

system in crisis. There is very little talk nowadays of the problems of youth, or of age; all the talk is of jobs, and therefore the defence of specific qualities in the experience of the young or the old can only be expressed in private terms; for large references to social reforms or changing values look more and more empty.

In this sense it is possible to talk about the re-appearance of a youth culture which is seen in particular in the ecological and anti-nuclear movements, movements of withdrawal rather than of criticism, but in any case not defined through targeted opposition to the parents' generation or the adult world.

It must, therefore, be concluded that "the conflict of generations" is an illusion, and that it is an unhistorical notion especially ill-suited to our type of society and culture. Whether we live in a time of growth or of crisis, the relations between gener-

ations have been growing indirect, for between parents and children there intervenes the enormous world of consumption, economic organisation, and governmental policy.

THE SOCIETIES STUDIED BY anthropologists are dominated by the categories of age and sex. Distinctions between young and old, or men and women, are the most useful means of understanding their forms of social organisation. But those categories which once were public are becoming private at the same time as public life is more and more subordinated to great forces or trends which can no longer be directly detected in the consciousness of individuals. The conflict of generations is disappearing, to give way to the conflict between public and private life.

### International Commentary

## Reflections in Jerusalem

*Religion under Stress—By Elie Kedourie*



IN THE LAST century or so Scriptural religions—and perhaps all traditional religions—have had to face the challenges and dangers of "secularisation." The onslaught has come from many directions. A scientific world-view has gained ground which

on the face of it is incompatible with the Bible or the Koran; a new ideal of moral autonomy for the individual, irreconcilable with the authority of divine prescriptions, has become increasingly attractive; and the pervasive influence of Marxism has diminished all religion into a mere illusion, an "opium", used to lull the pain of alienation which men must suffer in a class-ridden society.

Religious responses have varied a good deal. Some of them have been uncompromising in rejecting modernity root-and-branch. But most have been anxious to appear broad-minded and up to date. In his recent Reith Lectures, Dr Edward Norman, for example, has forcefully

argued that Christianity has absolutely no business with politics, and is not a religion of social service. But as other writings of his have established, commitment to the ideology of a liberal intelligentsia has been rife for decades now in the Church of England. Such a commitment, whether it stems from conviction or from the prudent pursuit of a defensive strategy of accommodation with what is taken to be "the spirit of the age", was manifest in reactions to the Falklands war. There was reluctance to acknowledge that a victory was a proper occasion for thanksgiving by the national Church; an eagerness, almost, to treat both sides with a distant impartiality; and even a fastidious distaste for the profession of arms. The same commitment is also patent in the activities of the World Council of Churches, as it is in the outlook of large numbers of Roman Catholic clergy. The Mexican priest "on the run" in Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory*—a poor and scared creature, with his craving for alcohol, and terror of the authorities hunting him down, who yet at the peril of his life is driven to go from place to place secretly saying the Mass and administering the sacraments, because God must be brought to the faithful and only a priest can do so—is a figure from another world. Today he would be schooled in "Liberation Theology", able and ready to discourse fluently to television journalists on

the Third World, Neo-colonialism, Multinationals, and the charms of urban guerrilla warfare.

SECULAR IDEAS and attitudes have also affected Islam deeply, albeit in different ways. Secular notions came to the Muslim world charged with all the prestige which a powerful and prosperous Europe possessed. Their attraction derived from the belief that modernity (of which secular notions are a part) would enable the Muslim world, which had come to be dominated by the European Great Powers, to defend itself and attain the same degree of prosperity and power. This was particularly important for Islam, since from the earliest times it had come to consider worldly success a proof and validation of its truth. But by the same token, secularisation was bound to lead to strain and tension in the life of Muslim societies. For traditional Islam had been associated with the idea that it was a religious duty for the subject to obey the ruler, whether bad or mad. The principle of individual autonomous judgment associated with the secular outlook made this unacceptable. Again, non-Muslims had their own, subordinate and inferior, station in a Muslim society; and this too was incompatible with secularity. Also, a secular outlook includes the notion of a society of states whose sole formal characteristic is the equal possession of sovereignty, and whose intercourse is, in some fashion, regulated by international law. An international order of this kind is at variance with a doctrine which saw the world as divided between the abode of Islam and the abode of war.

