

fourth party rights. It is no wonder that the Lords have restrained him. As it happens, legislation has in fact proceeded partly on the lines mapped out by Denning, and it may proceed further. But in this the wider aspects of the matter could be taken into account.

For all its faults, one cannot lay this book down without a sense of gratitude. In the immortal words of Stephen Decatur we may acclaim its author. "Lord Denning, may he always be right. But right or wrong, Lord Denning!"

"Likewise, No Doubt"

The Greeks and Their Heritages, by Arnold Toynbee, *Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981. x + 314 pp. \$19.95.*

STUDYING CLASSICS in graduate school, I found that scholars using Latin *sine dubio*, "without doubt," had no shred of direct evidence to cite for the claim made: the reader was to take it as self-evidently true. Professor Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975) spent his life in this "doubtless" state; the last time he had any doubts was in his boyhood: he found Christianity "unverifiable and extravagant."

Toynbee finished this book before his terminal illness, in 1974. It is a shame Oxford University Press did not release it until 1981: promptly posthumous, it would have made Toynbee another William O. Douglas, old and wise, yet hip and with-it. It is a perfect seventies book: "karma" and "Earth Mother" abound; "technology" and "bigness" are bad, small is better; "relevant" is a good word, "futurologist" a compliment for the Byzantine scholar Khalkokondyles. To "have 'dropped out' of Christianity" puts one in "the Westernized intelligentsia." All monotheism, in fact, "inherited from Judaism," is a poison whose "antidote . . . is a polytheism which recognizes that non-human Nature is divine."

This book highlights the essence, the suc-

cesses and failures, of each of the four great periods of Greek history: Mycenaean, Hellenic, Byzantine, and Modern. "The Greeks," throughout all four, are a "non-Western people": no proof is offered, *ipse dixit*. "Their Heritages" are the heavy burden of the past each stage bore from the preceding ones. This is *karma*, Sanskrit-Buddhist concept engrafted into genetic coding and Skinnerite psycho-social determinism:

Even if we believe that death spells spiritual as well as physical annihilation for each individual, we must concede that karma will be transmitted either physically through genes or culturally through the transmission of a social heritage by education in the broadest meaning.

The four historical surveys assume detailed acquaintance with all periods. The speculation on the Mycenaean age I found stimulating, but any recent *National Geographic* article on Greece details new finds destroying some of Toynbee's conclusions. "For instance, there is no evidence for blood sacrifices in Crete." The February 1978 issue has some, and the February 1981 issue shows conclusive signs of *human* sacrifice on Minoan Crete, undermining Toynbee's view of its "peaceful . . . higher culture."

Pieter Geyl criticized Toynbee's careful selection of "instances which will support . . . him," and benign neglect of "innumerable others with which his theses would not bear company" and of how "those cases he does mention can be explained . . . so as to disagree no less completely with hi[m]." Here Toynbee adds a new twist: he contradicts *himself* on the meaning of his evidence, having it both ways. The same suffering is light or serious, beneficial or disastrous, as he needs to make his point. The earliest loss, of Mycenaean culture, "the catastrophe," proved "[t]he Hellenic Greeks' good fortune in escaping . . . potential legacies." "The temporary loss of such practical amenities as razors and lamps . . . temporary squalor . . . a cheap price to pay," becomes a "more serious regression into inefficiency and discomfort" five centuries long. Total illiteracy, "[l]oss of

technical skill . . . impoverishment . . . depopulation . . . must have been the consequence of some great economic disaster."

Similarly, the more afflicted "Modern Greeks ought to be grateful" for passing off the karma-burden of a classical education to Western Europe, via "the Franks, as well as to the Turks for having temporarily extinguished Greek political independence. These robberies have also been reliefs." Welcome relief means "[t]he mercilessness of life for Greeks under Ottoman rule," undergoing "anarchy, insecurity and poverty," "condemned . . . to suffer . . . eviction or massacre."

As disaster is relief, so success that Toynbee praises highly becomes failure. Byzantine diplomatic "economy" twice saved huge territories from devastation, by "concession" of the jealously-guarded title Emperor (Caesar, Tsar) to Charlemagne in 811 and to Peter of Bulgaria in 927, "still more advantageous . . . relief from a state of war under which, since 913, all the . . . Empire . . . had been at the Bulgars' mercy." This greater success becomes "the failure of the compromise of 927, . . . purchas[ing] not a permanent peace settlement with Bulgaria, but merely a forty-two years' truce."

