



2014 no.4 £5.00 (free to members)

INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



**SOMETHING WE'VE ALWAYS SUSPECTED?
THE VVD INTERNATIONAL...**

Inside: Genocide: Rotterdam Report

EVENTS

2nd June Egypt Forum. Lawrence Robson Room,
NLC. 7.00pm

5th June Tim Garden Memorial Lecture: Sir Menzies
Campbell MP will speak on 'Whither Europe?'
Chatham House 6.00pm

30th June LIBG AGM, NLC followed by joint
meeting with Liberal Democrat History Group on
1914.

4th –8th October Liberal Democrats Autumn
Conference, Glasgow

*For bookings & other information please contact the
Chair below.*

NLC= National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London
SW1A 2HE
Underground: Embankment

Liberal International (British Group)
Chair: Wendy Kyrle-Pope, 1 Brook Gardens,
Barnes, London SW13 0LY *email* w.kyrle@virgin.net

*interLib is published by the Liberal International
(British Group). Views expressed therein are those of
the authors and are not necessarily the views of
LI(BG), LI or any of its constituent parties.*

*Comments and articles can be sent to
Lockhart & Hastings, Ltd Creative Media Centre,
45 Robertson Street, Hastings TN34 1HL, email
lockharthastings@btconnect.com*

CONTENTS

Reflections on Genocide. Nigel Dower	Pages 3-6
Scottish Group report	Page 6
LI Congress, Rotterdam report	Pages 6-7
North West Group report	Page 8
International Abstracts	Page 8
UK China Twinned Cities.	Page 9
Elections Euro & Other. Stewart Rayment	Page 9
Reviews	Pages 10-12

Lord Garden Memorial Lecture

Britain and Europe: A Common Future?

**Sir Menzies Campbell MP,
Leader, Liberal Democrats (2006-07)**

Thursday 5 June 2014 18:00 to 19:00

**Chatham House, St James's Square,
London, SW1Y 4LE**

Menzies will examine the continuing case for Britain's place in the European Union in light of the results of the 2014 EU Parliamentary elections. As the debate intensifies as to whether the UK should remain in the EU, he will reflect on the advantages of the UK continuing as a member state, as well as the need for reform.

This meeting is held in association with the Liberal International British Group.

To Register phone Chatham House on +44 (0)20 7314 3631 or at membership@chathamhouse.org

Dinner is available afterwards at Al Duca restaurant price £55 including wine. Contact Robert Woodthorpe Browne robertbrowne@cix.co.uk to book

Reflections on Genocide

Nigel Dower

This is mainly about the wider framework for thinking about international responsibility. What I say reflects the fact that I am a Quaker philosopher but also a social liberal in the tradition of L.T Hobhouse and T.H. Green, but also reflecting the more recent expressions of a social liberal approach in John Rawls and Amartya Sen.

Two premises frame what I will say about responding to genocide (1):

First, liberalism is about all basic human rights not just liberty. Second, our responsibility for human rights crosses borders: liberalism should be seen as international or, I would prefer to put it, cosmopolitan. Let me expand these two points.

1. Liberalism and Human Rights

First, as liberals we are concerned to protect and promote not just liberty/the right to liberty but also the right to security, subsistence/welfare, and also, both as intrinsically important and as vital means to the first three values, education, non-discrimination, political participation and so on. In fact as Rawls notes, the reason why liberty is valuable (the worth of liberty) largely resides in one's being able to exercise it in a meaningful way and this require a background of adequate resources and general social conditions, not just laws that permit it.

Any act that violates these rights is seriously wrong, including acts that violate them because the person violated belongs to a group e.g. a white who attack a black because he is black, a Christian who attacks a Muslim because she is a Muslim, a Serbian who attacks a Kosovan Albanian because he is a Kosovan Albanian.

Genocide is this kind of behaviour on a wider scale with an additional intention to destroy or weaken a group, or (as in ethnic cleansing) to get it to go away. (A religiously or racially motivated attack need have nothing to do with this wider goal, but it involves the same human rights violations.) See the UN definition below for a more precise definition in terms of international law (2).

2. Cosmopolitanism

Second, if the promotion and protection of these rights along with responding to violations of them are all

morally important, this importance crosses borders. It matters to everyone in principle, not just to compatriots. In other words our liberalism needs to be cosmopolitan: this means that both as global citizens we have an individual responsibility across borders but also that nation-states in their foreign policy need accept this (and part of our role as global citizens is to influence our governments in this direction)(Dower 2007 (3)). Liberalism does not have to be internationalist/ cosmopolitan, since one could hold as a liberal that the promotion and protection of human rights was the responsibility citizens and governments within each state, but generally modern liberals accept an international dimension, including support for the United Nations as a vehicle for promoting these things: how far and in what ways is a matter of controversy.