THE STRAINS might have been eased and the tensions alleviated if secularisation had borne the fruit which its advocates expected. But secularisation has not served to make the Muslim world visibly more powerful or more prosperous. And from the very first it gave rise to great opposition on the score that it was a betrayal of Islam, and a sure way of delivering it into the hands of its traditional enemies. Even when the prestige of Western civilisation was at its highest, and hence also the power and influence of the secularisers, this opposition was never completely silenced. With Khomeini in Iran and the Muslim Brethren in Syria and Egypt—with Pakistan officially enforcing the Islamisation of the judiciary, the economy and other public activities—with Malaysia and Indonesia harbouring powerful Islamic movements—what has been called “fundamentalism” is in full and seemingly irresistible flood.

But irresistible as it seems, fundamentalism may have a secret canker at its heart. For it is intimately affected by the secularisation it so sincerely rejects. The ideals of equality and social justice which it proclaims are really inspired by the popu-

larity of Western ideologies which have disseminated these ideas all over the world. In this respect, the fundamentalist divines and those fashionable clerics of the Western world who equate Christianity with “social justice” may be brothers under the skin. In another respect, fundamentalism is caught in a dilemma. Muslim countries can no longer do without motor cars or telephones or all the other products of Western science. The argument now is that these things can simply be “imported” as they are required, that they need not make it impossible to found purely Islamic commonwealths, and lead a life similar to that of “the first Muslims.” There is a desperately theoretical air about such arguments, since it was precisely the importation of Western techniques and Western manufacturers which in the first place led to secularisation.

Even more serious, fundamentalism will have to stand or fall by its ability to make Islam secure and powerful—which the secularisers failed to do. Can *power* and *security* today be attained without the weapons which the Muslim world does not develop or make—a state of affairs which the fundamentalists are least likely to remedy?

JUDAISM has also been profoundly touched by secularisation, and the strains this has set up are as serious as they are unresolved. Secularisation has offered Jews two alternative self-views, both of which are at variance with the traditional self-view; but neither of which is, in the end, satisfactory in providing a transparent and unproblematic account of the place of the Jews in the modern world, and in making them feel fully at home in it.

In the traditional self-view, the Jewish situation is simple. The people of Israel are bound by a Covenant with God. They are collectively responsible for abiding by the terms of the Covenant; but this collective responsibility in no way diminishes the responsibility of each single Jew to see that the Covenant is kept. To break the Covenant is to disobey God; and this sin brings punishment to the transgressor himself and to the whole people. Punishment for transgression culminated in Exile and Dispersion for the people. God is just, but He is also merciful, and in the course of time He will take pity and pardon. The exile and dispersion will end and the Messiah son of David will sit on his throne in Jerusalem.

This traditional self-view is unproblematic. Divine anger and divine mercy are the two poles which govern the course of Jewish history, all its vicissitudes, horrors and catastrophes included.

Another characteristic of this traditional self-view seems to have been established early on in Jewish history. In this history, almost from the beginning there was a dichotomy between prophethood and kingship, between, so to speak,

spiritual and political authority, with kingship considered decidedly inferior to prophethood. From the very first, therefore, there was a depreciation of the political, and a profound scepticism about its efficacy. Of the many differences between Athens and Rome on the one hand, and Jerusalem on the other, this is probably the most striking and most far-reaching. Earthly power and its pride were nothing—and powerlessness, which marks so much of Jewish history, and which modern man so much resents, was not a particular concern to the traditional self-view.

**T**HIS TRADITIONAL SELF-VIEW came in modern times to be considerably eroded by a rival one, which saw the Jews not as the object of divine election—which involved duties rather than privileges—and not as agents in a providential history the unfolding of which is set out in Scripture. Rather, the Jews are seen here as simply one group among the many which together constitute humanity. Like all of them they have progressed from Superstition to Enlightenment, and are now set to enjoy equally with their fellow-men all the rights and duties of citizenship, in a world where the inevitable spread of universal education will eradicate ignorance and its two products, fanaticism and despotism. Jews now take their place in the general society; they are bidden to be men abroad, but Jews only at home.

