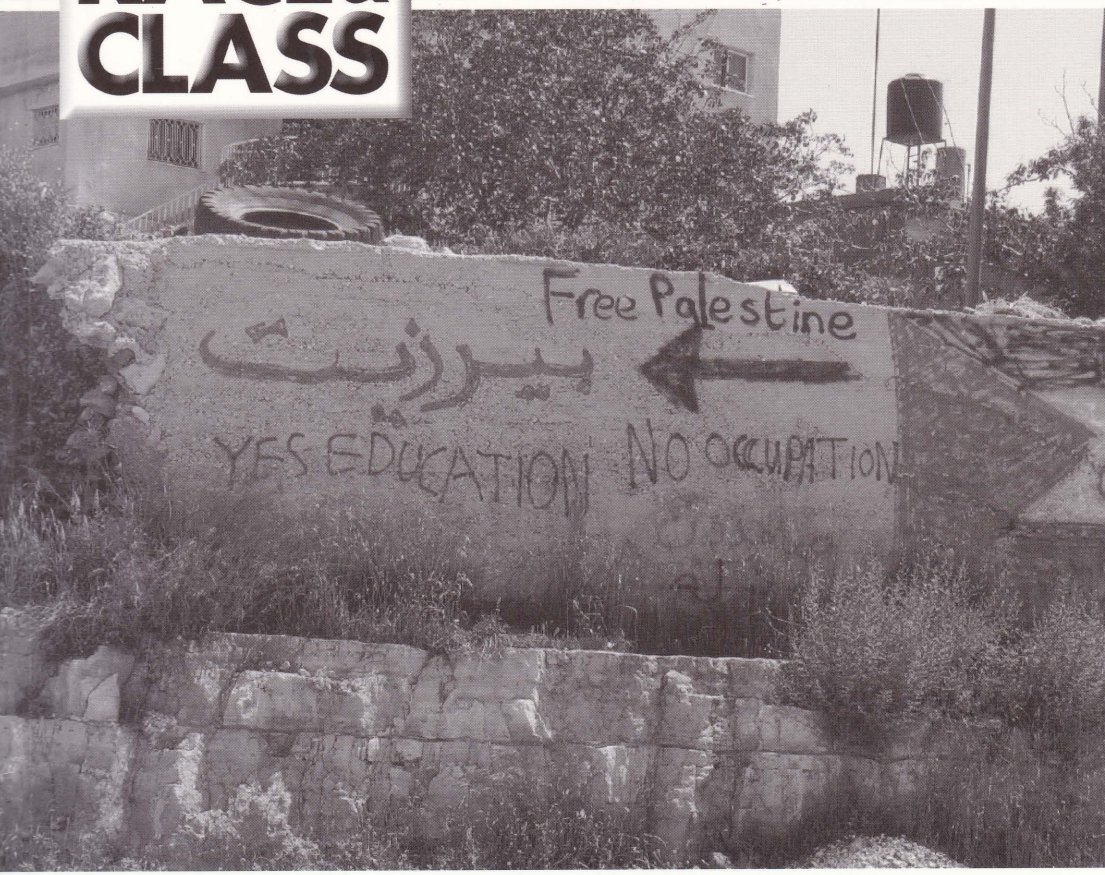
RACE & CLASS



Hilary Rose and Steven Rose
on the academic boycott of Israel

Matt Carr
on the barbarians of Fallujah

Jerry Harris
on US imperialism after Iraq

Race & Class is published quarterly (in July, October, January and April) by Sage (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore) on behalf of the Institute of Race Relations, London. ISSN 0306 3968; ISBN 1 4129 2151 1.

Contributions
Contributions, editorial and advertising correspondence and books for review should be sent to:
The Institute of Race Relations, 2–6 Leeke Street, King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9HS, UK. Fax: +44 (0)20 7278 0623; Tel: +44 (0)20 7837 0041.

The Institute of Race Relations is precluded from expressing a corporate view: the opinions expressed are therefore those of the contributors.

Subscriptions
Annual subscription (2008): full rate (includes electronic version) £214/US$385; reduced individual rate: £28/US$50; NGO rate: £107/US$192. Prices include postage. Full rate subscriptions include the right for members of the subscribing institution to access the electronic content of the journal at no extra charge from Sage. The content can be accessed online through a number of electronic journal intermediaries, who may charge for access. Full details available on our website: http://rac.sagepub.com

Student discounts, single issue rates and advertising details are available from Sage, 1 Olivers Yard, London EC1Y 1SP. Tel: +44 (0)20 7324 8500, fax: +44 (0)20 7324 8600 [email: subscription@sagepub.co.uk; website: www.sagepublications.com] and in North America from Sage, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320, USA.

Periodicals postage paid at Rahway, NJ: POSTMASTER, send address corrections to *Race & Class*, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd, 365 Blair Road, Avenel, NJ 07001, USA.

Typeset by BC Typesetting, Keynsham, Bristol, UK
Printed in the UK by The Cromwell Press Ltd, Trowbridge, Wiltshire on acid-free paper (conforming to ANSI Z39.48-1984)

RACE & CLASS

A JOURNAL ON RACISM, EMPIRE AND GLOBALISATION

Volume 50 July–September 2008 Number 1

Articles appearing in *Race & Class* are abstracted and indexed in *Academic Search Premier, Alternative Press Index, America: History and Life, British Humanities Index, Business Source Corporate, CD-ROM – International Bibliography of Book Reviews of Scholarly Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences, CD-ROM International Bibliography of Periodical Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences, Current Contents/Social and Behavioral Sciences, e-Psyche, Family Index, Historical Abstracts, Humanities International Index, IBZ: International Bibliography of Periodical Literature, International Bibliography of Book Reviews of Scholarly Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, International Political Science Abstracts, Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography, Online – International Bibliography of Book Reviews of Scholarly Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences, Online – International Bibliography of Periodical Literature on the Humanities and Social Sciences, Peace Research Abstracts, Periodical Abstracts, Research Alert, SAGE Race Relations Abstract (Ceased circa 2002), SAGE Urban Studies Abstracts, Science Direct Navigator, Social Science Abstracts, Social Sciences Citation Index, Social Sciences Index, Social SciSearch, Social Services Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, The Left Index, Worldwide Political Science Abstracts.*

ISSN 0306 3968
ISBN 978–1–84787–408–5

Cover photo courtesy of Right to Education Campaign, Birzeit University
Cover design by Arun Kundnani

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Editorial

This issue of *Race & Class* marks an important milestone in the struggle for racial justice in Britain – for it is the first one of the fiftieth volume of the quarterly journal of the Institute of Race Relations. Not that that was really the Institute's remit when it was first set up, in 1952, as a department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, to become fully independent in 1958 (notably, the year of the Notting Hill and Nottingham riots). Rather, it was the issue of 'race relations' as a factor in the declining, dismantling British empire and its importance for business and government. Indeed, the Institute was the first specialist organisation to wrest the subject of 'race' away from traditional anthropology and initiate *race relations* as a matter for intellectual and policy-oriented inquiry, albeit *de haut en bas* and steeped in the world-view of the British establishment. Initially, *Race*, as it then was, maintained a safe, dull academicism that was careful on the whole not to engage with the massive upheavals that, from the late 1960s, were beginning to change the world in fundamental and unforeseeable ways.

But it was on that rip-tide – of social transformations and neo-colonialism, of Black Power and cultural commodification – that the Institute too transformed itself, from a voice that spoke to the liberal establishment to a voice that spoke from and on behalf of the black and migrant experience. In the early 1970s, *Race* became *Race & Class* – a journal for Black and Third World liberation. As such it has analysed, reported and reflected on some of the most significant developments of the last and present centuries; the political, economic and social impacts of the information revolution; the massive instabilities wrought by globalisation; cultural imperialism; the changing nature of racism; refugee

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): i–ii
10.1177/0306396808093297 http://rac.sagepub.com

and asylum issues and, latterly, the interlinking of the 'war on terror', the assault on civil rights and state-engendered anti-Muslim racism.

The point here, though, is not to reiterate past achievements, but, on this half-century anniversary, to reaffirm and carry forward the principles set out by *Race & Class*'s founding editor, A. Sivanandan, in the new journal's first editorial in April 1974:

> The function of knowledge is to liberate – to apprehend reality in order to change it … what traditional sociology has tended to do is to separate the people it investigates from the experience of their reality ... This is particularly true of the studies of Third World people both in their own countries and in the metropolis … To submit to theories of social reality which have no bearing on their lives, or which bind them to the existing order of things, is to relinquish their authority over their own experience and to undermine their will to action. Hence the questions they pose ... are quite simply: What good is your knowledge to us? Do you in your analyses of our social realities tell us what we can do to transform them? … Does your apprehension of our reality speak to our experience?

These questions are as pertinent for *Race & Class* today as ever. Indeed, in an intellectual climate and a consumerist culture that combine ever more subtly to restrict and ultimately stifle dissentient views; in a world in which, paradoxically, the information freedom spawned by the world-wide web is blanked out, except at the margins, by the saturating power of media corporations; and in a world in which the surveillance and policing of those who would speak truth to power – whether of corporations or of governments – is more closely and *effectively* practised than ever before, those questions are even more essential. *Race & Class* will continue to offer a platform for radical, informed and liberatory scholarship – a venue for the beleaguered successors to those 'insurgent academics' to whom it opened its pages almost four decades ago.

Hazel Waters

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Israel, Europe and the academic boycott

HILARY ROSE and STEVEN ROSE

Abstract: From competing in the Eurovision song contest to participating in the European Research Area, Israel is beneficially treated as a European nation. Yet its violations of international law against the Palestinians, attested in UN resolutions and in contravention of Europe's own humanitarian conventions, attract no international sanctions. The academic boycott of Israel, following the wide-ranging boycott of South Africa that helped to publicise and end the iniquities of apartheid, aims to focus attention on issues of human rights, in the hope of securing a just peace in Palestine/Israel. The parameters of the boycott and the opposition mounted against it are explored here by two of its leading proponents, even as they expose the double standards to which Israeli and Palestinian students and academics are subjected.

Keywords: AAUP, Birzeit university, BRICUP, European Research Area, Israel Lobby, separation wall, UCU

Hilary Rose is a feminist sociologist of science. *Steven Rose* is a neuroscientist. They were jointly responsible for the initial moratorium call described in this article and are founder members of the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine (BRICUP).

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 1–20
10.1177/0306396808093298 http://rac.sagepub.com

How has it come about that a country geographically located squarely in the Middle East has managed to persuade Europeans that it is actually part of Europe? Israel's footballers play in the UEFA cup, its singers compete in Eurovision song contests and its research scientists participate in the European Research Area (ERA). In part, this inclusion of a Middle East state in Europe is a guilt-laden response to the long history of European Christian anti-Semitism and its hideous culmination in the Shoah. Atonement combined with the Zionist project cleared the path for the creation of the state of Israel. But not only was this an act of atonement, it was also the export of what was so long called the 'Jewish problem' to the Middle East. That the 'Jewish problem' was more accurately the problem of anti-Semitism and its postwar re-emergence was glossed over.[1] The UN, in its support of the Zionist project, placed the heavy cost of this 'solution' on the Palestinian people and their lands. The Palestinians, not the Europeans, have paid and paid for the Naqba – the disaster when, sixty years ago, they were driven out of their homes and off their lands to provide space for the new state. Israel, despite its creation having been endorsed by the UN as part of the post-1945 affirmation of human rights, is also the last example of European colonial expansion. Zionist foundational texts, such as the autobiography of Israel's first president, Chaim Weizmann, writing in 1949, speak of Jewish migrants to Palestine as colonisers, settlers with a civilising mission to make the desert bloom.[2] The words 'colonisers' and 'settlers' are densely used within Weizmann's text. Emigrant European Jews were taught that Palestine was a 'land without people' for 'a people without land'. Perhaps not so different from Cecil Rhodes?

Israel's own foundational narrative centres on the European Holocaust and the right of Jews to return to their mythic place of origin, which they spoke of as the Jewish National Home. The legal narrative turns on the Balfour Declaration of 1917, in which Foreign Secretary Balfour wrote to Lord Rothschild promising a Jewish state in Palestine.[3] With the collapse of the Ottoman empire, Britain had become responsible for Mandate Palestine and therefore a central player in geopolitical events in the Middle East and, hence, the future division into Palestine/Israel. Weizmann played a key role in driving British policy. He had consistently lobbied the Cabinet to support the Zionist project and his contribution to explosives manufacture had earned him its gratitude.[4] But, characteristically, the British were making contradictory promises to Arab nationalist groups. By accident, Weizmann himself received a copy of a secret British government proposal, made at a conference in 1939, for an Arab state of Palestine within five years.[5]

Israel's increasingly successful positioning as a European nation, *sui generis* entitled to take part in European cultural and commercial networks and institutions, is however at odds with its own demography. Although 80 per cent of Israel's population (that is, behind the 1967

border) is Jewish, only around half of these (Ashkenazi[6]) originate from Europe or the US, the others (Mizrahi) being from the Middle East or Africa. Nonetheless, Ashkenazis are massively over-represented in the elite strata of Israeli society. The political classes, the state institutions, the senior ranks of the military (the IDF), the arts and the universities are dominated by Jews of European origin. While gender justice is a matter of concern within Israeli academia, little interest has been shown towards ensuring ethnic diversity. Given this political and cultural pre-eminence, it is the Ashkenazi who have successfully constructed Israel as both the Jewish National Home and an integral part of Euro-America.

Why Israel is important to Europe

European governments' willingness to go along with Israel's foundational narrative, though, is not merely a matter of sentiment or residual guilt. It requires more than this to explain why, despite Israel's continued breaches of international law and UN resolutions, European governments sit on their hands rather than take effective punitive action, and fail to enforce either the UN resolutions or the EU's own charter of human rights.[7] This extraordinary double standard, one that insists on Israeli exceptionalism, is supported in practice by many western governments, notably of course the US, but also many European states. Witness the silent refusal of their obligations under international law to enforce the judgement of the International Court of Justice concerning the illegality of the 9-metre so-called 'separation wall'. No more graphic examples are needed than three recent episodes: the first is the collusion of the UK authorities in preventing the arrest of the Israeli major-general Doron Almog on war crimes charges when he attempted to visit the UK in 2005.[8] The second is the revelation that in the first draft of Blair's 'dodgy dossier' on Iraq's nuclear weapons a reference to Israel's nuclear weapons had been inserted in the margin – then ignored in the final draft. Unsurprisingly, the government sought to prevent this fight in the margin from being revealed under the Freedom of Information Act, until a court order made the document public in February 2008.[9] Or, finally, consider an outrageous recent example when, in August 2007, Britain welcomed an Israeli football team to play a friendly match whilst at the same time denying visas to a Palestinian under-19 team to play a similar game. The Foreign Office reason for their exclusion, namely that the footballers were too poor to admit, reaches, in view of Prime Minister Brown's claimed war on global poverty, a new level of hypocrisy.[10] And it is precisely this refusal by governments to comply with international law and act in defence of Palestinian human rights that has, in part, led to the Palestinian call to international civil society for boycott, divestment and, ultimately, sanctions (BDS) against Israel.

UEFA and Eurovision may be marginal but Israel's scientific and technological wealth – Bill Gates described this tiny state as matching California's Silicon Valley – makes it a valued economic, scientific and technological partner. Israel's commitment to, and expertise in, the natural sciences, research and development, is formidable. In its eight universities, together with the Weizmann and Technion research institutes, and in fields ranging from mathematics and computing through sub-particle physics to molecular biology and neuroscience, Israel ranks amongst world leaders. It spends a higher proportion of GDP (4.7 per cent) on research and development (R&D) than any other country, including the US (2.6 per cent) – and nearly three times the UK's current investment of 1.7 per cent. Israel's universities, institutes and companies are rich in lucrative patents;[11] Israel is an inventor and exporter of high technology products and know-how, including military technology. In an increasingly globalised economy, scientific research, whether publicly or privately financed, has become international. Israel's science and technology are central drivers of this powerful knowledge economy. This pre-eminence is a matter of huge national pride and international prestige. It is here that Israel's participation in the ERA becomes so important, not just to Israel but also to an EU increasingly committed to neoliberalism and in retreat from the social market.

The ERA is funded by way of the transfer of a proportion of the national R&D budgets of EU member states to the European Commission's Research Directorate. Research is funded from this budget through five-year Framework Programmes. From their inception these have had three aims: to build a 'European identity' in research, to aid in wealth creation and quality of life and to strengthen research in less well-developed EU nations. Framework funds multinational R&D programmes involving universities, research institutes and small and medium enterprises. The current programme (FP7) began last year and is scheduled to spend €50.5 billion over its five-year life. Originally confined to EU member states, Framework expanded to include other European countries during the third programme and to Israel in the fourth. Over the past decade, Israel has been included in no less than 1,700 such R&D collaborations. Between now and 2013, the Israeli government is to contribute €440 million per year so that it can participate in Framework.

Currently, according to an international press service (IPS) report, the European Commission is considering new steps to deepen its cooperation on scientific research with Israel, despite admitting that previous funds earmarked for that purpose have gone to firms based in illegal settlements in the Palestinian territories. While this is in breach of the European directive which forbids trade with the illegal settlements, there are no signs that Europe is going to pursue the matter. An unpublished document prepared by EU diplomats reveals that, because much of the joint research will relate to security issues, Israel has requested a formal assurance

that any information it gives to Brussels will be treated confidentially. According to the IPS report:

> Ton Van Lierop, the Commission's spokesman for enterprise and industry, acknowledged that the joint research with Israel will have a so-called anti-terrorist dimension. But he insisted that it will be focused on 'civil security' such as measures to improve ambulance and fire brigade services. 'It is not aimed at the military,' he said. 'We always have an ethical review of our programmes. Human rights are always at the forefront and are always important for the European Commission.'[12]

All Israel's eight universities, from Bar-Ilan to Tel-Aviv, as well as technical institutes and many companies, are active collaborators with European partners. Many of these collaborations involve UK universities – amongst Britain's most powerful research powerhouses. There are currently twenty-seven active projects at Imperial College and twenty-one at University College in London, for instance. Oxford and Cambridge have participated in 101 projects each with Israeli partners over the past decade.[13] Most are at the 'cutting edge' of science and technology – nanotechnology, molecular neuroscience, information technology. Others focus on more immediate practical matters such as water management and fishery stocks. It's worth remembering that, at the same time that these contracts are made, five Palestinian households may share a stand-tap in the street, and the illegal settlers may have swimming pools using water from the dangerously depleted aquifers. Further, while Gaza borders the sea, the Palestinians are forbidden to fish even while they are denied food supplies by Israel. Children and older people suffer with particular severity, and morbidity and mortality increase steadily – above all, in Gaza.

During the 2006 debate in the European Parliament on the research budget for the seventh Framework programme, the Greens tried to block participation by any country in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. They did not name Israel but, instead, sought the reaffirmation of the Convention. For, over the last decade, with the intensification of Israeli human rights abuses, collective punishments, house demolitions, targeted assassinations and, most recently, the construction of the 'separation wall', the majority of European citizens have become profoundly concerned by Israel's policies. A Eurobarometer study in 2003 reported that 59 per cent of those surveyed saw Israel as the country posing the greatest threat to world peace.[14] A report by Amnesty International in June 2007 once more condemned the violations of international law by Israel.[15] Such violations challenge the appropriateness of Europe-Israel trade agreements and Israel's presence in the European Research Area.

The Greens' attempt, however, was firmly rebuffed, not only by the research commissioner, the Slovenian Janez Potocnik, but by many of their fellow parliamentarians, who unashamedly insisted that the calibre of Israeli research was so important that it took precedence over human rights.[16] On any occasion when the claim is made that science is above human rights, there are unpleasant echoes of the Nazi doctors' trial at Nuremberg. Then, the doctors and scientists argued confidently that what they were doing was good science, which, as such, would contribute to human welfare. And let us be clear; some of their findings did constitute 'good science' – but at an obscene cost in human suffering.

Academic life in Palestine

It is not easy being a student – or teacher – in any Palestinian university. It is no more than about 15km as the crow flies between Birzeit, the premier Palestinian university near Ramallah, and the elite Hebrew University in Jerusalem, but they are worlds apart, separated both by checkpoints and the infamous 9-metre high apartheid (separation) wall. This journey, for anyone other than an Israeli or an Israeli-approved international, can take any time from about two hours to days. The institutions are also worlds apart in terms of the richness of the Israeli and poverty of the Palestinian universities – a difference exacerbated by Israel's reluctance and sometimes refusal to return the tax moneys paid by Palestinians. The 120,000 students and their 10,000 academic and other staff may be among the relatively privileged but, like all Palestinians, they suffer from systematic harassment and humiliation, and the stress and danger of living under occupation. Some are poor and have difficulty in paying their fees, but the universities rarely exclude them, not least as study is one of the few positive things in the lives of young Palestinians.

Getting from home to campus is itself an uncertain struggle. Israeli checkpoints can spring up overnight (there are more now than before the abortive 'peace talks' in Annapolis in 2007) and whether or not a student or academic will be allowed through depends on the whim of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) soldiers manning the blockade. Sometimes, when the roads are blocked by checkpoints, students will risk their lives crossing the hills to get to their classes. And, even if they do get through, their journeys may be fruitless as teaching may be arbitrarily stopped by the occupying Israeli military. Palestinian academics from the West Bank cannot visit the Hebrew University (which partly sits on illegally expropriated Palestinian land) because they do not have the right sort of ID. It is even difficult for Birzeit academics to get to the Palestinian university of Al Quds in east Jerusalem to teach, often being arbitrarily turned back at the Qalundia checkpoint, which separates their campuses. Israeli soldiers have turned back staff who are 'under 40' or, on another occasion, refused to let an assistant professor through on the grounds that, as an

assistant, he could not possibly be giving a lecture, as only professors can do this. A senior Palestinian mathematics professor was subjected to a maths 'exam' by an Israeli soldier (a maths professor in civilian life) at a checkpoint before he was allowed through.[17] Such humiliations are routine. Indeed the Israeli wall drives right through part of the Al Quds campus.

Birzeit was forcibly closed from March 2001 to December 2003. Lecturers continued to teach their students in secret, despite the risk that they and the students ran of being arrested and held without charge in 'administrative detention'. Birzeit's first president, the physicist Hanna Nasir, was hijacked by the Israelis and exiled to Jordan in 1974. Because of the unfailing support of his colleagues, he was able to administer the university from exile, until, following the Oslo accords in 1993, he was able to return and once more lead the university in person. (Just how many university presidents anywhere else in the world could rely on their colleagues' determined support for almost twenty years?)

Gazan students were a significant presence in the Birzeit student body until the Israeli government decided to tighten the noose around Gaza – this entailed stopping all freedom of movement for Gazans, including Birzeit students. For those in their last year, this was an especially cruel blow to their career hopes. Israel also prevented any new students being admitted.[18] Many Gazan students studying abroad have now either been prevented from returning home or, if home, prevented from returning to their studies. One rare successful fight against this abuse of human rights was that of the Bradford University student Khaled al Mudallal. He had returned to his home town of Rafah to get married and found himself trapped by the sealing of Gaza. At Bradford, his fellow students protested furiously, securing nationwide support. This put intense pressure on the UK government, leading to Israel giving him permission to leave Gaza. Back in Bradford, Khaled expressed his gratitude for the solidarity he had received that had led to his release, but forcefully pointed to hundreds of students still denied their right of freedom of movement as set out in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Being relatively privileged does not mean that students or staff are free from the risk of arbitrary arrest. In August 2007, five Birzeit students active in their student council were arrested in a raid on their dormitories and homes by the IDF. Under the IDF occupation, membership of any political party or organisation is illegal. That the student council is solely concerned with academic support for fellow students was deemed irrelevant.[19] Currently, ninety-nine Birzeit students are detained without charge, nine of whom are imprisoned indefinitely under the British Mandate law still utilised by Israel. Students from the other Palestinian universities are similarly incarcerated. A couple of years ago, one of us was in Jerusalem attending a conference called by Faculty For Israeli Palestinian Peace (composed primarily of Jewish Israelis and Jewish

internationals). One of the Israeli academics had managed to secure passes for some half dozen Gazan students. Their hunger for the freedom to travel – to see Jerusalem, to meet international academics, even just to check out the shops – was visible. They hadn't been in Jerusalem twenty-four hours when the news came that they had been arrested. Immediately, a group of Israeli and international academics went to the police station to insist that the students had visas and that they should be released. This was heard with total indifference. Then one of the Israelis, an eminent scientist, rang the police chief. Afterwards, he told us that she had said that at university she had been taught by his wife. Whatever else was said, suddenly the students were released. It was difficult to think that it was anything other than the luck of this elite connection that had done the trick. The students came out towards us, some in tears, all with strained faces. Their fear was well grounded, as many have been arrested and detained without charge for lengthy periods. The point of rehearsing yet again an account of the institutionalised abuse and humiliation of young people is that, with all constructive avenues blocked by Israel, it itself acts as a recruiting sergeant for the armed intifada.

The not-so-silent complicity of Israeli universities

Barring the statements of a courageous outspoken few, there has been a resounding silence from academics in Israeli universities about these attacks on Palestinian academic freedom. The late Tanya Reinhart, a distinguished Haifa professor of linguistics and a leading Israeli dissident, wrote a passionate attack on this silence.

> Never in its history did the Senate of any Israeli university pass a resolution protesting the frequent closures of Palestinian universities, let alone voice protest over the devastation sowed there during the last uprising … If in extreme situations of violations of human rights and moral principle, academia refuses to criticise and take a side, it collaborates with the oppressing system.[20]

We are constantly told that Israeli universities are one of the chief sources of criticism of and opposition to the government, yet, despite the heroic efforts of a very few, what is mostly audible, as Tanya Reinhart declares, is the silence of the Ashkenazi-dominated Israeli academia. In the eighteenth century, the conservative political theorist Edmund Burke trenchantly observed that all that is needed for evil to be done is silence on the part of good men (and, the twenty-first century would add, women). Far from being the bastions of criticism of government policy, the universities have harboured few dissidents; rather, they have tended to harass the few there are. But such complicity is not surprising when it is recalled that Israeli Jewish academic staff also serve in the IDF, many as senior officers. So, too, do Israeli Jewish students. A recent *cause célèbre* has

been that of one of the few Palestinian lecturers in Israeli universities, Nizar Hassan. When an Israeli student came into one of his classes (in film studies) in military uniform and carrying a gun, the lecturer asked him to remove the uniform and attend classes in civilian clothes. The student refused and protested to the university authorities. The lecturer was ordered, under threat of dismissal, to apologise to the student for insulting the Israeli army.[21] The university's action was widely welcomed by the Israeli press. A further well-established case is that of Bar-Ilan university which, until it broke its links in the wake of the European boycott debates in 2005, fostered the work of the illegal College of Judea and Samaria in the illegal settlement of Ariel, in the illegally occupied West Bank.[22]

It is not only in reference to the abuses of Palestinian academic freedom in the Occupied Territories that Israeli academics are complicit. There are numerous examples of discrimination against Arab students in Israeli universities. In its compilation, 'The case for an academic boycott of Israel', the Alternative Information Center documents *de facto* age discrimination against Arab-Palestinian students; the illegal military service criterion in the allocation of housing; the failure to have signs in Arabic (as opposed to Hebrew and English) at Haifa; and the illegal seizure of Palestinian land to extend the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and at Tel-Aviv.[23] There are also multiple personal testimonies of anti-Arab racist abuse by Jewish students, unchecked by senior university staff. In August 2007, seven Arab and Jewish Israeli students, holding hands and with their mouths covered with tape, made a silent protest against the racist remarks of the student union spokesperson. They were arrested and charged with 'provoking a commotion' and 'wild behaviour'. When they were found innocent by a disciplinary tribunal, the university declared its intention to appeal the decision.[24]

In one now notorious case, Haifa professor of geography Arnon Sofer, who claims to be the 'architect' of the illegal separation wall, referred to the 'demographic problem', arguing in a press interview that:

> If we want to remain alive we will have to kill and kill and kill. All day, every day. If we don't kill we will cease to exist. The only thing that concerns me is how to ensure that the [Jewish] boys and men who are going to do the killing will be able to return home to their families and be normal human beings.[25]

Sofer's advocacy was in accord with the concerns of a conference at Haifa university, from which Arab Israeli academics were excluded, which discussed 'the demographic problem'. This focused on the differential birth-rate between Palestinian and Jewish Israelis and how to achieve the political objective of ensuring a permanent Jewish majority in Israel. That such an event could take place on any university campus with the support of the university authorities points to a more general problem in

treating Israeli universities as independent of the interests and policies of the Israeli regime.[26]

From moratorium to boycott

It was in recognition of such abuses, within the context of Israel's overall record of ignoring UN resolutions, international law and human rights conventions, that, in April 2002, as part of a growing number of calls for boycott, divestment and sanctions against the Israeli state, a short letter (signed by some 120 European academics and researchers), was published in the London *Guardian*. It read as follows:

> Despite widespread international condemnation for its policy of violent repression against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories, the Israeli government appears impervious to moral appeals from world leaders. The major potential source of effective criticism, the United States, seems reluctant to act. However there are ways of exerting pressure from within Europe. Odd though it may appear, many national and European cultural and research institutions, including especially those funded from the EU and the European Science Foundation, regard Israel as a European state for the purposes of awarding grants and contracts. (No other Middle Eastern state is so regarded.) Would it not therefore be timely if, at both national and European level, a moratorium was called upon any further such support unless and until Israel abides by UN resolutions and opens serious peace negotiations with the Palestinians, along the lines proposed in many peace plans, including most recently that sponsored by the Saudis and the Arab League.[27]

The affirmation of human rights is a precondition of participation in the EU, whether as a member or as a trading and research partner, and the call for a moratorium touched a nerve amongst those many European citizens increasingly distressed and angered by Israel's oppression of the Palestinians. Before long, several hundred names had been added to the original signatories. Later that year, the moratorium was adopted by the UK Association of University Teachers (AUT). A number of French universities, notably Paris IV, made a stronger call[28] which unleashed a powerful Zionist backlash, claiming – what has become another routinised charge against any criticism of Israel – that it is by definition anti-Semitic.

In response to the moratorium call, Hanna Nasir sent a brief but poignant thanks, saying 'we thought Europe had forgotten us'. At the same time, the call evoked an intensely hostile response both from within Israel itself and from what we have subsequently learned to call the Israel Lobby, primarily in the US but also strongly present in the UK and France.[29] The email response system set in train by the Lobby unleashed

a storm of hate mail on to the screens of moratorium supporters. Such messages as 'You should have been Auschwitzed', 'You are worse than a Kapo' (a Jewish concentration camp assistant guard) were not atypical.[30] Such toxic abuse came in the defence of what the Lobby claimed was the academic freedom of Israeli universities.

Then, in July 2004, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), a Palestinian civil society group, released a statement, endorsed by campus trade unions and NGOs on the West Bank, asking for a comprehensive boycott.[31] The Birzeit university president reinforced this call in an open letter to members of the European Parliament.[32] In response to the PACBI call, a group of academics working in British universities formed the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine (BRICUP) to campaign for the boycott in the universities and in the academic trade unions, and also to find practical ways to support their Palestinian colleagues.[33]

In 2005, the annual AUT congress passed a resolution calling for the boycott of three Israeli universities, Haifa, the Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan, a resolution that was overturned a few months later by a specially convened AUT meeting after intense lobbying by pro-Israeli groups. The National Association of Teachers in Higher and Further Education (NATHFE) remained steadily committed to the Palestinian cause and in 2006 passed a resolution which invited teachers to consider their moral responsibilities before embarking on collaborations with Israeli institutions. In 2007, AUT and NATFHE merged to form the new University and College Union (UCU) and all previous resolutions were put on hold until the first joint annual conference in May. There, the moratorium was re-endorsed and a moderate resolution was passed by a two-thirds majority, instructing the union to inform itself of the issues and to this purpose to invite Palestinian academic trade unionists to a series of UCU meetings, prior to any binding resolution for a boycott.[34]

Meanwhile, the boycott movement itself was expanding. By the time the European Parliament was debating FP7, the moratorium calls were already being superseded by those for BDS – boycott, divestment and sanctions – against what was increasingly being seen as the apartheid state of Israel. Campaigning groups such as the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in the UK were already demonstrating against the sale of Israeli and, above all, illegally labelled settler products – the latter mainly fruit and herbs in the supermarkets. In the UK, calls were made for architects and planners to refuse to take part in projects involving work in the illegal settlements.[35] Following appeals by Palestinian filmmakers, John Berger initiated a call for a cultural boycott of Israel, with appeals being made to individual performers, filmmakers and writers not to participate in cultural events celebrating Israel's sixtieth year as a state in 2008.[36] Most powerfully, doctors and health workers in the UK, supported by Israeli Physicians for Human Rights, called for a boycott of the Israel Medical

Association on the grounds, amongst others, that it condoned torture and refused to condemn the targeting of Palestinian ambulances by the IDF.[37]

The new McCarthyism

The UCU vote was received with something resembling acute consternation both in Israel and among its supporters abroad, especially in the UK and US. In the US, the Israel Lobby swung into action, organising condemnatory statements from university presidents and vice-chancellors and Nobel prizewinners. It was condemned in Congress (only one dissident Congressman pointed to the absurdity of a US legislature debating the merits of a vote by a UK trade union). Full-page advertisements appeared in the *New York Times*. In the UK, the Jewish Board of Deputies announced that it was establishing a £1 million fund to fight the boycott and legal action was threatened against any university which supported it. The UCU head office took its own legal advice and was warned that even to discuss a boycott might be a breach of its own statutes and race relations legislation.[38] The Palestinian tour was initially called off but, after pressure from UCU members and especially its national delegate congress (representing all colleges and universities in the UK), was reinstated for May 2008, with the proviso that the visiting Palestinian academics, whilst discussing the situation on the ground on Palestinian campuses, did not specifically call for a boycott. Though quite how the UCU proposed to limit its Palestinian colleagues' academic freedom of speech in this regard is unclear.