Henry Shue claims that basic rights (to liberty, security and subsistence) are the 'minimum demand of all human on all humanity'(4). The cosmopolitan perspective is reflected in Thomas Pogge's quite explicit cosmopolitanism (see his definition below (5)) and his view that the securing of basic threshold human rights takes moral priority.

So human rights violations, especially when they are extensive and systematic as in genocide require a trans-boundary response. There are two main responses: proactive and reactive. The proactive responses are about making it less likely that human rights violations will happen; reactive responses are about various measures to try to stop human rights violations when they are happening (and of course post conflict justice issues like Truth commissions).The proactive aspect is linked to the point made earlier about promoting the general conditions for rights realisation, and to the specific idea of Henry Shue's that, in addition to the duty to avoid violating human rights and the duty to come to the aid of those whose rights are violated, there is a duty, partly for organisations like the state and partly for individuals backing them, to protect people from 'standard threats' of violation'. Whatever one thinks about what should be done in response to human rights violations and about military intervention in particular, the challenge is to find ways of making such things less likely to happen in the first place.

3. Responsibility to Protect

This is illustrated in the UN commitment in 2005 to Responsibility to Protect, commonly referred to as R2P. R2P arose out of much thinking that had occurred particularly after the NATO intervention in Kosovo which was clearly done at least in part to protect an ethnic group within a state, which clearly went against Article 2.7 of the UN Charter which rules out interference in matters internal to a member-state. R2P is interesting because it represents a shift in



thinking about the UN in that it make much of the idea of an international responsibility to deal with human rights violations, in particular genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Arguably the thinking is more cosmopolitan here.

There are three so called 'pillars' to R2P: national responsibility, international proactive responsibility and international reactive responsibility (see below for details (6)). The second is of course an expression of the general commitment to promote and protect human rights that I have already emphasised. The third, whilst it emphasises a wide range measures to be taken, does include the possibility of military intervention. It is this small part of it that has attracted all the attention, and whatever one makes of it, it is worth remembering that the general thrust of R2P is extremely important in underlining a way of thinking that appropriate actions in regard to actual or possible serious human rights violations are an international responsibility.

What then should we think about military humanitarian intervention to try and stop genocide and other serious human rights violations? If ever there were a 'just cause' this would surely rank as one along with self-defence? However even those who do not share the doubts I express below will recognise that other conditions of a just war would apply, such as last resort, non-combatant immunity, proportionality (the good to be achieved in the action is not outweighed by the likely harms) and reasonable hope of success (see e.g. Dower 2009 (7)).

4. Doubts about humanitarian military intervention

There are four kinds of doubts: the first one I merely mention but do not discuss, is doubts about the motives behind interventions which may be mixed or other than humanitarian for which the humanitarian argument is a cloak; the second concerns the wider consequences of such actions and the risks of being counter-productive; the third questions the ethical priority of stopping human rights violations over helping to realise human rights realisation; the fourth questions the 'ethics of the means' of military intervention. (The latter three arguments are discussed in more detail in my article – Dower 2014.)

The argument about counter-productivity is really an expansion of the traditional proportionality argument, but applied to longer term consequences and wider framework of such actions. First, all too often violence begets violence and a short-term good outcome is overturned by later development (as we have seen in the cases of Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, all partly but only partly inspired by humanitarian concerns). Second the resort to war as a way of resolving problems simply perpetuates the cycle/culture of war in the future. Third, preparations for and the waging of war involve massive use of resources that could be used for positive humanitarian work and human rights realisation in development etc.

Second, some may say that intervention is not simply justified by looking at consequences, and we simply have to act. It is wrong to stand by when human rights are being actively violated by others. But we have to be cautious about this argument. Does stopping human rights violations have ethical priority over helping to realise human rights realisation generally? The duty to stop others violating rights looks parallel to the duty not to violate them ourselves, but it is really parallel to the duty to help realise the rights of others by all manner of means (including both reactive emergency assistance and proactive development assistance). And the advantage of the latter is that generally it does not involve doing harm (killing, maiming, destroying property) and violating the rights of others (civilian bystanders, quite apart from combatants) in the

process. Still it may be said: how can we let human rights be violated by others? But by the same token, how can we let the rights of people not be realised or be undermined by not intervening or helping with aid? We do not do all we can. Far from it. We are highly selective and limited in what we do or support our governments in doing, and do not think such limitation is unjustified. In regard to what we do do, there are many considerations that enter the decision about the best use of resources etc. Going in guns blazing may not be the right one.

Fourth, this leads to the issue of the ethics of the means. Here I invoke Gandhi's statement 'the means are the ends in the making'. You may think this is just a restatement of a pacifist objection to using violence for any reasons. But it is actually another more complex thought. The thinking is that the means ought to reflect/express the values of the goals pursued e.g. pursuing justice by just means. It is the antithesis of the common view that the end justifies the means. In the 'real' world it is not always possible to follow it completely, but it is a regulative ideal, something we should try to reflect in our actions, private and public. Arguably the more we follow this, the more 'civilized' we are. Of course this is idealistic, but cosmopolitanism is meant to be a civilising project – it represents faltering moral progress in the world – and so insofar as the motivation for actions in response to genocide is actually or genuinely cosmopolitan, there is at least a mild sense of paradox in the military option.