As a last sample of logic, A is not-A is A, Toynbee insists of Biblical Greek:

A language is not an emotionally and intellectually neutral means of communication. Every language conveys a distinctive way of feeling and thinking. The language used . . . could be left optional, because language was merely a vehicle for conveying . . . content.

Ferdinand Mount noted Toynbee's "verbose images." This book is bedeviled by the word incubus, used a dozen times, often twice on the same page, from the Greeks' "not shaking off the incubus of their past," which "continued to haunt them" in two forms—that "of the East Roman Empire," its capital, Constantinople and its "rigid and ponderous political regime"; and the "linguistic incubus" and "educational incubus of Hellenic Greek" and "of the Hellenic *paidéia*"—to a final delicious mixed metaphor for urban sprawl:

[S]aved . . . from the urban incubus of Constantinople, Greece . . . has imposed on her[self] the urban incubus of Athens;

Athens—Greece's urban octopus— . . . tentacles . . . threatening to clutch the whole of Greece in a throttling embrace.

Urban incubus-octopus has the most threatening tentacles and throttling clutch I know, worse than suburban succubus-platypus!

Seriously, this work points up, by its failure to address them, three great needs in current scholarship: (1) America's role as archetype for Europe's revolutions, avowedly for France in 1789, Poland in 1795, Greece in 1821, indirectly at least for later ones modeled on the French; (2) the loss of this successful, "restrained" revolutionary model, the causes of this loss or conscious rejection, and the resultant failures or excesses that lost true, lasting liberty, from the Reign of Terror through the Second Russian Revolution; (3) the restoration and reapplication of this revolutionary model today, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

Toynbee shares the European intellectual's appalling ignorance of American history and of America's role in modern Europe's first steps toward national liberty. I once met a young Austrian professor, on a chemistry research fellowship, and his wife, a Ph.D. in history: she, at least, corrected his idea that the French Revolution came *before* the American, and shaped and defined it. Toynbee has the dates right, but the influence as backward as my friend did. "No doubt" in my title recurs twice in consecutive sentences which display his highly dubious grasp of the U.S. Constitution and what European thinkers saw in it, including Adhamandios Koraes, the revolutionary Greek writer Toynbee most admires:

[T]o the Greek[s] . . . in 1824, Koraes holds up Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson . . . with Aristides and Phokion, as examples of political integrity; cites a saying of Franklin's, "one of the celebrated founders of the liberty of the Americans, which is the only true liberty . . ."

a saying not worth quoting or even citing, to Toynbee. "In a letter of 4 July 1823" (no

Toynbee significance to the date) to a Founding Father of the first free Greek state, Prince Alexander Mavrokordhato, Koraes:

adjures [him] to act as if . . . in the invisible presence of "our ancestors the pioneers of liberty and civilization," or, alternatively, . . . under the eyes of "the healthy part of Europe and of the whole of the felicitous American nation," and . . . to persuade the Greeks to adopt the American Constitution as their first choice.

Toynbee draws no conclusion from this, or the comparison of Athens' incorruptible patriot-generals, Aristides the Just and Phocion, to Washington.

America does not fit Toynbee's absolute thesis for modern nations. This leads him to ignore it "without doubt":

[T]he Modern Western . . . centralized national state . . . has passed through three phases: absolute monarchy, . . . parliamentarism, . . . the dictatorial rule of a junta of professional military officers . . . the series of regimes in seventeenth-century England, . . . in eighteenth-century France.

England was exceptional in managing, after the brief taste of military rule (1655–60), to revert to parliamentary government and . . . to preclude lapses into any form of arbitrary rule. This is, no doubt, what Koraes had in mind when he called the English "the first founders and fathers of modern liberty" . . . on a par with "the first fathers of ancient liberty," . . . the Hellenic Greeks. The parliamentary element in the constitution of the United States was likewise, no doubt, the feature of it that led Koraes to commend it, above all others, [even the British Parliament!].

