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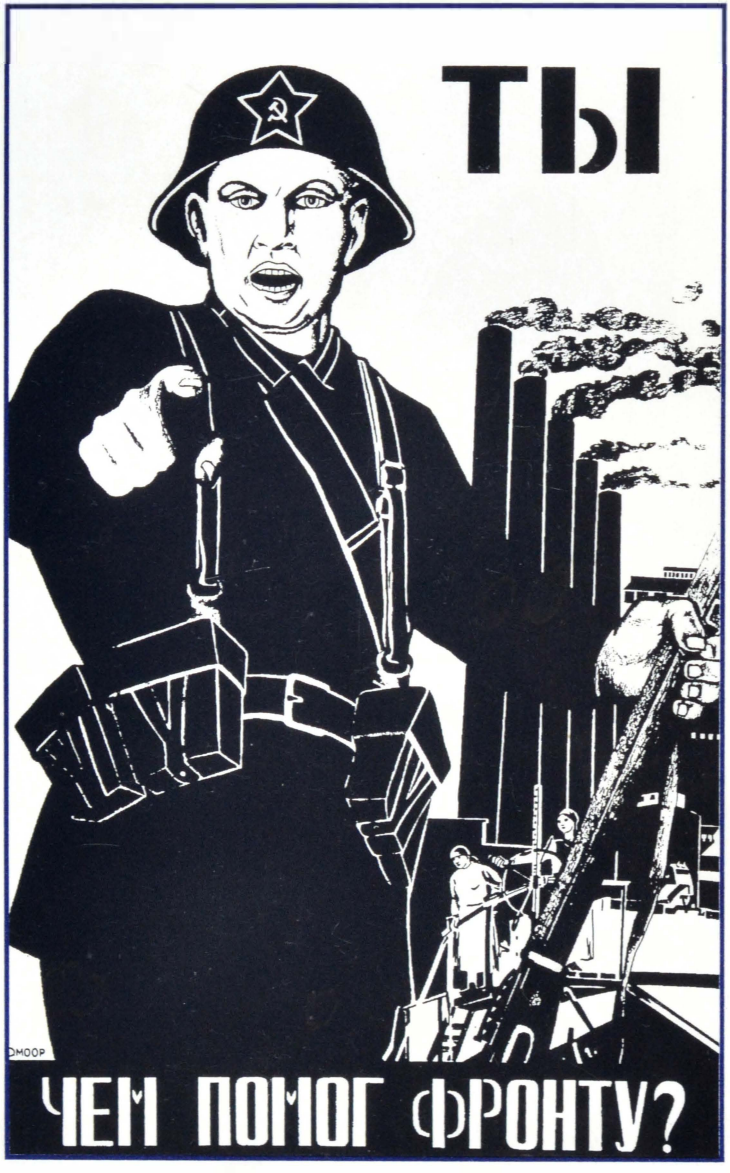

THE YEAR BOOK OF THE SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF HISTORY

HISTORY TEACHING REVIEW

YEAR BOOK

EDITOR: ANDREW HUNT

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Fiona Watson is Lecturer in History at the University of Stirling. She began research life with a Ph.D. on Edward I in Scotland under Archie Duncan at Glasgow but subsequently has also worked on the history of Scottish woodlands with Chris Smout. This had led to a slightly schizophrenic teaching and research programme, combining both medieval and environmental history. Her first book, *Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland* is due out this summer, to be followed by a textbook on the entire period of the wars with England. The book on trees, with Chris Smout and Alan MacDonald, will also appear. She has also presented a first series of the history magazine programme, *The History File*, for Radio Scotland.

Dr Lionel K. J. Glassey is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of History at the University of Glasgow. He has published *Politics and the Appointment of Justices of the Peace, 1675-1720* (Oxford, 1979), and edited *The Reigns of Charles II and James VII & II* (Basingstoke, 1997) in the series 'Problems in Focus' published by Macmillan. He is currently engaged on a study of the Exclusion Crisis, and on a new edition of Gilbert Burnet's *History of His Own Time*.

Ian Whyte is Professor of Historical Geography at Lancaster University. A graduate of Edinburgh University, he has written numerous books and articles on aspects of the economy and society of early-modern Scotland, including *Scotland Before the Industrial Revolution. An Economic and Social History c1050-c1750.* (Longman, 1995) and *Scotland's Society and Economy in Transition c1500-c1760* (Macmillan, 1997). He is currently writing a book on migration in early-modern British society.

Dr David Saunders trained at Oxford in the 1970s and is now Reader in the History of the Russian Empire at the University of Newcastle. He has published *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture 1750-1850* (Edmonton, 1985: Canadian Institute of Urkainian Studies) and *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform 1801-1881* (London and New York, 1992: Longman). His essay in the present volume springs from his work on *A Social History of the Russian Empire 1801-1917* (to be published by Longman). The total period he has spent working in Russian archives has recently passed the three-year mark.