Whether or not one is persuaded by these doubts about military intervention, the main point is this: the key focus of attention should be improving the general conditions for human rights protection and answering the questing: how to make genocide or other human rights violations less likely? This is a challenge for the international community all the time, not just when crises loom.

Nigel Dower

n.dower@abdn.ac.uk

Nigel Dower is former head of the Philosophy Department at Aberdeen University and author of "The Ethics of War and Peace". This is a slightly expanded version of a talk given to the Liberal International & Liberal Club of Scotland Fringe meeting at the Scottish Lib Dem Conference in Aberdeen on 28th March 2014.

Notes

1 While a precise definition varies among genocide scholars, a legal definition is found in the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment

of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG). Article 2 of this convention defines genocide as 'any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life, calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; [and] forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.'

² Nigel Dower, *World Ethics - the New Agenda*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press (1998, 2nd edition 2007).

³ Henry Shue, *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence and US Foreign Policy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press (1980/1996).

⁴ Pogge for instance characterises cosmopolitanism as follows: 'Three elements are shared by all cosmopolitan positions. First, individualism: the ultimate units of concern are human beings, or persons – rather than, say, family lines, tribes, ethnic, cultural or religious communities, nations, or states. ... Second, universality: the status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to every living human being equally – not merely to some sub-set, such as men, aristocrats, Aryans, whites, or Muslims. Third, generality: this special status has global force. Persons are ultimate units of concern for everyone – not only for their compatriots, fellow religionists, or suchlike.' (Pogge *World Poverty and Human Rights*, Cambridge: Polity Press(2002): 169)

⁵ For more detail see <http://www.who.int/hiv/universalaccess2010/worldsummit.pdf> and <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml>, and Buskie, A., 'The Responsibility to Protect and the prevention of mass atrocities', UNA-UK, 3, Whitehall Court, London, February 2013. I include the analysis she presented of the three pillars: "Each individual state has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means."/"the international community should, as appropriate, encourage and help states to exercise this responsibility"... "we also intend to commit ourselves, as necessary and appropriate, to helping States build capacity to protect their

populations ... and to assist those which are under stress before crises and conflicts break out”/“the international community...also has the responsibility to use appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means...to help protect populations...we are prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner...should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations”

⁶ Nigel Dower, *The Ethics of War and Peace*, Cambridge: Polity Press (2009).

⁷ Nigel Dower, 'Global ethics in theory and in practice: the case of The Responsibility to Protect (R2P)', *Nordicum-Mediterraneum*, vol. 9, no.2 (2014), <http://nome.unak.is/nm-marzo-2012/vol-9-no-2-2014>.

Scottish Group

Liberal International in Scotland chose the difficult subject of genocide for a fringe meeting at the Scottish Liberal Democrats' conference in Aberdeen from March 28-30. A packed room heard Sir Malcolm Bruce MP, chair of the parliamentary select committee on international development, recount experiences in Rwanda and more recently the Middle East. Gillian Gloyer, a committee member of LI in Scotland, who worked in the Balkans in the wake of the wars there, examined the framework and shortcomings of international law and practice. Nigel Dower, former head of the philosophy department at Aberdeen University and author of “The Ethics of War and Peace”, gave the paper published here..

Willis Pickard

Report of LI Congress Rotterdam April 2014

Liberal International's 59th congress suffered perhaps from a rather odd choice of timing - a congress in Europe held only weeks before most of the continent would be caught up in European Parliament elections. This led to a rather select attendance - there appeared to be plenty of people present but many were from the host party, the VVD.

That said, delegates attended from as far afield as Chile, Mongolia, DR Congo and Mexico.

As with a Liberal Democrat assembly, there is a programme of formal business but much of the event's value comes simply from the opportunity to

meet other Liberals - in the case of congress from across the world.

In quick succession, for example, I met a man forming a new political party in Egypt, a Georgian veteran of a Soviet gulag and the head of think tank which is now one of the few organised Liberal presences in Italy.

The congress marked the retirement as LI president of the VVD's Hans van Baalen after five years in office and the arrival of Andorra's Juli Minoves, whose inaugural speech noted his wish to reinforce LI's work on human rights, in particular.

Uncontested elections to the LI bureau saw the Liberal Democrats Baroness Falkner become a vice-president, alongside Dr Minoves, Mr van Baalen, new deputy president Helen Zille, of South Africa's Democratic Alliance and vice-presidents Dzhevdet Chakarov (Movement for Rights and Freedoms, Bulgaria); Markus Loning (FDP, Germany), Kasit Piromya (Democrat Party, Thailand) and Cecilia Wikstrom (Folkspartiet, Sweden),

Lib Dem international relations committee chair Robert Woodthorpe Browne continues as a joint treasurer, joined by Shih-chung Liu (DPP, Taiwan).