Despite the attempts to argue that the boycott call was anti-Semitic, both the initial moratorium call and the subsequent BRICUP statement referred specifically to an institutional boycott, not to one aimed at individuals of any specific nationality or ethnicity. Thus, while it would cover non-Jewish and non-Israeli academics working in Israeli universities, it would not affect Israelis working outside Israel. Moreover, the initial PACBI call sought to exclude from the boycott individual Israeli academics working directly with the Palestinians for peace and justice, in an attempt to avoid some of those painful contradictions that the ANC's total boycott call had produced.[39] Such contradictions are, as the freedom struggle demonstrated, both unavoidable and at the same time sometimes cruelly unjust at a personal level. Recognising these impossibilities, PACBI modified its position. But this 'exceptionalist' clause did not merit the Israel Lobby's fatuous claim that a civil society group with powers only of moral persuasion could unleash a force resembling McCarthyism.

However, a new McCarthyism is emerging in the US, with the passing of the Patriot Act. Groups such as Campus Watch study university syllabuses, particularly those of Middle East studies, and, where they find

the approach is too critical, seek to exert pressure to censor the teaching content and censure the teacher. Four recent examples will suffice: first, the denial of tenure at DePaul university to the historian of the Holocaust Norman Finkelstein, following a campaign led by the Harvard lawyer Alan Dershowitz;[40] second, the attempt to achieve something similar at Barnard College, against the archaeologist Nadia Abu El-Haj.[41] In this case, the College stood firm and El-Haj obtained tenure. The Lobby was more successful in ensuring the cancellation of lectures to be given in New York by the historian Tony Judt and, in Chicago, by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt (on account of their meticulous study of the workings of the Lobby).

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which was silent during cold war McCarthyism, when academic freedom and free speech suffered, today stands alongside the American Civil Liberties Union defending academics against this new McCarthyism. Despite this welcome development, the AAUP as a body opposes a boycott of Israeli universities just as it opposed a boycott of apartheid South African universities. For the AAUP, academic freedom is not socially located; it is an abstraction to be defended as an absolute principle. Numbers of individual academics have not usually subscribed to this absolutism and boycotted South African universities in the past, as today numbers boycott Israel's universities.[42] However, the AAUP and indeed many of the signatories to the unqualified claim for the academic freedom of Israeli universities take the position that academic freedom automatically trumps the claims of human rights.

The limits of academic freedom

Yet such a stance flies in the face of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights which, out of the ashes of the death camps, set out a vision of a world where the human rights of all humanity were both recognised and to be made real:

> In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedom of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare of a democratic society. Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 29(2).[43]

Yet what Israel and its Lobby continuously seek is to displace Israel as the target of criticism and, instead, to relocate the focus of discussion on an abstract, context-free discourse of 'academic freedom', in which the illegal Israeli occupation, military repression and the very real physical and psychological sufferings of the Palestinian people disappear. The discourse of the Lobby denies the rights of others that the Declaration

demands. This ideological and politically driven impulse to defend Israel and her universities, right or wrong, is particularly strong in right-wing quarters but disturbingly widespread across the political spectrum. It has been able to derive strength by commandeering this abstract discourse of academic freedom. Today we hear a great deal about the celebration of the anniversary of the founding of the state of Israel in 1948; perhaps we should reflect that this was also the year of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The US philosopher Judith Butler comments that 'material and institutional foreclosures ... make it impossible for some historical subjects to lay claim to the discourse of rights itself'.[44] So when that impossibility happens, and Palestinian civil society suffering extreme oppression does lay claim to the discourse of rights, just what, given the failure of the international community either to defend the Declaration or uphold international law, should civil society do? In this, university teachers are simply part of civil society, and increasing numbers wish to express their solidarity by supporting the Palestinian call for an academic boycott. It is the boycotters, not the apologists for Israel, who are upholding human rights.

Israeli academics' silence, especially contrasted to their noisy outcry at any hint of a threat to their own academic freedom, represents a grotesque double standard. Yet many, despite the announcements of the collapse of the enlightenment, are still the children of Diderot and insist that rights are constrained to protect the rights of others. Thus, in Britain, remarks such as those made by Arnon Sofer would fall under the rubric of racist speech and incitement to violence and be subject to prosecution, just as the leader of the British National Party was charged for expressing not dissimilar sentiments concerning Muslims, as was also an imam from Finsbury Park mosque for his comments on Jews. On 9 March 2008, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith banned Likud Central Committee member Moshe Feiglin from entering the UK on the grounds that he had used words very similar to those of Sofer.[45] Providing the charges are made against all forms of racism and all expressions of incitement to violence, a postcolonial British political and ethical culture supports such restrictions on the freedom of speech.

In the case of Palestine/Israel the question is, therefore, with whom are we to solidarise? With our oppressed Palestinian colleagues? Or with the academics of their oppressor regime? If academic freedom is precious to every academic are there, as an article in *Nature* asked, any circumstances when boycotts can be justified?[46] In 1965, 365 academics wrote a letter to the London *Times* urging the case for an academic boycott of apartheid South Africa. Many academics supported the boycott as their contribution to what was to become an immense international movement. For that matter, today British academic trade unions infrequently but routinely impose 'grey listing' status (*de facto* almost indistinguishable from a temporary boycott)

on colleges and universities to challenge cases of institutionalised racism against minority ethnic staff or to protect academic staff from systematic managerial bullying.

The furore around the academic boycott and a highly abstract discussion of academic freedom has glossed over a number of total boycotts demanded or imposed by western governments on entire countries. Cuba's boycott by the US has to be one of the longest. More recently the US government has demanded that leading scientific journals such as *Nature* and *Science* refuse to publish articles submitted by Iranians, and the Israeli ex-premier Binyamin Netanyahu has called for a total boycott of Iran.[47] To their credit, the scientific journals have fought back, successfully defending their right to select publications by quality and not by even the most powerful of western governments. The Euro-American boycott of the Hamas-led Palestinian government ignores both the internationally observed democratic election and the ensuing suffering of the Palestinian people, their underfed children and the concomitant dreadful mortality rate, while condoning the arrest of Hamas parliamentarians, including the minister of education, by Israelis. Those who vigorously defend the academic freedom of Israeli universities in the face of an ethically driven boycott and who are silent about the economic strangling and physical attacks by Israel on the Palestinian universities are guilty of – at minimum – double standards.

What seems so paradoxical is that it is precisely those who are so loudly opposed to the boycott who attempt to have any discussion of it suppressed, as Fiona Godlee pointed out in an editorial in the *British Medical Journal* after it had run two articles, one for and one opposed to the boycott, and organised a poll among its readers.[48] When the AAUP, itself opposed to the boycott, organised a conference with pro- and anti-boycott speakers to be held in Italy in January 2006, the Lobby put such pressure on the funding foundations that they withdrew their support at the last minute. To its credit, the AAUP refused to bow to the Lobby's pressure and stuck to its commitment to publish the papers in its professional bulletin. Bar-Ilan University in Israel (under criticism for fostering an illegal extension in the settler town of Ariel) called its own conference on academic freedom. Despite this being listed as a 'debate', the organisers only invited those opposed to the boycott.[49] Clearly, even hearing oppositional arguments was incompatible with this Israeli construction of academic freedom.

Are economic and academic boycotts similar or different?

Some opponents of an academic boycott have argued that it is different in kind from an economic boycott. On the face of it, this is an attractive distinction but, in the twenty-first century, the distinction is, at best, a rearguard fight to preserve some residual cultural space and, at worst, an

expression of nostalgia for a past world. In today's knowledge economy, matters are arranged rather differently and the claimed distinction seeks to mask the fundamental changes that have taken place in the production system of knowledge as part of globalisation, especially, but not exclusively, in science and technology – precisely those areas in which academic collaboration between Israeli and European academics is so strong.

To see why, it is necessary to understand that, whereas once it was arguably possible to distinguish between science and technology, that distinction is no longer viable in the global economy. In these 'hot' fields, academic research findings are frequently secret, protected by patents. 'Chinese walls' inhibit the exchange of information between researchers even in the same department unless both have signed non-disclosure agreements. Biotechnology, embryonic stem cell research, nanotechnology and informatics are among the key drivers of postindustrial society. Indeed, pre-eminence in these areas is seen as crucial for the UK (and Europe) not only to keep up with the present super-state of the US but to be ready for the emerging new superpowers – China, India, maybe Singapore. Governments, especially the UK's, exhort university chiefs to encourage their academic staff to get closer to business to help foster innovation. Natural science research is strongly oriented towards wealth creation and quality of life;[50] social science research programmes are all too often directed to how these natural science advances could become socially acceptable.

These practices are pervasive features of a new system of knowledge production. Biotechnology and informatics are increasingly funded by industry and the military, and integral to a global neoliberal economy. 'Intellectual property' is the term that so brutally links the academic and the economic. It stalks the universities of the world and daily diminishes their autonomy and, with it, the claim to academic freedom. It is precisely in the context of today's knowledge economy, rather than in some abstract universe, that the distinction that some wish to draw between a possibly acceptable economic boycott and an unacceptable, academic boycott becomes unsustainable. For a country like Israel, whose universities are central to her position in the global market place, above all in informatics and biotechnology, an international boycott would not only affect the universities but the economy itself. The Israeli economy is distorted by its massive expenditures on illegal settlements, illegal roads, the illegal wall and, of course, the illegal military occupation itself. It is not just Israel's poor who are feeling the pinch but even academic staff have struck over their salaries. Israeli universities position themselves as central players within a globalised knowledge society and, at the same moment, claim the values of a past world where universities once had a high degree of autonomy from both state and industry.

From boycott to disinvestment and sanctions

As Nelson Mandela has pointed out, boycotts are a tactic in political struggle. They may or may not be appropriate or effective depending on the circumstances. When the ANC, facing a desperate crisis, called for a total boycott, it was not the academic but the sporting boycott of apartheid that the media seized on in Britain. This dramatically raised public awareness and, as one of many strands contributing to the pressure for change, led ultimately to UN sanctions. The Israeli state recognised immediately that an academic boycott and the furious debate that it engendered would similarly draw massive media attention and nourish the rising anger of civil society. The Likud cabinet itself established an anti-boycott committee with Binyamin Netanyahu as its chair. For Israel, the threat was too great to be left to the university administrations to respond.

So, in all of this, where does an academic boycott fit in, and what chance is there of the tactic working? While international media from the *New York Times* to *Al Jazeera* and endless websites have focused on the academic boycott and, above all, on the struggle within the British University and College Union, this particular fight is just one moment in a growing movement of international support for the just cause of the Palestinians. In significant part, the boycott of Israel – academic, professional and cultural – is an expression of the despair and anger of international civil society, including academics, over the failure of our governments and the European Union to help pressure Israel to negotiate with the Palestinians to build – not just peace, but a just peace.

The bigger picture is not just the academic boycott and not just the fight within one academic trade union, but an economic boycott of Israeli products (above all, those from the illegal settlements), not least by Jewish groups. There are community groups and student unions twinning with villages and student unions in Palestine; there is a vigorous campaign against Caterpillar;[51] musicians, writers and filmmakers are actively organising a cultural boycott; the churches, especially in the US, are disinvesting in Israel; industrial and white collar trade unions support the boycott; the doctors' group works to eject Israel from the World Medical Association. Boycott, together with disinvestment and eventually international sanctions, can be a non-violent but powerful form of struggle. Crucially, the BDS movement supports Palestinian civil society, so long crushed but not defeated by the occupation. Both Palestinian and international civil society have an essential part to play in the long haul to secure a just peace in Palestine/Israel.

References

1 After the 1939–45 war, the leader of the British fascists, Oswald Mosley, once released from internment, immediately returned to vicious Jew-baiting, especially in London's

East End. In response, the Association of Jewish Ex-Service Men and Women (AJEX) appointed Major Lionel Rose as anti-fascist organiser.

2 Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (London, 1949).

3 In 1917, a letter from Arthur Balfour, addressed to Lord Rothschild, set out the terms of the Declaration, which committed the British government to supporting the establishment in Palestine of a national home for Jews. The letter also added protection of the civil rights of any non-Jewish residents – a point Weizmann disliked. Ibid., p. 262.

4 Balfour was both intensely Christian and anti-Semitic, and saw in Zionism an opportunity to regroup the Jews in Palestine to await the coming of the Messiah.

5 Weizmann, op. cit., p. 499.

6 Israeli definitions of Ashkenazi and Mizrahi/Sephardi populations do not match those used by European Jewry, hence care must be taken with comparison.

7 UN resolutions begin in 1948 with the General Assembly affirming the right of return of the Palestinian refugees: 'Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.' Subsequent resolutions include: 'Israel's occupation of Palestine is illegal', Security Council Resolution 242 (22 November 1967) and 'Israel's settlements in Palestine are illegal', Security Council Resolution 446 (22 March 1979), which 'Determines that the policy and practices of Israel in establishing settlements in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.' See also 'Palestinians have the right to self-determination', General Assembly Resolution 3236, 22 November 1974. However, the US power of veto in the Security Council has been used to block all but the most blatant examples of illegality, e.g., 242 and 446. Britain's long subservience to the US is reflected by her supportive abstentions.

8 The attempted arrest was initiated by human rights lawyer Daniel Machover. Vikram Dodd, 'Papers reveal how alleged war criminal escaped UK arrest', *Guardian* (20 February 2008).

9 *Guardian* (21 February 2008).

10 Mark Steel, *Independent* (22 August 2007).

11 The Milken Institute Patent Ranking: composite index 2002–4 shows the top nine universities as all US institutions, followed by the University of London, giving Hebrew University eleventh place.

12 David Cronin, 'Europe heading for a new security deal with Israel', <http://www.ipsnews.net/print.asp?idnews=41314>. Consulted 22 February 2008.

13 Projects can be identified through the EU CORDIS website, <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html>.

14 <http://www.Gesis.org/en/data_service/eurobarometer>.

15 Amnesty International, 2007, <http://www.Thereport.amnesty.org/eng/Regions/Middle-East-and-North-Africa/Israel-and-the-Occupied-Territories.html>.

16 Letter from Janez Potocnik to Caroline Lucas, MEP (7 March 2008).

17 Personal communication.

18 'The Israeli government is arbitrarily blocking some 670 students in Gaza from pursuing higher education abroad, Human Rights Watch said today. Israel is denying exit permits that the young men and women need to leave Gaza for university programs in countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Germany, Britain and the United States. The students are among roughly six thousand four hundred Gazans with foreign citizenship, permanent residency, work permits, student visas or university admissions abroad, who have been trapped in Gaza since June, when Hamas took control of the territory by force.' Human Rights Watch, press release, New York, 20 November 2007.

19 <http://Right2Edu.Birzeit.edu/news/article476>. Consulted 22 August 2007.

20 Tanya Reinhart, 'Academic freedom: in support of Paris IV', *ZNet* (4 April 2003), cited by Sondra Hale, *Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (September/October 2006), pp 51–2.
21 Jonathan Cook, 'Academic freedom? Not for Arabs in Israel', <http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/cook29028.html>.
22 Ariel University Center of Samaria, *Wikipedia*, consulted 6 March 2008.
23 Alternative Information Center, 'The case for academic boycott against Israel' (23 August 2007).
24 <www.alternativenews.org/news/english/haifa-university-harrasses-jewish-and-arab-students-who-participated-in-peaceful-anti-racist-picket-20070809.html>. Consulted 23 August 2007.
25 Arnon Sofer, 'It's the demography, stupid', *Jerusalem Post* (21 May 2004), *Upfront* supplement.
26 In Israel, the relative independence of institutions from the state, such as the army, the judiciary and others, has become weakened. Thus military refusniks who will not serve in the Occupied Territories are insisting on the rule of international law, but the Israeli courts deny their argument. Hence, we see scholars, even of Judith Butler's sophistication, using 'state' where conventional analysis would indicate government. I take her conflation of categories as echoing the conflation on the ground where, for example, the rulings of the courts not infrequently are in accordance with government policy rather than international law. Judith Butler, 'Israel/Palestine and the paradoxes of academic freedom', *Radical Philosophy* (No. 135, January–February 2006).
27 *Guardian* (6 April 2002).
28 The French position was set out on the website <http://www.pjpo.org>. This server has now closed. Formerly, cross reference could be found on <http://www.Europalestine.com/article.php3?id_articles=1727>, consulted 20 July 2006.
29 John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, 'The Israel lobby', *London Review of Books* (23 March 2006), available at <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/mear01_.html>.
30 Insulting to the anti-racist record of many boycott supporters.
31 The full statement can be found on <http://www.pacbi.org/>, consulted 20 July 2006.
32 See <http://www.birzeit.edu/news/news-d?news_id=22200>.
33 See <http://www.bricup.org.uk>, also the pamphlet 'Why boycott Israeli universities?' (London, BRICUP, 2007).
34 Congress passed three motions relating to Israel and Palestine:
   1 'Policy on international greylisting and boycott' (motion 28)
   2 'Boycott of Israeli academic institutions' (motion 30, as amended by 30A.3)
   3 'European Union and Israel' (motion 31, as amended by 31A.1 and 31A.2).
   Motion 30 instructs the NEC to 'circulate the full text of the Palestinian boycott call to all branches/LAs for information and discussion' and to 'organise a UK-wide campus tour for Palestinian academic/educational trade unionists' prior to any vote on support for the boycott by the Union. Motion 31 reinforced the previous AUT moratorium call.
35 'Architects threaten to boycott Israel over "apartheid" barrier', *Independent* (10 February 2006); the appeal, signed by over 130 architects and planners, was published as an advertisement in *The Times* on 25 May 2006.
36 'John Berger rallies artists for cultural boycott of Israel', *Guardian* (15 December 2006).
37 Derek Summerfield and 129 others: Letters, *Guardian* (21 April 2007).
38 UCU advice: circular UCU/41 10.10.07.
39 Jonathan Hyslop documents the case of the South African sociologist Eddie Webster, who was picketed in the UK on the total boycott basis. See *Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (September–October 2006), pp. 59–64.
40 'Holocaust academic vows to fight axe of university class', *Guardian* (29 August 2007).
41 'Newsblog: Alumni group seeks to deny tenure to Middle East scholar at Barnard college', *Chronicle of Higher Education* (15 August 2007).

42 South African academic Salim Valley documents this and, like the ANC and Archbishop Tutu, sees the boycott as contributing to the freedom struggle. See *Academe: Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* (September–October 2006), pp. 64–8.
43 Ibid., p. 44. We are indebted to Omar Barghouti for drawing attention to this.
44 Judith Butler, op. cit.
45 The home secretary's letter is quoted in full in the *Jewish Chronicle* (7 March 2008). Search at <http://www.thejc.com>.
46 Colin Blakemore, Richard Dawkins, Dennis Noble and Michael Yudkin, 'Is a scientific boycott ever justified?' *Nature* (No. 421, 2003), pp. 314–7. The authors, two of whom had signed the original moratorium call, set out the circumstances in which, they argue, a boycott might be justified, but fail to say anything specific about the case of Israel – the trigger for their intervention.
47 Binyamin Netanyahu, 'Economic and diplomatic strategies for isolating Ahmadinejad and the Iranian regime', *Jerusalem Issue Brief* (Vol. 7, no. 7, 1 July 2007).
48 F. Godlee, 'Academic boycott of Israel: follow-up to the debate', *British Medical Journal* (No. 335, 2007), pp. 234–5.
49 Bar-Ilan University Conference, 'Academic freedom and the politics of boycott', 25–26 January 2006.
50 The recent bringing to heel of the formerly proudly independent Medical Research Council and the cutting of budgets for 'fundamental' astronomy in Britain speak to these shifts.
51 Caterpillar supplies specially modified heavy armoured equipment used by the Israelis for destroying Palestinian houses, not infrequently crushing inhabitants unable to escape in time.

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

The barbarians of Fallujah

MATT CARR

Abstract: The 'global war on terror' is often represented as a struggle between incompatible opposites, of good versus evil, terror versus democracy and civilisation versus barbarism. The deployment of such dichotomies was part of the background to the onslaught on Fallujah in 2004, serving to provide the US military with the appearance of moral legitimacy, as it turned the city to rubble in order to 'save' it. In the US media, the arrogant assumption that the US is civilisationally superior both to the 'barbarians' its armies were fighting in the city and to the broader mass of the Iraqi population, was a recurring theme among neo-conservative and pro-war liberal ideologues. Yet, with the city's destruction presented as a moral imperative on behalf of civilised values, there has been scant examination of the allegations that US forces were guilty of war crimes. Moreover, the attack on Fallujah shows that civilisation and barbarism are not diametrically opposed concepts in a 'global war on terror' which continues to cause more death and destruction than the violence it is supposedly intended to eliminate.

Keywords: clash of civilisations, Iraq occupation, US military, 'war on terror', al-Zarqawi

---

Matt Carr is a writer and journalist living in Derbyshire. His latest book is *The Infernal Machine: a history of terrorism* (New York, The New Press, 2007).

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 21–36
10.1177/0306396808093299 http://rac.sagepub.com

> Our deepest national conviction is that every life is precious, because every life is the gift of a creator who intended us to live in liberty and equality. More than anything else, this separates us from the enemy we fight. We value every life; our enemies value none – not even the innocent; not even their own.
>
> *George Bush, 9/11 anniversary address, September 2002*[1]

> The Iraqis are sick people and we are the chemotherapy.
>
> *US Marine, April 2003*[2]

On 31 March 2004, four US mercenaries working for the Blackwater private security firm were ambushed and killed by Iraqi resistance fighters in the city of Fallujah in central Iraq, while escorting a convoy of empty trucks that was on its way to pick up kitchen equipment. The four Americans were dragged from their burning vehicles by a furious local mob and hacked with shovels before two of their charred bodies were hung from a bridge before a jubilant crowd of a thousand fighters and civilians. The entire sequence was filmed and broadcast across the world, transforming what would otherwise have been merely a routine act of brutality in the ongoing carnage in Iraq into a global media spectacle.

To the insurgents who filmed those images, the brutal *sahel* – public lynching – inflicted on the four contractors was a humiliation of the US and an attempt to sap the will of the American public to support the occupation by 'sickening' public opinion in the US. To the US media and political establishment, however, the Blackwater mercenaries were transformed through the manner of their deaths into symbolic incarnations of the virtuous intentions and noble endeavour of the occupation itself, whose selfless dedication to 'reconstruction' was contrasted with the collective depravity on display at the Fallujah bridge.

The dominant consensus was summed up by Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*, which branded the celebrating crowd 'thugs', 'savages' and 'cold-blooded ruthless barbarians', while the *Washington Times* described how 'cheering crowds revelled in a barbaric orgy'. In Iraq itself, the US military commander, Brigadier-General Mark Kermitt, described the celebrating crowds as 'bestial' and the head of the Iraqi transitional authority, L. Paul Bremer, depicted the attacks as 'a dramatic example of the ongoing struggle between human dignity and barbarism' and vowed that the 'ghouls and cowards' responsible would be caught and punished.[3]

Elsewhere, there were calls for a more comprehensive retribution. On Fox News, the bullying anchorman and propagandist Bill O'Reilly exhorted the US military to destroy Fallujah itself, declaring: 'You're not going to win their hearts and minds. They're going to kill you to the very end. They've proven that. So let's knock this place down.'4 On the internet, the language was even more unrestrained, as right-wing websites overflowed with outraged condemnations of the 'savages' and 'subhumans' of Fallujah and urged

the US military to 'shell the joint' and 'level the city – no quarter'. Robert Spencer's anti-Islamic website Jihad Watch provided a natural platform for such sentiments: one post recommended that Fallujah should be obliterated with a 'tactical nuke', while another demanded the annihilation of the city whose inhabitants were 'not humans with minds but evil spirits trapped in bodies'. In the neoconservative online journal Front Page, the one-time feminist and radio talk show host Tammy Bruce solemnly declared:

> I contend it is now time to raze Fallujah. I'll remind you of what it took to quell the beasts of Germany and Japan in 1945: complete and total destruction. There was a reason why we bombed Dresden into oblivion. There was a reason why Berlin was not saved. There was a reason why two atomic bombs had to be dropped on Japan after Hiroshima: they still refused to surrender unconditionally. Beasts of violence and destruction understand one thing: destruction.[5]

On the internet news site *Newsmax.com*, Jack Wheeler, a former advisor to Ronald Reagan, invoked more distant historical parallels to advocate the same response in an article entitled 'Fallujah delenda est', which coolly recommended that:

> Fallujah must be destroyed. I don't mean metaphorically, I mean for the entire population of the city, every man, woman and child, given 24 hours to leave and be dispersed in resettlement camps, moved in with relatives in another village, wherever, and the town turned into a ghost-town. Then the entire city carpet-bombed by B-52s into rubble, the rubble ground into powdered rubble by Abrams tanks, and the powdered rubble sown with salt as the Romans did with Carthage. Fallujah must be physically obliterated from the face of the earth.[6]

The intellectual architect of the 'Reagan doctrine', which called for the violent destabilisation of leftist regimes during the cold war, Wheeler was also a doctor in philosophy with a special interest in Aristotelian ethics. This classical education was now brought to bear in his depiction of the Iraq war as a continuation of an ongoing struggle between civilisation and barbarism that had first begun '25 centuries ago, when a few thousand Athenians, representing the founding culture of Western civilization, faced a Persian horde many times their size on the field of Marathon'. In Wheeler's *Readers Digest* version of history, the Blackwater 'contractors' were no longer guns for hire but valiant defenders of western civilisation in an unbroken confrontation that included the failed attempts by Roman legionaries to repel 'vast human wolf packs', the 'barbaric insanities of Marx and Hitler' and, of course, Islam, which had 'waged jihad against the West for 13 centuries'.

Wheeler was not the first pundit to seek classical precedents for America's catastrophic adventure in Iraq. Since the 9/11 attacks, the idea that America should act 'like Rome' and impose a 'benevolent hegemony'

on a disordered world has been a recurring theme amongst neoconservative intellectuals. This evocation of the classics tends to confer a similarly noble glow across the past and the present, and Wheeler's proposal for a 'Carthaginian' response to the killings at Fallujah was no exception. In his previous incarnation as a Reaganite cold warrior, Wheeler had been a fervent supporter of the maniacally violent RENAMO insurgency in Mozambique but this association with one of the most murderous organisations of modern times was not reflected in his moral outrage at the 'barbaric horror' on view at Fallujah. Though he conceded that 'the people of Iraq as a whole were not barbarians', there was nevertheless 'a barbarism in their culture which is capable of subhuman atrocities'. Having demonstrated this capacity through the killing of the four contractors, Wheeler presented his Carthaginian response as a form of quarantine, since: 'Turning Fallujah into rubble, smashing its atrocity with a hammer, is the only way to get this genie back in the bottle.'

These fantasies of punitive annihilation cannot be attributed to visceral disgust at the horrific deaths of the hapless Blackwater operatives, some of whom had barely arrived in the country when they were inexplicably sent without an adequate escort into a known centre of violent resistance to the US-British occupation. There is no doubt that the public mutilation of American corpses was seen as a particularly outrageous transgression, in a way that the deaths of Iraqi civilians, soldiers and even ordinary American servicemen in the course of the Iraq invasion and its subsequent occupation were not. At a time when the role of privatised paramilitary companies in the Iraq occupation was still barely known, the presentation of the four Blackwater operatives as civilians aiding in 'reconstruction' added to the aura of monstrous depravity that surrounded their killers. The killings were also recognised as a test of American will comparable to the 'Black Hawk Down' battle in Mogadishu in 1993, when images of dead US airmen being dragged through the streets had similarly horrified and revolted the American public.

All these factors contributed to the outrage that followed the killings of the Blackwater contractors. But the reiterated depictions of those responsible as 'barbarians' – and the suggestion that the entire population of Fallujah was complicit in such barbarism – stemmed from the same arrogant assumption of civilisational superiority that had helped make the Iraq invasion possible in the first place.

Barbarians

Western politicians and ideologues of the 'global war on terror' (GWOT) have often depicted this 'war' as a global struggle between incompatible opposites, of good versus evil, terror versus democracy, freedom versus tyranny, civilisation versus barbarism. In September 2001, only a few weeks after the attacks in New York and Washington, the Italian president

Silvio Berlusconi gave more concrete shape to these abstractions when he told a press conference that: 'We should be conscious of the superiority of our civilization, which consists of a value system that has given people widespread prosperity in those countries that embrace it, and guarantees respect for human rights and religion. This respect certainly does not exist in the Islamic countries.'[7]

Berlusconi's brash, cultural chauvinism caused some embarrassment at a time when the Bush administration was attempting to mobilise the support of the Muslim world for the coming offensive in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the idea that the 'war on terror' is a confrontation between civilisation – meaning the West – and an array of barbarian enemies intent on tumbling that civilisation into the void is a recurring theme of the GWOT. In a speech at Johns Hopkins University in April 2002, the then US national security advisor, Condoleeza Rice, described the 'fundamental divide between the forces of chaos and those of order' and declared that: 'Nations must decide which side they are on in the fault line that divides civilization from terror.'[8] Stripped of the contemporary resonance of 'terror', Rice's comments evoked the same binary opposition between the 'civilised' and the 'barbarian' as Wheeler, whose origins can be traced back to classical times. Both the Greeks and Romans saw themselves as the apex of the civilised world, surrounded by an array of barbarian peoples whose cultural inferiority made them worthy only of conquest and enslavement. This classical distinction has been replayed in many different ways during the centuries of European military expansion into the wider world. It is not a distinction that is unique to the West but western states have nevertheless shown a remarkable consistency in using it as a rationale for imperial domination and conquest.

In the ancient world, the inferiority of the barbarian was defined through a wide range of cultural characteristics which the Greeks and Romans projected onto their enemies. As European colonial powers pushed out into the Americas, Africa and Asia, such inferiority was variously determined by culture, race or a 'heathen' absence of Christianity. Barbarian societies were often defined through a supposed propensity for violence and cruelty, which distinguished them from civilised states. Where 'barbarian' violence was visceral, 'savage' and dictated by primitive bloodlust, civilised violence was controlled, rational and dispassionate, subject to ethical and legal restraint and dedicated towards a higher purpose.

However the barbarian was defined, the term was invariably used to justify a common objective of imperial conquest and domination. If the savagery of the barbarian made it possible for civilised states to present such conquests as a form of liberation, there were also episodes in which barbarian peoples could not be raised up from their primitive state but only destroyed – particularly when such peoples resisted the encroachments of civilisation. The history of European colonialism is littered with episodes

in which the inferiority of the barbarian has acted as a justification for gratuitous acts of slaughter carried out by armies and states that claim to act in the name of civilisation. By representing 'the barbarian' as an alien 'other' with whom no rational discourse or common ethical framework is possible, even gross acts of barbarism may appear to be not only morally acceptable but morally essential. Such representations were crucial to the self-righteous consensus that demanded the obliteration of Fallujah in April 2004 and served to transform a city of some 300,000 inhabitants on the Euphrates river into a symbol of the wider confrontation between the civilised West and the new barbarians of the twenty-first century. The result was a savage assault by the most powerful military force in history, the devastating consequences of which have barely been acknowledged by either those responsible or a compliant media that has too often acted as their mouthpiece.

The 'terror city'

Before the killing of the four contractors, few of those calling for Fallujah's destruction had even heard of its existence. But if 'the city of minarets' was little known in the West, it occupied a unique place in the history of modern Iraq, with its overlapping of nationalist, tribal and religious currents in Iraqi society. It was in Fallujah, in 1920, that the shooting of a British colonial official in the city prompted a nationwide revolt against British occupation. The city was also the scene of bloody fighting by British and Indian forces during the invasion of Iraq in the second world war. Under Saddam, Fallujah was generally favoured by the Iraqi dictator and was considered a strong base of support for his regime, though the city's militant religious conservatism occasionally brought it into conflict with the Ba'athist regime. Fallujah was also the scene of a horrific tragedy during the first Gulf War, when British tornado fighters inadvertently killed more than two hundred civilians during an attack on one of the city's bridges.

In the immediate aftermath of the 2003 invasion, Fallujah's mayor initially welcomed US troops. The city's metamorphosis into a centre of violent resistance to the occupation stemmed directly from an incident in the immediate aftermath of the invasion, on 28 April, when US soldiers fired on an unarmed crowd protesting the conversion of a local primary school into a military base, killing at least eighteen demonstrators. Though the army claimed that its soldiers had been fired upon, local eyewitnesses denied that the demonstrators had carried any weapons. Various international journalists supported this account of events, as did a report by Human Rights Watch, which concluded that 'physical evidence does not support claims of an effective attack on the building as described by US troops'.[9]

In the wake of these killings, relations between the local population and the US military rapidly deteriorated and Fallujah became a major base for local and foreign groups fighting the occupation. The US military attributed these activities primarily to foreign groups, particularly the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's al-Tawhid wal-Jihad, which subsequently adopted the al-Qaida franchise. Some of the bloodiest sectarian atrocities of the insurgency were attributed to al-Zarqawi's group, as well as some of the more notorious kidnappings and gruesome murders of foreign hostages, such as Nick Berg, Ken Bigley and the British aid worker Margaret Hassan. Al-Zarqawi's media notoriety was partly boosted by US counterinsurgency propaganda, which generally preferred to present a 'foreign jihadist' linked to al-Qaida as a more suitable 'face' for the insurgency. But a subsequent US military intelligence assessment of Fallujah concluded that al-Zarqawi's group only contained about a hundred members and attributed the majority of the attacks on US and Iraqi forces to fighters drawn from local tribes.