Toynbee misses an excellent, contemporaneous parallel between the American colonies and Greece, on the eve of and groping toward independence. The Peloponnese and a few other regions of Greece were semi-autonomous within the Ottoman Turkish Empire, less burdened than the rest. These regions were "hard to hold," and the Imperial government feared a heavy hand would drive them into open revolt or the arms of

hostile powers. Yet it refused to relinquish all direct Imperial control. This relative freedom only whetted the appetite of Greeks there for complete independence, exactly as it did in America. "[T]he recognized local constitutions" of the thirteen Colonies, as of these Greek regions, showed the same "extreme lack of uniformity in their terms," yet had the identical features conducive to revolt: an imperially-appointed governor, a "governor's permanent council," and a popular assembly and "local public officers, . . . elected, but a majority . . . drawn, *de facto* if not *de jure*, from a privileged minority." Supporting but often frustrating the Imperial governor in both systems "was an elaborate three-tier system of representative government, in which the provincial assembly held the power of the purse." This stranglehold on payrolls and purse-strings gave a foretaste of independent sovereignty to Greek and American merchant- and landowner-patricians. Each group provided leaders of their people's revolution, the Ypsilandes and Adams families, for example.

Aversion from citing American experience may result from Toynbee's own deep, long-held beliefs. The first is that only compulsion truly liberates, collective compulsion is the key to success. Alien conquerors, Dorians, Romans, Turks, always liberated the Greeks: the Communists would have, save for "British military intervention . . . [and] American economic aid." Repeatedly, "attractiveness" is alleged as "a better criterion of success" for a culture. Asking: *attractive to whom?*—one receives Toynbee's invariable answer: to a strong leader who will compel his people to accept this superior culture. From fifth-century B.C. kings (the Scythian Scyles, the Sicel Ducetius) to Peter the Great, who "decided for the Russian people more promptly, to seek admission to . . . the Western World," and Lenin, the man must be absolutist-enough to enforce his higher choice, but, like Pādishāh Mehmet II, conqueror of Byzantium in 1453, "a highly cultivated and a highly intelligent man . . . also, for these very reasons, exceptional and unrepresentative," and "particularly enlightened." He must overcome the traditions, the traditional religion in particular, of his

own people and his subjects: "fifteenth-century Greeks['] . . . fanatical attachment to Christianity . . . a natural but unprofitable reaction of the majority," or the "reactionary obscurantism" of Orthodox Christians "in Russia[,] the influence of the hermits on the masses. . . . The blind were leading the blind, and, all too often, they fell, together."

Toynbee writes with pure admiration of "the military and administrative efficiency of the Pādishāh's slave-household . . . the master-institution that had enabled the House of 'Osman to conquer and to maintain its Empire":

This . . . the Pādishāh . . . recruited from voluntary converts from Christianity—deserters, prisoners of war, and eventually the compulsorily conscripted (but never forcibly converted) children of the Pādishāh's own Christian subjects. In the household's heyday, its members were admirably disciplined—especially the native Ottoman Christian "tribute children," who were the Pādishāh's slaves—and . . . also carefully graded and selected. Each individual was given the education that accorded best with his ability.

A pre-Enlightenment Socialist paradise: to each according to his ability, from each, his—or her—children. What Moses' mother, Mrs. Lech Walesa, or Solzhenitsyn's anonymous, "multiplied" victims of Pharaoh, Herod, Lenin, Stalin, might cry out at this "in the voice of Rachel, weeping and lamenting her children," Toynbee does not deign to notice.

For, like the Party cadre, this slave elite, with its "own slaves . . . was minute, but numerous enough for its purpose, . . . effective control over the Empire's subjects." When compulsion "was reduced to a trickle," the deluge followed: no more "conscript Christian children, . . . discipline broke down, efficiency was lost and . . . failure" followed, because free men, "free Muslim 'Osmanlis had forced their way in."

The pinnacle of compulsory collective liberation is, to Toynbee, Communism, Russian Communism, his "wave of the future" twice, summit of "[t]he modern Western

secularizing rationalizing movement" in its "three phases":

first the . . . "Enlightenment," . . . a recoil from the Wars of Religion; next, nineteenth-century liberalism, precipitated by the French Revolution; and then Communism, which captured Russia as a result of the First World War. The movement has risen crescendo in a steeply ascending curve . . . to the . . . third wave . . . the most powerful wave of the three, . . . Lenin's.