The congress featured greater interactivity than before thanks to the work of the new Congress Advisory Committee, which held several virtual meetings to improve the opportunities for delegate to be involved in the proceedings.

Lib Dem international officer Ian Gill was among the committee's members and also organised two fringe meetings - a relatively new part of the congress.

The first was on the Africa Liberal Network, with which the Liberal Democrats are closely connected, and featured contributions from Olivier Kamitatu Etsu (ARC party, DR Congo), Ceilou Dalein Dialo (UFDG party, Guinea), Gomolemo Motewaledi (Botswana Movement for Democracy) and Baroness Falkner.

They emphasized that although outright dictatorships are now rare in Africa, democracy is fragile in many countries and dominated where it exists by non-ideological parties based on ethnic or geographical interests.

The most important development through was the string economic growth now being seen across much of Africa.

Our own experience in coalition formed part of the second fringe on Liberals in Coalition: Happy Marriage or Bad Romance, again featuring Baroness Falkner, with Sigmundur David Gunnlaussón (prime minister of Iceland), Tamara van Ark (VDD) and Khatuna Samnidze (Republican Party of Georgia).

This session saw the launch of a booklet on Liberal in Coalition: tips and advice before, during and after government, edited by Peter Lesniak of the Liberal Democrat international office. It draws on experience from mainly European countries of how to manage the coalition process and many will no doubt wish it had been available in 2010. The booklet is available here.

LIBG president Sir Nick Harvey addressed a congress session in his role as a former defence minister on whether European countries should be more willing to pool and share their military capabilities. His speech will appear elsewhere on this site shortly.

This congress had relatively few resolutions. The one the World Today - which saw some controversy in the section on the Middle East - is here and the theme resolution on global trade here.



The Bureau: Sidi Toure from Cote d'Ivoire, Juli Minoves, the new president, Hans van Baalen, outgoing president & now president of honour, Emil Kirjas (secretary general) and Robert Woodthorpe Browne (treasurer).

Normally there are several resolutions on other topics but this time only three. A discussion was held on Ukraine but there was no resolution given how fast the situation there was developing.

The UK delegation successfully backed the Centpartiet of Sweden against attempts by the VVD to water down recognition of the contribution of man-made carbon emissions to climate change in its resolution on securing a new climate regime.

Resolutions were agreed without significant amendments on stronger protection of human rights in the context of mega sporting events, from the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth, and on preventing and combating violence against women through the Istanbul Convention of the

Council of Europe, from the International Network of Liberal Women.

Every congress sees some new parties admitted to LI and a few leave, the latter in most cases for having failed to pay their affiliation fees for two years or more.

Two this time were close to home. Ireland's Fianna Fail was granted observer status. As Mr Gill noted, a decade or so ago an application for Fianna Fail would have been laughed out of the congress and he would have been unable to credit the party's presence among liberals. It had though, he said, undergone radical change and was now, for example, leading the campaign for same sex marriage in Ireland.

For reasons left unexplained, the Isle of Man's Liberal Vannin Party resigned from LI.

New full members admitted were: Botswana Movement for Democracy, Botswana; ARC, DR Congo; Free Egyptians Party, Egypt; UDFG, and UFR, Guinea; SLS, Kosovo; Future Movement, Lebanon; and Independent Liberal Party, Nicaragua.

Of these only the last proved controversial because of its support for one of the world's most restricted abortion laws, and the British delegation abstained on its acceptance.

Observer status, in addition to Fianna Fail, was accorded to IDS-IDD, Croatia; LRP, Moldova; and LPCG, Montenegro.

Mark Smulian

Resolutions, speeches and key documents referred to are on the LI website - www.liberal-international.org and there are hyperlinks from this article on the LIBG website - www.libg.co.uk



Nick Harvey speaking, with (from left) Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, the Dutch defence minister, Stefan Wallin, former Finnish defence minister and session chair Giovanni Faleg.

Report of launch of LIBG North West Branch

The inaugural meeting of LIBG's North West England branch took place in Preston on 22nd April.

Many thanks to all those who were able to come along. I know a few people couldn't make it and others sent apologies; it was good, diverse small group - eight of us for this first meeting. Howard Henshaw introduced the history and work of LIBG, and Gordon Lishman used his extensive knowledge of the standing of Liberal parties around the world to fill us in on the current situation in many countries.

Discussion ensued about history of the past decades and current situation in various African, Asian and European countries in particular. And of course we talked about the crisis in Ukraine. I enjoyed the meeting and conversation very much, with the wide variety of perspectives - including views from: studying politics; interests in social work; industry, engineering and business; banking; and from an experienced parliamentary candidate.

Interesting points of debate included Gordon's: "You learnt How to argue. Now people assert a view and other people go elsewhere on social media to assert a different view."