This was not how the situation in Fallujah was presented in the western media in the spring of 2004. The more al-Zarqawi's reputation grew, the more the US military carried out air raids on the city in search of his hideouts and safehouses, which frequently killed more civilians than fighters. One of these raids took place only days before the ambush of the four contractors and resulted in the deaths of eighteen Fallujan residents, who died in their bombed homes. The *Guardian* correspondent Jonathan Steele witnessed its bloody aftermath and commented on the anger created by such raids. Steele rejected the conventional media image of a city dominated by 'foreign jihadists' and attributed the insurgency to 'ordinary families, driven by nationalist pride, and increasingly by a desire to retaliate when their homes and neighbourhoods are violated and their relatives and friends killed'.[10]

Such reports received scant attention in the outrage that followed the deaths of the four contractors. On both sides of the Atlantic, British and American politicians and media pundits agreed that an overwhelming military response was required to restore control over the 'lawless' and 'restive' city. At the beginning of April, US helicopters and warplanes unleashed a fearsome aerial assault on residential areas in Fallujah believed to be harbouring insurgents, using an array of high-tech weaponry, from cluster bombs loaded with razor-sharp metal pieces known as 'flechettes' to 500lb explosives. This aerial assault was followed by a ground offensive by US marines to the strains of 'Welcome to the Jungle' by Guns 'n Roses. Numerous eyewitnesses reported that US soldiers were firing on unarmed civilians and that ambulances and hospitals were prevented from giving medical treatment to wounded patients. One US sniper described how: 'Sometimes a guy will go down and I'll let him scream a bit to destroy the morale of his buddies … then I'll use a second shot.'[11]

Few western reporters were inside the city to confirm the impact of the assault on the civilian population but harrowing footage of civilian casualties was broadcast through the al-Jazeera television network, which the US military accused of acting as a vehicle for insurgent 'propaganda'. Other observers supported al-Jazeera's coverage. Jo Wilding, a British human rights worker who remained in the city throughout the assault, described on 13 April how: 'US snipers in Fallujah shoot unarmed man in the back, old woman with white flag, children fleeing their homes and the ambulance that we were going in to fetch a woman in premature labour'.[12] Even the liberal Israeli daily *Haaretz* accused the US army of having 'committed war crimes in Fallujah on a scale unprecedented for this war'.[13]

Such protests, coupled with unexpectedly stiff resistance and the emerging scandal of the Abu Ghraib photos that month, obliged US forces to withdraw from Fallujah without taking the city, after negotiating a truce with insurgent leaders – leaving an estimated 650 dead civilians in their wake. This was not considered a satisfactory outcome, either by the military or the Bush administration. That same month, General Richard Myers, the chair of the joint chiefs of staff, told a US congressional committee that Fallujah was 'a huge rat's nest that … needs to be dealt with'.

That summer, the US journalist Nir Rosen, one of the most courageous and clear-sighted of American journalists in Iraq, visited the 'rat's nest' and reported on a poetry festival attended by an enthusiastic audience of 'religious clerics wearing turbans, tribal leaders wearing head scarves, businessmen, military and police officers'. The Arabic-speaking Rosen described how a succession of Sunni and Shia poets celebrated Fallujah's heroic defiance in hyperbolic verse, amidst banners that variously proclaimed 'The stand of Fallujah is the truest expression of Iraqi identity', 'Fallujah, castle of steadfastness and pride' and 'All of Fallujah's neighbourhoods bear witness to its heroism, steadfastness and virtue'.[14]

This picture of a passionate local resistance to occupation rarely figured in the western media, which generally took for granted the US military's version of Fallujah as a zone of barbarism in thrall to psychotic 'foreign jihadists'. If Fallujah had become a symbol of nationalist pride in Iraq and to some extent in the Arab world, it had assumed a very different symbolic significance in the US. In June 2004, Herbert London, president of the conservative US thinktank the Hudson Institute, warned of the 'growing fatalism' that he observed amongst the American population as a result of the Abu Ghraib revelations and the failure to curb the 'insurrection of Fallujah'. London attempted to reverse such 'national despair' by reminding the US population that: 'Americans fight not only for self-defence against sanguinic and shadowy foes, they fight for the foundations of western civilization in Scripture, literature, traditions and morality.'[15]

Throughout the summer, the forces of civilisation continued to clash sporadically with the 'sanguinic and shadowy foes' at Fallujah. In October, as the US presidential campaign moved towards its conclusion, the confrontation entered a new phase and US and Iraqi forces, backed by British troops, prepared for an all-out assault on a city whose continued defiance was now depicted as an insuperable obstacle to the staging of Iraq's first elections the following January. With the Bush administration now installed for a second term, the 'barbarians' at Fallujah were depicted not merely as savage enemies of 'western civilisation' but as diehard enemies of freedom, democracy and progress, whose defeat would mark a turning point in Iraq's 'liberation'.

The laboratory

The coming assault was dictated by military as well as political considerations. To US army commanders, Fallujah was a decisive confrontation in the Sunni-based insurgency, the successful subjugation of which would have 'demonstrative effects' on insurgents elsewhere. The primitive logic behind this aspiration was summed up by the British Iraq analyst Toby Dodge: 'You flatten Fallujah, hold up the head of Fallujah, and say "Do our bidding or you're next".'[16]

If Fallujah was a test of US military resolve in Iraq itself, the city was also seen as a laboratory for the new type of war that American military strategists saw its armies fighting in the twenty-first century. Whereas US counterinsurgency theory during the cold war had been directed primarily towards fighting irregular guerrilla forces in jungles and rural areas, the dominant strategic trend of the 'war on terror' consisted of 'military operations on urbanised terrain' (MOUT) – or 'fighting in someone's house' (FISH) as it was unofficially known. From this perspective, the main battlegrounds of the twenty-first century would be the cities and slums of the Third World, which US soldiers would be obliged to enter in order to 'flush out' their terrorist enemies in what the military called 'complex environments' and 'difficult terrain'. The Israeli army was already familiar with such operations in the Occupied Territories, where US army observers had witnessed the brutal Israeli assault on Jenin in 2002. But the US army itself had little experience of such warfare apart from its disastrous retreat from Mogadishu in 1993. This was an experience that the military was determined not to repeat in Iraq or anywhere in the Islamic world, which was identified by US military strategists as the main site of these new urban battlefields.

According to the geographer Stephen Graham, the US military has established a chain of eighty mock 'Arab cities' around the world to train for such wars. Graham has described such training grounds as 'imaginative constructions of Islamic cities as little more than "terrorist nests" to

soak up US military firepower'.[17] In these fantasy versions of the Middle East, US soldiers rehearse the future battles of the 'war on terror':

> Replete with minarets, pyrotechnic systems, loop-tapes with calls to prayer, donkeys, hired 'civilians' in Islamic dress wandering through narrow streets, and olfactory machines to create the smell of rotting corpses, this shadow urban system simulates not the complex cultural, social or physical realities of real Middle Eastern urbanism, but the imaginative geographies of the military and theme park designers that are brought in to design and construct it.[18]

By the autumn of 2004, Fallujah had become a 'real' version of these fantasy targets, which provided an opportunity for the US army to put its new concept of counterinsurgency into practice. As one US marine later described it in a 'kick ass' action video celebrating the performance of the marines in Fallujah, the city offered 'a once in a lifetime opportunity to take down a full-fledged city full of insurgents'.

From where had the US military acquired the moral and legal right to carry out an assault on a residential city? Legally, US army commanders always maintained the fiction that they were carrying out the assault on the orders of the Iraqi prime minister, Iyad Allawi, a US appointee whose power, such as it was, derived entirely from the US military presence itself. On a broader level, the moral legitimacy for the assault stemmed from the assumption that the 'coalition' in Iraq represented a higher 'value system' that was directly contradicted by the 'terrorist barbarians' inside Fallujah. This narrative was supported and disseminated by a consensus of conservative and 'hard liberal' commentators in the American and British media. Some argued that Fallujah had become an outpost of the most virulent 'Islamofascism'; others predicted that the 'liberation' of the city would pave the way for the establishment of democratic secular government, not only in Iraq but throughout the Middle East.

In the US, the savage neoconservative pundit and former military officer Ralph Peters portrayed Fallujah as a diseased city in need of violent purification, writing in the *New York Post*: 'The most humane thing we can do in that tormented city is just to win, to burn out the plague of fanaticism and prove to Iraq's people that the forces of terror will not be allowed to enslave them … If that means widespread destruction, we must accept the price … Even if Fallujah has to go the way of Carthage, reduced to shards, the price will be worth it.'[19]

George Bush similarly described Fallujah as a city that had slipped the moorings of the civilised world, whose inhabitants were 'without law' and menaced by 'the enemies of democracy'. Elsewhere the potentially devastating consequences of an all-out military assault were cushioned by the familiar dehumanising language of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism, as a chorus of British and American politicians and army officers described Fallujah as a 'rat's nest' and a 'cancer' that would have

to be 'cleansed' and 'flushed out' so that the city could be 'liberated' and remade as a 'model city'. A number of liberal commentators, such as the *Independent*'s then pro-war columnist Johann Hari, depicted Fallujah as a zone of misogynistic religious fanatics in thrall to al-Zarqawi. Hari described the forthcoming 'incursion' as a 'massive bloody risk' but nevertheless concluded: 'I cannot see any way to hold an election unless Fallujah is reclaimed; Zarqawi is not going to agree to set up polling booths any time soon.'[20]

The picture of Fallujah as a city in thrall to 'Zarqawi' ignored the desperate attempts by the city's governing council to prevent the forthcoming assault, including a public letter that same month from the Fallujah governing shura council to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. The letter rejected US claims that the city was harbouring al-Zarqawi's organisation, claiming that:

> The people of Fallujah assure you that this person, if he exists, is not in Fallujah and is probably not anywhere in Iraq. The people of Fallujah have announced many times that any person who sees al-Zarqawi should kill him … At the same time the representative of Fallujah, our tribal leader, has denounced on many occasions the kidnapping and killing of civilians, and we have no links to any groups committing such inhuman behaviour.[21]

The letter was barely acknowledged in the US or British media, where an all-out assault by the most powerful army in history on a civilian city, defended by a few hundred insurgents armed mostly with kalashnikovs, was already being accepted as a *fait accompli*. By the first week of November, the majority of Fallujah's 300,000 population had fled in expectation of the assault, leaving an estimated 30,000–50,000 people still inside the city, of whom only a tiny proportion were armed fighters.

While liberal hawks such as Hari rationalised the coming assault as a tragic but necessary step towards secularism and democracy, others depicted Fallujah as a battleground in a cosmic confrontation between good and evil. Evangelical Christian narratives often featured in the representation of the 'war on terror' in the US and such representations were given explicit shape by Lieutenant-Colonel Gareth Brandl, the commander of the US marines surrounding Fallujah, who told reporters: 'The enemy has got a face. He's called Satan. He lives in Fallujah and we're going to destroy him.'[22] On 7 November, *Agence France Presse* described an open-air religious service outside the city in which thirty-five marines 'swayed to Christian rock music and asked Jesus Christ to protect them' in the forthcoming battle. One marine compared Fallujah to the biblical battle between David and the Philistines, to the approval of his colleagues who, according to the reporter, 'perceive themselves as warriors fighting barbaric men opposed to all that is good in the world'.[23]

The assault

Stripped of its Christian warrior overtones, this depiction summed up the broad consensus of politicians and the media in the US and Britain. On 8 November, with British and Iraqi forces in support, the US military unleashed Operation Phantom Fury, also known as Operation al Fajr (the dawn), against what Ralph Peters called 'the terrorist city-state of Fallujah', with a massive aerial bombardment using cluster bombs and 500lb conventional explosives, followed by a ground offensive by US and Iraqi forces equipped with tanks and new shoulder-mounted assault weapons (SMAWs), which fired smaller versions of the devastating 'thermobaric' explosives used by the Russian army at Grozny in Chechnya. The *Marine Corps Gazette* later enthused how 'SMAW gunners became expert at determining which wall to shoot to cause the roof to collapse and crush the insurgents fortified inside interior rooms'.[24]

As in April, there were reports that US forces were using napalm, that civilians had been shot by US snipers waving white flags, that families had been killed in their homes, that hospitals, health centres and trauma clinics had been targeted by US forces. The intrepid and resolutely unembedded US journalist Dahr Jamail interviewed refugees from Fallujah in Baghdad, who described how they were using carjacks in bombed neighbourhoods to prise dead children from under blocks of concrete and that American soldiers were dropping bodies into the Euphrates. According to one of Jamail's interviewees: 'The first thing they did was bomb the hospitals because that is where the wounded have to go. Now we see that wounded people are in the street and the soldiers are rolling their tanks over them. This happened so many times. What you see on the TV is nothing. That is just one camera. What you cannot see is much more.'[25]

Little of this emerged in the playstation game imagery broadcast by the dozens of correspondents accompanying US marines into the city. In December 2007, a leaked US army intelligence report on the April assault attributed the US withdrawal to the 'effects of media coverage, enemy information operations and the fragility of the political environment'. In November, according to the report's authors, the assault was covered by ninety-one embedded reporters, mostly from western news outlets, whose purpose was to offer a 'rebuttal' to 'false allegations of non-combatant casualties … made by Arab media in both campaigns'.[26]

For the most part, the embedded reporters fulfilled their allotted role but there were exceptions when the reality of what was taking place in Fallujah showed through. One American TV cameraman captured footage of a marine casually shooting a wounded man lying on the floor of a mosque. On 14 November, a *Reuters* correspondent described a 'sea of rubble and death' in Fallujah. The *Daily Telegraph* described one incident in which:

> A Phantom Abrams tank moved up the road running along the high ground. Its barrel, stencilled with the words 'Ali Baba under 3 Thieves' swivelled towards the city and then fired a 120mm round at a house where two men with AK-47s had been pinpointed. 'Ain't nobody moving now,' shouted a soldier as the dust cleared. 'He rocked that guy's world.'[27]

One US marine sniper told the same reporter: 'I got my kills … I just love my job.' After three weeks of such fighting, US forces announced that Fallujah had been pacified. In the ensuing weeks and months, a wider picture of the destructive impact of the assault began to emerge in piecemeal fashion. Though the US military claimed that its forces had killed 1,200 insurgents, statistics by Iraqi NGOs and other organisations estimated 6,000 deaths. In January 2005, the director of the main hospital at Fallujah told the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs that a hospital emergency team had recovered 'more than 700 bodies from rubble where houses and shops once stood', of whom 'more than 550 were women and children'. In February, Dr Salem Ismael, an Iraqi doctor from Bagdad, accompanied an aid convoy into the city, where he described a scene of apocalyptic devastation in which: 'Hundreds of bodies were decomposing in the houses, gardens and streets of Falluja. Bodies were rotting where they had fallen – bodies of men, women and children, many half-eaten by wild dogs.'[28]

In March that year, a deputation sent to Fallujah by the Iraqi health ministry confirmed that some 75 to 80 per cent of the housing in the city had been destroyed or heavily damaged. At a press conference, the head of the deputation, Dr ash-Shaykhli, accused US forces of using 'mustard gas, nerve gas and other burning chemicals' during the assault. The independent journalist Dahr Jamail, one of the few foreign reporters to visit the city in the aftermath of the assault, recorded numerous incidents in which US soldiers had shot unarmed civilians in their homes, in the streets or trying to swim to safety across the Euphrates.

Such allegations produced no expressions of outrage or denunciation in western media coverage or official statements. On the contrary, in the US, Operation Phantom Fury was hailed as an exemplary victory and the heroism of the US marines was epitomised by the photograph of the 'smoking soldier' at Fallujah, whose oil-stained face became an iconic image of American military valour. The *New York Daily News* commented favourably on the 'shooting-fish-in-a-barrel quality' of the fighting with its unprecedented 'thirty-to-1' kill ratio, while a headline in the *New York Post* proclaimed 'Marlboro Men kick butt in Fallujah'.

In the following months, Fallujah faded from media headlines, reappearing only in January 2005 when an Italian television station revealed that civilians in the city had been killed by white phosphorus dropped by US forces in 'shake and bake' operations against insurgents. The suggestion that US forces had committed war crimes caused a brief media flurry before Fallujah slipped once more from the media radar. The

assault received more attention from a video game company called Kuma Reality Games, which specialises in 'playable recreations of real events in the war on terror' and now sells a game called 'Fallujah: Operation al-Fajr'. Using real satellite imagery of Fallujah's Jolan district, it provides a fantasy environment where players can 'dodge sniper fire and protect civilians'.

Journalistic access to Fallujah itself remained difficult. Occasional reports described a model 'antiterrorist' city, cleansed and purged of its evil elements, where vehicle traffic was prohibited to prevent car bombs, a city divided by roadblocks, sentry posts and mountains of earth known as 'sand berns', where the population was subjected to DNA tests, biometric retina scans and obliged to wear visible ID badges with their photos, names and addresses at all times. In December 2005, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld spoke to marines at Camp Fallujah, where he congratulated them on Fallujah's transformation from a 'symbol of rejection of the new democratic Iraq' into a city which has 'some of the highest voter registration and turnout rates in the country, has increasingly capable and competent Iraq security forces in the streets helping to maintain order and hunting down terrorists'.[29]

Other visitors have told a different story. In November 2007, the Iraqi journalist Ali ad-Fadhily reported that some 70 per cent of the city's buildings had been damaged or destroyed and many neighbourhoods remained without water and electricity. Fadhily reported a hollow shell of a city, where businesses and cafes remained mostly closed and whose residents were reluctant to talk to the media for fear of being detained by the Iraqi police.[30] In January 2008, the brilliant *Independent* journalist Patrick Cockburn found a still devastated and locked-down Fallujah that was 'more difficult to enter than any city in the world' and which was still receiving only an hour's electricity a day.[31]

Cockburn's visit took place more than two years after US forces carried out their devastating assault on the city. In that time, there have been no independent investigations into the allegations of war crimes that took place there. Within the US military itself, a minor dispute emerged last year over whether the assault was consistent with the 'judicious application of the minimum destruction concept in view of the ongoing requirements to minimize alienating the population' outlined in the US army's *Counterinsurgency Operations Field Manual*.[32] But the western media has generally remained silent on the morality or legality of a military operation that converted some 216,000 Iraqis into refugees and turned large sections of their city into an uninhabitable wasteland.

Why did this happen? As far as its stated counterinsurgency objectives are concerned, the 'demonstrative effects' had no impact on the Iraqi insurgency and transformed Fallujah into a rallying cry that will continue to resonate throughout the Islamic world for years to come. Presented as a moral imperative on behalf of civilised values, the assault

merely revealed the absence of such values amongst those who ordered and approved it. In doing so, Fallujah provided further evidence that barbarism and civilisation are not diametrically opposed concepts in a 'global war on terror' which continues to cause more death and destruction than the violence it is supposedly intended to eliminate. If this 'war' is steeped in the civilising imperial narratives of the nineteenth century, it also replicates an imaginative worldview that harks back to classical times.

Greek and Roman geographers once imagined the world as a series of concentric circles, with a civilised centre emanating outwards to an ever more barbarian periphery. At the furthermost edges there were no longer people but 'monstrous races', consisting of mutants with cloven feet and 'wild men' who were closer to beasts than humans. In the imagined atlas of the GWOT, the core nations of 'the West' stand at the centre of the world, surrounded by a dark periphery of 'rogue states' and 'lawless wild places' inhabited only by terrorists and homicidal death cults, by 'jihadists', 'ragheads', 'Taliban' and 'al-Qaida' . These zones of barbarism and disorder range from the badlands of Helmand province and the 'failed state' of Somalia to the 'terrorist nests' of Lebanon. They include the 'feral, failed cities' of the Third World that Mike Davis has identified as the emerging battlefronts in the Pentagon's future wars.[33] Most of these places are located in the Muslim world, particularly in the Middle East, which the neoconservative pundits Richard Perle and David Frum have depicted as a 'cesspit' of violence, hatred and religious fanaticism that can only be cured by limitless western military 'interventions'.

In 2004, Fallujah was identified as one of these 'cesspits' and selected for exemplary punishment. The Roman historian Tacitus once famously described how his compatriots 'make a desolation and call it peace' – a phrase that he placed in the mouth of a barbarian chieftain. In this sense, at least, the US really did behave 'like Rome' at Fallujah and the more it continues to do so in the course of its bloody and incoherent campaigns against the 'barbarians' of the twenty-first century, the more likely it is that Fallujah will not be the last city that has to be destroyed before it can be saved.

References

1 Address to the nation by George W. Bush, Ellis Island, New York, 11 September 2002.
2 'We are the chemotherapy', *New Statesman* (April 2003).
3 'Bremer congratulates Iraq's newest police academy graduates', *America.gov* (2 April 2004), <http://www.america.gov/st/washfile-english/2004/April/20040402160041ndyblehs0.6427881.html>.
4 Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: the rise of the world's most powerful mercenary army* (New York, Nation Books 2007), p. 107.
5 Tammy Bruce, 'Raze Fallujah', *FrontPageMagazine.com* (2 April 2004).
6 Jack Wheeler, 'Falujah delenda est', *Newsmax.com* (2 April 2004), <http://archive.newsmax.com/archives/articles/2004/4/2/100042.shtml>.

7 'Furor at Berlusconi's remark on West's superiority', *New York Times* (28 September 2001).
8 'Remarks by National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice on terrorism and foreign policy' (29 April 2002), <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/04/20020429-9.html>.
9 *Violent Response: the US army in al-Fallujah* (Human Rights Watch, 2003).
10 Jonathan Steele, 'Driven by national pride', *Guardian* (2 April 2004).
11 Tony Perry, 'Marine corps snipers aim to strike fear', *Los Angeles Times* (17 April 2004).
12 Jonathan Holmes, *Fallujah: eyewitness testimony from Iraq's besieged city* (London, Constable & Robinson, 2007), p. 30.
13 Orit Shohat, 'Remember Falluja', *Haaretz* (28 April 2004).
14 Nir Rosen, *In the Belly of the Green Bird: the triumph of the martyrs in Iraq* (New York, Free Press, 2006), p. 149.
15 Herbert London, 'Overcoming national despair', *Townhall* (16 June 2004).
16 Scott Petersen, 'Behind Fallujah strategy', *Christian Science Monitor* (29 October 2004), <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/1029/p01s02-woiq.html>.
17 Stephen Graham, 'Constructing "homeland" and "target" cities in the "war on terror"' (25 November 2004), <http://eprints.dur.ac.uk/archive/00000048>.
18 Stephen Graham, 'Remember Fallujah: demonising place, constructing atrocity', *Environment and Planning D: society and space* (Vol. 23, 2005), p. 6.
19 Ralph Peters, 'Finishing Fallujah', *New York Post* (9 November 2004).
20 Johann Hari 'How do you defend the destruction of Fallujah to the people who live there?', *Independent* (10 November 2004).
21 'Letter from the people of Fallujah to Kofi Annan, secretary general of the United Nations' (14 October 2004), <http://www.brusselstribunal.org/Letter_Fallujah.htm>.
22 'The enemy has got a face: he's called satan', *Associated Press* (6 November 2004).
23 'Holy war: evangelical marines prepare to battle barbarians', *Agence France Presse* (8 November 2004).
24 *Marine Corps Gazette* (July 2005).
25 Dahr Jamail, 'What I saw in Fallujah', *New Statesman* (1 November 2007), <http://www.newstatesman.com/200711010031>.
26 Shaun Waterman, 'Analysis: US lost Fallujah's info war', *United Press International* (2 January 2008).
27 'I got my kills ... I just love my job' *Daily Telegraph* (9 November 2004).
28 'Fallujah: the truth at last', *Socialist Worker* (19 February 2005), <http://www.socialist-worker.co.uk/art.php?id=5891>.
29 'Secretary Rumsfeld Fallujah townhall meeting', US Department of Defense News Transcript (23 December 2005), <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2005/12/mil-051223-dod03.htm>.
30 Ali al-Fadhily, 'Fallujah now under a different kind of siege', *Interpress Service* (20 November 2007), <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=40125>.
31 Patrick Cockburn, 'Return to Fallujah', *Independent* (28 January 2008).
32 'Fallujah push: by the book?', *DefenseTech.org* (11 November 2004), <http://www.defensetech.org/archives/001205.html>.
33 Mike Davis, 'The Pentagon as global slumlord', *Tomdispatch.com* (19 April 2004), <http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/1386/mike_davis_on_the_pentagon_s_urban_war_planning>.

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

US imperialism after Iraq

JERRY HARRIS

Abstract: The failure of its occupation of Iraq has provoked deep divisions among the US ruling elite over the future of foreign policy. The unilateralism promoted by the neoconservatives has been discredited, yet it is unclear whether the post-Bush era will be dominated by the 'realists' or the 'globalists', each of whom advocate different pathways for US imperialism. The 'realists' – long the dominant trend in US foreign policy thinking – aim to maintain US leadership of the pro-western alliance formed during the cold war, whereas the 'globalists', whose economic interests are those of transnational capital, seek to rethink US power within the context of an emerging polycentric world system, the parameters of which remain to be fully articulated. For the moment, there is a disconnect between the transnational economics of globalisation and the nationalist politics of the US ruling class, which remains committed to its belief that America has been uniquely chosen by history, culture and God to lead the world.

Keywords: Iraq occupation, military/industrial complex, neoconservatism, oil, US hegemony

---

Jerry Harris is Professor of History at DeVry University, Chicago, and part of the online think-tank and network <www.solidarityeconomy.net>. He is also secretary of the Global Studies Association of North America.

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 37–58
10.1177/0306396808093300 http://rac.sagepub.com

What is the future direction of US imperialism? The disaster in Iraq has created deep division among ruling elites over strategic choices and the framing of US power. While the future remains unclear, one thing is obvious: the US has been defeated in its Middle East invasion.

To properly judge the war, we must remember its original goals: not only a US-dominated Iraq but a Middle East ready for regime change in Iran, Syria and wherever else deemed necessary. Such a show of unrestrained military power was to cement US hegemony for the twenty-first century. None of this has been achieved. Shelby Steele from Stanford's Hoover Institution articulated the original vision in unambiguous terms: 'Historically, victory in foreign war has always meant hegemony. You win, you take over … A complete American victory in Iraq would put that nation … entirely under American power and sovereignty. We would in fact "own" the society as a colony.'[1] In fact, the opposite has occurred, with the US unable to control the battlefield and the political course of events. Iran has emerged stronger, terrorist networks more organised and the region more unstable. In a survey of 3,400 current and retired officers, including 200 generals and admirals, 42 per cent reported that the war has 'broken the military' and 88 per cent agreed that the military was stretched 'dangerously thin'.[2] Problems on this scale will have far reaching ramifications as ruling circles reflect on the role and capabilities of the military in the decades to come. Even Charles Krauthammer, who first popularised US unilateralism, admits: 'The unipolar moment is now over.'[3]

But if the unipolar moment is over, has a globalist era fully asserted itself? The US ruling class is generally divided into three foreign policy wings, each with global projects that promote different strategic roles for US imperialism. The first is represented by the Bush administration with its economic and political base in the military/industrial complex and a doctrine of unilateral domination.[4] This is counterpoised by the globalists, whose economic interests are those of transnational capital. The hallmark of their strategy is to work through international institutions and embed US power within the constraints and support of a multilateral world system. This is tied to civic engagement and nation building using military power to ensure stability for global capital. The strategy promotes a polycentric global imperialism rather than US hegemony *per se*. The 'realists' are the largest and most traditional faction, having forged a consensus for US imperialism after the second world war with George Keenan's strategy of Soviet containment. Their great concern is guarding and expanding US interests by maintaining US leadership of the pro-western alliance formed during the cold war. The various realist trends find their common viewpoint rooted in national self-interest and a world system of nation-centric competition. They see unilateralists as dangerously aggressive, isolating the US from necessary friends but, unlike globalists, they don't accept a polycentric world order. The terrorist attacks

on 9/11 temporarily covered over these differences, forcing an uneasy unity around White House leadership. But with the debacle in Iraq, failure to crush the Taliban and continued activity from al-Qaida, these differences have grown into a fully engaged debate.

Militarism and globalisation

In discussing globalisation and US imperialism, William Robinson argues that: 'The beneficiaries of US military action around the world are not US but transnational capitalist groups.'[5] Yet transnational elites around the world opposed the US invasion of Iraq. Military policy promoting hegemonic domination commanded by the nationalist wing of US capitalism cannot be described as transnational consensus. By its very definition, globalisation is polycentric. Secondary effects may open closed markets to transnational penetration but if power and leadership are unilateral, then the policy is nationalist in character. A globalist political/military system would need to be *translateral* and integrated in the same manner as the transnational economy. When US leadership decides for everyone else, even in the face of opposition, it cannot be fairly described as a transnational process. As French president Jacques Chirac complained: 'The Americans always want to impose their point of view ... I told Bush 36 times that he was committing a monumental error.'[6] Rather than exploring divisions within US imperialism, Robinson assumes globalist economic hegemony has led to their political hegemony over military policy. But globalisation is not simply a US project; it is a mutually shared system of capitalists the world over. Therefore, to be considered truly transnational, military policy needs to be politically translateral.

Other important studies have recognised a nationalist/globalist split in the US ruling class. Ismael Hossein-Zadeh, in *The Political Economy of US Militarism*, addresses the 'conflict between the two major competing factions within the ruling elite at home: multilateralist proponents of neoliberalism, representing primarily the interests of nonmilitary transnational capital, on the one hand, and unilateralist advocates of nationalism and militarism, who tend to represent the interests of military industries and of the internationally noncompetitive businesses'.[7] Rather than oil and resources, the author argues that the main drive for war is the tremendous profits and economic needs of the military/industry complex. This analysis points to the permanent nature of aggressive imperialist policies built into the economic and political structure of the government and the Pentagon.

Jonathan Nitzan and Shimshon Bichler contend that wars are driven by the accumulation needs of the 'weapondollar-petrodollar coalition'. The authors also see two dominant capitalist factions tied to distinct regimes of accumulation, the first being the oil and armament corporations whose accumulation is 'fuelled by stagflation and driven by conflict',

the second being the '"new economy" coalition led by civilian high-tech companies'.[8] This latter globalist faction seeks to 'secure free trade and open capital flow, tries to establish political stability and international peace [and has] no need to physically conquer new territory'.[9] Nitzan and Bichler argue that oil is allied to the military/industrial complex and that energy resources have been a major element in all the wars that have raged in the Middle East. They do this through a detailed study of price and profits in the oil and weapons industry before and after each war, linking the two industries as one faction of dominant capital.[10]

As insightful as the above authors are, they present an overly economistic view of the military/industrial complex and the drive to war. Hossein-Zadeh argues that the oil industry has never advocated war and prefers stability but ignores the fact that energy security is an essential question for the entire US capitalist class, not just oil companies. Nitzan and Bichler limit their analysis to the competition between two models of accumulation and the capitalist factions that are linked through profits and power to either broad economic expansion or inflation and stagflation. Ignored is the power of ideology and culture embedded in nationalism, which plays a subjective motivating force among both elites and the general population. This goes beyond mere propaganda; consciousness becomes an objective force in political organisation. Political economy cannot be reduced to rates of accumulation and the drive for profits, important as these may be. Furthermore, while all three authors correctly point to nationalist and globalist class factions, they fail to recognise that this split extends into the military/industrial complex itself.[11] In what follows, these splits and the possible military and political direction of the post-Bush years will be investigated. How will failure in Iraq affect unilateralists, realists and globalists as they struggle to redirect US imperialism onto the road of recovery?

Down but not out

Unilateralists have called for US domination of the twenty-first century. This project was most clearly articulated by the neoconservatives but reflects a broader base than this cadre of thinktank activists. Hardline nationalists from the realist school of foreign policy participated in its formulation. Thus neoconservatives such as Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle were joined by 'neorealists' Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld. Together, they promoted a unilateralist strategy in the influential policy paper 'Rebuilding America's defenses: strategy, forces and resources for a new century', published in 2000 by the Project for the New American Century. Their strategic vision prepared the field for the Bush doctrine of pre-emptive war. But it would be a mistake to see this policy as simply the product of some neoconservative coup. Its real influence came about because it represented a clear statement for major elements within the

military/industrial complex, articulating a map for political power and profits in the post-Soviet world.[12]

By following this path, the White House/Pentagon leadership team created what many in the ruling class see as the most serious strategic blunder in US history. Former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski has written that 'the war in Iraq is a historic, strategic and moral calamity'.[13] Concerned that the fiasco could severely restrain US imperialism in the future, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the National Defense University (NDU) jointly sponsored a 'Symposium on Iraq's impact on the future of US foreign and defense policy' in October 2006. Panelist Steven Miller of Harvard painted a grim picture:

> The United States, with a half-trillion-dollar-a-year military, with 150,000 well-trained, well-armed forces in Iraq, possessing total superiority in the air, with a massive technological advantage is being stymied by 5,000 Ba'athist bitter-enders. What this told you was that there were ways for adversaries to confront American power that rendered irrelevant or neutralized many of our advantages militarily and gave them a chance to achieve their interests over ours. And I assume that anybody who's out there on the world stage who thinks they're on Uncle Sam's target list has noticed this. And if we come after them they know what to do ... The point is that there is now a demonstrated, asymmetric strategy that can bog down, hog tie and stymie the United States of America.[14]

The magnitude of the defeat is such that neoconservatives will be on the outskirts of power in the post-Bush years. But their bold rejection of the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group and their escalation of the war shows that they may be down, but not out.[15] Just as the CFR was declaring that 'the idea of talking to Iran is now the consensus position',[16] Bush was pushing more troops into Iraq and threatening Iran. The troop surge indicates the strong attraction that victory through military power still holds.