It is no doubt possible to see the course of Jewish history in these terms. In those Jewries where the European Enlightenment found lodgment, this self-view became popular, indeed dominant. But Nazism, to which a people hitherto considered to be in the van of civilisation gave overwhelming support—and the Holocaust which ensued—threw grave doubt on the notion of historical progress which the Enlightenment had invented, and on the particular Jewish self-view derived from it. For if this self-view is accepted, then there is no possible accounting for the disasters which befell the Jews after 1933. If, in large parts of Europe, Jewish citizens suddenly found themselves outlawed, their property and lives wholly subject to the arbitrariness of their own governments and at the mercy of their fellow citizens then surely there was something quite wrong with this modern self-view. By contrast, the traditional one, so long derided as reactionary obscurantism, now reveals unexpected strengths. What Enlightened Judaism cannot explain, traditional Judaism has the spiritual resources to cope with. But, for good reasons, neither the one nor the other self-view can secure complete dominance in the Jewish world—and it is not simply that some give allegiance to the one, and some to the other. It is rather also that often, within one and

the same breast, the two self-views dwell in strenuous contention or uneasy coexistence.

**T**HERE IS YET ANOTHER, rival, Jewish self-view which has appeared in modern times. It is now just as influential as the other two. This is Zionism. Like the Enlightened self-view, it is the outcome of the Jewish encounter with modern Western thought. Nationalism is one of the most powerful and influential ideologies invented in the modern West. It holds that humanity is naturally divided into nations, each one of which has its own specific and peculiar character. If national values are to survive, nations have to live on their own territory and enjoy self-government. Zionism is the adaptation of this doctrine to the Jewish condition. Only in a country of their own, Zionists hold, can the Jews survive and preserve their identity, their lives and their culture. If Judaism is deprived of a territorial base it becomes ghostly and insubstantial, and fails to satisfy the spirit. On this analysis, homelessness is the central Jewish predicament. The establishment of Israel is, in a sense, the fulfilment of the Zionist aim.

But how different the circumstances in which Israel was established and exists today from what the founders of Zionism had in mind! If homelessness is indeed the central Jewish predicament, Israel has proved no remedy. Far from Israel resolving the dilemmas of Jewish existence in the Diaspora, the Diaspora is today essential to the welfare, and perhaps to the survival, of Israel. The so-called “Canaanites” and others in Israel have, however, taken the line that there is and ought to be a fundamental distinction between Jews and Israelis. This is an untenable paradox since it is as Jews, and because they were Jews, that the original settlers came to Palestine and laid the foundations on which Israel was built. Even if this were practically possible, it would still be highly uncomfortable for their descendants to cut themselves off from their past, and rather bizarre to think of themselves as not being part of Jewry.

Far more prevalent today is the idea of the centrality of Israel in Jewish life and history. But this notion too is not without its difficulties. To put the state of Israel at the centre of Jewish history, or consider it as the terminus and fulfilment of Jewish history, would be to look upon two millennia of Jewish life in the Diaspora as a mere preface and preparation for the establishment of a Jewish state. But the fact is that Jews, scattered throughout the world, without benefit of political sovereignty, indeed frequently the victims of unfriendly and oppressive rulers, did succeed, in a most remarkable and original way, in creating and preserving a network of communal institutions; and these became the buttresses and carriers of their tradition and identity.

THE JEWISH SELF-VIEW which Zionism promotes has by no means superseded or cancelled the other two. Hence an additional cause for inner fragmentation and strain. Equally with Christianity and Islam, Judaism testifies, thus, to the ravages which modernity has wrought on traditional religions and on the traditional societies for whom they provided solace and coherence.

To a greater extent perhaps than in the other two religions, modernity has disrupted Jewish patterns of communal life and communication. Hence the existence of a Jewish state can serve to protect and promote institutions working for the survival and continuity of Judaism. But whether Israel—which has successfully absorbed and adapted Western values and norms, but which has not so far proved religiously innovative—can succeed in fashioning a Judaism intellectually able to challenge modernity (better say, than US Jewry, so much more numerous and incomparably wealthier) remains a moot point. Also, the character of Israeli politics since 1948 means that religious parties have taken shape which are deeply involved in the bargaining or haggling which government-by-coalition entails. *Mystique* descends to *politique*, and this is not compatible with the aloof detachment from political quarrels which is necessary for authority in religion.

IN ITS AIMS and assumptions, Zionism may seem to hold an eccentric views of the course of Jewish history, and be hard put to it to account for the present state of affairs. But does Israel as it is now depend on the truth, or cogency, of the doctrine which presided over its coming to be? However it came about, here is a society which is now a going concern, in all its variety and complexity, its tensions and complications. It does not need to justify its existence by appealing to some ideology. Nor can the ideology make Israel immune from the chances and changes to which all states are necessarily subject, or save its rulers from mistakes and blunders. And, given the differing self-views which coexist in the Jewish world, it is not easy, or indeed even practicable, to have recourse to one single ideology in order to explain and justify the nation-state.