And Peter Hirst's provocative - "I think a religious theocracy is preferable to a military dictatorship" (and Richard Bennett putting the opposite position). We now know the next day that Tony Blair prefers the opposite position, but all of us - Peter included - of course preferred for Liberal values and parties to be successful after revolutions overthrow whatever kind of authoritarian regime.

Everyone agreed they would like to have another meeting after the elections. Howard and Karen have offered to host a summer get together in St. Anne's. Gordon has also good ideas for a future potential speaker. Several of the group themselves, and persons who couldn't make it, would also be excellent speakers to introduce particular topics for a future meeting. One idea suggested is a meeting focusing on the Middle East. Another could be the situation after the elections in Ukraine.

For details of future activities, contact Kiron Reid on kiron.reid1@orange.net

Kiron Reid

INTERNATIONAL ABSTRACTS

The Nuba People: Out of Sight, Out of Mind, by

Rebecca Tinsley

Genocide Studies International, Volume 8, Number 1 /2014 pages 75-85. University of Toronto Press
ISSN 2291-1847 (Print), 2291-1855 (Online)

Despite the improved international architecture for the prediction, prevention, and punishment of mass atrocities since the Rwandan Genocide 20 years ago, the fate of Sudan's Nuba people has been overlooked. Since May 2011, the Nuba have been under attack by the Sudanese regime, which has been using the same tactics it employed to devastating effect during the 1990s. However, problematic Arab-Islamic views of the Nuba go back centuries, to the slave trade. The international community's attention to continuing human rights abuses in the Nuba Mountains has been inconsistent and easily deflected onto low-level hostilities between South Sudan and Sudan. Meanwhile, Sudan has rallied regional leaders, defying the International Criminal Court's indictment of President al-Bashir. The United States and United Kingdom, guarantors of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), have declined to press Khartoum to fulfill its obligations under the CPA, to enact constitutional reform, or to cease bombing the Nuba for fear that a Sudanese Arab Spring might bring unknown actors to power in Khartoum.

Putin's World - Ivan Krastev (Chairman of the Center for Liberal Strategies, Sofia) project-syndicate.org
Krastev argues that the West's indecisiveness is empowering Russia.

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/ivan-krastev-blames-the-west-s-weak-response-in-crimea-for-empowering-russia#aHzWGfQ1qwOCtZ9P.99>

I hope I'm wrong but historians may look back and say this was the start of World War III, by Edward

Lucas. Mail Online, 15th April 2014

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2605578/Edward-Lucas-I-hope-Im-wrong-historians-look-say-start-World-War-III.html#ixzz2z2dmb0eI>

Who'd have thought the Daily Mail would ever feature in this column, but east European & Russian expert Ed Lucas has to earn his crust somewhere. Analysis of the fast moving events in Ukraine.

Southern Whites' Loyalty to G.O.P. Nearing That of Blacks to Democrats, New York Times 24th April 2014

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/24/upshot/southern-whites-loyalty-to-gop-nearing-that-of-blacks-to-democrats.html?action=click&contentCollection=The%20Upshot®ion=Footer&module=MoreInSection&pgtype=article>

The Upshot is an interesting column in the NY Times, providing good analysis. The headline says it all, are we really surprised? But worth reading on.

UK China Twinned Cities

Jeremy Browne MP, former Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and author of the book "Race Plan" is key note speaker at a Conference on "UK China Twinned Cities" to be held on 24th June in Nottingham.

The conference on this timely and exciting topic is jointly organised by Chinese Liberal Democrats and Dr Bin Wu and Min Rose of the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies at The University of Nottingham. Other eminent speakers include Claire Urry of the China Britain Business Council, representatives from the Chinese Embassy and from Local government as well as authors Carl Carlstedt and Chris Georgiou who will be presenting their findings on this subject.

In his recently launched book, Browne reminds us that this is "the Asian Century", but Britain should nevertheless seek to shape it. At the Conference he will share with us his ideas for keeping Britain ahead in the global race and comment on the role twinned cities may have in bringing more trade and inward investment into regional cities.

A graduate from Nottingham University, Browne did not have the chance of studying at their Ningbo campus when he was a student. He has however visited China on many occasions as Minister and has been much impressed by China's remarkable journey:

"In 1990 China's GDP was \$357 billion. It is now \$8.23 trillion - roughly 23 times bigger..."

"According to the British Council 300 million people in China are learning or have learned to speak English. That is more than five times the population of England."

Browne highlights in his book the many strengths and assets that Britain has. We are not merely the 6th largest economy but Brand Britain has international resonance, English is a global language, and our elite education is a global attraction. As the world changes, our strategies and alliances will also have to adapt and change, he says.

There are currently over 40 twinned cities between UK and China, notably, Liverpool and Shanghai, Manchester and Wuhan, Sheffield and Chengdu and Bristol and Guangzhou. How do we leverage on existing alliances and try to forge new ones? What are the ingredients and framework that need to be in place to sustain these twinned relationships?