Widening the war brought renewed support from neorealist senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman. Like Cheney and Rumsfeld, neorealists have abandoned the crusading 'democratic' rhetoric of the neoconservatives but see victory in Iraq as central to promoting hegemonic power. Some neoconservatives hope that McCain can become their new standard-bearer – among them William Kristol, who writes: 'The Republican Party will have to choose, in the very near future, between Baker and McCain.'[17] Similarly, another neoconservative believes that: 'McCain could prosecute the war on terror vigorously with the kind of innovative thought that realists hate and the country needs.'[18]

McCain defends the need for a deeper commitment to war – a position long favoured within the military/industrial complex and most clearly stated in Colin Powell's doctrine on overwhelming force. This was one

of the first battles within the Pentagon and swirled around Rumsfeld's implementation of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that called for a smaller, flexible and technologically advanced army.[19] This doctrine worked well in Afghanistan and the taking of Baghdad. But some military leaders argued that a force of 250,000 or more was necessary to control Iraq. This continued to be a controversy as the occupation marched on. The troop surge and the resulting support of neorealists and neoconservatives is a shift away from RMA but maintains the object of hegemony intact.

In *Foreign Policy*, Joshua Muravchik makes an appeal on 'how to save the Neocons'. He writes:

> One area of neoconservative thought that needs urgent reconsideration is the revolution in military strategy that our neocon hero, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, has championed. This love affair with technology has left our armed forces short on troops and resources … Let's now take up the burden of campaigning for a military force that is large enough … to assure that we will never again get stretched so thin. Let the wonder weapons be the icing on the cake.[20]

The renewed unilateralist strategy emerged out of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) in a paper titled 'Choosing victory, a plan for success in Iraq' by Frederick W. Kagan, a neoconservative and associate of the Project for the New American Century. Faced with the Baker-Hamilton group, Vice-President Cheney asked Kagan to draw up an alternative policy that advocated victory over what was seen as Baker's plan for defeat. This led to the surge policy calling for more soldiers, money and time.[21] Some at the AEI even accused troops of avoiding combat. Kagan's fellow neoconservative Michael Ledeen wrote: 'We've got lots of soldiers sitting on megabases all over Iraq. They should be out and about … I don't know how many guys and gals are sitting in air-conditioned quarters and drinking designer coffee, but it's a substantial number. Enough of that.'[22] This after over 3,000 dead and 25,000 wounded.

The surge strategy relies on the counter-insurgency doctrine advocated by General David Petraeus, who argues that the military must protect citizens from violence and win their hearts and minds through economic aid. But, as history shows, counter-insurgency campaigns target civilian populations because guerrillas are embedded among the people. For insight, we can turn to two more associates of the AEI, Eliot Cohen and Bing West. They call upon the US military to increase the Iraqi prison population by 600 per cent, complaining that releasing prisoners has been 'the single weakest link in the US strategy'.[23] Since the surge, prisons have been inundated beyond capacity. In just one facility at Rasafa, of the 6,647 detainees captured during the surge, 6,079 have been found guilty of no crime. One can easily imagine the anger and fear this creates among Iraqis. A returning US interrogator from Abu Ghraib reported that

more than 80 per cent of prisoners are Iraqis picked up in neighbourhood raids and not involved in the insurgency.[24]
A more concrete assessment of counter-insurgency difficulties is given by Antulio Echevarria, the director of research at the Army War College:

> What terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and (to a lesser extent) Al Qaeda actually have done is integrated themselves into the social and political fabric of Muslim societies worldwide. Hamas and Hezbollah, especially, have established themselves as organizations capable of addressing the everyday problems of their constituencies: setting up day cares, kindergartens, schools, medical clinics, youth and women's centers, sports clubs, social welfare, programs for free meals, and health care. Each has also become a powerful political party within their respective governments … in short, they have become communal activists for their constituencies, which have, in turn, facilitated the construction and maintenance of substantial financial and logistical networks and safe houses.[25]

In light of this assessment, counter-insurgency wars, in Iraq or elsewhere, would clearly lead to attacks on the local population insofar as it constitutes a support network for insurgents.

This review of changing tactics in Iraq is important because it sets the stage for future wars. Overwhelming force and counter-insurgency doctrine are strategies for occupation. But all imperialist occupations face the same political problem. They are opposed by local people who yearn for self-determination. This fundamental truth is something no Washington thinktank or Pentagon general can admit, not even to themselves. They always believe in the rightness of their cause, be it the 'white man's burden' or the war against terror. Such hubris blinds military/industrial intellectuals time and time again. Their understanding of conditions is framed by the bias and dogmas formed in the imperial centre, leaving them ignorant of the complexities of Third World societies. National chauvinism that originates in power and wealth never accepts that less powerful, less wealthy and less technologically endowed societies can run their affairs better than the imperialist centre; consequently, defeat seems unimaginable.

Just listen to the eloquent arrogance of neoconservative Richard Perle shortly before the war: 'Those who think Iraq should not be next may want to think about Syria or Iran or Sudan or Yemen or Somalia or North Korea or Lebanon or the Palestinian Authority … if we do it right with respect to one or two … we could deliver a short message, a two-word message, "You're next."'[26] But the future occupations envisioned by Perle will have no better results than those from the past. History shows that insurgencies fighting colonial forces have been very successful over the past half century, while the insurgencies most often defeated are those engaged in civil wars facing limited or no foreign military presence. This was a

major reason for the success of guerrilla wars in Africa and their failure in Latin America. The post-second world war anti-colonial struggles in Africa liberated Algeria, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Anti-occupation victories can also be marked in Vietnam, Afghanistan and, during the second world war, in Albania, Yugoslavia and China. But the internal revolutionary insurgencies, from the 1960s to the 1980s, in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela were all defeated. The hegemonists, remaining wilfully blind to the colonial character of pre-emptive wars and occupation, have failed to learn this lesson.

Realist resurgence

Mainstream foreign policy elites have long been part of the realist school, which advocates US leadership of an international alliance using a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' power. As the debacle in Iraq grew deeper, their voices became louder, culminating in the Baker-Hamilton report which called for a regional diplomatic solution and a phased withdrawal of US troops. Realists see global order as a balance of power set in a framework of alliances that recognise legitimate areas of influence for national competitors – for example, Soviet influence in eastern Europe during the cold war. Containment and engagement are their policies of choice, with wars limited to peripheral areas of the Third World or vital national interests. In the Middle East, they seek a renewed balance of power that maintains US influence and contains Iran. But containment is not pre-emption and occupation.

Habitually on the inside, realists are bitter over their treatment by the White House. Richard Haass, president of the CFR, refers to realist success and unilateralist failure when he states: 'US dominance of the Middle East has ended … It is one of history's ironies that the first war in Iraq, a war of necessity, marked the beginning of the American era in the Middle East and the second war, a war of choice, has precipitated its end.'[27] Adds another CFR member Ray Takeyh: 'This has got to be the most incompetent administration in history.'[28] Such harsh conclusions by the CFR have a significant impact in Washington. Since its founding in 1921, the CFR has been a major centre for foreign policy. Hossein-Zadeh writes that 'the organization is composed of wealthy, influential and largely global-oriented corporate leaders, with networks and ties to major industrial, financial, and trading corporations, as well as with elite academic and legal experts in Ivy League schools and Wall Street law firms'.[29]

The strongest argument for realists is the success of Operation Desert Storm in 1991, led by George Bush Sr after Iraq invaded Kuwait. Bush Sr built an effective international coalition, including many Arab states, with the intention of re-establishing stability in the Middle East rather

than effecting regime change. The war held to the Powell doctrine which asks eight fundamental questions:

- Is a vital national security interest threatened?
- Do we have a clear, attainable objective?
- Have the risks and costs been fully and frankly analysed?
- Have all other non-violent policy means been exhausted?
- Is there a plausible exit strategy?
- Have the consequences been fully considered?
- Is the action supported by the American people?
- Does the US have broad international support?

Most of these questions were answered before the start of Desert Storm and just as completely ignored in the 2003 Iraq invasion. The Powell doctrine was developed to avoid large-scale occupations, such as that which occurred in Vietnam, and to prevent the small-scale 'humanitarian wars' favoured by the globalists.

Realist opposition to unilateralist policies particularly focused on the role of alliances. For unilateralists, alliances are messy relationships which restrict US power and force unnecessary compromise. If any issue grated on realist sensibilities, it was this. As the CFR and the NDU were holding their post-Iraq war symposium, the Army War College published an important paper titled, 'Alliance and American national security'. The paper defined foreign policy principles for the post-Bush years and was part of the realist push to get beyond the war. Author Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall defends the central importance of alliances as a strategic orientation that is multifaceted and set within cooperative international arrangements. Characterising the unilateralist approach as 'sloppy thinking', she argues that the difference between a 'coalition of the willing' and long-term alliances 'could not be starker' – for they are 'two entirely different organisms'.[30] For Sherwood-Randall, alliances are akin to 'long marriages' in which the views and interests of each partner affect decision making. She writes that 'in developing policy initiatives and in deciding on a course of action, the United States explicitly would give allies more voice and more capacity to influence their own future'.[31] Yet Sherwood-Randall still advocates a hegemonic US role, arguing that: 'The purpose of alliances in US national security policy must be fourfold: To generate capabilities that amplify American power; to create a basis of legitimacy for the exercise of American power; to avert impulses to counterbalance American power; and to steer partners away from strategic apathy or excessive self-reliance.'[32]

The author seems trapped between two eras, promoting US leadership yet recognising how globalisation has changed the world. Grappling with this problem, she writes that 'the United States must accept the reality that its allies no longer depend as they once did on the American security guarantee, [and] needs to reconcile the tension between the regional

rootedness of its partnerships and the increasingly globalized nature of the 21st century'.[33] What Sherwood-Randall fails to realise is how much more independent allies will be in a globalised world, whether or not the US allows it. The European generation that welcomed US troops to fight Hitler and invited them to stay to counterbalance the Soviet Union will soon be gone. In its place will be those who remember the wars in Vietnam and Iraq. Such enduring memories will not foster an attraction to US leadership. In addition, while the author calls for a world-spanning network of alliances, somehow China is excluded. Realists still fail to understand how fully globalisation has undermined Hobbesian national competition. There will be no stability without the inclusion of China and other emerging powers.

Globalist views have a more restrained attachment to US power and allow greater room for a polycentric political order. Speaking at the CFR Iraq symposium, Dana Allin argued that working with Europe gives the US additional capacity, legitimacy and restraint. These are linked by 'embedding our power in the imperfect order of global institutions and governance [and] allowing ourselves to be restrained by international opinion – a restraint that would be good for us. If we had accepted it in 2003, we might have avoided disaster in Iraq. If we accept it now, we might avoid future disasters.'[34]

A globalist alternative?

Building a common strategic security project is a difficult task for globalists. Security and military power goes to the very essence of nation-state identity and purpose, and the attacks of 9/11 have strengthened the nationalism and militarism still inherent in the old international system. Yet terrorism has forced security questions into a qualitatively different context from statist realities and superpower stand-offs. As a non-state threat, terrorism necessitates a global response based less on overwhelming might than on cooperation, coordination and mutual reliance. Rather than unilateral occupations, a cultural war for the ideological hegemony of universalist human values is essential. When asked what he thought about the French revolution, Zhou Enlai famously stated: 'It's too soon to tell.' His words ring true today, as the political and social ideas that sprung from the enlightenment are challenged by fundamentalist religions.

Faced with both military and cultural challenges, are globalists capable of developing a security doctrine? Globalists seek to build a stable environment for the expansion of capital into every nook and cranny of the world. Their key policy components are multilateral institutions and nation building. But countries that follow a different logic of development are labelled 'rogue states' in need of disciplining, often through direct intervention. Both terrorism and regional stability are rationales

for military action. But globalists share with realists a belief in balancing military force with soft power. As Joseph Nye points out, the attraction of culture and ideology is as important as the coercion of missiles and tanks.[35] The globalist approach has an affinity, in some respects, with the theories of Antonio Gramsci, who showed that the most effective method of capitalist rule combines both cultural hegemony and force.

But globalists seek to use hard/soft power in ways which realists criticise as going beyond core national interests. This was especially true when Clinton pursued interventions in the name of global stability rather than US security. It was during this period that 'humanitarian intervention' was pursued hand-in-hand with nation building, resulting in small wars of intervention in ongoing civil conflicts and attempts to stabilise countries through institution-building and economic integration into global accumulation. The US military was still the main actor but most often in coordination with the UN or NATO. Interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo sought justification as humanitarian efforts to stop bloody civil wars, as did the US occupation of Somalia. In Haiti, the US invasion attempted to stabilise the country by reinstalling Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president. Realists and unilateralists saw these 'humanitarian interventions' as unnecessary adventures and nation building as a waste of effort and money. Additionally, the globalist appropriation of human rights rhetoric remains problematic in a world of poverty and military intervention. Imperialism is built upon structural inequalities; at its very core is the expropriation of wealth from the labour of others. As such, the labelling of what are really foreign occupations as 'humanitarian wars' remains Orwellian.

A global military?

There are three global military institutions: the US armed forces, NATO and the UN. Any fully articulated globalist military doctrine would need to promote coordinated action and policy between these three. In addition, countries of growing importance, including Russia, China and India, would need to be part of any reconfiguration – through UN participation. In 2006, the UN had 100,000 soldiers, police and civilians under its control – the second largest deployed force after the US. Costs topped US$5 billion with an expected US$7 billion to be spent in 2007. The UN has been involved in the Congo, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Ethiopia-Eritrea, East Timor, Bosnia, Rwanda, Somalia and, in 2006, sent 10,000 troops to Lebanon that included forces from Italy, France and Germany. The three top global contributors to UN forces are India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and there are eighteen ongoing UN-led deployments.[36] But the UN's mandate is for peacekeeping, with military interventions structured to provide time for a political process to unfold between belligerents. In

addition, UN forces specialise in nation-building projects, oversee elections and help economic reconstruction.

NATO, the other military force essential for any globalist doctrine, is struggling to define its expanded role in the world. Its greatest thrust into global affairs is the presence of 35,000 NATO and US troops in Afghanistan. Meeting in Riga in 2006, the alliance pushed its mandate to include peacekeeping, counter-terrorism and dealing with failed states. The globalists argue that NATO should evolve into a military consortium for the world's democracies. According to Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, 'genuine co-operation and burden sharing – real multilateralism – *is* possible and, indeed, necessary … An effective NATO is the sine qua non of democratic multilateralism … Only by beginning to develop NATO as a global institution of democracies will the allies be capable of not just talking the multilateral talk, but actually walking the multilateral walk.'[37] Ron Asmus, executive director of the Transatlantic Center, calls on NATO to reinvent itself for a 'strategic leap to a new era … to become a more global alliance that takes it to places beyond the European heartland and on missions beyond the imaginations of the founding fathers'.[38]

The big test for NATO is Afghanistan where British, Canadian, Dutch, Polish and US forces are involved in fighting a resurgent Taliban. In addition, French, German, Spanish, Turkish and Italian troops are present but are, at the time of writing, reluctant to engage in combat. Taliban attacks on NATO forces increased by 270 per cent in 2006 and its area of operations increased fourfold. But NATO is divided between advocates of political and military solutions. As a senior NATO diplomat explains: 'There are basically two camps in NATO – the countries that emphasize the need for more military resources for Afghanistan and the countries that emphasize a greater political effort.'[39]

Presently, there is no way out of this contradiction for global imperialism. Globalists may desire stability as the best way to ensure uninterrupted accumulation but, since capitalism engenders inequality, instability results from the inherent nature of the system. This leads to military interventions which end up with unintended consequences, such as prolonged occupations and, as a result, greater instability. Faced with such circumstances, globalists tend to split into two camps, one relying on multilateral military force, the other defining security issues more broadly in terms of economic development, global warming and world poverty. Splits between hard and soft power advocates appear as sharp tactical differences but the real question is whether or not they will develop into deeply held strategic differences with political ramifications.

Nation building

The flip side of military occupation is nation building, which globalists and, more recently, realists argue can best produce long-term peace.

Those who believe in the greater effectiveness of military power see nation building only as an exit strategy from occupation. Although the debate now favours nation building, realities in Iraq and Afghanistan make its belated application difficult. A disregard for nation building was deeply embedded in Rumsfeld's Pentagon. The lack of planning was evident from the start, when three weeks of looting erupted in Baghdad, seventeen out of twenty-three ministries were destroyed and US$12 billion in damage was caused. Rumsfeld's response was to say that 'stuff happens'. In his autobiography, invasion commander General Tommy Franks devotes hundreds of pages to the planning and execution of the war but only a page and a half to reconstruction. In this short space, Franks admits that he received neither guidance nor funding to plan for stability. Such astonishing disregard for the social impact of war was still apparent in 2007. There were only 345 officials working on provincial reconstruction compared to the 8,100 deployed during the Vietnam war. With two million Iraqi refugees in neighbouring countries and another two million internally displaced, the US budgeted a mere US$500,000 for refugee aid, which amounts to what the military spends on the war and reconstruction every two and a half minutes.[40]

Although realists and unilateralists made clear their opposition to nation building during the Clinton years, their rejection went beyond Washington party politics and their objections were based on military and economic doctrine. The first objection is that the military excels as a fighting force, not as peacekeepers; the second objection is based on an ideological commitment to neoliberal market solutions for all problems. This was evident in Iraq, where a vast privatisation of state assets was planned. Even as reconstruction failed to provide jobs and services, an understanding of the importance of nation building was painfully slow in coming. Yet reality has its own way of enforcing itself. Under the new counter-insurgency doctrine, the job of on-the-ground troops in Baghdad has apparently come to include a nation-building element: 'In their new role, the Americans find themselves acting as jailers and doctors, construction workers and garbage men, guardians and detectives – all in the effort to restore lasting order.'[41] Economic reality has also started to impact on military officers. Paul Brinkley, deputy undersecretary of defense for business transformation, has promoted the revival of state-owned Iraqi enterprises. The Iraqi government still owns 192 companies outside the energy and security sectors and continues to pay part of the salaries for 600,000 employees. Little of the US$38 billion in American reconstruction money has gone to local companies and unemployment rates are put somewhere between 30 and 60 per cent.

But US ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, part of the neoconservative circle in Washington, argues that the US should use private corporations because: 'That's obviously the right thing to do.' The *New York Times* reports that Green Zone officials have 'retained their unbending

orientation toward privatization'. When asked why the US was buying buses abroad when a struggling state-owned firm makes similar vehicles, a US official answered: 'We've denied these people access to the global free market for 15 years; I'm not going to go back to them and say that you've got to buy buses from some state-owned enterprise.' Brinkley suggests that when factories 'are laying idle due to our policy of shutting them off, we have an obligation to restore them to the Iraqi people'.[42]

Lt General Peter Chiarelli, a major proponent of the counter-insurgency doctrine, also calls for expanded social, economic and agricultural programmes to employ Iraq's 'angry young men'. Chiarelli calls these 'nonkinetic policies' and argues that: 'A lot of people say: "If we just go down and kill and capture them everything will be OK." ... I'm not saying that every insurgent is going to take a job making 55-gallon drums. But my point is, do you try and reintegrate them into society, or do you just believe that everybody around here wants to have a gun ... ?'[43] Yet nation-building efforts often conflict with battlefield conditions. The Pentagon's new 'FM 3-24 counterinsurgency' doctrine states: 'Sometimes doing nothing is the best reaction. The best weapon is sometimes none at all. The prime objective is not to kill as many insurgents as possible but to maximize support from the local population.' In order to get 'close to the population', troops should be thought of as 'nation-builders as well as warriors' involved in 'armed social work' with political and cultural workers attached to each company.[44] The new strategy may sound all well and good, but what will be the reaction of troops in an environment where they can be 'greeted with either a handshake or a hand grenade'?[45] Similar circumstances in Vietnam created an outlook that saw every Vietnamese as the enemy and led to widespread attacks on civilians. There is plenty of evidence that these same feelings run deep among soldiers today. Numerous reports of US troops killing civilians by accident or in retribution continue to filter out of Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2007, the American Civil Liberties Union reported that the military had paid out US$32 million in compensation for civilian deaths and injuries.

Chiarelli tries to put a human face on occupation, believing that the US is a benign force for good. The view from the Iraqi side is something altogether different. It is hard to paint foreign occupation as anything less than a western war on Islam. Attempts at humanitarian nation building are already far too late. Although unilateralists contend that the troop surge has worked, more important in reducing violence have been the Sunni 'awakening councils' turning on their al-Qaida allies, a truce called by the Shiite Mahdi army and the fact that most Baghdad neighbourhoods had already been purged by the time the US surge took place. None of this indicates an acceptance of US occupation.

The same problem confronts US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Since the defeat of the Taliban, there has been little attention paid to the humanitarian needs of the local population. As one western diplomat pointed

out: 'Reconstruction projects were planned, but never materialized … We are all scratching our heads as to why the aid has not rolled out … It's not for a lack of resources. We are meeting basic needs, but when it comes to sustainable livelihoods and jobs, it's not happening.'[46] With the Taliban resurgence, fighting has spread and so have civilian deaths. Although NATO is guided by a counter-insurgency doctrine that calls for winning hearts and minds, battlefield conditions contradict the strategy. The *New York Times* reports: 'As suicide bombings have taken their toll on troops … the soldiers have frequently resorted to lethal force, calling in airstrikes and firing on approaching cars, often killing and wounding civilians and further worsening the public mood.'[47] The White House only grudgingly recognised the need for greater Afghanistan reconstruction aid. Asking Congress for US$10 billion more in 2007, US$8.6 billion was earmarked for military purposes. Meanwhile, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pushed NATO for more combat troops. For the Bush administration, nation building remains a poorly understood strategy and is regarded as a rearguard action in a deteriorating situation.

It is not that the US lacks the ways and means to carry out large-scale humanitarian reconstruction; the problem is political will. The US had no problems building its own state within a state inside the Green Zone in Baghdad, where the US embassy covers 104 acres – six times larger than the UN complex in New York. It employs 1,000 people, along with private-sector bodyguards, provides its own water, sewerage and electricity, maintains six apartment buildings, a Marine barracks, swimming pool and shops, and has fifteen-foot thick walls.[48] Yet, for Iraqis, little is accomplished – as late as 2007, electrical power had not returned to pre-war levels.

One additional element undercuts nation building as a central objective. The arms industry has billions of dollars sunk into the production of weapons. The proposed military budget for 2008 would enable the Pentagon to spend US$1.2 million every minute and be the world's sixteenth largest economy.[49] Nation building, on the other hand, would redirect government funds towards different types of skills and commodities which are in direct economic competition with the military/industrial complex. Given the influence of military corporations inside the Pentagon, the push for weapons contracts and military solutions to world problems will continue unabated.

The mess in Iraq and Afghanistan has made nation building a primary concern for US foreign policy elites. The CFR convened a task force under the leadership of retired general William Nash, Brent Scowcroft, Samuel Berger and top figures from the Bush Sr and Clinton administrations. Among the task force members were representatives from RAND, Brookings, the World Policy Institute and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Also represented were the National Defense University, the Marine Corps and transnationals such as Citigroup,

Goldman Sachs and Bechtel. Their report, 'In the wake of war: improving US post-conflict capabilities', argues that nation building is 'not just a humanitarian concern, but a critical national security priority that should be on par with war-fighting and urges the United States to equalize the importance of the two'.[50] The report goes on to state that: 'Stability and reconstruction needs to be understood and treated as a mission as important to America's security as high-intensity combat operations.' Furthermore, the report recommends the establishment of a 'multilateral reconstruction Trust Fund' of US$1 billion dollars managed by the Group of Eight and with the UN and World Bank on board. For good measure, it recommends a new undersecretary of state responsible for stabilisation and reconstruction.[51]

Following the publication of the report, the CFR convened a number of symposiums to promote its policy initiatives, pointing out that the nation-building lessons of the 1990s were 'disregarded with devastating consequences'. As Scowcroft explained:

> From the military standpoint they want to focus on their primary mission. You know, the term that was the 'shock and awe' and so on: ruthless force, overwhelming. And we don't want to train paratroops to escort kids to kindergarten. Well, those are slogans and the fact is if you look at the likely nature of conflict over the next generation it's going to be much more this mixed kind of conflict than 'shock and awe' ... war-fighting does not solve the problems ... after the shooting stops you have the problem of what you do, how you put that political entity on a course of reform, stability and reconstruction to make it a useful member of the international community rather than a running sore.[52]

The Scowcroft-Berger 2005 report was a precursor to the Baker-Hamilton 2006 Iraq Study Group. Both were efforts by realists and globalists to stop the unilateralist train to disaster; both were dismissed with little more than a sneer by Bush and Cheney. But in February 2008, the Pentagon issued a new doctrine manual elevating nation building to an equal importance with military victory on the battlefield – clear evidence of the shift of influence away from the unilateralists towards the realist/globalist consensus position. This is a significant win for the globalists' wing which originally promoted the importance of nation building, economic reconstruction and civil institutions. Even unilateralists nowadays acknowledge that nation building is an 'essential component' of occupation.[53] But this came only after the terrible price paid in Iraq and the rapidly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan.

The battle for energy

Oil has long been of key importance to US foreign policy, particularly after the decline in oil production after 1972. Self-sufficient during the

second world war, foreign oil now supplies 56 per cent of total US needs. Access to oil is a concern that reaches far beyond the oil industry itself. It is of strategic importance to the entire economy and therefore viewed as a national security matter. It is a commodity different from all others and one that fuels 97 per cent of US transportation. In addition, the military itself, entrusted to safeguard world access, is dependent on oil to fuel its own global capabilities and industry.[54] For some in the military, oil is the very essence of the US. For example, Captain Donald Root writes: 'The economy is the heartbeat of the American society and way of life. Energy keeps that heartbeat strong and oil is the blood it pumps ... A thriving US economy is the embodiment of the spirit of the American way of life; a strong economy supports political freedom, economic freedom, the unlimited potential of the people and the projection of those ideas across the globe.'[55] This entanglement of oil, global ambitions and the 'American way of life' creates a cultural/political mix tied to the control of foreign energy – a dangerous configuration that justifies ongoing wars.

Realists avoid such language but they see energy as the object of national competition. Consequently, China's deepening economic ties to Iran, Africa and Latin America are a threat and political challenge. Russia's desire for a fair oil price from the Ukraine becomes nationalist interference with the market. And the underbelly of the old Soviet Union is now a hotbed of competition over oil and gas resources. It's not only access that drives geopolitical fears but concerns over how profits are used. China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia are all outside of US political control with economic models or political priorities that are viewed with suspicion or outright hostility. As pointed out in a report by the CFR, countries from 'Russia to Iran to Venezuela are able and willing to use their energy resources as leverage to pursue their strategic and political objectives. Because of their oil wealth, these and other producer countries are free to ignore US policies and to pursue interests inimical to our national security.'[56] If realist views dominate, concerns over oil security competition will become more pronounced and insecurity increased. With the US position weakened in a post-Iraq Middle East, greater tension will result in every region of the world as the US seeks to shore up its power and access.

But none of this makes sense when viewed from a globalist perspective. In an integrated world economy with cross-border investments and production, what is needed is a stable energy market with open access for all. When China imports oil from Angola and Iran, it suits the needs of US transnationals, all of which have manufacturing facilities in China that cry out for more energy. Competition continues and will be fierce but is it global corporations or national economies that are competing? Energy is a highly integrated transnational market of exploration, production and trade. Much of this is under the control of nationally owned corporations dealing with some of the world's biggest and most profitable

corporations. State ownership of 90 per cent of the world's oil resources gives the market its particular geopolitical character. In fact, the six largest state-controlled companies have ten times the reserves of the six largest oil transnationals. Consequently, there is a dual nature to the market, one rooted in nationally identified economics, the other in the expanding transnational economy. Therefore, strategic military policies can promote or retard either accumulation model depending on the political agenda of the class faction in control of the state.

How will all this be reflected in future US energy security policy? A growing sector of corporate, military and political elites are pushing a strategy of energy independence. Battered by the war in Iraq and with fears of global oil instability, their answer is to back away from geopolitical competition and recognise 'the realities of global energy interdependence'. The most important statement of this strategy is 'Recommendations to the nation on reducing US oil dependence' by the Energy Security Leadership Council (ESLC) – a body made up of former high-ranking generals and important corporate representatives, such as Goldman Sachs, UPS, Dow Chemical, FedEx and Southwest Airlines. Unlike the unilateralists, who see competition over oil as a way to assert US leadership and ensure the flow of profits to the military/industrial complex, the ESLC takes the opposite view. Insecurity and economic waste result from the attempt to protect oil access through a globe-spanning military network. As the report argues:

> The magnitude of our dependence on oil provides leverage to our strategic adversaries, makes us vulnerable to terrorist actions, exacerbates geopolitical competition, creates additional military requirement, and undermines efforts to support democratic polices worldwide. Each year the US expends enormous military resources protecting the chronically vulnerable oil production and distribution network while also preparing to guarantee international access to key oil-producing regions. Americans would be well served to recognize that the current struggle for oil security gives rise to burdens not reflected in the retail price of gasoline.[57]

Therefore, reducing oil consumption (particularly in transportation), developing energy alternatives (ethanol) and increasing US production (Alaska and the continental shelf) are all ideas emphasised by the report. Globally, the report recommends a mutual defence of energy resources that includes India and China. As ESLC notes, in an 'interconnected and interdependent world economy', open markets and reciprocal foreign investments are a factor for stability. While certain green policies are advocated, this report does not present an environmentalist strategy – rather it is a geostrategic policy, primarily concerned with security and based on a hybrid of nationalist and globalist ideas. As Herb Kellehner, chairman of Southwest Airlines, has remarked: 'Two or three years ago

I wasn't preoccupied with these issues but I have become more sensitive to them, especially our oil dependency, I've become a crusader from a patriotic standpoint.'[58] This patriotism is not defined as world hegemony but as independence from foreign involvement and 'oil peacekeeping' as the best way of stabilising global competition.

Preparing for defeat

As Bush talked of expanding the war, others were confronting defeat. An early critic of the war, retired general William Odom, asked in 2005: 'What's wrong with cutting and running? There is no question the insurgents and other anti-America parties will take over the government once we leave. But that will happen no matter how long we stay. Any government capable of holding power in Iraq will be anti-America, because the Iraqi people are increasingly becoming anti-American.'[59]

In early 2007, the Brookings Institute issued an analysis paper titled, 'Things fall apart: containing the spillover from an Iraqi civil war', and the CFR published 'After the surge: the case for US military disengagement from Iraq'. The main thrust of both papers is containing the disaster through a pull-back to neighbouring states and working with regional and world powers to prevent violence spilling into the entire Middle East. 'Things fall apart' by Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack is an analysis of civil wars throughout the world and draws a grim picture of violence and chaos spreading to neighbouring states. Massive flows of refugees, greater terrorist activity, radicalisation of neighbouring populations, secessionism, economic loss and regional interventions are listed as potential outcomes. The study concludes that 'the only rational course of action, horrific though it will be, is to abandon Iraq's population centres and refocus American efforts from preventing civil war to containing it'.[60]

'After the surge' by Steven Simon is the result of a CFR task force study. Recognising the surge will fail, Simon sees 'no alternative policy with the potential to turn things around'. As he explains: 'Saddam's rule dismantled civil society before twelve years of sanctions hollowed out Iraq's middle class. US intervention decapitated its leadership, swept aside its remaining institutions, and created the security vacuum that empowered militias and reduced society to a state of Hobbesian misery. Iraqis have thus been stripped of the capacity to build a post-Ba'athist state.'[61] There is evident anger in the report that speaks volumes to splits within the US ruling class. As the author bitterly states: 'Military disengagement will be a severe blow to the United States, which staked its prestige and defined its security on a war to disarm Iraq and transform its politics. Disengaging will signify the inability to achieve these strategic goals … Some disasters are irretrievable.' Who is to blame? 'Amateurish American leadership imbued with a grandiose conception of its power

and committed to a flawed political program.' The result? An American presence 'floundering ineffectually in Iraq while supplying the Muslim world with iconic images of seeming weakness and cruelty'.[62] Facing up to defeat, the report calls for disengagement 'without reference to Iraqi progress toward national reconciliation' and a containment policy carried out through diplomacy. Motivating Simon is a desire to avoid a Vietnam-like debacle: 'Better to withdraw as a coherent and somewhat volitional act than withdraw later in hectic response to public opposition to the war.'[63]

Conclusion

All this draws attention to the weakening of US power and an end to the unipolar moment in history. Unilateralists face years in the cold with the bitter taste of Iraq hanging over Washington. Their only path to regained influence might be another terrorist attack on US soil. But if US hegemony is fading, can the realists succeed in asserting US leadership based on the old western alliance? Here, too, problems exist as US economic power blends into broader transnational relationships and US cultural and political influence faces alternatives from the EU, China and the growing independence of the Third World. The emerging polycentric world simply does not need or want the type of US leadership that won the cold war. The globalists seem best positioned to take advantage of this changing world, as they seek to embed US influence in a set of new transnational networks. But America's self-conception as a country uniquely chosen by history, culture and God to lead the world is deeply rooted in the US ruling class, particularly within the military/industrial complex. This creates a disconnect between transnational economic growth based in polycentric relationships and a political culture based on national supremacy.

With no clear strategic path and lingering divisions within ruling circles, US foreign policy will continue to blunder through any number of tactical adjustments – some more aggressive and dangerous than others. But such confusion does afford space for a growing peace movement to influence the direction and choices of the US. Fading empires can be destructive in their decline or go gently into that good night. It is up to the people of the US to demand a radical redirection of policy and resources, not only ending the occupation of Iraq but also creating the political groundwork for the end of US hegemony.

