

will double. . . . The population explosion will coincide with, and add to, the great migration of peoples. . . . This migration foreshadows another Islamic invasion of Europe. Demographers project the Middle East alone (including Iran) could reach a population of three hundred to four hundred million by 2030. . . . If large numbers of Middle Eastern and African migrants swarm into Europe in the 2000s and beyond, the result will not only be a migration of individuals, it will be a migration of Islam.

As Mr. Norval points out, the storefront mosques where the World Trade Center bombing was hatched are a sign of events to come. The proliferation of advanced weapons, the Koran, and the realization of a *Camp of the Saints* scenario: These are the makings of a deadly combination, advanced at every step by bad policy decisions made in Washington. In view of that fact, the locus of the next major terror strike might involve a little poetic justice—though Mr. Norval and I may find it a little too close to appreciate.

Gregory D. Palmer writes from Washington, D.C.

## Crying Bloody Murder

by Andrei Navrozov

**The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain**  
by David Cannadine  
New York: Columbia University Press;  
293 pp., \$29.95

The more a man of the world looks at the world, the more he is persuaded that not only are its political and social truths rarely what they seem, they are often the diametrical opposite of what they seem. So, in one memorable episode, did many an Englishman, a copy of the *Times* in one hand and a cup of milky tea in the other, remark with surprise that it was a Conservative prime minister, John Major, who first unveiled the plan for a "classless society," even as a Labour

prime minister, his present successor, abolished the clause of his party's constitution that had been demanding, since 1918, "the common ownership of the means of production." A paradox, then? Not at all; only a repositioning of social fictions. Few have gone on to reflect that even as it was Major who worked to undermine the British constitution by locking up Parliament in a cattle car bound for Brussels, so Tony Blair now intends to finish the job, and has in the meantime hit on the simple expedient of locking half of Parliament out of Westminster.

David Cannadine is nominally an historian, but he thinks and writes like a sociologist. He wants to look at the evidence, perform some computations, and arrive at a conclusion. And yet he is not even writing the history of a period or a people, of an aqueduct or a cathedral, but of what, in the final analysis, is a term describing a perceived political reality, which is to say a mendacious fabrication by many a hand, known as well as unknown. What he has put before himself is an ungrateful task. Whatever political or social reality one chooses to consider, whether "class," or "democracy," or "sovereignty," or a myriad others, it is quite clear that what this sort of cool-headed, impartial, diachronic approach is bound to dredge up—even when only a decade or two of history within one's living memory, to say nothing of a couple of centuries, is on the research assistant's computer screen—are ossified lies and broken shells of old doctrines. In the writing of history, as in all treasure hunting, one must follow hunches. You cannot just dig.

Of all the weasel concepts one could mention ("freedom" perhaps the most notorious among them), "class" has a slipperiness that is uniquely its own. Given that every society that ever existed, in earthly reality as distinguished from a philosopher's dream, had the dimension of height—with a top, a bottom, and a putative middle—it is easy to show that an eyewitness, or rather a participating observer, had four basic ways of describing the society of his day in relation to himself. He could say that he belonged to the upper part, which was good (beautiful, moral, intelligent, well dressed, educated, responsible, and of course rich), while the rest was bad (unattractive, filthy, stupid, subversive, uncivilized, and of course poor); or that he belonged to the lower part, which was good (honest, hardworking, idealistic, loving, clever,

and handsome, but perforce poor), while the rest was bad (idle, corrupt, cynical, stupid, and ugly, though admittedly rich).

Alternatively, he could say that, while he himself belonged to the upper part, he could testify that this was the repository of all vice (parasitic, perverted, deluded, unhappy, and not even noble enough to be admirable), while the rest of society was the repository of all virtue (happy, healthy, uncomplicated, generous, naturally aristocratic, and not so poor as actually to smell), with the implication that the life's aim of any virtuous man ought to be eventual devolution from that malignant stratum; or that, while he himself belonged to the lower part, it was thence that all vice proceeded (cue moral vacuum, unemployment and crime, prostitution and illiteracy, unrelieved tedium and despair) and that social elevation and eventual absorption into the rest of society (bring on higher education, useful employment, better medicine, higher quality of life, pursuit of happiness) ought to be the aim of every virtuous man's life.

In the 18th century, to these four basic vantage points and their *n*-factorial, or 24, theoretically possible permutations was added the middle class. Even ignoring this complication to the clockwork dichotomy of the high and the low, it is quite clear that much if not actually everything we know as European literature, political economy, and social history—from Marx to Tolstoy, from Engels to Disraeli, from Adam Smith to Lenin, from Fourier to Herzen, from Dickens to Keynes, from Beatrice Webb to Margaret Thatcher—is made up of one or another set of lapidary variations on what is at bottom a simple Manichaeian movement. And, in practical terms, the new addition changed little of the established conventions of collective or individual self-aggrandizement and self-abasement.