To consider these questions, hear from experts and share best practice amongst local authorities, British and Chinese companies, register to attend our Conference at the Si Yuan Centre on 25th June. Email info@chineselibdems.org.uk to reserve your place.

Elections – Euro and Other

A week away, it is premature to speculate too much about the Euro Elections and the local government elections in the UK. However commiserations have to be extended to the many good Liberals who lost their seats in Brussels and Blighty; sad because their numbers cause us to say this before congratulating those who held on or advanced the Liberal cause.

As Peter Brooke put it, the UK electorate has replaced some of their hardest working MEPs with members of a party whose track record has been to turn up, collect their expenses and go home. How soon will this sink in? Go out there and tell them they were wrong.

Looking at the LI website the overall position is gloomy, but less so: Liberals are seen as kingmakers in Europe after tough elections.

As the results were announced it was clear that the ALDE Group in the European Parliament would again hold the balance of power in deciding the result of crucial votes, with gains for LI parties in the Netherlands, Belgium, Estonia, Bulgaria and Finland. Addressing the rise of populist parties that had cost liberals in some member states, Dr Minoves observed "disturbing trends in certain European countries where far-right rhetoric seems to be in the upswing."

Speaking about the fight back against populism, the LI President added "Liberal values founded the European idea and must be reasserted against far-right rhetoric and populism. Personal freedoms and open borders to trade and labour have brought prosperity and honour to Europe; extreme ideologies have but a history of ruin and dishonour behind them."

Among those re-elected were LI Bureau members Hans van Baalen MEP - VVD, and Cecilia Wikstrom MEP - Folkpartiet. In his first comment after the result, Van Baalen said: "We can be proud that VVD has won 3 seats on its own", having also increased the vote of the Dutch liberals.

So what can we say? For once the Liberal Democrats fought the EU elections on Europe, and more of it. But did they really push their vision of Europe – a sovereign European Parliament rather than the Commission or Council of Ministers? I used to make my own posters – United States of Europe – Yes Please. Time for ALDE to sit down and draw up a dynamic radical programme. *InterLib* does not normally concern itself with EU matters - parish council stuff, but as a forum for discussion, bring it on.

Stewart Rayment

reviews

The French Intifada: the long war between France and its Arabs, by Andrew Hussey
Granta 2014 £25.00

'The French Intifada' by Andrew Hussey is an account of the colonial and post-colonial struggles that took and are still taking place in three North African countries - Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco and the way these struggles have spread to France and Europe. If you know nothing about the subject it is better than just a useful introduction and if you know a little then it will certainly paint a fuller picture - if you know more than that no doubt it will be found wanting but never misleading.

He uses a clever device (I call this the essayist's photo-realism) to pick out the detail in history by checking out the etymology of street slang such as *banlieusards*, *coquillard*, *bougnoles*, *caseur*, and *bavure*. This last one, meaning a police cock-up usually involving a death (think Blair Peach and de Menezes), derives from the *Brigade des Aggressions et Violences*, the English equivalent of the SPG. Elsewhere the interludes of narratives within the outlines maintain the dynamic of this tortuous (and indeed tortured) history of colonialisation and how it has become a long war, a very long war, going on long enough to make one wonder how it can end. Andrew Hussey certainly doesn't know and any eventualist who might commit himself would be a brave turkey in a turkey shoot.

I felt I was in the middle of a hard-boiled crime novel when the Toulouse motorcycle murders were being unravelled; ditto the account of the Medea monastery kidnapping, the subject of a calming and contemplative film, "Of Gods and Men", and quite the opposite to Pontecorvo's "Battle of Algiers" which also gets cited. Directors, writers, musicians and even footballers are referenced throughout as a way of bringing the history down to earth - there is even a chapter on the ex-patriate gay artist community in Tangiers titled "Queer Tangier". The low cost of living for those with dollars (and those with pounds that they could get out of the UK) made the International Zone a mecca, dare one say, for what would nowadays be called predatory sexual tourism but back then in the 50s to early 60s was just simple sexual liberation on the cheap in a tax and hang-up free zone. Here the likes of Paul Bowles (who gets a slightly dismissive analysis, unfairly so to my mind as his political androgyny is little understood), and William Burroughs were able to function freely and this

undoubtedly helped them creatively - both of these Americans produced their greatest writing in North Africa. In fact, the scabrous, surreal violences of Burroughs' Naked Lunch coupled with Hussey's insistence on detailing the shocking and incredible savageries inflicted on the victims of Algeria's decade of civil terror in the 90s ("tongues stuffed in the corpse's mouth, disembowled entrails draped over bushes") may well have prompted the metaphor I need to understand Hussey's engaging and very readable account. It is as if we are left with an image of the history of the region as a cartoon string puzzle with the strands hopelessly twisted, and we have to work out which of the three blind mice will get the strings that lead to Freedom, Democracy and Peace. The post-postmodern spaghetti tangle is too perfect for the puzzle to be resolved. History is, of course, a sequence of loose ends.