References

1 Shelby Steele, 'Our unceasing ambivalence', *Wall Street Journal* (8 January 2006), p. A16.

2 Demetri Sevastopulo, 'US army "stretched thin" by Iraq War', *Financial Times* (19 February 2008), p. 6.

3 Guy Dinmore, 'US twists civilian arms to fill its Fortress Baghdad', *Financial Times* (8 January 2007), p. 2.
4 Jerry Harris, 'The US military in the era of globalisation', *Race & Class* (Vol. 44, no. 2, 2002), pp. 1–22.
5 William Robinson, *A Theory of Global Capitalism* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 139.
6 'Chirac tells of daughter's anorexia', *Financial Times* (21 February 2007), p. 4.
7 Ismael Hossein-Zadeh, *The Political Economy of US Militarism* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 4.
8 Jonathan Nitzan and Shimshon Bichler, 'Cheap wars', *Economy of the Occupation* (No. 10, September 2006, Alternative Information Center), p. 18.
9 Ibid., p. 10.
10 Simon Bichler and Jonathan Nitzan, *The Global Political Economy of Israel* (London, Pluto Press, 2002).
11 Jerry Harris, 'Power in transnational class theory', *Science & Society* (Vol. 67, no. 3, 2003), pp. 329–39.
12 Jerry Harris, *The Dialectics of Globalization* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007).
13 Zbigniew Brzezinski, 'Four steps towards calming the chaos in Iraq', *Financial Times* (2 February 2007), p. 13. Brzezinski is a senior advisor to Barack Obama.
14 Steven Miller, 'Coping with rogue states, failing states and proliferators' (Washington, DC, Council on Foreign Relations, 6 October 2006).
15 James Baker and Lee Hamilton are members of the Republican and Democratic Party elites and forged a bi-partisan consensus on ending the war. It was widely greeted in foreign policy circles in Washington.
16 Guy Dinmore, 'White House hunts for way into Iran talks', *Financial Times* (16 November 2006), p. 5.
17 John Broder and J. R. Toner, 'Report on Iraq exposes a divide within the GOP', *New York Times* (10 December 2006).
18 Joshua Muravchik, 'Operation comeback', *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2006).
19 Jerry Harris, 'Dreams of global hegemony and the technology of war', *Race & Class* (Vol. 45, no. 2, 2003), pp. 54–67.
20 Muravchik, op. cit.
21 Frederick W. Kagan, 'Choosing victory: a plan for success in Iraq: phase 1 report' (Washington, DC, American Enterprise Institute, January 2007).
22 Michael Ledeen, 'The surge and its critics' (Washington, DC, American Enterprise Institute, January 2007).
23 Eliot Cohen and Bing West, 'Our only hope', *Wall Street Journal* (8 August 2007).
24 T. Marlan, 'How I learned to hate the war', *Chicago Reader* (August 2006).
25 Lt Colonel Antulio Echevarria, 'Fourth-generation war and other myths' (Carlisle, Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, November 2005).
26 Richard Perle, 'Next stop, Iraq' (30 November 2001), <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/americawar.20011130.perle.nextstopiraq.html>.
27 Richard Haass, 'The new Middle East', *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2006).
28 Guy Dinmore, 'A uniform trend? How democracy worldwide is on the back foot', *Financial Times* (17 January 2007), p. 5.
29 Hossein-Zadeh, op. cit., p. 42.
30 Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, 'Alliances and American national security' (Carlisle, Strategic Studies Institute, Army War College, October 2006), p. 3.
31 Ibid., p. 28.
32 Ibid., p. 10.
33 Ibid., p. 25.
34 Dana Allin, 'Appeasement or restraint? The transatlantic dialogue after Iraq' (Washington, DC, Council on Foreign Relations, 6 October 2006).

35 Joseph Nye, *Soft Power* (Cambridge, Public Affairs, 2004).
36 Mark Turner, 'Peacekeeping blues', *Financial Times Weekend* (2 December 2006).
37 Ivo Daalder and James Goldgeier, 'US and Europe must learn about alliances', *Financial Times* (14 December 2006), p. 13. Daalder is another foreign policy advisor to Obama.
38 Ron Asmus, 'Nato must go global to have a meaningful purpose', *Financial Times* (7 February 2007), p. 11.
39 Daniel Dombey and Demetri Sevastopulo, 'Nato allies consider extra troops for Afghanistan', *Financial Times* (18 January 2007), p. 8.
40 'Iraqis refugee crisis is nearing catastrophe', *Financial Times* (9 February 2007), p. 10.
41 Marc Santora, 'In the vortex of Baghdad, staying put this time', *New York Times* (23 January 2007).
42 James Glanz, 'Iraqi factories, aging and shut, now give hope', *New York Times* (18 January 2007).
43 John Burns, 'US general says jobs and services may curb Iraq violence', *New York Times* (13 December 2006).
44 'Think before you shoot', *Economist* (23 December 2006), pp. 42–3.
45 Ibid.
46 Carlotta Gall, 'NATO's Afghan struggle; build, and fight Taliban', *New York Times* (13 January 2007).
47 Ibid.
48 Guy Dinmore, 'US twists civilian arms to fill its Fortress Baghdad', *Financial Times* (8 January 2007), p. 2.
49 Demetri Sevastopulo, 'Bush to set Pentagon spending at $623 bn', *Financial Times* (6 February 2007), p. 5.
50 Council on Foreign Relations, 'Improving US post-conflict capabilities: report of an independent bipartisan task force', *Federal News Service* (27 July 2005).
51 Ibid.
52 Council on Foreign Relations, 'In the wake of war: improving US post-conflict capabilities', *Task Force Report No. 55* (September 2005).
53 Kagan, op. cit., p. 4.
54 Michael T. Klare, *Blood and Oil* (New York, Metropolitan Books, 2004).
55 Captain Donald Root, 'For the want of a nail: US dependence on foreign oil and national security' (Carlisle, Strategy Research Project, US Army War College, 6 February 2005), p. 2.
56 Council on Foreign Relations, 'US energy dependence undercutting US national security, council task force warns' (12 October 2006).
57 Energy Security Leadership Council, 'Recommendations to the nation on reducing US oil dependence' (December 2006).
58 Caroline Daniel, 'Bush faces pressure on carbon emissions', *Financial Times* (22 January 2007), p. 4.
59 William Odom, 'What's wrong with cutting and running?', *Nieman Watchdog* (3August 2005), <http://www.niemanwatchdog.org/index.cfm?askthisid=129&fuseaction=Ask_this.view>.
60 Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack, 'Things fall apart: containing the spillover from an Iraq civil war', *Analysis Paper 11* (Washington, DC, Brookings Institute, January 2007).
61 Steven Simon. 'After the surge, the case for US military disengagement from Iraq'(Washington, DC, Council on Foreign Relations, February 2007).
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Structuring silence: asbestos and biomedical research in Britain and South Africa

LUNDY BRAUN

Abstract: Over the last quarter of the twentieth century, asbestos-induced diseases began to attract widespread attention as a result of labour activism, media coverage, government regulation, scientific research and extensive litigation in North America and Europe. The consequences of asbestos mining and manufacture in producer countries, such as South Africa, where the multinational industry operated, however, remained largely invisible internationally. Historians of the asbestos industry have demonstrated that suppression and manipulation of scientific knowledge played a central role in the industry's efforts to escape accountability. What has been neglected are the ways in which mainstream asbestos researchers in the early twentieth century separated the physiological from the social context of disease in both the metropole and the colonies, thereby narrowing understandings of disease causality. It is argued here that narrow concepts of disease allowed for limited visibility and, in Britain, fostered prevention policies based on technical 'solutions'; whereas, in the racially segregated society of South Africa, a narrow

Lundy Braun is an associate professor in the departments of Africana Studies and Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Brown University and a member of the Faculty Committee on Science and Technology Studies.

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 59–78
10.1177/0306396808093301 http://rac.sagepub.com

notion of causality rendered asbestos-induced diseases almost completely invisible – as they still are today.

Keywords: asbestosis, history of medicine, labour activism, occupational disease

From the mid-1960s, the popular press began to feature chilling accounts of the hazards faced by workers in the asbestos manufacturing industries of North America and Europe.[1] Though it was cancer from non-occupational exposures to asbestos, particularly mesothelioma,[2] that triggered particular anxiety, the extensive press coverage nonetheless made visible the disease experience of men and women who laboured in the asbestos industry. For many in the North, the asbestos industry came to embody the callousness of industrial capitalism. Ultimately, this visibility unleashed waves of litigation, which contributed to the decline of the manufacture and use of asbestos products in developed countries, although mesothelioma remains epidemic in Europe and high in the US.[3]

Despite intense scrutiny of industry practices in the ensuing decades, however, little attention was paid to the burden of disease among the men, women and children in South Africa who, for much of the twentieth century, extracted and processed the mineral to make consumer products which were central to industrialised economies. Not until 1999 did a major US newspaper feature the legacy of asbestos mining in South Africa.[4] After touring former mining regions and interviewing people suffering from asbestos-induced diseases and officials charged with rehabilitation, investigative reporter Carol Morello declared with stunned disbelief that many villages she visited would, in the US, be designated as sites in need of 'Superfund' federal assistance for the clean-up of toxic waste. How, one wonders, could such devastation have happened?

During the twentieth century, South Africa produced most of the world's supply of crocidolite (blue) and amosite (brown) and a smaller proportion of chrysotile (white) asbestos. From its inception, the asbestos industry was global. Although most raw material was exported, asbestos tailings were used extensively in building materials and road surfaces in former mining regions. Animals now graze and people collect wood on polluted mining and milling sites. Even rehabilitated mines remain contaminated. Though the last mine closed in 2002, most experts agree that the major asbestos-induced diseases are epidemic in South Africa and, given such widespread environmental contamination, will remain so for decades.

Over the last quarter of a century, historians of the asbestos industry have shown how the industry escaped social accountability and financial liability for its practices.[5] Uncovering this history has been central to

legal settlements, trade union battles to limit exposure and international activist campaigns to ban asbestos. Without doubt this work has saved many lives and limited expansion of the industry. The asbestos industry is, however, far from dead. Under the mantra of 'safe use' of chrysotile asbestos, Canada, Russia and Brazil continue to export asbestos to markets in Asia and the Middle East, primarily for housing materials.[6] Moreover, academic scientists from Canada, the UK, Switzerland and the US are critical to this effort of promoting 'safe use' by sustaining debate over the pathogenicity of different types of asbestos (i.e., whether or not they are disease-causing agents). Taking a cynical rhetorical stance, they even go so far as to argue that opposition to the mining, manufacture and use of asbestos is tantamount to 'environmental imperialism'.[7]

While occupational disease is structured into industrial market economies, the effects of work on health have received surprisingly little attention from labour, political, social, cultural or medical historians.[8] In the case of asbestos, historians have documented the double standards of exposure to and regulation of asbestos in the UK and South Africa, the history of occupational legislation in South Africa and the systematic suppression of scientific knowledge.[9] The sheer magnitude of environmental contamination and occupational exposure in South Africa, however, suggests that suppression of scientific knowledge cannot fully explain how the epidemic in this country was so effectively silenced. Is there a relationship between conventional biomedical understandings of disease causality, that is understandings not directly influenced by industry interests, and the rendering invisible of disease in South Africa and the partial visibility of disease in North America and western Europe? How, in other words, does power work through transnational discourses and practices of 'normal' science?

To elucidate the consequences of biomedical concepts of disease causality for the production of disease and for prevention policies in the metropole and the periphery, this article explores the development of the scientific conception of asbestosis as a specific disease in early twentieth century Britain, the home country of the multinational companies that operated the mines of South Africa and an important site of manufacture of a wide range of asbestos-containing products.[10] In their quest for objectivity and value-neutrality, scientists worked to separate the scientific from the social dimensions of disease, producing a narrowly circumscribed concept of disease causality. In what follows, it is argued that the process of specification obscured the political and socio-economic roots of disease along with workers' experience and knowledge, even as it illuminated certain aspects of the physiological effects of asbestos. In the case of Britain, decontextualisation of disease was compatible with partial visibility of the dangers of asbestos, limited disease prevention efforts and a faith in technical solutions. In the context of the industrialising settler colony of South Africa, on the other hand, biomedical concepts

of disease causality worked together with political and socio-economic conditions to establish the almost absolute invisibility of the burden of asbestos-induced diseases, which in turn led to the virtual non-existence of public health measures. Whether visible or invisible, however, asbestos-induced disease among workers and communities surrounding factories and mines in both Britain and South Africa was deemed, for most of the twentieth century, a politically and socially acceptable price of industrialisation.

Demarcating the scientific and the social

Almost every aspect of the history of asbestos is controversial. Of particular salience legally is the exact moment when the asbestos industry became aware of the hazardous properties of asbestos. Most, but not all, scientists would agree that knowledge of the pathogenicity of asbestos fibres was widespread among communities of scientific experts who linked it definitely to asbestosis by 1928, to lung cancer by 1948 and to mesothelioma by 1959.[11] Moreover, South Africa was no scientific backwater. South African researchers were central players in the global circulation of scientific knowledge about asbestos, publishing seminal papers on disease aetiology (that is, the study of the causes of disease) and hosting several international conferences on occupational disease. There was, in other words, no lack of knowledge of the relationship between asbestos and disease in South Africa for much of the twentieth century. Yet campaigns organised by the industry to manufacture uncertainty, through the suppression and manipulation of knowledge and through calls for ever more research, continue to the present day.[12] Of course, as historians of occupational disease have shown, such strategies are not unique to the asbestos industry.

The rendering invisible of asbestos diseases in South Africa, however, involves more than simple suppression or expert manipulation of knowledge. According to anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'effective silencing does not require a conspiracy, not even a political consensus. Its roots are structural.'[13] What has not been examined in most analyses of the problem of asbestos are the structures and practices by which disease is framed scientifically in terms of specific entities, with single causes and scientifically knowable mechanisms accessible only to experts, thus stripping disease of its social context and silencing workers' intimate and rich knowledge of the dynamics of factory life, the complexity of exposures in the workplace and their experiences of disease and disability.[14] Invisibility, however, was not an inevitable outcome of monocausal theories of disease. While ignorance of the social context has been a general feature of aetiologic understandings of the health effects of asbestos, whether the health hazards of asbestos acquire visibility or remain invisible has depended on how scientific ways of thinking about

disease have interlocked with broader socio-political, economic and cultural forces.

In *Science at the Bar*, science studies scholar Sheila Jasonoff tells us that 'although its conclusions may be speculative, provisional, and subject to modification, science is ordinarily seen as set apart from all other social activities by virtue of its institutionalized procedures for overcoming particularity and context dependence and its capacity for generating claims of universal validity'.[15] The institutionalisation of such procedures in science, with the notion of value-neutrality as central, was an uneven process that changed over time. In the seventeenth century, for example, the status of science was fragile. In this period, according to Robert Proctor, 'neutrality was part of the bargain struck, the price science had to pay, for social legitimation in the eyes of church and state'.[16] For the biomedical sciences, the emergence of pathological anatomy in the nineteenth century, as historian Charles E. Rosenberg has written, informed increasingly narrow notions of diseases as specific, isolatable entities produced by physical, chemical and biological agents that slowly and fitfully replaced more fluid and non-specific understandings of disease centred on complex physiological interactions with the environment.[17] Although co-existing with ecological visions of disease, especially in the field of tropical medicine,[18] by the early-twentieth century, the germ theory, which linked specific microbes to specific pathological mechanisms, provided a model of disease causality that was to profoundly influence modern biomedicine. Such a determinist model of disease, which was seen as more objective than previous understandings, was of particular importance to the emerging field of industrial medicine, as modern states looked to biomedical and engineering sciences to limit the scope of workers' compensation.[19]

In early twentieth century industrial medicine, separating disease from its social roots was a complex process, accomplished through the professionalisation of occupational health experts; development of research methodologies; contentious negotiations over standards of exposure, measurement and compensation; and debates over definitions of disease and the pathogenicity of chemical and physical agents.[20] Within such a framework, the tasks for scientists studying the relationship between work and disease became narrowly circumscribed to describing and classifying harmful agents and their interactions with workers' bodies, developing 'objective' laboratory tools for their detection and designing technical methods for their elimination.

A key period in the framing of asbestos-induced diseases as specific entities distinct from other pulmonary ailments was the 1920s to 1930s. Innovative applications for asbestos proliferated during these decades, allowing for continued expansion of the industry. As one pro-industry writer claimed in 1924, 'the world, once thoroughly awakened to its [asbestos'] merits, had rapidly made up for the past neglect by almost

feverish activity in many directions, so that to-day this has become a very great and ever-growing universal industry of enormous importance'.[21] With development of new technological tools for visualisation of lesions and diagnosis of disease, biomedicine was positioned to mediate relationships among labour, capital and the state, in such a way that the disease experience of some British asbestos workers acquired visibility, though severely limited in scope. The press covered the plight of asbestos workers and some regulation of the industry became politically necessary.[22] During this same period, on the other hand, South African society was becoming more rigidly segregated on the basis of race, excluding the majority of workers from political participation in society, limiting their movement and controlling with impunity and violence their conditions of life and labour.[23] In such a context, scientific models of asbestos-induced diseases helped to create the conditions for almost absolute invisibility, a situation that prevailed for the rest of the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries. What had emerged, therefore, by the early twentieth century, when the first papers on this entity named asbestosis were published, was a knowledge system that could not 'see' workers, especially those who laboured far away in the mines and mills of South Africa, even while their bodies were critical research tools in the scientific legitimation of asbestosis as a discrete entity.

'Curious bodies' and disease specificity

For a number of reasons, uncertainty has long characterised the scientific study of work-related diseases. These diseases tend to be chronic in nature with long latent periods between exposure and the development of symptoms. Exposures are frequently mixed, symptoms are often non-specific and the clinical course of disease is unpredictable, making diagnosis complicated. Moreover, industrial processes are continually changing, producing new forms of exposures, whereas medico-legal procedures attempt to fix artificially these exposures in time. Reflecting these ambiguities, in the early twentieth century, many pulmonary conditions simply carried vague labels, such as 'phthisis' or 'pneumoconiosis', which correspond to what we now name tuberculosis, silicosis, emphysema, bronchitis, asthma, and so on.

Asbestos received little attention from scientific researchers until the 1920s, when thirteen published reports, some based on studies conducted in southern Africa, appeared in rapid sequence in prominent British medical journals. This new research emphasis, however, did not spring from nowhere. That asbestos was hazardous to health had been known since the late nineteenth century, although it was only later that the specific diseases caused by asbestos were established. For example, basing their restrictions 'entirely on the then existing state of knowledge as regards the accident and disease liability of men employed in various occupations',

the Prudential Life Insurance Company of America stopped issuing intermediate policies to asbestos workers as early as 1897.[24] In Britain, the 1898 report of women inspectors of factories highlighted the hazards of asbestos.[25]

Evidence, given in 1906 by H. Montague Murray, a physician at Charing Cross Hospital in London, to the Parliamentary Departmental Committee on Compensation for Industrial Diseases on 'fibrosis of the lungs produced by asbestos dust' is of particular significance to the history of asbestosis. His was the first official description of the distinctive microscopic appearance produced by exposure to asbestos fibres. Nonetheless, the authority of Murray's evidence was weakened by his reliance on a single case of a 33-year-old worker, by his cautious – if not sceptical – stance regarding the worker's testimony on the high death rate in the asbestos factory and, of particular importance, by his inability to provide the examiners with a 'handy method' of distinguishing asbestos-induced fibrosis from that due to other agents. Like so many physicians and scientists after him, Murray's testimony obscured the consequences of industrial capitalism by speculating that the voluntary efforts of industry had reduced the prevalence of disease. 'One hears, generally speaking', Murray told the committee, 'that considerable trouble is now taken to prevent the inhalation of the dust, so that the disease is not so likely to occur as heretofore.'[26] Since specificity was essential to establish the scientific legitimacy of asbestosis as a scheduled disease for workmen's compensation, Murray's evidence was ignored by government and scientists for nearly twenty years. During the first decades of the twentieth century, despite the fact that its precise aetiology had not yet been determined, scientific studies, parliamentary hearings, reports of the chief inspectors of factories, coroners' inquests, media accounts, physicians' experience and workers' testimony nevertheless all provided an abundance of knowledge about lung disease in asbestos workers. By 1930, the health hazards of asbestos were indisputable.[27]

A cryptic note in 1924 in the *British Medical Journal* by pathologist W. Cooke, of the Wigan and Leigh Infirmaries, marks the moment when asbestos fibres were first linked in a scientific report to a fibrosis distinct from tuberculosis and silicosis.[28] Noting that 'medical men in areas where asbestos is manufactured have long suspected the dust to be the cause of chronic bronchitis and fibrosis', Cooke describes the microscopic appearance of the lungs obtained during an inquest into the death of Nellie Kershaw, a worker at Turner and Newall's Rochdale factory who died at the age of 34, leaving behind a husband and young child. In the next few years, three papers presented at the Section of Preventive Medicine at the annual meeting of the British Medical Association, and subsequently published in the *British Medical Journal*, named this entity asbestosis.[29] Its specificity was delineated through clinical, anatomical and histopathologic descriptions of the distribution of lesions in the lungs

bolstered by the availability of x-ray technology, through detection of particles in areas of fibrosis and 'curious bodies' that might prove to be diagnostic and through the classification of specific work processes as either hazardous or safe. As shown by press coverage of the meeting, there was no doubt about the health consequences of asbestos exposure or the broader meaning of the scientific findings for workers' compensation.[30] Numerous other articles, some of which introduced laboratory methods for differential diagnosis and for probing the physiological effects of exposure, were published in British journals in the 1920s and 1930s. By 1930, animal experimentation had conclusively established the microscopic specificity of the entity asbestosis, linked it to a specific cause and begun to dissect the underlying biological mechanisms of the disease.

This was truly exciting and ground-breaking work for scientists. But, as researchers enacted the process of 'overcoming context dependence' in clinical case reports, pathological descriptions, experimental studies and scientific surveys, asbestos workers were reduced to demographic variables and objects for constructing a scientific narrative, not thinking, feeling or acting human beings. In none of the papers was it possible to imagine the people who were the objects of this elegant research.

The following passage, from a paper written by F. W. Simson of the South African Institute for Medical Research (SAIMR),[31] illustrates the distancing rhetoric of the patho-anatomic gaze that characterised the method by which a boundary was established between the scientific and the social. In describing the histology of the lungs of 'a male adult native, who had worked for twelve months in the asbestos mill' in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Simson writes: 'apart from the tuberculosis and associated fibrosis, sections of the lungs showed a certain amount of connective tissue change which had no obvious connexion with the tuberculous process. It was also found that curious golden yellow segmented structures, with rounded or club-shaped ends … are embedded in this fibrous tissue.' While Simson admitted that 'an unresolved pneumonia with subsequent fibrosis is not an uncommon occurrence among natives working on the mines in South Africa', his only acknowledgment of working conditions was to dismiss mining as a 'source of danger' compared to milling, carding and spinning of asbestos fibres. Since there was no asbestos textile manufacture in southern Africa, that left only one process – that of milling – as hazardous. By narrowing the scope of the problem, Simson cast exposure as manageable and amenable to technical solutions, thus ensuring that the disease burden of miners was ignored.[32]

In clinical case reports on asbestos, humans are indeed present, although as experimental objects whose knowledge and experience of disease is excluded from the scientific process. For example, in his detailed clinical description of asbestosis, A. C. Haddow, a clinician from Leeds, transformed asbestos workers from patients into 'cases' with scientific value.

Though at first glance less distancing than pathological reports, even in clinical accounts the central problem defined by scientists was a technical one of identifying the distribution of asbestos dust in the lungs, improving diagnosis of disease and distinguishing asbestosis from tuberculosis. Absent were the structural conditions under which dust was inhaled or workers' knowledge about the source of their suffering. The only mention of the broader context of asbestos manufacture occurs in the last sentence, in which Haddow manages both to exonerate industry and government and to assign blame to workers for their disease. 'The disclosure of the danger arising from asbestos dust', he writes, 'has brought home to the workers the need for observing the measures provided for their protection, and is bound to be salutary.'[33]

Containing disease

Once established as a specific pathological entity, asbestosis became a factor in subsequent social debates, informing narrowly conceptual surveys to assess the magnitude of the problem in asbestos workers and mediating negotiations over dust regulations, compensation for asbestos-induced disease and, more generally, who should bear the burden of industrialisation.[34] The knowledge produced by surveys of workers, in particular, needed to be managed carefully so as not to jeopardise the profitability and growth of the industry. While the asbestos industry in Europe and southern Africa was small in comparison to coal mining in Britain or gold mining in South Africa, British companies were opening new asbestos mines in Africa in the 1920s and markets for manufactured consumer products containing asbestos were expanding rapidly in North America and western Europe. Under conditions of super-exploitation in the colonies but with profit margins variable, the stakes for the industry were high.[35]

The approach that the industry went on to take was one of containment, rather than prevention, of disease. And the degree of containment was determined by the socio-political and economic context. In Britain, the categorisation of work processes as either safe or hazardous in two large surveys of asbestos workers conducted in the late 1920s proved critical to the goal of containment. With trade union pressure in coal mining and silicosis-producing industries, anecdotal reports of asbestos workers' own experiences in factories, parliamentary inquiries and increasing scientific curiosity about the pathogenicity of asbestos fibres, the Home Office initiated an inquiry in November 1928 into the extent of disease among asbestos workers. The investigations of Medical Inspector of Factories, E. R. A. Merewether, which showed that 32 per cent of asbestos workers had pulmonary disease, formed the basis of legislation enacted in 1931, thus bringing some visibility, though dangerously limited in scope, to the problem.[36] The first survey of asbestos miners

conducted between 1926 and 1930 by George Slade, a medical officer on a chrysotile mine in South Africa, in collaboration with the SAIMR, found an even higher prevalence of respiratory disease. In the colonial context of South Africa, with no political pressure on the state or industry to limit exposure, however, the study had no impact on the regulatory environment or the visibility of the workers' disease experience.[37]

As key representatives of the state in matters of industrial health and safety, factory inspectors in Britain were well aware that they needed to maintain good relations with employers; interference with the operations of industry and trade was a last and infrequently invoked resort.[38] Such views are revealed in the underlying assumptions about the nature of asbestos-induced disease that informed Merewether's analysis. First, drawing especially on the histopathological work of previous researchers, Merewether conceptualised disease causality as reducible to single agents. Like Cooke and Simson, what intrigued him especially was the presence of 'curious bodies' located throughout the lungs of exposed workers. 'The importance of these findings', he remarked, 'lies in the fact that the bodies have never been found, as yet, in any other human affection.'[39] Their specificity was thus of potential significance not only to scientists but also to the state in distinguishing asbestosis from other respiratory diseases, linking it to specific industrial processes and ultimately containing the disease to a limited extent.

Second, Merewether characterised asbestosis as generally benign, despite its high prevalence in asbestos textile workers. He wrote:

> The amount of disablement produced by the development of pulmonary fibrosis in these workers is surprisingly slight for a number of years, even more so than is generally the case in silicosis. The nature of the work, however, in the majority of the processes does not involve much physical exertion – in fact, in this respect it is 'light work'. The affected person may, and often does, continue at work – with occasional intermissions … until the condition is advanced, although he suffers increasing inconvenience from shortness of breath on the slightest exertion.[40]

Such a characterisation leaves no doubt about the value of workers' lives in the rigidly hierarchical class society of early twentieth century Britain. No mention is made of how workers survived during 'occasional intermissions', how they coped with the demands of daily life or what happened to them when the condition became 'advanced' and they were forced to leave the industry with no means of support.

Finally, undoubtedly aware of the implications of his work for the bureaucratic operation of the compensation system, Merewether designed his study on the assumption that work processes could be rationally categorised as hazardous or safe. While acknowledging that multiple processes went on in the same room in many factories and that workers

continually moved from one process to another (and from one dusty industry to another), he nonetheless proceeded to declare that the spinning process represented an appropriate standard of safety. The goal then was simply to reduce dust exposure in hazardous work processes, such as crushing, carding and mattress-making, to the level in spinning. Inherent in this characterisation was the cultural assumption that a certain level of bodily damage and disease was not only inevitable but also acceptable. 'In order to prevent the full development of the disease among asbestos workers', Merewether wrote, 'within an average working lifetime, it is necessary to reduce the concentration of dust in the air of the workrooms to a figure somewhat below that pertaining to spinning at the present time.'[41] This attempt to reduce asbestosis to acceptable levels went on to shape future legislation, restrict access to compensation and inform scientific theorising about asbestos.[42] As a consequence, although asbestosis acquired some visibility, exposures affecting workers not included in the legislation (which was the majority of those in the asbestos industry) were ignored and the association of asbestos with lung cancer and mesothelioma was obscured for decades.[43]

As would be expected of a mine medical officer, the South African George Slade was well aware of the importance of the asbestos industry worldwide. In his 1931 thesis, he demonstrated a subtle understanding, not only of the chemical properties of asbestos and the medical aspects of exposure to asbestos fibres but also of the various aspects of industry operations. Steeped in the British scientific literature, he extended the early research carried out in the UK. Drawing on his own clinical expertise, he described the signs and symptoms of asbestosis with exquisite precision, distinguished it from bronchitis and other respiratory ailments and related disease to specific work processes in the mine. Most striking were his clinical findings that shortness of breath, indicative of impaired respiratory function, was present in a staggering proportion of workers: 72 out of 100 mill workers overall and 14 out of 14 mill workers who had been employed for more than five years![44]

Despite the strikingly high prevalence of respiratory symptoms, Slade shared with his British scientific colleagues a similar conceptualisation of disease causality. Like Merewether, he was impressed that some work processes were safer than others, that some level of disease was inevitable and that acceptable levels could be achieved through engineering techniques. Workers, even with advanced fibrosis, he noted, did not generally complain. Rather than noting that their lack of complaints might be explained by the oppressive social conditions under which the black majority in South Africa lived, Slade ignored their experience, representing the disease as generally benign clinically. With high levels of dust confined to milling operations, not underground or surface work, he, too, thought exposures could be managed through technical means and periodic medical exams.

Although Slade's thesis was never published,[45] it is highly likely, given the closely knit nature of the South African research community, that his findings circulated widely, nationally and internationally, among medical and public health experts whose careers were structurally intertwined with the mining industry. US and European researchers visited the SAIMR frequently and South Africans spent time doing research abroad. From the first decades of the twentieth century, knowledge about asbestos in South Africa was part of a global system that silenced – and normalised – the disease experience of southern African workers.

Visibility of asbestos-induced disease in early twentieth century Britain

What I have attempted to demonstrate thus far are the ways in which the discourses and practices of scientists and state officials worked together to refine a concept of disease causality that obscured the conditions of life and labour, and the knowledge of asbestos workers, in both Britain and South Africa. The knowledge produced was deployed, however, in different ways in the two contexts such that the problem of asbestos acquired a limited and tightly managed visibility in Britain but remained invisible in South Africa.

Of key significance to the emergence of a degree of visibility in Britain was the interwar compensation crisis, which was generated by rapid and unregulated industrialisation and the introduction of machine processing in coal mining and by trade union activism, both occurring in the context of declining profits after the first world war. This crisis, in turn, shaped the development of the field of industrial medicine and this discipline's knowledge and practices proved central to managing and containing the crisis. In 1906, six occupational diseases were added to the Workmen's Compensation Act and, thereafter, new diseases were added regularly to the schedule, each after intense debate and political struggle in which all parties, albeit with different perspectives and to different degrees, looked to science as a value-free, neutral arbiter of their claims.

Triggered by Merewether's research and shaped by his interpretation, the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1925 was extended in 1930 to include asbestos. This was quickly followed by the Asbestos Industry (Asbestosis) Scheme in 1931 and the Silicosis and Asbestosis (Medical Arrangements) Scheme, also in 1931, which remained in effect until 1969. Although this legislation was so narrow in scope that it excluded a large proportion of workers in the asbestos industry, it nonetheless brought limited recognition of the hazards of asbestos. The reasons for government action at this moment are not immediately apparent, especially when one considers that coal workers' pneumoconiosis, a condition that affected a much larger number of workers, was not scheduled until 1943. At this time, the asbestos industry was small and scattered throughout the

country, a high proportion of workers were women who worked for relatively short periods of time in the industry and unions representing asbestos workers were generally compliant.[46] On the other hand, there were other factors on the horizon, notably lobbying by the more militant coal miners' unions for compensation.[47] With the asbestos industry expanding, there was some incentive for the state and for companies to find ways to contain disease but without jeopardising the industry's operations. Such an approach entailed delicate negotiations between companies, the state and labour. The rapid expansion of the Cape Asbestos Company's operations, its purchase – after the depression and during the second world war – of new properties both in South Africa and Britain, and the proliferation of asbestos-containing consumer products, which were avidly marketed, indicates that such negotiations favoured industry.[48]

Thus, research on asbestos conducted in Britain during the 1920s and 1930s was an integral part of an environment in which the epistemological structure for mediating social relations among capital, labour and the state was already highly formalised.[49] Researchers, such as Simson, Cooke and others, who worked to differentiate asbestos-induced pulmonary fibrosis histologically, radiologically and clinically from other occupational lung diseases, such as silicosis, bronchitis and coal miner's phthisis (which was still not distinguished from silicosis in the early twentieth century), could hardly have been unaware of this medico-legal context.