Interestingly enough, the credit for inventing the term "the middling class," used for the first time in *Clarissa*, goes to Samuel Richardson, second only to Shakespeare in the *Oxford English Dictionary* for the number of literary phrases that have become part of the national fabric of thought and speech. This is significant because, as first employed, the term was an innovation, an admirable and characteristically Richardsonian attempt to break out of the Manichaeian circle of us and them, wealth and poverty, innocence and experience, nature and nur-

ture, good and evil. Of the many illuminating contemporary references in Professor Cannadine's book, I would only single out Dr. Johnson's view of "class" as equally sagacious, insofar as the author of the *Dictionary of the English Language* believed in

"the fixed, invariable external rules of distinction of rank, which create no jealousy as they are allowed to be accidental," by which he meant they were beyond human intervention or alteration because they were God's will and God's work.

Elsewhere, perhaps, in Edmund Burke if not in Thomas Paine, in Thomas Jefferson if not in William Cobbett, though most probably in the work of novelists and diarists rather than that of scholars or politicians, one can find scattered other adducible instances of men transcending the vicious juxtaposition. But just about everybody on record writing directly on the subject, from Adam Smith onward, seems to belong to that line-drawing, finger-pointing, name-calling school of social classification which became famous the world over in the wake of the French and, later, of the Russian Revolution. Name your class, citizen! Identify your class enemy, and a small part of his money, of his property, and of his social prestige may become yours. Who knows, perhaps even his old *dacha*. "There are many ironies here," comments Professor Cannadine, not least among them the fact that

Karl Marx, the man Lady Thatcher claims most to hate, derived his basic models of social structure and social identity, models that she so deplores and abominates, from the works of Adam Smith, a man whom she so admires. For the idea that society should be understood in terms of collective and conflicting social groups—sometimes three and sometimes two, sometimes expressed in the language of class but sometimes not—was well established as a capitalist concept long before it was appropriated as a communist concept. Far from being invented by a nineteenth-century revolutionary who looked forward to a proletarian utopia and a classless society, it had first appeared in a book by a Scottish political economist who was steeped in

the hierarchical view of society.

Such ironies aside, and apart from its general usefulness as a reminder that the history of European social thought is nothing but a dense web of self-serving, self-perpetuating, and at the same time self-incriminating, almost childish lies, Professor Cannadine's book remains an assemblage of interesting quotations, facts, and suppositions without ever becoming what it should have been even before it was begun: namely, a contention, an indictment, or a thesis. To resume the analogy with which this review began, *The Rise and Fall of Class in*

*Britain* is like the concerned Englishman's observation that all of a sudden not everything is going quite as expected, what with a Conservative prime minister mouthing Marxist slogans while his Labour successor is removing Marxist signposts. True enough, but the contention one yearns to see proved is the equivalent of the terrible truth that a man engaged in the crime of murder has two bloody hands, one right and the other left.

Andrei Navrozov is *Chronicles'* European correspondent.

## RECEIVED WISDOM

*Quel avenir pour Vatican II?* by Claude Barthe. Paris: Francois-Xavier de Guibert (3, rue J-F. Gerbillon, 75006 Paris), 120 f.

The Abbe Barthe is a well-known conservative Catholic scholar in Paris. His recent book on Vatican II, written with a critical intelligence and restraint that is increasingly rare, points to many unanswered questions in the Church's project of modernization—or self-destruction. Barthe is also on the editorial board of *Catholica*, a solid and scholarly journal of opinion published three times a year. A recent number takes up the question of progressivism and includes an essay on technology by Thomas Molnar and editor Bernard Dumont's trenchant editorial on relativism: "The more we travel in the direction of the glorious future promised by a unified and programmed planet earth, the more we must understand that we are required to pay the price . . . to make our minds supple and malleable in order to eliminate any obstacle to the progress of the new civilization."

*Catholica*, Printemps 1999.

The Spring 1999 number of *Catholica*, "*Vers Une Eglise Vassalisée*," includes a number of provocative pieces by Claude Barthe, Bernard Dumont, Thomas Molnar, and Günter Maschke (among others) on a set of not entirely unrelated topics: the subjugation of the Church to modernist ideology, the American political ideology, and several German questions (including Molnar's discussion of Ernst Junger's conversion). This issue also contains an interview with *Chronicles'* editor Thomas Fleming on "the American mission." His eloquence in French (translated) confirms the Thurber cartoon: "He loses something in the original."

*Against the Odds: In Honor of the Nativity* by Harold Grier McCurdy. Charlotte: Briarpatch Press.

*Chronicles* readers, who are familiar with Mr. McCurdy's quiet and elegant verse, will wish to read his musings on Christmas. Here is the last stanza of "A Cold Christmas":

Till starlight and lovelight entirely cease  
He lives with us, our Prince of Peace,  
And neither snow nor gallows can  
Sunder us from the Son of Man.