Jim Pennington

John McHugo's excellent *Concise History of the Arabs* (Saqi) has now been published in paperback. It was reviewed in *interLib* 2013-03.

Goth Girl and the Ghost of a Mouse, by Chris Riddell. Macmillan, 2013 £9.99

Just when we were wondering when another Ottoline book would crop up we are greeted by an ancestor. Ada Goth is the only child of Lord Goth, who bears some resemblance to Lord Byron, the first person to call himself a Liberal in the Palace of Westminster. There is a mystery to be solved, but even allowing for a childrens' book relying heavily on illustration, characters are often underdeveloped – one might specifically cite the ghost of the mouse in the main story (his memoirs notwithstanding). It's an attractive book, holds a ten year old, but could do better.



A generosity of spirit is the hallmark of Lord Goth's character, so the villains live to fight another volume.

Stewart Rayment

**The China Crisis, by James R Gorrie
Wiley, 2013**

In his future dystopia *Cycle of Violence*, Grayson Perry visualises a world where peddle-power has replaced the motor car. Gorrie opens with the joke that China used to be the bicycle capital of the world, but if we stop to consider the pollution in that country's now burgeoning cities, we can see the negative side of so-called progress. It is within the past 40 years that Chelmsford used to be a bicycle city – I recall the hundreds of bikes in and out of Hoffmans in the rush hour; now the city is carved up for the motor car.

Gorrie takes the pessimistic view of China's future. Despite adopting the Beijing Model of market capitalism, the dead hand of Communism still predominates and as its demands on the growing entrepreneurial class increase, so too will their rejection of it. Sinophiles (like Jeremy Browne) see what they want to see; he adds, perhaps wanting to keep their viability with Chinese officials intact.

Traditionally the focus on China's problems has been on its human rights record, its environmental degradation (some of you will recall Beijing trying to stop a LIBG fringe on timber logging in occupied Tibet at the LI Congress in Ottawa), and its imperialism – Tibet, East Turkestan, aggression towards Taiwan etc. Gorrie expands on these, but what he adds take us back to the worst imaginings of uncontrolled Victorian capitalism - a food crisis.

Xi Jinping was heir apparent at the time of publication; he is now General Secretary & President. He has called for fighting corruption and for market reforms – the 'Chinese Dream', but on the other hand there is 'Document 9' which cites the seven deadly sins of the west - Western constitutional democracy, Universal values of human rights, Western conceptions of media independence & civil society, Pro-market neo-liberalism and "Nihilist" criticisms of past errors of the party. Does this mean Xi's adversaries have the upper hand in the Chinese Communist Party? I don't hold out much hope.

Meanwhile, if this is the Asian century, as Jeremy Browne would have us believe, we need as much information as we can get to balance our decision making, and Gorrie's is a useful corrective, because we have enough economic problems of our own and need to anticipate future storms.

Stewart Rayment

**Contesting Democracy, political ideas in Twentieth-century Europe, by Jan-Werner Müller.
Yale 2013**

We live in a 'liberal' age, or so popular belief would have us believe. As Liberals, we are not quite so sure of this and Müller's thesis provides something of a corrective – perhaps we should describe the post-war consensus as a 'liberal-conservative' age? Christian Democracy has been the dominant ideology of post-war Europe, and has turned out to be broadly conservative, whatever its earlier aspirations, which is hardly surprising given its roots in Roman Catholicism. It might be argued that social democracy has prevailed in Britain & Scandinavia in, at least, the immediate post-war period, but with its Fabian base here, this is no less conservative.

Broadly speaking, the short Twentieth century can be divided into three ideologically; the class struggle culminating in World War Two, the subsequent discrediting of the worse elements of conservatism and the 'social or Christian democratic moment' in the west paralleled by Communism in the east, and the fight back of conservatism, sometimes styled neo-liberalism. Underlying these was progressive bureaucratization, technocracy, call it what you like; reaching a zenith with the Commission having supremacy in the European Union over any democratic institution. The Twentieth century was not a Liberal age. This is despite the advances of our ideology and their contributions to social democratic and conservative thought, in terms of zeitgeist we have been on the margins.

One of our great thinkers, Hobhouse, not even mentioned in the book, described Stalingrad as a battle between left and right Hegelianism – poor Hegel, he wouldn't have had much time for either of them. Beveridge & Keynes were critical to the post-war consensus in the UK, but the programmes that they are associated with were carried out were in other hands. Beveridge recognised that a Labour government with its statist preconceptions would be the worst interpreter of his blueprint for the welfare state, bringing all of Weber's greatest fears home to roost. Crucial to this was how the NHS should be funded – Beveridge's proposals weren't acceptable to Labour and we are still picking up the pieces. Keynes, of course, died at the critical moment; what would Keynes make of the Keynesians? Any analysis of his mind shows far greater flexibility, willingness to change and adapt – Hayek recognised this in him and it is an open question as to how Keynes' own thought would have developed. Economics writing, even more so than political, is of its day, if not its hour.