But it is really the very predicament in which Israel has found herself since 1948 which leaves contending self-views and ideological warfare behind.

Since its foundation Israel has been in a state of war with its neighbours. This international conflict has been the direct consequence of a strategic decision taken by the leaders of the Palestine Arabs long before 1948. In their uncompromising opposition to Zionism these leaders decided to call in the Arab and Muslim worlds to the support of their cause. To judge by its results, the strategy has

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not so far been notably successful in protecting the interests of the Palestine Arabs. What it has done is to widen immeasurably, and to increase enormously, the gravity of what started out by being a local and limited quarrel. This ceased to be simply a matter of a Jewish "national home" or a "Jewish state." The whole Arab, the whole Muslim, world has now become involved in this contention, and consequently the whole of Jewry as well. Israelis have found themselves inexorably treading the treadmill of power and violence, enmeshed in the dialectic of political conflict and armed struggle which few Zionists can have envisaged when the movement began. And the uncompromising stance, the "maximalist" language which has been throughout a hall-mark of the conflict, has conjured up forebodings of catastrophe and nightmares of expulsion and extermination, the reverberations of which, as is

only natural, affect most intimately the Jews of Israel. An inkling of what these can be may be gathered from post-1948 Israeli poetry and fiction, some of which has explored quite subtly such mental and spiritual states, and how they can coexist with military efficiency, courage, and prowess on the battlefield.

But the effects of such forebodings and nightmares are not confined to Israeli Jews. They spread to, and deeply affect the Jewish world, and their power is enhanced by the memory of past disasters—which stretch back at least to the Roman Empire's sack of Jerusalem. Just as the fortunes of Judaea touched in the end the whole of Jewry, in which the Diaspora (then as now) was by far the largest component, so willy-nilly the fortunes of Israel, good or bad, will do so similarly, and in ways now unexpected and not to be foreseen.

## The Protests in Pushkin Square

*By Bohdan Nahaylo*



MOSCOW'S CELEBRATED Pushkin Square has been the site of many unofficial gatherings and protests. The most famous, the demonstration on 5 December 1965 against the arrest of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel,

heralded the birth of the Soviet Human Rights movement. Every year since then Soviet dissenters have gathered there silently on 10 December to commemorate this and to observe the anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Two extraordinary incidents which took place in the square last year rank among the most bizarre and embarrassing demonstrations ever witnessed in the Soviet Union. The details have slowly been emerging.

On 20 April 1982, more than a dozen young Russian neo-Nazis, wearing black shirts and swastika armbands, congregated in Pushkin Square in an attempt to mark Hitler's birthday. Scuffles broke out as shocked bystanders tried to break up the unauthorised meeting, and several people are reported to have been injured. At the nearby *Ros-siya* Cinema, fascist leaflets were scattered. Within a few minutes the police dispersed the demon-

strators, reportedly detaining several of them.

The astonishing thing is that this was not an isolated episode. On several other recent occasions groups of Soviet youths have flaunted their fascist sympathies in open defiance of the authorities and with total disregard for the acute sensitivities of a population subjected to constant official reminders about the 20 million Soviet victims in the war against Nazi Germany.

Since the first reported public appearance of self-styled Soviet fascists in the Estonian city of Tallinn in September 1980, pro-Nazi demonstrations are reported to have taken place in Sverdlovsk, Yuzhno-Uralsk, Leningrad, and other towns. In November 1981, for instance, around 100 high school students are said to have taken to the streets with the slogan "*Fascism will save Russia*." And last June, neo-fascist hooligans are believed to have been responsible for vandalising statues in Leningrad's Summer Gardens.

Western experts have long known about the existence of clandestine fascist groups in various parts of the Soviet Union. (In many cases they have consisted of the offspring of government and party functionaries.) In the 1960s a large fascist organisation comprising high school students was formed in Leningrad. In 1968 Anton Fetisov and a group of his followers were arrested in Moscow for advocating extreme Russian chauvinist and totalitarian views. According to dissident sources, his brand of violently anti-Semitic "ultra-Stalin-