---

# Principalities & Powers

---

by Samuel Francis

## I Was a Teenage Werewolf

"When I think back on all the crap I learned in high school . . .," Paul Simon mused in a popular song some years ago. Simon, of course, was in high school long before multiculturalism, Afrocentrism, Outcome-Based Education, bilingual education, Heather Has 17 Mommys, Holocaust Studies, and assorted therapeutic group gropes and mass séances in "counseling" displaced the deathless vapidities about history, life, and literature that typically spill from the lips of teachers in all ages and nations. But no matter what sort of crap Simon endured in his high school and what sort poisons the minds and spirits of teenagers today, it is nothing compared to the offal that the American news media regularly inject into grown-ups and anyone else who pays attention to them.

The mass murder of 12 students at Littleton, Colorado's Columbine High School on April 20 was the occasion for the construction of a veritable mountain of journalistic chicken doodle by almost every major newspaper and news service in the world. The blood had not stopped flowing before the ace reporters and investigative journalists had the whole gory mess all figured out and ready to serve hot and piping to a gape-jawed public. As it turned out, almost everything they reported was wrong—some of it almost certainly deliberately wrong—and not only wrong, but a carefully crafted wrongness that pointed in the exact opposite direction of the truth about Littleton and a lot of other things in the United States that it is important for some people to hide.

The two teenage killers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, an Associated Press story told us on April 21, were "said to be part of an outcast group with right-wing overtones called the Trenchcoat Mafia." "Students said the group was fascinated with World War II and the Nazis and noted that Tuesday [April 20] was Adolf Hitler's birthday," it continued. The same day, yet another AP story described the "Trenchcoat Mafia" as a group that "hated blacks, Hispanics, Jews and athletes." A student named Aaron Cohn, repeatedly quoted in several stories,

claimed the "Mafia" "often made anti-Semitic comments"; he was the apparent source of the story that the killers had called the black student they murdered by a racial epithet, while other students said the group or the killers themselves wore "Nazi crosses" and "made generally derogatory remarks' about Hispanics and blacks." "They talked about Hitler and wore clothes with German insignia," gasped the *New York Times* on April 23. "They hated jocks, admired Nazis and scorned normalcy. . . . They were white supremacists. . . ." the *Washington Post* bubbled the same day.

And so it went for the next week or so, with proponents of more gun control, more voodoo education, more hate-crime laws, and more federal manipulation of schools, law enforcement, and families flapping their wings and their jaws overtime, intent on squeezing every possible ounce of political advantage from what the press at once dubbed "the worst attack on a school in American history." Even that wasn't true. In 1927, a school board member named Andrew Kehos planted several dynamite bombs under his local schoolhouse in Michigan and blew it to splinters, killing himself and 45 other people, including 38 students. Whether Mr. Kehos was also reported to have "right-wing overtones" and to be a "white supremacist" is not known, but that atrocity committed by a lunatic, like most others in civilized countries, was soon forgotten.

The Littleton massacre wasn't forgotten, at least not for several weeks after it happened, and it soon became clear that the media were trying to use it in almost exactly the same way they had exploited the Oklahoma City bombing of April 19, 1995. They were setting a Reichstag fire, creating a vast and elaborate lie that sought to pin the blame for the Littleton massacre on "the right."

But the Littleton Lie couldn't last because it was just so contrary to certain facts that soon began to emerge from the carnage, and in any case, the Lie was largely irrelevant to the main political usage of the massacre, more gun control. Yet the major media kept the Littleton incident on their front pages for at least two weeks after it occurred; it was only when the facts did emerge that they lost interest

in it and the story began to follow Mr. Kehos and his dynamite bombs into that subcontinent of oblivion reserved for inconvenient facts and truths. The facts, you see, not only gave the lie to the Littleton Lie but pointed to a truth the news media didn't want to bring up.

One glimpse of reality began to creep onto the national screen when the contents of Eric Harris's website were released. Those contents had been reported to the local police by an alarmed parent more than a year before young Master Harris tripped over the edge on April 20, but the cops had ignored them. As soon as the massacre occurred, however, America Online shut down the Harris website, and no one got a gander at what was on it until the *New York Times*, to its credit, reported at least some of the contents on May 1.

The *Times* found the following passage, written by Harris, "intriguing": "You know what I hate?" Harris "repeatedly asked readers of the site," the *Times* reported. "One of the answers he gave was, 'RACISM!'" "He wrote that people who are biased against 'blacks, Asians, Mexicans or people from any other country or race besides white-American' should 'have their arms ripped off' and be burned." "'Don't let me catch you making fun of someone just because they are of a different color,' he wrote." Young Master Harris, it turns out, hated many things besides "RACISM," among them fans of "Star Wars," people who mispronounce words, liars, country music, freedom of expression, opponents of the death penalty, and smokers. But "RACISM," so far from being a creed to which he subscribed, was definitely on the enemies' list.

As for Dylan Klebold, it soon came out that he was of Jewish background and that his grandfather had been a prominent Jewish philanthropist in Ohio. In fact, young Master Klebold was reported to have taken part in a Passover seder only shortly before the massacre. Whatever motivated him to splatter the schoolhouse with the brains of his pals, it probably wasn't the admiration for Hitler and the Nazis that the press had attributed to him and his colleague, nor did Eric Harris's website reveal any sympathy for Hitler or for "racism" or indeed for any