Outlining the problems for Liberalism at the outset of the century, Müller notes that Liberals were not prepared to move fast enough in meeting the demands of mass democracy – Mr. Gladstone’s cabinets, you will recall, were primarily aristocratic. Working class Liberalism was never nurtured as it could have been. In much of Europe the divisions between economic and social Liberals continue to be masked in a multiplicity of parties.

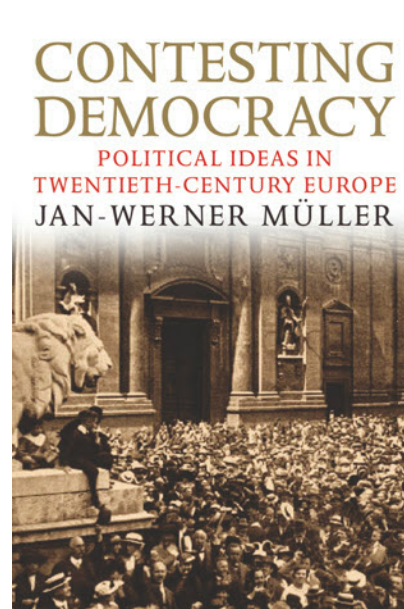
There are questions of Liberalism. An accusation of the Trotskyist left is that in order to defend capitalism, Liberalism resorted to Fascism in the 1930s, and would do so again if it had to. How do they arrive at this? Certainly Giovanni Gentile began his career as a liberal before following Mussolini, and German Liberals in the Reichstag voted Hitler his powers in the misguided hope that they would be able to control him. This says nothing of Liberalism as a philosophy, but Müller opened his 2003 book on the ultra-conservative Carl Schmitt by quoting José Ortega Gasset, who in 1930 said ‘Liberalism announces the determination to share existence with the enemy’¹; there is an innate tendency amongst Liberals to try to make things work – hence easily lending themselves to coalitions. Liberalism is not homogenous over time and space, the circumstances of German Liberalism – Germany a diffuse collection of small states a bare 150 years ago led many of its protagonists to a strong state, whereas a more decentralist tradition prevails in Britain. The argument that Liberalism per se does not lead to Fascism needs rigorous examination, especially if one takes our present stance as advocates of the European Union and globalization. Schmitt would argue that the ‘liberalism [of the prevailing spirit] is alternatively helpless or hypocritical’ – I hope I’m not reading too much into Müller there. Simplistically, we may think we’re Jedi knights, but are we actually the Empire?

As I wrote above, economics writing, even more so than political, is of its day, if not its hour. Hayek’s *Road to Serfdom* was written at the height of a war economy – something Asquith could not mobilise in the First World War, but Lloyd George, Churchill & Roosevelt could, if exceptionally. To some extent Hayek took us no further than say, the Classical Liberalism of Herbert Spencer’s *The Man versus The State*, or Hilaire Belloc’s *The Servile State*, except in that Hayek’s observations would have nearly a century’s empiricism on Spencer. Marginalized, Hayek was almost a forgotten figure in Britain until he gave a theoretical underpinning to Thatcherism. Loosing the battle in Grimond’s Liberal party, Arthur Seldon would go on, with Ralph Harris and Anthony

Fisher, to form the Institute of Economic Affairs, which promulgated this influence.

So far as the UK is concerned, certain *Orange Book* arrivistes aside, Hayek’s ideas have been reinterpreted through a Conservative ideology; the then old man seemed flattered. However with the fall of the Iron Curtain, he has been widely embraced by governments in east Europe. However there is a concern that this Liberalism has been reduced in this to a narrow economic doctrine, and one that ignores its roots in Smith, Ricardo and the Mills at that.

So much for Liberalism, but what of other ideologies? Communism & Fascism, and also Socialism as we once knew it are dead. The Labour party is no longer the tribune of the working classes, indeed is essentially a machine for electing career politicians. Conservatism



will always adapt – Oakeshott giving it the necessary revitalizing shot rather than Hayek. The ‘end of ideology’ which characterized the Christian/Social democratic ascendancy and the ‘end of history’ with the fall of the Iron Curtain seem to say it all of the greyness of contemporary political thought.

The 1968 generation achieved little and theorised less according to Müller, though they might be credited with symbolizing the end of the Victorian era. For us, they are the generation of community politics. The Situationists had some interesting things to say, but I feel lucky to have graduated before the (mainly French) thinkers of the last 40 years hit the curriculum. Nothing Müller writes makes me more inclined to struggle further with them, but thus it’s a useful summary. This is a good read and you’ll certainly have a better understanding of the European dimension as a result of it.

Stewart Rayment

¹ Ortega Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses*. 1930, quoted in Müller’s *A Dangerous Mind, Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought*, Yale 2003