'Socially acceptable risk' in South Africa

The socio-political conditions differed significantly in South Africa. There was no compensation crisis in the interwar years that involved black workers,[50] no pressure for parliamentary action on asbestos and limited trade union activity or threats of litigation. The structures of power in asbestos mines were distinct from those of gold mines.[51] Asbestos mining at this time – and for many decades after – remained informal and, for the most part, family-based, facilitated by the extensive and easily accessible outcroppings of asbestos scattered widely throughout parts of rural South Africa. By the 1930s, there were 104 mining sites but only twelve underground mines. Men did heavy manual labour, drilling, blasting and loading rock into cocopans; women and children separated fibres from the ore to sell directly to overseers or to companies. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, workers lived in makeshift huts on the mines, surrounded by tailings dumps. While asbestos workers escaped some of the most onerous aspects of surveillance that gold miners endured, by living and working on the mines, asbestos workers were exposed occupationally and environmentally to higher levels of fibres than white workers.[52] In his study of working conditions at the large underground Havelock asbestos mine that began operations in Swaziland

in the late 1930s, for example, Nhlanhla Dlamini has argued that white workers were exposed to lower levels of asbestos than black workers because their housing was located further from the site of production and they spent shorter times underground.[53] While asbestos mining afforded black workers some measure of independence compared to work in the gold mines, their options were few. Public health legislation, developed in response to epidemics of plague in the first decade of the twentieth century in the Cape Colony, had established the principle of 'native locations'.[54] Africans were alienated from the land by the Natives' Land Act of 1913, forcibly removed to distant rural areas, burdened by colonial taxation policies and restricted in their movements between urban centres and rural villages through pass laws and other legislation linked to the hardening of racial segregation.[55] One can thus argue that the material conditions of racial domination and class oppression, which were formed in part by scientific theories of white supremacy, worked together with asbestos fibres and narrow concepts of disease causality to produce disease in the southern African context.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, labour struggles by white workers in South African gold mines, triggered in part by their experiences of high rates of respiratory disease, led to compulsory compensation for occupational disease. Other outcomes, however, were a racially segregated labour movement and reservation of skilled jobs for white workers, which formalised a discriminatory system of wages and for decades helped to limit black mineworkers' efforts to organise. Early health and safety legislation established differential standards for compensation, surveillance and exposure to hazardous substances for black and white workers. Moreover, the white Mine Workers' Union was weak on asbestos mines and did not advocate for exposure limits. With no black unions at mines until the 1980s, there was no pressure for systematic monitoring or documentation of disease.[56] Even in the 1980s, when political mobilisation against apartheid heightened, 'acceptability' informed the approach to prevention. Occupational disease thus became defined as accidental and there was a shared understanding that the health effects of workplace exposures were natural and therefore acceptable.[57]

Comments to the press in 1983 by Pat Hart, the former managing director of Gencor's Gefco and Msauli mines, illustrate this point. 'A zero-risk situation is not possible in industrialized countries', Hart argues. 'We should instead aim to achieve socially acceptable risk levels.'[58] By 1985, according to Hart, the danger of working with asbestos and using products made of it had been reduced to a 'socially acceptable risk'.[59] Hart is correct in assuming some consensus about the social utility of asbestos mining and manufacturing in colonial and apartheid South Africa. What he ignores, however, is that the majority of asbestos workers and residents of communities close to sites of mining and manufacture were excluded from these social negotiations on the acceptability of risk – and it is their

bodies and human dignity that have been, and continue to be, assaulted by industry practices. Only a year later, in 1984, the Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers' Union made precisely this point, arguing for the closure of the asbestos industry in South Africa.[60]

The geographic and imaginary distance between colonial and metropolitan labour, extractive and manufacturing industries, producers of raw materials and consumers of commodities ensured that the asbestos regulations in Britain had no impact in South Africa on the practices of multinational companies, such as the British-based Cape Asbestos Company and Turner and Newall. Underground and surface sampling of dust levels by the mines inspectorate only began in the 1940s but, even then, local inspections were sporadic and the recommendations of the inspectors, minimal though they were, were disregarded. Asbestos mines were not even registered as mines until 1953. As in the metropole, lack of enforcement characterised industry-state relations after the first dust standards were introduced in 1956.[61]

While there were numerous studies of asbestos workers in Britain,[62] after Slade's survey in the late 1920s, neither industry nor the state sponsored studies of asbestos workers in South Africa until 1961, even though the Pneumoconiosis Research Unit (PRU) in Johannesburg was selected as the repository of standardised samples of the different types of asbestos, which were made available to researchers worldwide.[63] However, as the extent of disease became clear in the 1961 field study in the northern Cape and at Penge mine, the industry withdrew funding for a larger survey and delayed publication of the report.[64] Moreover, the most internationally prominent longitudinal studies that were conducted by the PRU from the 1960s, many of which continue to be published in peer-reviewed journals, excluded black workers.[65] Black workers were literally invisible.

A serious examination of asbestos-induced disease only began in the 1980s as the political context of South Africa shifted and research not under the direct control of industry slowly emerged. In the 1970s, waves of strike activity swept Durban, threatened output and forced the government to recognise the right of black workers to organise into trade unions. Asbestos diseases were soon high on the unions' agendas.[66] But, by this time, the health of generations of workers had been compromised and the environment was extensively, perhaps irreversibly, contaminated.[67]

It is significant that the early research on asbestosis, including research conducted in South Africa, was published primarily in British journals, even though it drew on studies conducted on the bodies of southern African workers. The context of settler colonialism ensured that knowledge produced by British and South African scientists was never deployed to address the health needs of the black majority – nor was it meant to. Healthcare services were virtually non-existent in South Africa for the majority of South Africans.[68] While Africa was a 'natural' laboratory for

aetiological studies of asbestosis and mesothelioma, medical research on asbestos exclusively served the metropole.

Conclusion

Soon after asbestosis was defined as a specific entity, the asbestos industry began to develop systematic efforts to engage scientists in its agenda of suppression, manipulation and distortion of information, although it took some time for these efforts to become organised internationally.[69] I have argued that organised efforts to control knowledge took place in a particular historical context in which the intimate connections between the biological and social causes of disease were being severed conceptually and methodologically through the practices of 'normal' science. As a consequence, debates over the biology and physico-chemical properties of asbestos were central to the research agenda, marginalising the social dimensions of disease, concealing the scope of human suffering and obscuring ways to prevent disease and alleviate suffering. While these debates were certainly fostered by industry and served its interests, they were also utterly ordinary from a scientific perspective.

As historians Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner show in their history of silicosis in the US, visibility of occupational disease is negotiated and renegotiated over time.[70] In the case of asbestos, central to the negotiation of visibility were scientifically legitimated, reproducible and politically tenable methods of diagnosis, which emerged in the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century and which were based on narrow conceptions of causality, evaluation of impairment, measurement of hazardous materials and determination of standards or 'acceptable' levels of exposure. Although the diagnosis of asbestosis remained contested, by excluding workers' knowledge and experience, science produced ignorance about the nature and causes of diseases induced by asbestos and the effects of exposure on the lives of workers and residents surrounding the mines and factories of the asbestos companies. In Britain, reforms, though tenuous and partial in scope, made asbestos-induced disease partially visible. For families and residents of asbestos mining regions living under the brutal structures of settler colonial rule in South Africa, on the other hand, the framing of biomedical knowledge about asbestos ensured that their health experience was effectively silenced.

References

I would like to thank Sophie Kisting for sharing her wealth of knowledge on asbestos and asbestos workers in South Africa, Catherine Trimbur for research assistance and Jock McCulloch for providing me with a copy of George Slade's unpublished thesis.

1 See, for example, H. M. Schmeck, 'A rare carcinoma believed on the rise', *New York Times* (7 October 1964), p. 24; T. O'Toole, 'Rare, fatal cancer is showing up among

those handling asbestos', *Washington Post* (25 December 1967), p. A1; 'Asbestos dust as cancer cause', *The Times* (7 October 1964), p. 12.

2 Mesothelioma is a rare but highly aggressive and painful cancer of the lining of the lung and abdominal cavities, which is produced by exposure to asbestos fibres.

3 J. Peto, S. LaVecchia, F. Levi and E. Negri, 'The European mesothelioma epidemic', *British Journal of Cancer* (Vol. 79, 1999), pp. 666–72.

4 C. Morello, 'South Africa's blacks never knew that asbestos was killing them', *USA Today* (10 February 1999), p. 8A.

5 See, for example, P. Brodeur, *Expendable Americans: the incredible story of how tens of thousands of American men and women die each year of preventable industrial disease* (New York, Viking Press, 1974); J. Myers, 'Asbestos and asbestos-related disease in South Africa', *Saldru Working Paper No. 28* (Cape Town, Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit, 1980); R. Proctor, *Cancer Wars: how politics shapes what we know and don't know about cancer* (New York, NY, Basic Books, 1995), pp. 110–22; B. Castleman, *Asbestos: medical and legal aspects,* 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Aspen Law & Business, 1996); G. Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust: Turner & Newall and the asbestos hazard* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000); R. Johnston and A. McIvor, *Lethal Work: a history of the asbestos tragedy in Scotland* (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2000); J. McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues: labour, capital, physicians and the state in South Africa* (Oxford, James Currey, 2002).

6 J. LaDou, 'The asbestos cancer epidemic', *Environmental Health Perspectives* (Vol. 112, no. 3, 2004), pp. 285–90.

7 D. Bernstein, A. Gibbs, F. Pooley, A. Langer, K. Donaldson, J. Hoskins and J. Dunnigan, 'Misconceptions and misuse of International Agency for Research on Cancer "classification of carcinogenic substances": the case of asbestos', *Indoor and Built Environment* (Vol. 16, no. 2, 2007), pp. 94–8.

8 Some notable exceptions include: R. M. Packard, *White Plague Black Labor: tuberculosis and the political economy of health and disease in South Africa* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1989); D. Rosner and G. Markowitz, *Deadly Dust: silicosis and the politics of occupational disease in twentieth-century America* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1994), A. Derickson, *Black Lung: anatomy of a disaster* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1998); Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.; G. Markowitz and D. Rosner, *Deceit and Denial: the deadly politics of industrial pollution* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2002); McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit.; A. McIvor and R. Johnston, *Miner's Lung: a history of dust disease in British coal mining* (Ashgate, London, 2007).

9 J. E. Myers, 'The social context of occupational health in South Africa', *American Journal of Public Health* (Vol. 79, no. 2, 1989), pp. 213–21; J. McCulloch and G. Tweedale, 'Double standards: the multinational asbestos industry and asbestos-related disease in South Africa', *International Journal of Health Services* (Vol. 34, no. 4, 2004) pp. 663–79; L. Braun and S. Kisting, 'Asbestos-related disease in South Africa: the social production of an invisible epidemic', *American Journal of Public Health* (Vol. 96, no. 8, 2006) pp. 1386–96.

10 Asbestosis is a non-carcinogenic disease involving scarring of the lungs that causes disability and sometimes death.

11 F. W. Simson, 'Pulmonary asbestosis in South Africa', *British Medical Journal* (26 May 1928), pp. 885–7; R. Doll, 'Mortality from lung cancer in asbestos workers', *British Journal of Industrial Medicine* (Vol. 12, 1955), pp. 81–6; J. C. Wagner, 'Some pathological aspects of asbestos in the Union of South Africa', in A. J. Orenstein (ed.), *Proceedings of the Pneumoconiosis Conference Held at the University of Witswatersrand, Johannesburg, 1959* (London, J. & A. Churchill, 1960), pp. 383–90. German scientists were convinced of an aetiological link between asbestos and lung cancer as early as 1938. See R. N. Proctor, *The Nazi War on Cancer* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 108–13. Lung cancer caused by asbestos is

indistinguishable microscopically or clinically from that due to other causes, such as smoking.

12 L. Braun, A. Greene, M. Manseau, R. Singhal, S. Kisting and N. Jacobs, 'Scientific controversy and asbestos: making disease invisible', *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health* (Vol. 9, no. 3, 2003), pp. 194–205.

13 M.-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: power and the production of history* (Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 1997), p. 106.

14 See G. Markowitz and D. Rosner, *'Slaves of the Depression': worker's letters about life on the job* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1987) for workers' accounts of working and health conditions during the depression.

15 S. Jasonoff, *Science at the Bar: law, science and technology in America* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 7.

16 R. N. Proctor, *Value-Free Science? Purity and power in modern knowledge* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 7.

17 C. Rosenberg, 'Disease in history: frames and framers', *Milbank Quarterly* (Vol. 67, 1989), pp. 1–15; 'The tyranny of diagnosis: specific entities and individual experience', *Milbank Quarterly* (Vol. 80, 2002), pp. 237–60. See G. D. Feldberg, *Disease and Class: tuberculosis and the shaping of modern North American society* (New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 1995), pp. 41–2, for a discussion of the greater reticence US Americans demonstrated as compared to Canadians and Europeans towards Koch's notion of the tubercle bacillus as the causative agent of tuberculosis.

18 W. Anderson, 'Natural histories of infectious diseases: ecological vision in twentieth-century biomedical science', in G. Mitman, M. Murphy and C. Sellers (eds), *Landscapes of Exposure: knowledge and illness in modern environments* (Osiris Vol. 19, 2004), pp. 39–61.

19 K. Figlio, 'How does illness mediate social relations? Workmen's compensation and medico-legal practices, 1890–1940', in P. Wright and A. Treacher (eds), *The Problem of Medical Knowledge: examining the social construction of medicine* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1982), pp. 174–225.

20 A. Labish, 'Social history of occupational medicine and of factory health services in the Federal Republic of Germany', in P. Weindling (ed.), *The Social History of Occupational Health* (London, Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 32–51; Rosner and Markowitz, *Deadly Dust*, op. cit.; C. C. Sellers, *Hazards of the Job: from industrial disease to environmental health science* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

21 A. L. Summers, *Asbestos and the Asbestos Industry: the world's most wonderful mineral and other fireproof minerals* (London, Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, 1924), p. 1. While it is tempting to dismiss industry publications as mere propaganda, the cultural appeal of this fireproof mineral, with its seemingly endless applications, was profound.

22 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.

23 W. Beinart and S. Dubow (eds), *Segregation and Apartheid in Twentieth-Century South Africa* (London, Routledge, 1995).

24 F. L. Hoffman, *History of Prudential Insurance Company of America: industrial insurance 1875–1900* (Newark, NJ, Prudential Press), p. 246.

25 M. Greenberg, 'Knowledge of the health hazard of asbestos prior to the Merewether and Price report of 1930', *Social History of Medicine* (Vol. 7, 1994) pp. 493–516.

26 *Report of the Departmental Committee on Compensation for Industrial Diseases* (London, HMSO, 1907), pp. 127–8.

27 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.; McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit.

28 W. E. Cooke, 'Fibrosis of the lungs due to the inhalation of asbestos dust', *British Medical Journal* (26 July 1924), p. 147.

29 W. E. Cooke, 'Pulmonary asbestosis', *British Medical Journal* (Vol. ii, 1927), pp. 1024–5; S. McDonald, 'Histology of pulmonary asbestosis', *British Medical Journal* (Vol. ii, 1927), pp. 1025–6; T. Oliver, 'Clinical aspects of pulmonary asbestosis', *British Medical Journal* (Vol. ii, 1927), pp. 1026–7.

30 'The BMA doctors' views on milk supply, industrial dusts and tuberculosis', *The Times* (25 July 1929), p. 9.
31 The SAIMR was established in 1912 as a joint venture by the newly formed South African government and the Chamber of Mines, the mine owners' organisation.
32 Simson, 'Pulmonary asbestosis', op. cit., pp. 885–7.
33 A. C. Haddow, 'Clinical aspects of pulmonary asbestosis', *British Medical Journal* (28 September 1929), pp. 580–1.
34 N. J. Wikeley, *Compensation for Industrial Disease* (Dartmouth, Aldershot, 1993); Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.
35 McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit., pp. 42–6; 'New African asbestos mine', *The Times* (30 May 1928), p. 22; 'Cape Asbestos Company: continued expansion of the business', *The Times* (9 June 1928), p. 19.
36 E. R. A. Merewether, 'The occurrence of pulmonary fibrosis and other pulmonary affections in asbestos workers', *Journal of Industrial Hygiene* (Vol. 12, 1930), pp. 239–57; E. R. A. Merewether and C. W. Price, *Report on Effects of Asbestos Dust On the Lungs and Dust Suppression in the Asbestos Industry* (London, HMSO, 1930).
37 McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit., pp. 165–6; Braun and Kisting, 'Asbestos-related disease in South Africa', op. cit.
38 Richard Schilling, *A Challenging Life: sixty years in occupational health* (London, Canning Press, 1998).
39 Merewether, 'The occurrence of pulmonary fibrosis', op. cit., p. 241.
40 Ibid, p. 245.
41 Ibid, p. 242.
42 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.
43 See the Richard Doll papers at the Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine, London, for the narrow framework that informed Doll's investigations into the link between asbestos and lung cancer.
44 G. F. Slade, *The Incidence of Respiratory Disability in Workers Employed in Asbestos Mining, With Special Reference to the Type of Disability Caused by the Inhalation of Asbestos Dust,* MD Thesis, Witwatersrand University, 1931.
45 McCulloch and Tweedale, 'Double standards: the multinational asbestos industry and asbestos-related disease in South Africa', op. cit.
46 Greenberg, 'Knowledge of the health hazard', op. cit., pp. 506–7. It is also important to note that there were unions, such as the National Union of General Workers (NUGW) and the Amalgamated Society of India Rubber, Cable and Asbestos Workers, representing workers in asbestos factories in the first decades of the twentieth century. In papers submitted in a wage dispute during the first world war between the Cape Asbestos Co. Ltd and the NUGW under the Munitions of War Acts of 1915 and 1916, Cape notes that 'the whole of this industry is injurious to the health of the workpeople'. Arbitration Award, 4 September 1916, Public Records Office LAB 2/203/1.
47 H. Francis and D. Smith, *The Fed: a history of the South Wales Miners in the twentieth century* (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1980). See also the oral history collection at the South Wales Miners' Library, Swansea, South Wales.
48 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.; 'Cape Asbestos Company: further steady progress, increased net profit, Mr Robert Walker's speech', *The Times* (19 June 1936), p. 25.
49 Figlio, 'How does illness mediate social relations?', op. cit.
50 R. Naidoo, 'The social and political influences on the development of occupational health in South Africa since the 1980s', unpublished paper.
51 A. Butchart, *The Anatomy of Power: European constructions of the African body* (London, Zed Books, 1998) pp. 92–111.
52 McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit.; Braun and Kisting, 'Asbestos-related disease in South Africa', op. cit.
53 Nhlanhla Dlamini, *Race Relations in Swaziland: the case of Havelock asbestos mines, 1939–1964,* MA thesis in History, University of Swaziland, 2001, pp. 77–8.

54 M. W. Swanson, 'The sanitation syndrome: bubonic plague and urban native policy in the Cape Colony, 1900–1909', *Journal of African History* (Vol. 18, no. 3, 1977), p. 389.

55 R. Davenport and C. Saunders, *South Africa: a modern history* (Houndmills, MacMillan Press, 2000).

56 While African trade unionism and militancy centred on wages and working conditions expanded from the late 1920s, there was little activity on asbestos mines. V. L. Allen, *The History of Black Mineworkers in South Africa, Vol. I: the techniques of resistance, 1871–1948* (West Yorkshire, The Moor Press, 1992); D. O'Meara, 'The 1946 African mineworkers' strike and the political economy of South Africa', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* (Vol. 13, no. 2, 1975), pp. 146–73; J. Baskin, *Striking Back: a history of Cosatu* (Johannesburg, Raven Press, 1991).

57 K. Figlio, 'What is an accident?', in P. Weindling (ed.), *The Social History of Occupational Health* (London, Routledge Kegan & Paul, 1985), p. 189.

58 A. Manga, 'Fears of heavy asbestos death roll refuted', *Star* (28 August 1983).

59 'Asbestos danger now at "acceptable" level', *Star* (8 November 1985), p. 7.

60 P. Van Niekerk, 'Union calls for boycott of asbestos products', *Rand Daily Mail* (12 October 1984). Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers' Union, 'Asbestos: a position paper' (14 October 1984).

61 Myers, 'Asbestos and asbestos-related disease', op. cit.; M. Felix, J.-P. Leger, R. Ehrlich, 'Three minerals, three epidemics – asbestos mining and disease in South Africa', in M. Mehlman and J. Upton (eds.), *The Identification and Control of Environmental and Occupational Diseases: asbestos and cancer: advances in modern environmental toxicology, vol. XXI* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton Scientific, 1993), pp. 265–86; McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit., pp. 117–41.

62 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.

63 J. C. Gilson, 'Asbestos – recent studies on its biological effects', The Wyers Memorial Lecture, PRU.21/65, J. C. Gilson Papers, Wellcome Library for the History and Understanding of Medicine, GC/237/C.1/6 Box 4.

64 Felix et al., 'Three minerals', op. cit., p. 272; McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues*, op. cit., pp. 181–200.

65 See, for example, G. F. Sluis-Cremer, 'Asbestos disease at low exposures after long residence times', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* (Vol. 643, 1991), pp. 182–95.

66 Black Allied Mining and Construction Workers' Union, 'Asbestos', op. cit.; General Workers Union, 'Health and safety agreement at Turnall: a first in South Africa', *South African Labour Bulletin* (Vol. 11, 1986), pp. 42–6.

67 Many of the abandoned mining sites and other sources of contamination are known only to rural residents of South Africa.

68 N. Andersson and S. Marks, 'The state, class and the allocation of health resources in southern Africa', *Social Science & Medicine* (Vol. 28, no. 5, 1989), pp. 515–30.

69 Tweedale, *Magic Mineral to Killer Dust*, op. cit.; J. McCulloch, 'Saving the asbestos industry, 1960–2006', *Public Health Reports* (Vol. 121, 2006), pp. 609–14.

70 G. Markowitz and D. Rosner, 'The illusion of medical uncertainty: silicosis and the politics of industrial disability, 1930–1960', in C. E. Rosenberg and J. Golden (eds), *Framing Disease, Studies in Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ, Rutgers University Press, 1992), pp. 185–205.

Commentary

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Language and the seizure of power: an interview with C. L. R. James

By Chris Searle

Abstract: In this hitherto unpublished wide-ranging and reflective interview from 1982 on the relationships between language, literature and political change, C. L. R. James examines what is specific to the Caribbean genus of imaginative writing in English. And he draws insightful comparisons between it and the rhetorical power embodied in Martin Luther King's great speech, 'I have a dream'. As we go to press, the fortieth anniversary of King's death is being commemorated.

Keywords: Caribbean literature, George Lamming, 'I have a dream', Martin Luther King, Sam Selvon, Wilson Harris

The following interview with the Trinidadian writer and activist C. L. R. James was conducted in August 1982 at his home in Brixton, south London. At the time, I was writing *Words Unchained: language and revolution in Grenada*,[1] having returned from two years working as a teacher-educator for the People's Revolutionary Government, and I was particularly interested in discussing with James his thoughts on language and power. However, this became a mere starting point as James's mind ranged over many related questions of culture, literature, politics and personal history, through over seventy years of life and experience. It was his

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 79–97
10.1177/0306396808093302 http://rac.sagepub.com

own idea to read out in full the celebrated 1963 speech of Martin Luther King in order to illustrate the difference between Caribbean English and Black English in the US. He read dramatically, with a huge zest and enthusiasm, sometimes becoming transported by the power of King's words – some quotations from that reading and commentary are extracted here. Later the same day, after I had returned home, he telephoned me. He was excited and told me that a book which I had given him, an anthology of Mozambican poetry called *Sunflower of Hope*,[2] had interested him and moved him greatly. 'This is some of the most important poetry written this century', he said of the FRELIMO poets and asked me to return the next day. I did and we continued our conversation – this time without the encumbrance of a tape recorder – on the 'seizure of power' theme (while simultaneously watching a cricket test match on his television). As I was leaving, he gave me a copy of one of his most potent works – *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution*,[3] like *The Black Jacobins* very much about the organisation and seizure of power.

Chris Searle: Could you comment on the question of language in a revolutionary situation? For example, how can the English language, as a colonial institution, be transformed and decolonised?

C. L. R. James: I don't think that the language can be transformed. The English language has a certain basis to it which is the result of many centuries of development. What I think is most astonishing is the *use* that people in Africa and the Caribbean, particularly in Africa, have made of this foreign language. We had to adapt it to our own requirements and this gives it the revolutionary range and peculiar depth which colonial English did not have.

There are some African writers who use English; I think of Wole Soyinka who has introduced African aesthetics, African generic, organic ideas into his literature. And he is doing it in the English language – some remarkable work. I think also of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the writer of *Petals of Blood*. They have both handled the English language in a way that makes a contribution to it but they have not transformed it – they have *used* it. The French speakers have done even more, like Aimé Césaire in his *Return to my Native Land*. He, too, like Rimbaud and Baudelaire who were soundly based in the tradition of revolutionary French literature, has made his contribution to the French language. Or, take one of the most remarkable writers in the English language, Wilson Harris from Guyana. Wilson is doing things with the language that no English writer is doing. I hope you will recognise that I am not saying something which is out of place; he hasn't transformed the language. You can't transform a language like English or French or German. But we are in the territories abroad and we use the language and Wilson, in particular, is using it in relation to the Caribbean language, the Caribbean climate, the Caribbean environment and forest, the South American natural, objective situation

and his language is rooted in that. I don't see the word 'transformed' as the correct one here. I would really ask, with regard to that, in all the changes of language that writers from the former colonial territories have made, is there anyone you know who has transformed English or French, the two languages that I'm most familiar with? I don't think so; 'transformed' is certainly the wrong word.

CS: What about writers who have added a new dimension to the language, a new energy?

CLRJ: *That* is what Wilson Harris is doing. And, in *Return to my Native Land*, Aimé Césaire has written a French that no Frenchman is writing and I think that the French realise that more urgently than the English realise what Wilson is doing. There are some critics who do, when he turns from certain attitudes of philosophical analysis to a situation of concrete reality and where he handles the language with a firmness and simplicity that is amazing. So you find both forms of language within the covers of one small book.

CS: Does the anti-colonial struggle bring this new dimension to the language?

CLRJ: Anti-imperialist language is for the most part revolutionary in that it is against the tradition represented by the English language. And I regret to say that, in the twentieth century, the English language written by the English has not been revolutionary in any sense. One writer who I believe really matters is D. H. Lawrence. His language is what it is because he is dealing with subjects that the average British writer has kept away from. But when I look at the English literature of this century, I see that there are fundamental changes that have taken place, in that the old Keats/Tennyson tradition has been broken. Who broke it? Two Americans, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. Those two broke up the English language. They weren't revolutionaries but they transformed the poetic form that had been there for a hundred years. Then, when it came to fiction there was another American, Henry James. I don't like his work but it obviously made a great change in the conception of fiction writing. Then there is the other one – Joseph Conrad, and he was a Pole, a man who learned his English on board a ship. I listen to him when I read him and I don't think he is quite a master of the English language and the English rhythm. But he undoubtedly did things with the English language – in *Heart of Darkness*, for example, which had never been done before. So you have Eliot, Pound – another is James Joyce, an Irishman, and this Pole, Conrad. And then another influence which gave an impetus to the English language – the Caribbean writers.

CS: Three of the greatest prose writers in English this century have been Ngugi, George Lamming and yourself. All three of you have been vitally engaged in the anti-imperialist struggle. How has that struggle injected into your language the energy that has been absent in the mainstream of English writers?

CLRJ: Lamming's work *is* remarkable. *Of Age and Innocence*, for example, is a superb book. I compare him (and I hope that I don't offend anybody) to a writer like Iris Murdoch. I can't go more than fifty or sixty pages into her books. I begin a novel and this man is sleeping with his son or his sister's husband and I say: 'Well, what is all this?' But Lamming and Wilson Harris are always dealing with reality.

You mention my work. I'm glad you did because I spend a lot of time looking at it. Firstly, I have written two short stories. One is *La Divina Pastora*. What does that story mean? I only discovered that thirty or forty years after I had written it. My grandmother told me the story when I was a boy, about sixteen. This West Indian had joined the Catholic Church. Then, he heard about thee miracles from the priests, the breaking of the natural order that had taken place in Italy, in Spain or in France. Then it struck him that he would like a miracle, some defiance of the natural order, to take place in the Caribbean. So he made that one to suit. Then my next story was a story of the ordinary people, the people of the barrack-yards, a story called *Triumph*. Not many writers in Britain have that concern with people living their own lives. Then I wrote a novel called *Minty Alley* in 1929. It was my vacation, I had nothing to do, so I sat down and wrote it at the rate of a chapter a day. Then I left it. Years later, I came to England and my publisher heard me speak of it. He said: 'You've written a novel?' I said: 'It's no good. It's still in pen. I haven't had time to type it.' He said: 'Let me see it.' So I gave it to him. He gave me £50, which was a lot of money, and published it. Nobody took much notice of it. Now, after it was republished a few years ago, people began to say it expresses the conflict between the black intellectual and the mass of the population. And so it does! I read it and see that now, but when I wrote it I had no such ideas in my head. That tells you a lot about the handling of the language and the subject matter by someone of the Caribbean at that time. When I wrote *Minty Alley* and the two stories, I had no ideas about Marxism in my head. But being there you were automatically against the existing regime because it was so corrupt. And something happens. At school we learned Shakespeare, Goldsmith, Shaw and these others – men of high morality, and we absorbed that. Then we came to Britain and saw the truth. But even in the Caribbean, those things that I wrote showed that I didn't like what was going on there. Then when I came to Britain, I embraced Marxism. Lamming and those others I mentioned may not be Marxists but they are completely against the existing regime in the Caribbean, and once you are that way you begin to find all sorts

of subjects, particularly in the Caribbean with its history, where you can express that resistance, that opposition. You are in the situation where this thing is against you, you feel it every day and the language that you use reflects it. That accounts for Wilson Harris's and Lamming's writing and whatever I have done.

I want to draw your attention to something here. There is some writing that I did in the Caribbean on 'the intelligence of the Negro'. A writer, a well-known intellectual in the Caribbean, had said that the Negro is so many per cent less intelligent than whites, and I went at him. That is a subject that is made for you to expand and strike at the opinion that people have. What I am looking at is the objective situation, not what is in my head. You have to find the prose that corresponds to your feelings and your hostility.

CS: Your prose is classical. It is born from a European education.

CLRJ: I know that very well. And not only me. I had a very powerful European education. I read the classics and absorbed them. But there was nothing native for me to use. We had no native language in the Caribbean. My mother spoke Patois but my father did not – he was a teacher. So before I was nine years old, I had read *Vanity Fair* about ten times! My mother had it in the house. My mother, in the Caribbean, in 1907 when I was six years old, in a West Indian village as far away in the country as could be – she had *Vanity Fair*, an English classic; she had her own Shakespeare and *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper, an American classic. I sit down now and I wonder! I know, because I was a boy then and those were the books in the house and I read them. So you see this objective situation. Her mother had died and her father who was an engine driver (and that was a good position to be in) had sent her to some Wesleyan ladies who were well-educated people. So it was there that she got in touch with this literature, so she would have copies of Shakespeare, *Vanity Fair* and *The Last of the Mohicans*. She had been born in about 1875. I sit and wonder, you know! There was something in her, drawing her, and that was what I grew up in.

You see, for us there was no national language. There was a very strong French tradition and among ordinary people, particularly in the countryside, a lot of them spoke Patois, but it wasn't accepted. My mother spoke it because the people who sold fish and fruit spoke it and she was quick at languages. But as I said, my father never spoke it and neither did I, because I was being soaked in English literature.

CS: What do you think about the affirmation and encouragement of this people's language, the Patois or Creole versions of English?

CLRJ: I don't know. I understand that in Haiti, for example, everybody speaks it. Creole is *the* language. But a man will speak Creole to his wife, he will speak Creole to his servant, he will speak Creole to his friends, to the man driving the bus, but when he sits on a platform he speaks the French of Racine or Molière.

There isn't any dialect in Trinidad that is accepted. Nowadays you have radio and television so, however some people speak dialect, they are hearing the standard language all the time. I went back to Trinidad in 1957 – I had been away since 1932 – and I was surprised at the use that everybody, including the Indians, was making of language. Then I went back in 1968 and again in 1978–9. I was living in the south in San Fernando and everybody spoke normal English. There was no one speaking Patois to me and nobody seemed to be speaking English with an Indian accent, which surprised me a lot. I used to listen to the Indians singing when I was a boy. They sang in half tones and in such a way that seemed to me to be more intimate and refined than the English scales. That has gone. I go back and now they are singing the Indian songs with a certain calypso tinge. They are being creolised more than you could think – that is what is taking place.

Now, there are two writers I want to refer to in Trinidad. There is Samuel Selvon who I think is a most remarkable writer. I don't think he is a novelist of the first class, but to me he has an ear for the West Indian language, the West Indian speech, that is finer than anything that I have heard. He's a journalist but he has this ear! More than anyone else he catches the nuances of the Trinidad language. And it is because he has Indian in him, and he is aware of the Indian language which enables him to hear the Creole language with a fineness and justness that the ordinary Creole speaker just doesn't have. He begins from the conception of another language which enables him to find refinements in the language of the Creole speaker.

Then, you know whose language is very important, and the phrases that he uses? Sparrow the calypsonian. He handles the language brilliantly, but they have not made enough of him. To them, he is just a calypsonian, but not for me. He speaks with a great, powerful and poetic effect, with the language and rhythms of the population, and he has done something to the English language. I love his language and his songs and his English, so full of sharp, pointed Creole expressions.

Then, there is the novelist Earl Lovelace and a man from San Fernando, Michael Anthony. You see, myself and George Lamming and all the writers of that generation were soaked in English literature, me in particular. But Lovelace was not, and he is writing from Trinidad. When I described the lives of ordinary people, or Lamming, we were saying: 'Look at it! This is how they are more important to us than you, they mean something. They are the basis of the country, which is nothing unless we understand them.' But we are from here looking at them there! Lovelace and Michael

Anthony are already there; they are not in any way removed. They are saying: 'This is how we are.'