His supreme rational revolution has amazing effects:

Protestantism in the Baptists' form has prospered in the Russian Eastern Orthodox[y] . . . under the Communist regime . . . more . . . than . . . the other two Western ideologies.

They are "secular rationalism" and "Roman Catholicism." As the Greeks are "non-Western," religions are really ideologies: no proof is offered, none needed. If you smell an analogy like "Catholicism prospered in the Warsaw Jewish ghetto under the Nazi regime," since (relatively) fewer were butchered, or more survived to prosper like those Baptists, hold your nose, and your tongue. Hold your breath, too, for undivulged realities to unfold before you.

Where did Christianity *really* come from? What is "the real Christian Trinity"? What is "the real religion of the Hellenic Greeks" and most of mankind now? What was "the original religion of mankind" and Toynbee's true faith? He ends his life work with a discussion of Yemistos-Plethon, the Renaissance pagan, neo-Platonist and neo-polytheist rationalizer, the closest soul-mate Toynbee has, yet one he repeatedly despises as "a pedant." Plethon created an admirable "Totalitarian Hellenism," yet failed to be a Lenin, a Peter, the Great Man of enlightenment and power to impose it. Thus he doomed it to be merely "an academic exercise," the real fault Toynbee finds with this neo-pagan absolutist. "The collision between Hellenism and Judaism" produced "Christianity[;] the trinitarian interpretation of monotheism is a concession to Hellenic polytheism." Plethon "plagiarized from Chris-

tianity” to form his Trinity, “yet did not win any comparable success,” like Lenin’s, over our “interloping alien religion.” This new eternal Trinity: Zeus, Poseidon, his “eldest son, not his brother,” and Hera, “Zeus’s eldest daughter, . . . the Great Mother, . . . in assigning the third place . . . to a mother goddess, reproduces the real Christian Trinity under . . . Hellenic masks; for the real Third Person of the Christian Trinity is Mary, not the Holy Spirit[, t]he official Third Person . . . always . . . relatively dim.”

Toynbee makes a serious *confessio fidei* and a *non-apologia* “from personal experience; . . . a Byzantine-like education in England from 1899 to 1911”:

I was brought up to take it for granted the tenets of Christianity were true and binding. At . . . ten, I began to learn . . . Hellenic Greek. . . . It was assumed by my parents and teachers that my Christianity and my Hellenism were . . . insulated from each other in separate water-tight compartments. I was . . . not to take the Hellenic *Weltanschauung* seriously. I found this impossible. I did take Hellenism seriously, and consequently I lost my incompatible Christian faith. Like Plethon, I should have suffered for divulging my paganism if I had happened to be born one or two generations earlier than I was.

William F. Buckley once called this the “British Holden Caulfield syndrome, the lonely, sensitive soul,” but Toynbee is alone no more:

[B]y 1974 a great majority of Westerners—and . . . Westernized intelligentsia . . . transferred their spiritual allegiance . . . to the real religion of the Hellenic Greeks . . . the collective human power symbolized by Athens’ Athene Polias, . . . later . . . by the . . . Graeco-Roman world’s *Dea Roma* and *Divus Caesar*. This genuine Hellenic religion has become the prevalent religion in the West and . . . the World.

Contradicting himself twice again, Toynbee labels this “genuine religion” a “sinister ‘politicization’” and “prostitut[ion of] gods

who had originally stood for awesome natural forces . . . to stand for unethical organizations of collective human power[,]. . . states.” Second, he gives a new “original” and “majority” religion of mankind:

Plethon re-consecrated non-human Nature, and thereby reimposed on human greed the primaeval curb of awe. . . . By 1974 “the rotten nonsense of the Hellenes”—i.e. the original religion of all mankind—had become, for the living generation, a serious alternative to self-inflicted genocide[,]. . . nature-worship[,]. . . never . . . extirpated in India or in Eastern Asia, . . . habitat of much more than half the human race.

