

whole, and also the interpretative model of the left that goes with it. As a result, each of the Cousins' Wars, in his analysis, tends to be the same war over and over again, like *Twilight Zone* reruns. To a large extent, this is the result of historical coincidence: The Puritans of East Anglia were the leading forces against the crown in the English Revolution of the 1640's, and their descendants in New England tended to assume the same role against the Southern states 200 years later, while the South itself—*Southerners from Virginia*, at least—liked to identify with the Cavaliers (though a good many Confederates from other parts of the region either ignored or more or less consciously rejected that identification). Mr. Phillips devotes a fair amount of space to discussing New England Protestant theological beliefs that fed the crusade against slavery, but he tends to neglect Southern religion. That is just as well, since Southern religion in that era was often equally reflective of the "Low Church, Calvinistic Protestantism" that

supposedly animated the North.

In short, for all its erudition, *The Cousins' Wars* still manages to compress into a preconceived and historically unreliable mold historical realities that just do not fit. Moreover, Mr. Phillips argues that it is precisely because the side that won did win that the Anglos triumphed. Had the High Church monarchism of Charles I or the slave economy of the feudalistic and deferential South won, then the Anglo-Saxon peoples would not have prospered in wealth and power in this century quite as much as they have.

Mr. Phillips may be right about that, but again he may also be the victim of his own historical myopia. Had the side that won not won, then the values and ideals it was promulgating would not have been dominant in the Western world, and there would be few today who would be defending them as morally correct and historically inevitable. Mr. Phillips also has little to say about the future that the victory of certain ideas has opened for the Anglos. If the 20th century has been the

Anglo century, and the Anglos have been driven by the kind of modernism that Mr. Phillips sees triumphing in the 1640's, 1780's, and 1860's, then these same forces might reasonably be held responsible for the incipient disappearance of the Anglo-Saxon peoples within the borders of the very lands their ancestors conquered and settled. In the short run, the kind of modernism Mr. Phillips ascribes to the victors in the Cousins' Wars may conquer new countries, develop new sources of wealth, and spread liberty as far as it can reach, but its very success may also lead to its own destruction as the liberty it sows poisons the soil of its own civilization, the wealth it produces corrupts, and the conquered give laws to the conquerors. Whatever Mr. Phillips' modernism may have done for Anglos in the past, unless they have the wit and the will to modify it soon, the civilization their forebears created will soon go the way of Mr. Phillips' shrinking Republican majority.

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In Memory of One of the Better Ones

by Richard Moore

He launched his presidential bid
on a strange whim:
to see if the whole Country'd get as sick of him
as Georgia did.

He won, and down the Country slid
with Godly Jim,
his judgments catastrophic, his perceptions dim.
God, to be rid . . .

but friends, it wasn't right to shed
our leader thus—
there on our boil of state, our head,

our crown of pus,
that yellow corn pone eater, that voice, toneless, dead—
him? No, friends, us.

Christianity and Slavery in the Old South

by H. Arthur Scott Trask

"Slavery is as ancient as war, and war as human nature."

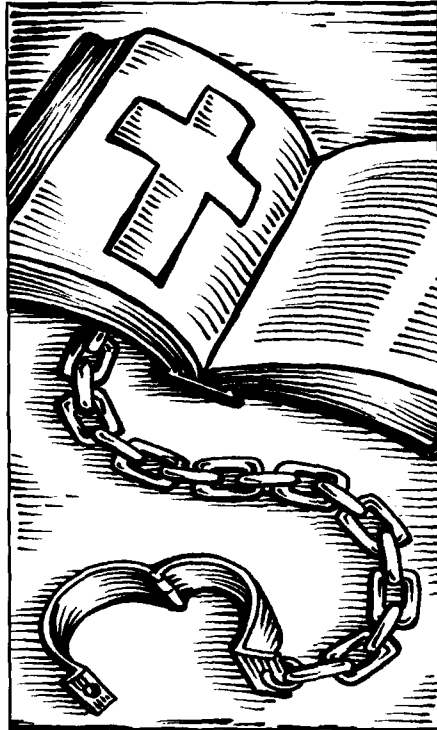
—Voltaire

**A Consuming Fire:
The Fall of the Confederacy in the
Mind of the White Christian South**
by Eugene D. Genovese
Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press;
169 pp., \$24.95

Americans, with their strong tendency to externalize the evil within them and to project it onto others, have been waging crusades to extirpate or crush one kind of evil or another for almost 200 years now. The Pelagian belief in man's natural innocence and capacity for perfection was the root of many heretical movements which swept the northern United States in the post-revolutionary period and the foundation of a host of religions from Finneyite Christianity to Transcendentalism and Mormonism, and it is still the core of the institutionalized leftism of the American academy.

The work of Eugene Genovese is a powerful rebuke to the Pelagian worldview of American historians, particularly as manifested in their treatment of the American South. Genovese is a former Marxist whose political philosophy has become more and more conservative in a Burkean sense, and who recently re-

H. Arthur Scott Trask recently received his Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina. He is currently writing a book on Pelagianism, antinomianism, and pantheism in Northern culture.



Gregory L. Newbold

turned to the Catholic Church of his ancestors. He is a meticulous, thorough, insightful, and fair-minded scholar whose work on both the black and white South is among the best in his field; his early work on the Southern slave system was brilliant and continues to set the standard for the subject. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (1974) remains required reading for those wishing to penetrate beyond the caricatures of the slave system presented in such works of fiction as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Alex Haley's *Roots*.

In the second half of his career, Genovese turned his historical attention to the thought and ideals of the Southern slaveholding class and their political and theological allies. His forthcoming volume, *The Mind of the Master Class*, promises to be an impressive work of American history. In the meantime, he

has produced three slim volumes of recent lectures that offer an introduction to his investigation of a neglected but important and rich body of thought. The first volume, *The Slaveholders' Dilemma*, was published in 1992; the second, *The Southern Tradition*, came out in 1994; and the present volume, *A Consuming Fire*, in 1999.

Almost all American historians present Southern history as nothing more than a dismal story of the long oppression of blacks by whites, interrupted by a brief and unsuccessful white rebellion against the Union, followed by the uplifting story of black resistance to their oppressors and their salvation at the hands of the federal government under Kennedy and Johnson. While Genovese holds no brief for either slavery or segregation (he considers them "enormities"), he despises the lazy leftist historians who treat the history of the South as a simplistic moral drama in which good finally triumphs over evil. As Genovese himself complained in a 1992 speech at the University of South Carolina, Southern youth "are being taught to forget their forebears or to remember them with shame"; "too often, [Southern] history is now taught, when it is taught at all, as a prolonged guilt-trip—a prologue to the history of Nazi Germany." He denounced this practice as "a cultural and political atrocity—a successful campaign to strip Southern youth of their heritage, and, therefore, their identity."

Genovese is no blind apologist for the South, nor does he suggest that the histo-