I want to refer to my story *Triumph*. In it, I spend a lot of words creating a setting in the Port of Spain barrack-yards or slums. But Lovelace and Anthony don't need to create any setting. They say: 'This is how we are!' That is what is new, and that is clear in Lovelace's dialogue and the stories that he tells and also in Michael Anthony's work. They are very different from writers from the generation that I belong to, and the new writers are going to be like that.

I am never much affected by what the critical mind says about language and the correspondence of the literature to the language. I prefer to deal with what the literature produces and I prefer to listen to Sparrow's calypsoes much more than to listen to the critics of the use of language. There is a remarkable Caribbean writer with great poetic gifts called Derek Walcott. But, while I recognise his poetic qualities, I think he's involved in twentieth-century Britain and the US, and now and then something native or something natural to the Caribbean environment comes out in his work. But I don't believe that he is making too much of a contribution, because what he is doing has been done repeatedly in French, in English and in American poetry. The best Caribbean writers have brought something new to language and literature. I don't think Walcott does, but I may be wrong.

I think that I've said enough but I would like to draw your attention to something else. I have a book here called *The Life of Martin Luther King*. Now King was using the English language under circumstances which were not so different from the circumstances that we knew. This is a speech which King made, and it is something which I read very often. He was reading from a text, then he gave up the text and started to speak extempore. It was a high moment during a great public demonstration and I want to read to you some expressions from it and draw attention to how different it is from Caribbean language. It is based upon traditional American speech, upon the Bible, the protestant Bible, the Authorised Version, and the English that the Americans have made of it. You will hear this particularly and how different it is from anything in the Caribbean.

He starts: 'In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a cheque' – that is a very American expression! 'When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note' – another American expression, we don't speak that way. That's a business community! '... that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' – that's an American speaking, using the American language and the American tradition. It's very different from ours and different from me. The Bible is common, but it is used in America as a classical book in a way that it is not in the literary places of

England. For the American Blacks it became their special book. 'America has given the Negro people a bad cheque, a cheque that has come back marked "insufficient funds"' – you hear him? 'But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt.' Again, it's a business community speaking, but he's using it in those beautiful terms! No Caribbean writer writes that way. '... Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice' – that is the Bible – 'Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children' – another American conception. '... As long as the Negro's basic habitation is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one' – notice the concrete objective remark – 'we can never be satisfied' – again the repetition! 'I have a dream, that one day every valley shall be exalted' – you know the phrase, from the Bible? 'Every hill and mountain will be made low. The rough places will be made plains and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh shall sing together' – do you hear that? You don't hear that from West Indian writers. That is the Bible and the tradition of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. '... With this faith we will be able to work together, pray together, struggle together, got to jail together, stand up for freedom together knowing that we will be free one day!' That is the preacher, the black preacher preaching to the slaves. What he has brought to the language is something American and black. That is a contribution to the English language, to the American language. King was a trained Doctor of Divinity, he used the Bible all the time, it was his basis. The black church, the preacher and the black slaves – that was a tremendous tradition in the United States.

CS: What about the links between language and power now, in both the Caribbean and Britain?

CLRJ: You know today, now, something is missing and it is very noticeable in the work of Walter Rodney. The story of Walter Rodney in Guyana is a very striking one. Rodney was a highly educated writer and a man of deep revolutionary conception. But he did not know anything about the seizure of power. In the Caribbean we have discussed the strength of imperialism in the region, our resistance to it, the way the Caribbean people have fought against it – but we have been dominated by the Westminster tradition. The French Caribbean people have not been, that's why they have produced Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon who deal with power. But in the English-speaking Caribbean we say what is wrong, but we don't deal with the actual seizure of power. Power has been seized in Grenada and much will depend on the use they make of it. Another example has been in Suriname where there has been another Caribbean revolution, but the writers have not concentrated upon that at all. The seizure of power should be the very life of Caribbean writers. When they begin to write about that, that's when there will be a new conception in language.

The blacks in Britain here too, they have created a new conception of political activity. They have defied the police! That is something new, and no one has written about it yet. I can't write about it, because I don't know it well, but it is coming! So that the seizure of power, and the proud defiance and possibly armed defiance of the police – that has now become a subject for literature that will come from the Caribbean and will come to Britain from the Caribbean people that are here now. That is the language! Poets are now writing in the Jamaican language, poets like Linton Kwesi Johnson. Now I never used to take any interest in Jamaican literature. I used to say, 'Dialect? Good, that's fine!' But now I read Linton's work and I am struck by its poetic quality and I realise that the Jamaican language has intervened. And it does more than the English people who try to write in local dialect, that's not so effective, in my opinion. But these Jamaican poets in England have written in a way that everybody has put their attention to. They are using the Jamaican language in English in England for the first time. With their work there *has* been a transformation of the language – and the word can properly be used here.

Chris Searle is director of the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Resource Centre in Manchester University.

References

1 Chris Searle, *Words Unchained: language and revolution in Grenada* (London, Zed Books, 1984).
2 Chris Searle (ed.), *Sunflower of Hope: poems from the Mozambican revolution* (London, Allison and Busby, 1982).
3 C. L. R. James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (London, Allison and Busby, 1967).

The *West Indian Gazette*: Claudia Jones and the black press in Britain

By Donald Hinds

Abstract: The *West Indian Gazette,* edited by Claudia Jones, and on which Donald Hinds was a writer, was one of the most influential pioneers of a genuinely independent black press in Britain. To say that Claudia herself was a communist, feminist and anti-imperialist does not express the dynamism and humanity of her politics, or their innovative nature – including the introduction of the first black carnival in Britain. She, and the *Gazette,* were immensely important in the creation of the black community in Britain from the late 1950s onwards, as it was beset by an ongoing and crude racism, including the riots of Notting Hill and Nottingham.

Keywords: 1958 riots, CPUSA, *Magnet*, Notting Hill Carnival

> The *West Indian Gazette* (*WIG*), like a child from the insalubrious part of town, was born into a struggle and its life was destined to be short, tortuous, and at times bruising. *WIG*, as it came to be affectionately called, spent its first six years of its seven years' existence in two crowded, chaotic and untidy rooms above Theo Campbell's record shop at 250 Brixton Road, SW9. It was indeed a child of the slums, it had not been conceived in Brixton and its parentage was uncertain.

I have written this before! When a writer resorts to quoting himself, be warned, he is either lost for words in more ways than one, or he is awfully sure of himself.

Contrary to popular belief, London carnival did not start in Notting Hill at the end of the 1960s, neither was the *West Indian World* the first black newspaper in Britain. And it is appropriate, in a year that has seen the fortieth anniversary – and commemorations – of Enoch Powell's infamous 'Rivers of blood' speech, to reflect on a fiftieth anniversary that is highly significant, in a positive sense, to the black community in Britain, but is shamefully little known – the founding of the *West Indian Gazette* under the inspiring leadership of Claudia Jones. Fifty years on, those whose job was that of midwife to *WIG* are nearly all dead.

Claudia Vera Cumberbatch Jones was born on 21 February 1915 in Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad. She joined her parents in Harlem, New York when she was 9 years old, they having migrated to the USA

in 1924. Her mother died in 1927 when Claudia was 12. It is said that the Cumberbatch family was so poor that although Claudia did well at school, she did not attend her graduation as they could not afford a graduation gown for her.

In 1936 she joined the American Communist Party largely on account of its uncompromising defence of the Scottsboro 'boys'. Arrested in Scottsboro, Alabama, in 1931, they were charged with raping two white girls on a goods train. The blacks were about to be charged with fighting a gang of white boys also on the train, when two white girls dressed as if they were boys (this was after all 1931) said that the blacks had raped them. Suddenly events took a more menacing turn. The stage was now set for one of America's most notorious court cases of the 1930s. The Communist Party leapt to the fore, hiring for the defence a famous New York lawyer who had never before lost a case. The reason that the Communists had become so involved in what was then called Negro affairs dates from the 1928 Comintern (Communist International) and can quickly be told. Joseph Stalin had made it known that he was disappointed with the poor effort of the American Communist Party in recruiting blacks into it. So, by the 1930s, the Party was second only to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in its efforts as champion of the rights of people of colour.

By 1937, Claudia (now aged 22) was on the editorial staff of the *Daily Worker* and in 1938 became editor of the *Weekly Review*. During the second world war, the Young Communist League (YCL) was transformed into American Youth for Democracy, and she became editor of its monthly journal, *Spotlight*. In 1947, she was made executive secretary of the National Women's Commission and, in 1952, of the National Peace Commission. In 1953, she took over the editorship of *Negro Affairs*. In 1948, her communist activities led to her arrest and incarceration on Ellis Island and threatened deportation to Trinidad, then a Crown Colony. In 1951, aged only 36, she suffered her first heart attack and, between then and 1955, went into hospital several times. In 1955, the Supreme Court refused to hear her appeal against conviction and Claudia began her sentence of a year and a day at the Federal Reformatory for Women at Alderson, West Virginia. The next step was for her to be served with a deportation order. So, on 7 December 1955 at Harlem's Hotel Theresa, some 350 people met to bid farewell to Claudia. She arrived in London two weeks later and, until her death nine years later in December 1964, she was to be a selfless and indefatigable fighter for the rights of peoples from Africa, Asia and the West Indies. Or, as the masthead of *WIG* would have it, 'Afro-Asian Caribbean [peoples]'.

* * *

The claim that *WIG* was the first black newspaper in Britain must be qualified by the term 'commercial' black newspaper. As the sole voice

of the black community between 1958 and 1965, it was sold for sixpence (2.5p) and it accepted what advertisements came its way. The latter were mainly from small entrepreneurs operating clubs, hairdressing salons and the occasional entertainments that had some coloured members, as we were then called, in their casts. The biggest advertiser for several years was the Grimaldi Siosa Line, whose ships the Auriga, the Ascona, the Begona and Castel Verde among others plied the Caribbean sea route to Britain. This line was mainly responsible for transporting the majority of Caribbean migrants to British shores between 1948 and the mid-1960s.

Before *WIG* there were, of course, what could be called the house journals of organisations such as the Caribbean Labour Congress and Harold Moody's League of Coloured People, which brought out *The Keys*. There might have been many such organisations with their newsletters, but apparently none had reached the high street newsstands. Between *WIG* and the coming of the *West Indian World* were *Link*, *Carib*, *Anglo-Caribbean News*, *West Indies Observer* and *Magnet*. Almost all of these papers had writers who were at one time or the other associated with *WIG*.

Among them, *Magnet* had the promise of sound commercial backing. It had offices near Warren Street, near London University, and experienced newspaper people from the liberal end of the national trade helped in designing the new paper. It first appeared in March 1965 with Jan Carew as editor. Although my name remained on the masthead of *WIG* until its final demise in July 1965, I had accepted Carew's invitation to write for *Magnet*. Teaming up with Sid Burke as photographer, we covered the second election defeat of Patrick Gordon Walker during the first six months of Labour coming to power under Harold Wilson. Gordon Walker's first defeat was, of course, Smethwick, where voters were given the stark choice: 'If you want a Nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour!' Gordon Walker's second defeat was in the erstwhile safe Labour seat of Leyton.

Malcolm X had visited Britain and Carew met him in Birmingham and interviewed him for *Magnet*. Carew left shortly after that and several people who drifted from one paper to the other were involved with *Magnet*. Colour magazines and glossies made their appearances simultaneously with the above-named papers. There were *Tropic*, *Flamingo*, *Daylight International*, *Cinnamon* and *Sepia*. Up to the mid-1960s, the *Gazette* had the longest life-span of all these publications.

To understand the role of *WIG* in its time, you must remember that there were, for example, only about half a dozen or so black cricketers playing for the first-class counties. In football, there was a black footballer at West Ham. There were no black newsreaders or disc jockeys on the airwaves. White passengers would bounce straight up out of their seats on buses if a black ('coloured') passenger was bold

enough to sit next to them. Some public houses still operated a colour bar, covertly or otherwise. Many employers would say that they did not hire *coloureds* or *darkies* (if they were being polite). Landladies blamed the fact that they could not rent a room to a coloured person because the white neighbours would object. One trade unionist even suggested that the oil we put on our bodies after a bath was offensive – that at a time when the more hygiene conscious of the population went to the public baths once per week. It is ironic that, fifty years on, curried chicken and rice is now the nation's most popular takeaway food. In the 1950s and 1960s, curries and other well-seasoned dishes offended the majority of the population.

The British Union of Fascists, with its lorry draped in the Union Jack, frequented the area opposite the Orange Luxury Coach Station, Brixton (now Windrush Square), from where its members would warn of the weakening of the sturdy British race through sexual liaisons. It would be reduced to the status of the Cape Coloured. Landlords and landladies still advertised rooms for rent under the legend: 'No Irish! No Coloureds!'. Brave white women who went out with coloured men were roundly insulted. White passengers still rubbed their hands on the coloured bus conductor's hair, for luck. For several years, the wall opposite St Matthews Church in Brixton, bore the legend 'Keep Britain White'!

The calls for the control of black immigration were regular. Of course, no one in authority would declare himself as prejudiced. The British never were! It was just, as the excuse went, that it would have been better if these people were kept in their own countries and helped by grants from the British Exchequer. One Conservative MP, he with the sweeping moustache and a knighthood to boot, gave voice (on BBC Radio's Any Questions) to the thought that was apparently perplexing thousands of white parents. Asked Sir Gerald Nabarro, 'What would you do if your blonde blue-eyed daughter came home with a buck Nigger and said she wanted to marry him?' (this question was edited out of the repeat broadcast the next day).

It was the right of each citizen to express his or her opinion that he/she did not want to live next door to one of *them*. In this atmosphere, you did not expect the shopkeeper to be civil and he/she invariably was not. You did not expect the policeman to be sympathetic when you asked for directions, and quite often he was not. You longed, as did Alvin Bennett in his novel *Because They Know Not*, to find that neighbour who was going around telling landlords not to rent rooms to blacks because he did not want to live so close to them. Find that neighbour and convince him that you were a decent sort of chap, and this colour thing would be history. Into this world was the *West Indian Gazette* born, like the goddess of mythology, fully armed ready for battle. It was not long in coming. In April 1958, four months after that famous flyer announcing *WIG,* Notting Hill, West London, and Robin Hood Chase, Nottingham, exploded with

racial hatred. The normally liberal national dailies analysed the situation to the satisfaction of their readers by pointing out that what had taken place was an inevitable clash between white hooligans and black criminals. That brought home the shallow depth at which racism lurked under the social facade.

None of this was strange to Claudia Jones. She was a seasoned campaigner who had won the support and admiration of such towering characters as W. E. B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson. During those months from late summer to the autumn of 1958, the *Gazette*'s office did more business meeting worried blacks than did the Migrants' Service Department. As we went into 1959, politicians from what was referred to as the British Caribbean were seen going up those stairs to talk to Claudia or she was invited to their hotels. Some of those whom she met were Norman Manley of Jamaica, Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago, Cheddi Jagan of British Guiana, Phyllis Allfrey and Carl La Corbinière of the ailing West Indian Federation.

Claudia was the one with a finger on the pulse of British society.

* * *

It was in this climate of expectations dashed that the idea of a carnival was conceived. Claudia asked for suggestions which would wash the taste of Notting Hill and Nottingham out of our mouths. It was then that someone, most likely a Trinidadian, suggested that we should have a carnival – in winter? It was December of 1958. Everybody laughed, and then Claudia called us to order. 'Why not?' she asked. 'Could it not be held in a hall, somewhere?' Yes it could, and it was held in St Pancras town hall in January 1959. The BBC televised it. The London papers were not pleased to see and hear hundreds of blacks doing the jump-up in a hall near you, or them. Five more carnivals followed annually, up to 1964. For the second carnival, held at Seymour Hall, the great calypsonian the Mighty Sparrow was brought over from the land of carnival, Trinidad. None of those who were active in helping to bring the first Caribbean-style carnival in modern times to St Pancras on 31 January 1959 – including Sam King, Jimmy Fairweather, Nadia Cattouse, Cy Grant, Gloria Cameron – argued that Claudia started the Notting Hill carnival. But it seems incredible that those who took carnival on to the streets of Notting Hill in the late 1960s were unaware of the six carnivals between 1959 and 1964, albeit in halls.

WIG took its role as a newspaper seriously. It was not merely a vehicle to bring the news of what was happening back home and in the diaspora to Britain. It also commented on the arts in all their forms, at a time when black performers were getting the crumbs, which fell from the production tables. *WIG* was talking up Cy Grant, Nadia Cattouse, Pearl Prescod, Edric Connor and Pearl Connor, Nina Baden-Semper, Corrine Skinner-Carter, Bascoe Holder, among others. It reviewed the novels

of George Lamming, V. S. Naipaul, Andrew Salkey, E. R. Braithwaite and Jan Carew. It reviewed the works of artists and sculptors such as Aubrey Williams and Ronald Moody. It published poems and stories. Its trenchant editorials did not stop at Britain but had an opinion on the what, where and why of the cold war's hot spots. The British media also sought Claudia's opinions.

Some young coloureds, then still in their teens, gathered around Claudia and the *WIG*, among them Della Mckenzie, Carmen Spencer, Diana Grant-Somers, Olive Chen, Brenda Tigh, June Allison Bayley and many others. Young writers included Ken Kelly from Trinidad who wrote a good humorous piece for *Punch* and later went to Germany, contributed to the *Rund Funk* and published a collection of plays in German under the title *Der Minister und seine Sippe* (The Minister and his Tribe). Then there was Lindsay Barrett, whose novel *A Song for Mumu* held out great promise before he was lost to academia somewhere in Africa. I did the occasional pieces of broadcasting for the BBC Caribbean Programme. Many of us were busily writing the great West Indian novel. My publications to date consist of two and one-third books in the shops now. They are *Journey to an Illusion*, *Black Peoples of the Americas* and, in collaboration with Marika Sherwood and Colin Prescod, a biography of the great lady herself: *Claudia Jones: a life in exile* (and, of course, there is a drawer full of rejected novels).

We all loved Claudia and respected her, but we were not always there for her. Some people were very cautious of her Communist connections at a time when the cold war was at its hottest. The majority had families and all had their livings to make. Somewhere in my chaotic filing system is a cry from the heart to me written in Claudia's bold handwriting: 'Where are you? Have you forgotten us?', which revealed the awful truth. I was not as readily accessible to the cause and the great woman as I would like to think. The years were ticking away and the family expanding. In some cases, the artist and his family suffer for his art and in other cases the art must lie dormant for the sake of the demands of the family.

The *Gazette* did not make enough to pay for contributions. Claudia herself was not a salaried editor. She had rent and other bills to pay, so her upkeep was another burden on the wobbly finances of the paper. There is evidence enough from letters of demands and threats of lawsuits among her papers to satisfy any sceptic. Only two people brought money to the *Gazette* in the early days. Sam King, who later became mayor of Southwark and the second black man (after J. R. Archer during the first world war) to hold that post in a London borough. King sold the first 100 copies of the first edition of *WIG* and did not take a commission. And James Fairweather, *WIG*'s advertisement manager, badgered the proprietors of furniture stores to give something back to the

community after doing so well out of black householders. They bought advertisements in the paper, which also brought them more custom.

Ken Kelly and I were the principal reporters, but we rarely ventured outside London. We were trappers rather than hunters of news. We would wait for newsworthy personalities to stop off in London, on their way to conferences, and then interview them. My biggest catch was James Baldwin right after the publication of *Another Country*. Radical writers from all over the globe would send in stories. Among them, W. E. B. Du Bois and his wife Shirley Graham wrote from China and Ghana. George Padmore exchanged correspondence with Claudia from Kwame Nkrumah's party headquarters in Accra. Claudia herself travelled to Russia and China and Managing Director Manchanda was visiting China when Claudia died.

However, I think it is fair for me to claim the singular honour of being the only *WIG* reporter to be sent abroad to cover a specific event for the paper. The *Gazette* paid £15 towards my fare and two-week stay in Vienna in August 1959 to cover the Seventh World Festival of Youths and Students. Thousands of young people, courtesy of the sponsorship of the USSR, descended on the Austrian capital for that fortnight. For me, a lad from the hills above the Yallahs River, St Thomas, Jamaica, it was a once in a life-time opportunity. I attended my first opera and ballet performances (did I actually see the young Nureyev dance?). I heard Paul Robeson sing 'Ole Man River' on the banks of the Danube. I even learnt to say 'you are a very beautiful girl' in German. I journeyed home through Czechoslovakia and East Germany, as a consolation for not being able to get an invitation to visit either Russia or China.

Much later it dawned on me that this was part of Claudia's plan to educate me. To her it must have been a mid-twentieth century equivalent of the Grand Tour. The Festival was part of the Soviet Union's cold war campaign against the West. This greatly annoyed the Americans who were there, although not with an official delegation, to counter the Soviet Union's propaganda with missionary zeal. It was educational to see the two mighty power blocs up close at work during those two weeks, trading verbal punches for the minds of those they did not seriously consider as equals but as hewers of wood and drawers of water. The Americans had a booth at every event where they thought the hydra-headed beast of Soviet propaganda would raise its many heads. And there were many, perhaps too many, American tourists there with cameras at the ready. 'Can you not see that this is just Soviet propaganda?', one of the young men supervising a booth at a park in the centre of Vienna asked me. 'I am aware of that', I replied. 'Why don't you hold a festival like this in Georgia, or some other southern state and invite the world. I will come', then feistily added, 'if you can guarantee my safety from the Ku Klux Klan.' The American Civil Rights Movement was taking hold of our consciousness on this side of the Atlantic. In May the same year,

the state of Alabama had banned a children's book because it showed a black rabbit marrying a white one! The young man gave me a copy of *The New Class: an analysis of the Communist system* by Yugoslav dissident Milovan Djilas. It has taken pride of place among the growing list of books which I will read one day.

The *Gazette* struggled on, hardly able to keep its publication deadlines three months consecutively. Yet looking over Claudia's papers and photographs, there were events which *WIG* sponsored that were public spirited and appealed to the community, and not only to raise funds for the paper. One such was in response to Hurricane Flora which devastated Jamaica in 1963. As always, Claudia was able to get the endorsement of leading black figures from the literary and entertainment fields, including C. L. R. James, George Lamming, Andrew Salkey, Samuel Selvon and, from entertainment, Edric and Pearl Connor, Nadia Cattouse, Pearl Prescod and Gloria Cameron. Perhaps what the black community at the time remembered most were the Paul Robeson concerts at Lambeth town hall, Brixton, and St Pancras town hall, when the great man revealed his generosity to a fellow fighter and friend by using his immense talent and precious time to promote a good cause.

WIG was present to celebrate Castro's revolution by promoting the film *Island Aflame*. It shook its fist at the Congo civil war and the abandonment of Patrice Lumumba. It printed the picture of Lumumba without his spectacles, bound and in a truck to be delivered into the hands of his rival Moise Tshombe, the West's place-man in Katanga. It reported the Sharpeville Massacre and the Rivonia Trials. The names of Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Robert Sobukwe were known to *WIG*'s readers – freedom fighters labelled by the British national broadsheets as troublemakers at best and terrorists by definition. There was no louder voice than *WIG*'s on Commonwealth issues or on decolonisation. There was the expectation of the West Indies Federation which sent visiting politicians climbing those stairs at the back of Theo's record shop up to the *Gazette*'s editorial office. And then there was the racial hatred of Notting Hill and Nottingham.

* * *

Looking back, it seems preposterous that the only coherent voice from the black community in Britain was a monthly paper that was so strapped for cash, it often could not find the £100 needed to pay the printers. And, thinking back, it is frightening to contemplate which was in worst shape, the appalling finances of the paper or Claudia's health. They were inextricably bound together and the death of one hastened the demise of the other. The paper finally folded eight months and four editions after Claudia's own death, in December 1964.

Today I read the current crop of black newspapers bulging with advertisements and occupying space on shelves of high street newsagents, and for a moment I am green as a Martian with jealousy. These papers may not accept it, and at times I find it hard to believe it myself, but they are heirs to *WIG*'s legacy. It was the progenitor of all black journals published in this country. I salute their success, but they have not got the link which bound *WIG* to its readers. Certainly I have not read an article to match the intellectual might of Jan Carew's 'What is a West Indian?', published in *WIG* in April 1959. I have not read an article to match Claudia's editorials on the Rivonia Trials. Try this: 'If this be treason, Mandela, Sisulu's cause is ours.' Perhaps papers today no longer lead but merely inform. Therein lies the difference.

When Claudia died, a great hole was ripped in the fabric of our society. In December 1964, the black community in London was widowed. For a while it was leaderless. Today, there are black people in positions that would have been thought no more than a comedian's throwaway line, if anyone had been bold enough to aspire to them then. For instance in an early issue (not among my collection) there was the picture of a black actor in a police uniform. I sold a copy to a police officer who had wandered into Brixton bus garage (did I not say that I earned my living as a bus conductor?). The PC laughed so much that he bought two more copies for his mates back at the station – the idea that there could be black police officers was such a great joke. I guessed some people felt the same way about having a black member of parliament when Dr David Pitt ran on the Labour Party ticket for Clapham, an erstwhile safe seat, and lost.

This year Claudia would have been a venerable 93–year-old. She might have remained poor but would have been rich in dignity. Had the *Gazette* managed to escape its financial stranglehold and become solvent, I had been promised that I was in line to be its first paid member of staff. Perhaps I might have inherited the editor's chair and already made sure of the succession. What flights of fancy! I have no idea if the carnivals would have transferred from the halls to the streets amicably. But this I know, that the young woman who wrote those editorials on the Rivonia Trials, who saw and understood the motives of Robert Sobukwe, Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela would never have abandoned their cause when they were abandoned on that flat windswept South Atlantic island. In 1993, she would have resumed the editorial chair again at 78 as editor emeritas to lead the loud hosannas celebrating the release of Mandela.

Even now I hear her voice: 'Donald, I asked for 3,000 words. This is far too long.' And then that smile, 'but if I ask you to cut it, you would only make it 5,000. What am I going to do with you? Give it here.'

Donald Hinds was among London's first black bus conductors, worked with Claudia Jones on the West Indian Gazette (1958–1965); *wrote*

Journey to an Illusion *(Heinemann, 1966) trained as a teacher; wrote* Black Peoples of the Americas *(Collins Educational, 1992); and, with Marika Sherwood and Colin Prescod, contributed to* Claudia Jones: a Life in Exile *(Lawrence & Wishart, 1999).*

Reviews

RACE & CLASS
SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Forgeries of Memory and Meaning: Blacks and the regimes of race in American theater and film before World War II

By CEDRIC J. ROBINSON (Chapel Hill, NJ, University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 429 pp. Paper $22.50.

There he is, on the frontispiece, and there he is again, on the contents page, and in his other antic guises, scattered throughout the pages of Robinson's magisterial history – the original, endlessly repeated Jim Crow, the comedic deformity and defamation of a people; a sell, a fraud.

Selling is part of what it's about – or what it came to be about. But there is much more to it than that … And it all began much earlier, centuries before, in fact. For *Forgeries* is much more than a scholarly exegesis of the treatment of race in film and performance, though it does that brilliantly, excavating a wealth of obscure, scarcely known material, as well as re-evaluating the great landmarks obscured as much, in their way, by unreckoning critical acclamation. Its fundamental achievement is to lay bare the cultural wellsprings of modern American society, the weight and meaning of its rootedness in slavery and the ingenious rapacity with which that fraudulent inheritance was invested; the dividends it paid; the costs it incurred.

Robinson's narrative – though that word does not adequately convey the reconstructive nature of his enterprise – begins with nineteenth-century 'race' science, reaching back to the images and understandings of 'blackamores' forged under pressure of slavery in a Europe that had long engaged in such practices and the consequent inferiorisation of their subjects. 'Race is mercurial – deadly and slick … By the time the moving picture camera arrived on the scene, the Negro was in full costume. But before then, that costume would undergo extraordinary changes in the seventeenth century and then again at the end of the nineteenth century.'

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 98–112
10.1177/0306396808093304 http://rac.sagepub.com

As Robinson demonstrates, many of those extraordinary changes were wrought by the salvoes fired, campaigns fought, territory grappled over, in the battle over slavery:

> the sheer audacity and apparently undeterrable stream of antislavery propaganda and the frequent occurrence of actual slave revolts compelled a proslavery counterattack. It was at this moment in the struggle over slavery that many of the caricatures of Blacks which would dominate American film came into existence.

The first target to come under the attack of white caricaturists was the free black middle class – its growth, despite all the forces ranged against it, a testimony to black resilience and enterprise. Its representatives were the most egregious in not knowing or respecting their allotted place, in daring to organise their own social lives, their own institutions, their own media, and were consequently pilloried for this through a sustained grossness of imagery and ridicule that permeated national cultural life.

It is no small part of Robinson's achievement that, in giving us a history of 'race' in American film, he gives us a history of black America for that period. And, in giving us a history of film itself, he gives us a dynamic portrait of the growth of the industrial and financial development with which the film business was inextricably linked and out of which it grew. It is a concrete demonstration of the way in which the representations blazoned on the screen and absorbed by millions of people, multitudes of them new immigrant Americans, were only the final flowering of a growth that was rooted deep in the economic and political structures of the nation. With painstaking subtlety, Robinson elucidates the links between, for example, the banking and finance houses, the indebted railroad companies (their infrastructure constructed by black convict labour) transporting the raw materials for industry across the continent and transporting mass populations to the thriving world fairs and exhibitions where ethnographic images (in keeping with the latest race science) of blacks as savages, or blacks as slavery-nostalgia were purveyed – to advertise and sell anything from porridge and pancake mix to washing powder, tobacco and shoe polish. Images that were then used as source and substance for the new wonders of the moving picture industry, that then fed back into advertising and other media in a continuous loop.

The career of one such black icon is instructive – 'Aunt Jemima'. Originally a figure from lyrics in the repertoire of the black minstrel Billy Kersands, 'Jemima' was then incorporated into blackface minstrelsy, and subsequently became the smiling 'mammy' face of a multi-million dollar food industry. The demeaning 'mammy' figure, with her fat jollity, knotted headscarf, devotion to the white family and total asexuality, bears, as Robinson demonstrates, no relation to any reality of southern black life for enslaved women. But this did not prevent her becoming the comforting face of race in popular culture. Aunt Jemima, launched

as a walking, talking figure at the massive Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, was performed by a black actress and a former slave, Nancy Green, who sang songs, told stories – and cooked pancakes; a front for bulk selling of this cheap, mass-produced commodity. Fictional Jemima took over real-life Green:

> Though complemented by regional surrogates, Green would dominate the performance of Aunt Jemima till her death in 1923. By then her own biography and the fiction of Jemima had long been merged by the corporate and historical reconstructions of the origins of Jemima. But hers was merely a particle of the fictionalizations of race, blackness and American history whose appearances would come to dominate American popular culture.

D.W. Griffith's 1915 *Birth of a Nation* is seen as crucial in what Robinson calls 'the rewhitening of the nation'. He frames his discussion of *Birth* not only in terms of prior film historiography but also Griffith's earlier work ('paternalist, sentimental'); the source novel from which *Birth* is drawn; and the poisonous racial politics of the time. It was a time when the brilliant black boxer Jack Johnson (his mastery captured on fight films) so utterly refused to know his (blacks' only) place that he was threatened by lynch mobs and public death threats and when a compound of anti-Semitism, racial and class hatred led to the railroading of a black man, Jim Conley, and a Jewish man, Frank Phagan, over the murder of a poor white woman; Phagan was eventually abducted from the prison farm where he had been sent and lynched. As Robinson laconically puts it, 'class animosity and anti-Semitism superseded Negrophobia'; in Griffith's film elements from the murder case together with elements from the novel combined to

> recast the American Civil War as a violent fratricidal confrontation between whites … Griffith then reimagined the Reconstruction as a temporary moment of mulatto political ascendancy and Black triumph, rape, and anarchy … 'Lincoln's dream' was to return Blacks to Africa, and only his assassination had frustrated his act of cleansing.

The film had opened in March 1915; Thanksgiving night that same year saw the formation in Georgia of the new Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. When is added to the wealth of this telling detail and close argument yet more contextual interconnection, between America's subsequent (arguably business-driven) involvement in the first world war and its growing expansionism, the formidable richness of Robinson's research and the multi-layered complexity of his analysis become apparent.

That the weight of the racism, expressed in mass-manufactured cultural products, that Robinson documents is almost overwhelming is not surprising for:

> At the onset of mass movie production, apartheid was the structural instrument of American capital, and American filmmakers supplied a galaxy of imagery and story lines which naturalized and popularized white hegemony.

Many of those story-lines, much of that imagery would, indeed, be surprisingly familiar to any student of English eighteenth- and nineteenth-century drama. A 1911 Pathé film *For Massa's Sake* appears to lift its main plot device from Thomas Morton's 1816 *The Revolt of Surinam*, in which a freed slave sells himself back into slavery to clear his former master's debt. Over and over, as in nineteenth-century English drama (with the towering exception of Ira Aldridge), blacks were represented by white actors in burnt cork make-up; while the evil mulatta/o, a staple of American motion pictures and an exemplar of the perils of race-mixing or 'amalgamation' had, also in the nineteenth century, crossed the Atlantic in the other direction, from a race-science obsessed America to England, that earlier home of racial science.

Yet it would be wrong to leave the story there. For in myriad ways black artists, actors, filmmakers, entertainers sought to challenge, subvert or broaden the humanity of those restricted images within which the major film industry attempted to confine them; from the black, independent and radical filmmaker Oscar Micheaux, whose best work was self- and community financed on a shoestring budget; to the militant black actress Fredi Washington; the lesser known Theresa Harris; and the brilliant comedic presence of Mantan Moreland, with his capacity for ironic inversion of his role even as he played it. Even Stepin Fetchit on occasion neatly sidestepped his accustomed function. Not to mention those musicians and performers who, as blacks in minstrelsy, challenged the grotesquery of blackface minstrelsy, to deepen the humanity of the image of the black-skinned entertainer. At the end of the nineteenth century, one such entertainer, Bob Cole, actually performed in whiteface – an unprecedented cocking of the snook at America's Jim Crow segregationist culture. Or there was the glamorous Aida Overton Walker, who from a singer and dancer became a choreographer – and the initiator of the dance craze, the cakewalk, which she taught to 'English aristocrats and the cream of white American society'.