Toynbee quotes “rotten nonsense” from Skholarios, the Byzantine scholar-primate, Plethon’s friend and pupil who dismissed this revived paganism. Toynbee seems personally stung by his attacks, and keeps reprobing the wounds, quoting “rotten nonsense” seven times in ten pages. Like Wither in *That Hideous Strength*, this eighty-five-year-old academic bows in worship to “Priapus, and Shiva-Dionysos too,” and ends on a crescendo urging us to throw away our “suicidal triumph of technology . . . the fruit of Judaic monotheism” (poisoned fruit, whose antidote is polytheism, recall) and likewise all doubt, and worship, too:

A god’s power is demonstrated by his ability to take vengeance on human beings who dispute it. . . . Mother Earth has begun to demonstrate to modern Man that he cannot violate her realm, the biosphere, with impunity. Yahweh may have licensed Man to subdue the Great Mother; but Yahweh’s directive does not excuse, in this goddess’s eyes, the impious liberties that Yahweh’s licensee, Adam, has been taking with her. Between gods, as between human sovereign states, force is the *ultima ratio*. In the present conflict between the chthonic gods and the thunderer from Sinai, do ex-Christian rationalists feel confident that Yahweh will prevail? If we are in doubt, it will be rash to dismiss, as “the rotten nonsense of the Hellenes,” a religion that was already immemorially

old before Judaism and Christianity and Islam were heard of.

Toynbee's final testament.

Reviewed by ROBERT H. BROPHY III

The Trouble with Socialism

A Plea for Liberty, edited by Thomas Mackay, *Indianapolis: Liberty Classics*, 1981 [1891]. xxxv + 828 pp. \$13.50.

THE SUBTITLE OF this book is *An Argument Against Socialism and Socialistic Legislation*. The book consists of an introduction by Herbert Spencer and essays by leading liberals of the last quarter of the nineteenth century who had banded together in the Liberty and Property Defense League to oppose interventionist proposals disposing of the Corn Laws in 1846. Their manifesto was *A Plea for Liberty*.

The Irish Land Act of 1881, which threatened the privileges of the English landed classes, precipitated the League's founding. As the extension of the franchise slowly transferred effective control of the Parliament from aristocratic and commercial hands into those of the middle and working classes, the Gladstone Government enacted further interventionist legislation, notably the Employer's Liability Act of 1880, which provided for compensation to injured workers when negligence on the part of their employer could be proven. This was considered a threat to contractual freedoms.

Editor Thomas Mackay retired from business at the age of thirty-six to devote himself to the study of political and economic problems. His writings reflect the wide-ranging character of his economic and social interests and include *Methods of Social Reform*, *The State and Charity*, *An Apology for Liberty*, and *Dangers of Democracy*.

In his Introduction, Herbert Spencer notes that his opposition to socialism does not mean

contentment with the *status quo*. The present social state, he says, is transitional, leading to a future state in which liberalism will be perfected. "My opposition to socialism," he writes, "results from the belief that it would stop the progress to such a higher state and would bring back a lower state." Nothing but the slow modification of human nature by the discipline of social life "can produce permanently advantageous changes."

In his chapter on "The Impracticability of Socialism," Edward Stanley Robertson affirms that "social inequalities are inequalities which may be mitigated, but cannot be redressed wholly." The trouble with socialism, he says, is that it tries to change nature: "Socialism attempts to vanquish nature by a front attack. Individualism, on the contrary, is the recognition, in social politics, that nature has a beneficent as well as a malignant side." The only thing that law can secure is freedom: "Law cannot secure equality, nor can it secure prosperity. In the direction of equality, all that law can do is to secure fair play, which is equality of rights but is not equality of conditions."

In his "The Limits of Liberty," Wordsworth Donisthorpe agrees with Hobbes that the power of the state is absolute, and he criticizes those like John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau who use the state of nature to suggest limitations on the state. The right course for the state to adopt towards its own citizens "cannot be discovered by education from any abstract principles, such as Justice or Liberty." Rules of conduct in the state "should be guided" by centuries of experience, "very much like the rules by which our own private lives are guided; not absolutely trustworthy, but better than no general rules at all." He predicts a diminishing role for the state as it surrenders gradually its functions to private associations.

George Howell, in "Liberty for Labour," admits that liberty necessitates regulation, which means restraint. Each person "must be restrained from infringing upon, or interfering with, the liberty of another, all being equally protected in the exercise of their undoubted rights, constitutional and moral." But state law should not reach "all the