That is Robinson's history for you – built, piece upon piece, from the ground up into a fascinating multi-storied structure, displaying a historical sweep that encompasses both the seemingly insignificant detail and the overarching grand design. *Forgeries of Memory and Meaning* in its breadth of vision, its originality of scholarship and its supple clarity of analysis is, quite simply, a tour de force.

Institute of Race Relations HAZEL WATERS

8.22.08

Hamas: a history from within

By AZZAM TAMIMI (Northampton, MA, Olive Branch Press, 2008), 376 pp. Paper $20.00.

In September 2007, Israel declared Hamas-ruled Gaza a 'hostile entity' and, beside the ongoing closures that had already made the Strip a virtual prison, marked by desperate poverty, hunger and unemployment, Israel started reducing fuel and electricity supplies, and threatening water cuts. Two months later came Annapolis, an extraordinary meeting in which almost the entire international community gathered in the US to relaunch the failed 'road map' peace plan of 2003, though excluding the elected Palestinian government, Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement). In Paris, just weeks later, eighty-seven countries and international organisations pledged US$7.4 billion in aid to help build a Palestinian state – without Hamas. But what state could it be?

Before 2007 had ended came the announcement that, in 2008, Israel had budgeted to build about 740 new homes on occupied land near Jerusalem. Such defiance of all international agreements of recent years takes Palestinian history back to the key issue of the Madrid negotiations and the Oslo agreement of 1993. The PLO's failure to confront Israel's settlements, as the fundamental issue then, lost them their key negotiator, the late and much regretted Dr Haider Abdul Shafi, and set the Palestinian national movement on the disastrous path to today's erosion of its authority and unity.

The year 1993 was also when Hamas emerged into the international limelight as 415 Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders were driven by Israel over the border with Lebanon and dumped in the no man's land of Marj Al-Zuhar, just outside Israel's declared security zone. It was retribution, after the kidnapping of an Israeli policeman as a hostage for the release by Israel of the Hamas leader Sheik Ahmad Yassin. Negotiations failed and the policeman was killed. But eight months in the harshest of desert conditions, before the men were allowed back to the Occupied Palestinian Territories (or Israeli jails), had allowed these Hamas leaders a rare opportunity out of prison to refine the next phase of their strategy. They did not, as Israel had apparently calculated, make their ways individually to Beirut, giving up on their intolerable situation.

The dramatic incident is well described in Azzam Tamimi's book and, had such an account of Hamas's realities existed back in 1993 and had it had the readership it deserves, perhaps Israel and its allies might not have made such a series of miscalculations of this enemy.

Hamas's opposition to Oslo and its compromises was based primarily on its leaders' view of the agreement's inevitable failure – little different in essence from the line taken by some of the towering Palestinian figures by then outside the PLO leadership, such as the late Edward Said, as well as Dr Abdul Shafi. Hamas did not take part in the 1996 elections because,

as their leader, Khalid Mish'al, says here, 'they emanated from Oslo, that is, from a political programme that we reject and oppose'. But, in January 2006, the Hamas analysis of political conditions had changed and it did stand, winning 74 seats to Fatah's 45 in the elections for the Palestinian legislative council.

What had not changed was Israel's and the US's profoundly hostile attitude to Hamas. The US and European governments' response to the election was to cut aid to the Palestinians – punishment for the government they had chosen. Too few outsiders noted that this was profoundly anti-democratic. This international complicity in the demonisation of Hamas (which had a rerun at Annapolis) illustrates the deep misunderstanding of the Islamic party in the West – its capacity and its standing among Palestinians.

Tamimi's book is an excellent history and analysis of Hamas, including its origins in the late 1960s. It puts into perspective just how the 2007 drama in Gaza is only the latest very serious crisis that the organisation has had to surmount, from both internal Palestinian and regional policy upheavals in the last forty years. If western policymakers had read this book, perhaps they would have taken a different attitude in January 2006 and thereafter and not sought the current confrontation.

The calculation of Israel and its allies in 2006 was that the Hamas government would collapse under the western sanctions, coupled with the Israeli blockade, and that there would be a backlash against them from a desperate population. The election of a new government ready for more compromises with Israel and the US was the aim. Influential US policymakers close to Israel prepared, too, for a military regime change, by pouring resources into Fatah security services. Civil war did not happen but US and Israeli policy ended the Palestinian unity government and a complete split between Fatah and Hamas ensued.

Far from being broken, Hamas gained prestige in the early months after its June 2007 takeover of Gaza, for its successful restoration of law and order, and its withstanding of constant Israeli and Fatah military pressure, including relentless assassinations of its fighters, as well as many civilians. Hamas later lost some voter popularity after heavy-handed actions against Fatah members, as well as against Gaza's influential clans, but it appeared as powerful and as well financed as ever in late 2007.

With Israel also withholding about US$600 million of tax revenues in early 2007, it was not surprising that the UN warned of a grave economic crisis. The statistics give a stark account of life in Gaza by the end of 2007. Two thirds of the Palestinian population were below the poverty line; stocks of medicines were run down to near zero: patients were dying because they were refused exit to hospitals which could treat them in the West Bank, Egypt or Israel. Around 1.2 million Gazans were reliant on UN food handouts, that is 85 per cent of the population. Unemployment

was at least 50 per cent and, in the last six months of 2007, the private sector had collapsed: 80,000 employees had lost their jobs.[1]

The Hamas story which leads up to all this is dramatic and Tamimi tells it well. The book is deeply researched, with more than thirty pages of footnotes, allowing the reader to trace the many interviews Tamimi has done with all the key players in Hamas who clearly gave him their trust. It gives non-Arabic readers access to a wealth of fascinating detail not available in English before.

In these pages, the organisation comes to life. The book traces the years of formation through education and social work, in Egypt and inside Palestine, against the background of failing Arab nationalism; then, the setting up of a prosperous network from Kuwait; the slow move towards armed struggle; the waves of mass arrests of Hamas members in 1988, 1990, 1991 and 1992 inside Palestine; the good years for the leadership in Jordan when King Hussein had warm and pragmatic relations with the organisation (saving its leader Khaled Mish'al from death by poison at the hands of Mossad and engineering the release of Sheik Yassin); followed by the souring of relations after the US-led Wye River meeting in 1998 between Yasser Arafat and Binyamin Netanyahu, and the ratchetting up of US pressure on the Jordanian government as the King fell ill and became sicker, finally changing the internal political dynamic in Jordan and resulting in Hamas's expulsion from Jordan.

Tamimi's account of Sheik Yassin's 1998 four-month tour of the Islamic world and the immense prestige of the slight figure in his wheelchair is just one part of the book which gives an insight no western media has ever conveyed. 'Speaking privately, where their words would not be reported to the US administration, most Arab and Muslim leaders, though they could do little, would express sentiments of the utmost respect for Hamas.' He goes on to write of Hamas leaders' reputation for 'asceticism, altruism, dedication and honesty'. Much has been written elsewhere of the contrast with Fatah's reputation for corruption. But, for Tamimi, the primary reason for Hamas's success at the polls in 2006 was 'Hamas's fidelity to the Palestinian dream'.

Tamimi writes interestingly of the 1988 Hamas charter as a false image of what is now a matured organisation and includes as appendices several articles written by Hamas leaders which spell out their current political positions. Most significant is the new edition's last chapter on the Mecca agreement of 8 February 2007. Here, Hamas and Fatah forged a national unity government on the basis of: commitment to a Palestinian state on the territories occupied in 1967; with Jerusalem as its capital; the dismantling of all settlements; the release of prisoners; and the right to return of refugees. From an interview with Mish'al in April 2007, Tamimi underlines how far Hamas has evolved beyond its traditional position in the out-of-date charter. Mecca 'provided an opportunity, for the first time, for a settlement between the Palestinians and Israel that does not entail a

recognition of Israel but that would at the same time provide it with a safe and secure existence'. It is entirely in character with the history Tamimi relates that, in late 2007 when Hamas's prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, proposed a ceasefire, Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, turned it down flat, saying 'a true war' would continue in the Gaza Strip between 'Israeli Defence Forces and terrorist elements'.

This Palestinian academic's book offers a counter view of Hamas, past and present, and its collective leadership, which is essential to understanding the current dynamics of resistance to occupation in Gaza and the West Bank, and also the lengths Fatah has gone to accommodate the US and Israel in recent times. The book is published in a new edition in the US which includes the Mecca agreement, so soon eclipsed by Israel's creation of new facts on the ground. The book ends before the dramatic deterioration of mid-2007, but it is a tragic political companion to the recent description of Hamas's territory by UNRWA's Gaza director, John Ging: 'You must be on the ground for days and weeks to begin to appreciate the full horror of the situation… by what other definition or name can these sanctions be described, other than arbitrary collective punishment of a civilian population, helplessly caught in the middle of a conflict?' While Raji Sourani, director of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, warned: 'We are on the verge of a real catastrophe… What is the meaning of international humanitarian law?' His answer could be: the law that excludes Hamas's people.

An important academic analysis, written after Tamimi's book, traces the progression towards a failed Palestinian state, following the US decision to opt for regime change after the Hamas electoral victory of 25 January 2006, and illustrates how much it matters. Dr Yezid Sayigh, for years part of the PLO establishment, notes now that 'Hamas may prove to be the one remaining bulwark against further breakdown and radicalisation'.[2]

London VICTORIA BRITTAIN

References

1 Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Occupied Palestinian Territory, <http://www.ochaopt.org>.

2 Yezid Sayigh, 'Inducing a failed state in Palestine', *Survival* (Vol. 49, no. 3, Autumn 2007).

Tim Hector: a Caribbean radical's story

By PAUL BUHLE (Jackson, MS, University of Mississippi Press, 2006), 208 pp. Cloth $32.00.

I have often thought: if only he had been there, as he so often was, Tim Hector of Antigua, in St George's, Grenada in October 1983. If only he had been there, together with other seasoned Caribbean Basin revolutionaries and creative minds like those of George Lamming of Barbados, Walter Rodney of Guyana (already dead, killed by a letter bomb in 1979), George Weekes of Trinidad, Michael Manley of Jamaica, Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua or Fidel Castro of Cuba – all of whom, with many other regional militants, rallying to Prime Minister Maurice Bishop's founding cry of 'One Caribbean!' had a profound influence over the leadership of the Grenada revolution – if only they had been there to mesh Grenadian heads together and prevent the carnage and destruction of the political hopes of the region. For Tim Hector was a huge unifying figure, as well as a mighty Caribbean man; one of a generation of outstanding Caribbean activists: he and Rodney had been born in 1942, Bishop in 1944. Perhaps he could have talked sense, unity and strategy out of disruption and division, emphasised the size and significance of what was at stake and being lost, brought bickering brothers together and forestalled the callous murders of many Grenadians, including fine and inspiring leaders like Bishop himself, Unison Whiteman, Jacqueline Creft, Vince Noel and Fitzie Bain who were the very founding flesh and blood of the Caribbean revolution in Grenada.

Whenever I think of Tim Hector, these thoughts surge through my mind, as they did again when I read Paul Buhle's uplifting book about Tim's life and times. And in one particular chapter, which Buhle calls, 'The great moment passed by', he focuses upon a brief enough era in Caribbean history, shared by Hector's relentless organising, political writing and campaigning with the Afro-Caribbean Liberation Movement in his own island and across the Caribbean which he loved so dearly, with his hopes for political unity, when the promise of progress beamed and was lost – not only in the implosion and consequent US invasion of Grenada but in Guyana with the Burnham dictatorship, Manley's 'halted experiment' of the 1970s in Jamaica and the decline of the Trinidadian Left. All corresponded with the most active period of Hector's political life, an epoch of achievement and hope so briefly realised and so cruelly removed.

Hector described himself, in one of a welter of articles in his indefatigable self-published Caribbean-wide journal, the *Outlet*, in 2001 as 'an island boy'. Proud of that, and a convinced localist as well as an internationalist, he had returned to Antigua from a prospective academic career in Canada in 1966. He declared: 'I believed then and I believe now that there are certain qualities which island people have which are critical to the emancipation of humankind – one of them being the capa-

city to produce a regional State of City States in which the sheer scope and range of human achievement would make the ancient city states pale in comparison. I would die trying.' As Bishop and his comrades did; as Rodney did on his mainland island of great forest, rivers and polders. And as an exhausted and body-worn Tim Hector did in October 2002, in the island of his life and hopes, surrounded by the crack of cricket bats, the calypsonians' keening words and the people's undying dreams of a free Caribbean.

Hector loved Caribbean cricket as a defiantly anti-colonial sport, as his inspiration C. L. R. James did, and he was an authority on the game. This is the one area in his book where Buhle, like a fledgling pace bowler, pitches a little short. Richie Richardson, for example, was not a 'genius bowler' but an immensely powerful Antiguan batsman who captained the West Indies and became the first black man to play for the previously lilywhite Yorkshire County Cricket Club in England. But then, not every American can understand and write so insightfully and persuasively about cricket as the remarkable Mike Marqusee. Hector's aspirations for Caribbean unity and the power of the region's culture were manifested in the beauty and glory of its cricket during its seventies and eighties heyday – and personalised in the great Antiguan players like the fast bowler Andy Roberts and the extraordinary Pan-Caribbean and Pan-African batting power of the magnificent Viv Richards, whom, as I learned on my last visit to Grenada in August 1983, was on the point of agreeing to work in Grenada as a coach of its young cricketers. Another dream repulsed by events, and how Hector would have revelled in it: the world's greatest cricketer from his own beloved island directly serving the Caribbean revolution.

What makes *Tim Hector: a Caribbean radical's story* such an impressive book is the way in which Buhle sees Hector as vitally springing from the Caribbean revolutionary tradition. It is not a book about a single human being but how a small-island man was projected into the common struggle of the islands and whose life influenced, enhanced and changed the nature of that struggle. Buhle sets his human subject in the context of twentieth-century Caribbean history by portraying Hector as an activist strongly drawn to the political vision of James, his exemplar and cultural and intellectual inspiration. Like James, says Buhle, Hector 'strove to make the Caribbean a nation and to explain to the world the components of its genius and distinctiveness'. And, as Hector himself described his own version of a true regional future, based upon people's democracy and true representation: 'People in control of their own communities. Only people secure in their own communities can be integrated in a larger confederation of Caribbean and Central American states. Only such a regional state can create the space for economic and social development.'

My own memories of Tim Hector are at Grenadian rallies and councils, sitting next to or near Bishop, who thought the same. Smiling, listening, joking, making language about the 'Revo', beholding, if for such a short time, a free and sovereign Caribbean people actively building their power and resisting the terrifying and tentacled destructiveness of Reaganism and its regional 'yard fowls' and neocolonial mimics whom he so vigorously opposed in his own island and across the region. Proud, generous, intellectually brilliant and eternally human, he embodied Caribbean hope and redemption like his contemporaries Bishop, Rodney and Marley.

One last thought: how Hector and such compatriots of the Caribbean nation would have marvelled at the book's publisher, the University of Mississippi Press! Ole Miss itself, the scene of such racist havoc during the civil rights struggle in that historically shameful state that bears its name. Now, its press publishes a book about the life of a Caribbean revolutionary hero, a black man of the people. How Hector would have loved the irony, as delicious as a Viv Richards straight drive for six over the pearl-white sightscreen.

Sheffield CHRIS SEARLE

Chronicler of the Winds

By HENNING MANKELL, translated by Tiina Nunnally (New York, The New Press, 2006), 233 pp. Cloth $24.95.

In the Country of Men

By HISHAM MATAR (London, Viking, 2006), 360 pp. Cloth £12.99.

'Scheherazade was a coward who accepted slavery over death.' Or so Suleiman's mother would furiously and repeatedly tell her son. And as Suleiman would recall, 'Nothing angered Mama more than the story of Scheherazade', although he, the young boy growing up in Qaddafi's 1979 Libya, 'had always thought Scheherazade a brave woman who had gained her freedom through inventing tales'. Suleiman, the storyteller of Hisham Matar's first novel, *In the Country of Men*, had himself 'often, in moments of great fear, recalled her example'. Meanwhile, at the other end of the African continent, Nelio, the street child, lay dying of a gunshot wound on a theatre rooftop and, for nine nights, told his story to José Antonio Maria Vaz, the baker below stairs, who brought the boy water and medicinal herbs, changed his bandages and listened to his stories: 'It was on the second night', as José tells it in Henning Mankell's novel, *Chronicler of the Winds* (first published in Swedish in 1995), that Nelio 'began to tell his story', even though 'he didn't tell me everything straight through'. No, it would take just another seven nights – not Scheherazade's record

1,001 – before Nelio would conclude his tale and pass on. But why Scheherazade in these two narratives? And why now?

What, that is, do 'humanitarianism' and 'human rights' have to do with the humanities? In what ways might contemporary world literature – even the tales told by two young boys, one written by a first-time novelist from Libya (Matar) and the other by an internationally reputed Swedish author of police procedurals (Mankell) – contribute to a consideration of these pressing questions in the early twenty-first century? In a globalising culture, both international and national interests are at stake and challenge too the ways in which personal stories contribute to political histories. Henning Mankell's *Chronicler of the Winds* (1995/2006) and Hisham Matar's *In the Country of Men* (2006) examine the various – even nefarious – roles that storytelling can play in the elaboration of contemporary human rights narratives. Although each work involves a child narrator, the children's tales contribute differently to a human rights project: Nelio's story, that is, is one of revelation, whereas Suleiman is trapped in his betrayals. When to talk? When to keep silent? *Chronicler of the Winds* is set in an 'unnamed African country' (but presumably in Mozambique, where the Swedish author is resident for six months annually as a theatre director) and *In the Country of Men* takes place in Qaddafi's Libya. That geo-historical specificity is critical, even necessary, to the political tales that the two works separately tell, even as the novels themselves draw together literary conventions of tale-telling and contest the legendary example set by – and still heralded as iconic – Scheherazade as heroine and champion par excellence of the proverbial power of stories.

A 'country of men', in other words Libya in 1979, ten years after Muammar Qaddafi's revolution seized power from the monarchy of King Idris that had ruled the former Italian colony since its grant of independence in 1951, is the setting of Hisham Matar's novel. It was a 'time of blood and tears', recalls Suleiman, telling his tale from exile in Egypt, 'in a Libya full of bruise-checkered and urine-stained men, urgent with want and longing for relief'. The father of the novel's narrator/protagonist is suspected by the regime of subversive activities, 'printing leaflets criticizing the Guide and his Revolutionary Committees', for example, or convening meetings through a 'small red towel on the clothesline' of a friend and fellow agitator. Suleiman's best friend's father, Ustath Rashid, is arrested. For Suleiman, however, 'to see Ustath Rashid arrested was different. I had heard it said many times before that no one is ever beyond their reach, but to see them, to see how it can happen, how quickly, how there's no space to argue, to say no, made my belly swim.' Suleiman, however, tattle-tale/tale-teller that he turns out to be – Scheherazade or not – tells on his own father. Falling finally for the overtures of the man at the wheel of the car accompanying 'Slooma' and his mother in and about Tripoli, parked daily outside their house, 'the one with the

old woman's voice … the one who had slapped Ustath Rashid, the one who had followed Mama and me from Martyrs' Square', Suleiman tells his father's story, giving away its characters and its setting, and thereby changing, compromising, the plot. It all happens 'in the country of men'. But Scheherazade: 'How did she do it? How did Scheherazade keep her nerve?'

Meanwhile, in another African country, Nelio, dying, is telling his nine-night story. José, his sole and solitary, one and only, listener, wants to know: 'What was he doing there? Who had shot him?' For those last nights of his life, Nelio, the 'boy who made himself a home inside an abandoned statue in one of the city's plazas', tells his tale – but does not answer José's questions – a tale of his country's conflicted history and the future it withheld. As José recalls: 'It wasn't until the year I met Nelio that the war ended. A peace agreement was signed, and the leader of the bandits came to the city and was embraced by the president.' It was those same bandits, however, who had pillaged Nelio's village, brutalised his family and forced him to grow up when he refused to shoot on order a young friend and killed a 'bandit' instead. As Nelio relates it: 'I was only a boy, but I had already killed a man.' Eventually and eventfully, Nelio found his way to the city, where he no less eventfully finds his way with a group of street children making their way on the streets, outside the theatre in which Nelio's last act is to be played. There are power struggles meanwhile over leadership of the group when Cosmos leaves and Nelio takes over, pranks are played with lizards in department stores, hotels, the parliament building, even the president's own bedroom, and gender and identity questions posed when Deolinda pitches up and Nascimento abuses her. Finally, albeit fatally, the kids have prepared a play, having given themselves 'permission to create another world', a visionary episode for one of their own, Alberto Bomba, who himself will not long survive the performance. Nor will Nelio – who is shot on stage and spends only nine more nights on the theatre's rooftop, telling his story to José Antonio Maria Vaz. For José, the 'last day of Nelio's life was one long, drawn-out performance'. Or, in other words, those of Suleiman: 'How did Scheherazade keep her nerve?'

Chronicler of the Winds and *In the Country of Men* pose, that is, important questions for comparative literary history and its contribution to the collecting of tales told by human rights advocates – and their readers. Nelio and Suleiman, tale tellers and tattle-tales that they are, raise, in other words, critical issues for the abiding question of just what might 'humanitarianisn' and 'human rights' have to do with the humanities – and literature?

University of Texas at Austin BARBARA HARLOW

Forgotten Wars: the end of Britain's Asian empire

By CHRIS BAYLY and TIM HARPER (London, Allen Lane, 2007), 674 pp. Cloth £30.00.

In this tremendous book, Chris Bayly and Tim Harper put 'the great Asian war' centre stage. As they point out, it is simply no longer possible to see the conflict in Asia as some sort of sideshow in the second world war. The great Asian war lasted from the Japanese attack on China in 1937 until the end of the Vietnamese war in 1975 and cost more lives than what the authors describe dismissively as Europe's civil war. Having established the importance of the conflict, they proceed to chronicle the history of the British empire in Asia through these turbulent times. They have already published an outstanding volume, *Forgotten Armies*, recounting the history of the British empire during the war with Japan. Now, in this second volume, *Forgotten Wars*, they provide an essential account of the end of Britain's Asian empire, an account that covers the interventions in Vietnam and Indonesia, the withdrawals from India and Burma and the protracted war that was waged in order to hold onto Malaya.

The Labour government that came to power in 1945 was committed to maintaining Britain's great power status, a status that rested on the empire. In Indonesia and Vietnam, it was to restore Dutch and French rule, and in Malaya it was to hold on with grim determination. Even in India and Burma, where Labour reluctantly conceded independence, the intention was that independence 'was not really to be full independence anyway'. At the very least, this book shatters the carefully cultivated myth, the invented tradition, that the Labour government was somehow 'progressive' as far as the empire was concerned.

Certainly the best demonstration of the Labour government's imperialism is provided by the intervention in Indonesia in 1945–6. Bayly and Harper's account of this episode is certainly the best we have so far. As they point out, before the Japanese occupation, Britain had over £100 million invested in Indonesia, including a 40 per cent stake in Royal Dutch Shell. Moreover, in August 1945, the Labour government had signed a secret agreement with the Dutch regarding the thorium deposits to be found on Singkeep island, deposits that were essential for nuclear research and development. Now the British found themselves engaged in fierce fighting with Indonesian nationalists in order to restore Dutch rule. The battle of Surabaya, still virtually unknown in Britain, was the decisive moment. It remains 'one of the largest single engagements fought by British troops since the end of the Second World War'. The British shelled and bombed the city, forcing a mass exodus of refugees, before proceeding to drive the resistance out street by street. Thousands of people were killed in the fighting. Forgotten in Britain, in Indonesia the battle is 'commemorated each year as Hari Patilawan, Heroes Day'. One cannot help feeling that, if Churchill had still been in power, it would

be remembered as another episode in his career as an imperialist. With Attlee in power, it is forgotten, leaving no stain on the reputation of the man who supposedly gave independence to India.

And what of India? Dirk Bogarde, then a young British officer, remembered on arriving in Calcutta, seeing a British major, 'moustached, red-faced', thrashing an Indian porter 'with a swagger cane … My first sight and sound of the Raj at work.' Another young officer, the future historian Eric Stokes, wrote home that when walking through Calcutta, he felt 'rather like a Nazi officer must have felt walking along a Paris boulevard'. Methods and styles of rule that had been possible before the war were now impossible to sustain, however. The mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy in 1946 signalled that the game was up. Once Indian troops could no longer be relied upon, the British position in both India and Burma had become untenable.

As Bayly and Harper make clear, the Congress leadership in India had got the measure of the Labour government: 'right up to independence and beyond they expected to be sold down the river. Somehow the chains would remain in place.' This expectation derived from long experience of Labour politicians and only Britain's chronic military and economic weakness prevented an attempt to crush Congress and keep a balkanised India under British control. What is truly remarkable is the way that a generation of historians and politicians successfully turned Labour's appalling imperial record into some sort of success story, into a triumph for and vindication of British Labourism.

Bayly and Harper provide marvellous accounts of developments in Burma, India and Malaya, successfully combining scholarship of the highest order with an accessible, popular style. The book can be unreservedly recommended and deserves the widest possible readership.

Bath Spa University College JOHN NEWSINGER

Index to Volume 49

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

Articles

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 113–114
10.1177/0306396808093305 http://rac.sagepub.com

Books received

RACE & CLASS

SAGE
Los Angeles,
London,
New Delhi,
Singapore

This listing does not preclude subsequent publication of reviews

An Alliance of Women: immigration and the politics of race. By Heather Merrill, University of Minnesota Press, 2006. Paper, $25.00.

Another World is Possible: globalization and anti-capitalism. By David McNally, Winnipeg, Arbeiter Ring and Monmouth. Merlin, 2006. Paper, Can. $28.95.

Bad Men: Guantánamo Bay and the Secret Prisons. By Clive Stafford Smith, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007. Hardback, £16.99.

The Belly of the Atlantic. By Fatou Diome, London, Serpent's Tail, 2006. Paper, £8.99.

Beyond Slavery: the multilayered legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean. Edited by D. J. Davis, Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2007. Paper, $19.99.

Black on the Block: the politics of race and class in the city. By Mary Patillo, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007. Hardback, $29.00, £18.50.

The Black Middle Class: social mobility and vulnerability. By Benjamin, P. Bowser, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 2007. Hardback, £30.95.

Brixton Rock. By Alex Wheatley, London, Blackamber, 2006. Paper, £7.99.

Catching Hell in the City of Angels. By João H. Costa Vargas, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2006. Paper, $19.95.

Cities of Affluence and Anger: a literary geography of modern Englishness. By Peter J. Kalliney, Charlottesville, VA, University of Virginia Press, 2007. Paper, $22.50.

Crossing Waters, Crossing Worlds: the African diaspora in Indian country. Edited by Tiva Miles and Sharon P. Holland, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2007. Paper, £14.99.

Crossovers: essays on race, music and American culture. By John Szwed, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. Hardback, $47.50.

The Debate on Black Civil Rights in America. By Kevin Verney, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006. Paper.

Diversity Management and Discrimination: immigrants and ethnic minorities in the EU. By John Wrench, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007. Hardback, £50.00.

Fluid Borders: Latino Power, identity, and politics in Los Angeles. By Lisa Garcia Bedolla, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2005. Paper, £13.95.

Gender, Race, and Class: an overview. By L. S. Chancer and B. X. Watkins, Oxford, Blackwell, 2006. Paper, £17.99.

The Global Politics of Contemporary Travel Writing. By Debbie Lisle, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006. Hardback.

Heart of Fire. By Senait Mehari, London, Profile, 2007. Paper, £6.99.

The Islamist. By Ed Husain, London, Penguin, 2007. Paper, £8.99.

Jamaica Kincaid and Caribbean Double Crossings. Edited by Linda Lang-Peralta, Newark, University of Delaware Press, 2007. Hardback, $26.50.

Race & Class
 Vol. 50(1): 115–116
10.1177/0306396808093306 http://rac.sagepub.com

Janitors, Street Vendors and Activists: the lives of Mexican immigrants in Silicon Valley. By Christian Zlolniski, Berkely, University of California Press, 2006. Paper, $11.95.

The Kurds in Syria: the forgotten people. By Kerim Yildiz, London, Pluto Press, 2005. Hardback, £25.00.

Marxism and National Identity: socialism, nationalism, and National Socialism, during the French fin de siècle. By Robert Stuart, New York, SUNY Press, 2006. Hardback, $85.00.

The Meaning of Life. By Terry Eagleton, Oxford, OUP, 2007. Hardback, £10.99.

Men of the Global South: a reader. Edited by A. Jones, London, Zed Books, 2007. Paper.

My Name is Anne, she said, Anne Frank. By Jacqueline van Maarsen, London, Arcadia, 2007. Hardback, £15.99.

Ordinary Springboks: white servicemen and social justice in South Africa, 1939-1961. By Neil Roos, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2005. Hardback, £45.00.

Pedagogies of Crossing: meditations on feminism, sexual politics, memory, and the sacred. By M. Jacqui Alexander, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2006. Paper, £15.95

Praised be our Lords: the autobiography. By Régis Debray, London, Verso, 2007. Paper, £19.99.

Prison Writings: the roots of civilisation. By Abdullah Ocalan, London, Pluto, 2007. Hardback.

Race and Multiraciality in Brazil and the United States. By G. Reginald Daniel, Philadelphia, Penn State University Press, 2006. Hardback.

Race, Law and Society. Edited by Ian Haney López, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006. Hardback, £135.00.

The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglas, Abraham Lincoln, and the triumph of anti-slavery politics. By James Oakes, New York, W. W. Norton, 2007. Hardback, £19.99.

Remembering Refugees: then and now. By Tony Kushner, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006. Paper, £14.99.

School Resegregation: must the South turn back? Edited by J. C. Boger and G. Orfield, Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 2005. Paper, $24.95.

The Seductions of Community: emancipations, oppressions, quandaries. Edited by Gerald W. Creed, Oxford, James Currey, 2006. Paper, £17.50.

Selling the Race: culture, community, and black Chicago, 1940-1955. By Adam Green, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006. Hardback, $35.00.

Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices. By Ella Shohat, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2006. Paper, £14.95.

The Theory and Reality of Democracy: a case study in Iraq. By Suman Gupta, London, Continuum, 2006. Hardback, £65.00.

Unruly Immigrants: rights, activism, and transnational South Asian politics in the United States. By Monisha Das Gupta, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2007. Paper, £14.99.

Unspeak: words are weapons. By Steven Poole, London, Abacus, 2007. Paper, £7.99.

Wandering Star: a novel. By J. M. G. Le Clézio, Willimantic, CT, Curbstone, 2005. Paper, $15.00.

What Every Radical Should Know About State Repression. By Victor Serge, Melbourne, Ocean Press, 2005. Paper, $14.95.

Working-class White: the making and unmaking of race relations. By Monica McDermott, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006. Hardback, £32.50.

Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the state and public space. By John R. Bowen, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007. Hardback.

Notes to contributors

General

Race & Class operates a conventional single-blind reviewing policy in which the reviewer's name is always concealed from the submitting author. Each manuscript is reviewed by at least two referees. All manuscripts are reviewed as rapidly as possible, and an editorial decision is generally reached within 6-8 weeks of submission.

Manuscripts should be submitted in double spaced hard copy. On acceptance of articles for publication we require them to be emailed, preferably in Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format. Formatting should be kept to the minimum. Articles should be between 5,000–8,000 words; commentary pieces between 2,000–4,000. Please include a brief, two- or three-line author description.

Style points

Race & Class uses minimal capitalisation – e.g. for the first word of a heading, title of an article; lower case for terms like prime minister, mayor, etc.; 'black' is normally lower case, however author's preference will be followed. Exceptions are 'Third World' and 'Left' and 'Right' as political entities.

Use British spelling, not US, except where necessary in quotations. Use -ise form, not -ize.

US, not U.S.; Mr not Mr. but Arthur A. Jones, not Arthur A Jones.

Numbers one to a hundred should be spelt out, otherwise given in figures, except for ages, percentages and statistical material. Use per cent (two words) not %.

Quotations

For short quotes, use single quotation marks, except for quotes within quotes, for which use double quotation marks. Punctuation should normally follow quotation marks, except when the quotation itself forms a complete sentence. Quotes of more than three or four lines will normally be indented.

Use square brackets [ ] to indicate matter inserted into a quotation, and a space followed by three stops and a space to indicate matter omitted. Please indicate where emphasis is added in any quotation.

References

Notes and references should be placed at the end of an article, indicated by continuous numbering throughout the text. Reference numbers should be placed after punctuation, except when the reference falls within a bracket. Please note, the author-date or Harvard system is not used. References do not need to be made to every point, though direct quotes and controversial points should be referenced. Separate bibliographies containing material not directly referenced in the text are not normally included.

Please format as follows:

For a book: A. Jones, *The Thusness of Thus: an examination* (Place, Publisher, Year), pp. 21–9.

For a journal: A. Jones, 'The thusness of thus: an examination', *Journal Title* (Vol., no., year), pp. 21–9.

Copyright

Before publication, authors are requested to assign copyright to the Institute of Race Relations; they retain their right to reuse the material in other publications written or edited by themselves. Authors are responsible for obtaining permissions from copyright holders for reproducing lengthy quotations or tables previously published elsewhere.

www.irr.org.uk $13/£7

0306-3968(200807)50:1;1-R

INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS

978-1-84787-408-5