Dr Peter Waldron is Reader in History at the University of Sunderland. His publications include *The End of Imperial Russia, 1855-1917* (Macmillan, 1997) and *Between Two Revolutions: Stolypin and the Politics of Renewal in Russia* (UCL Press, 1998). He is now working on a study of the nature of the Tsarist state betwen 1700 and 1900 and is preparing a new history of Europe since the French Revolution.

Keith Laybourn is Professor of History at the University of Huddersfield. He has written 20 books and more than 50 articles on British labour history and the evolution of British social policy. In 1997 he had *The Rise of Socialism in Britain, 1881-1951* published by Sutton Publishing and edited *Social Conditions, Status and Community* (Sutton, 1997). He is currently working on *Under the Red Flag*, a history of the British Communist Party which will be published in June 1999. He is also working on a book connected with the major historical debates in twentieth century British history, which will be published by I.B. Taurus.

Dr Evan Mawdsley is a Reader in the Department of History at the University of Glasgow. His most recent book is *The Stalin Years: The Soviet Union, 1929-1953* (Manchester University Press 1998 [in press]), and he is currently in the final stages of a study with Stephen White of the Soviet political elite from 1917 to 1991. Dr Mawdsley's earlier work touching on Russian military history includes *The Civil War* (Allen & Unwin, 1987) and his next major project is a one volume history of the Soviet-German campaign, to be entitled *The Great Fatherland War.*

Editorial

ANDREW HUNT

A quick perusal of the Contents page will demonstrate to all Year Book readers that my ambition of previous years has at last been fulfilled: I have managed to get away (somewhat) from concentrating on the later modern option of the Higher syllabus. It may have taken me several years of talking about this, but I do believe that to have this Year Book in front of you, in which four out of the seven articles are on different areas than those shown on pages 16 and 17 of the 1990 *Revised Higher History Arrangements Document*, represents a real achievement. This may of course, not easily be repeated, but meantime I take pleasure, on behalf of all the contributors, in offering a range of articles stretching from Stirling Bridge to Smolensk and from the 13th to the 20th centuries.

The reason for this width and range lies in the inspired choice of theme for this year's edition. Unless you are 'in the know', you may find it very difficult to detect that there actually is a theme in such a diverse range of articles, but there most assuredly is, and I feel that it will probably be worth employing again. The contributors this year were all asked to respond to the question of "Turning points?" Each of them, in their own area of specialism, chose to address a key moment or turning point in History. This key moment could be an event or action, a decision taken, a person or even a year. The view taken by the writer of the article may be that of supporting its significance and offering props to keep alive its legitimacy, or it may be so that they can demolish it and persuade us of its false claim to importance. In either case, each of the articles does what we try to do all the time; offer searching debate, challenge the intellect through the use and interpretation of evidence and provoke a critical response. Seven such articles make a real contribution to keeping History teaching in schools at the sharp edge of debate, just where it should be.

A look at the Biography page in this issue will show how much all the contributors are regular and accomplished writers. Many of us may possess, or have read, their books; in some cases we read their articles in the quality papers. Many of them have had their books reviewed, over the years, in the Resources Review and we have been doubly able to gain. It is a pleasure for me to be able to tell such distinguished contributors, how much all SATH members appreciate the strong links that these members of the academic community wish to have with History teachers, shown by their readiness to give the Year Book these 'tasters' of what they are working on and the direction their ideas are taking them. The old accusatory image of 'Ivory towers' used to make university staff an easy target for abuse; but now it is difficult to find anywhere within the university history subject area to actually apply it, so ready are they to answer my call to air their thoughts. As the Year Book Editor, whose task may at first sight, appear to be the grimly difficult one of trying to persuade such busy people to contribute their thoughts, I can only repeat my comments made in many previous Year Book editorials. All the contributors have made my life easy. They are not only well organised and reliable but also personally thoughtful and helpful; my thanks to them all.

Medieval Scotland: Truth and Fiction

DR FIONA WATSON

The interest in medieval Scotland highlighted (but not created) by Braveheart has coincided with a significant shift in the historiography of the period as a new generation of practitioners have emerged into print. Of course, every generation begins by building on the work of its predecessors and there is also no doubt that, in the case of medieval Scottish history, such work involved the empirical study of primary source material on a scale, over a range of topics, and with a degree of critical awareness that was unprecedented. The period of the wars with England (or at least the phase up to 1329) has been particularly well served over the last 30 years, beginning of course with Geoffrey Barrow's magisterial *Robert Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland,* together with a range of contributions from Archie Duncan, Grant Simpson and Ranald Nicholson particularly.

The war, as these historians have certainly recognised in their work, did not come out of nowhere, but it is understandable – given how much essential fact-finding and analysis was required to be done – that the crucial period after 1286 should have received so much attention, at the expense of the preceding more peaceful era. Of course, this is partly because the involvement of England brings an exponential increase in the amount of primary source material available. However, the comparative dearth of detailed and consistent analysis of the pre-war period has meant that historians can still, as recently as 1997, pedal the kind of image of medieval Scotland with which Sir Walter Scott would have felt at home:

> The early kingdom was Gaelic; quite quickly, however, it became heavily anglicised, a process beginning under the influence of Malcolm [Canmore]'s English queen, the able and devout Margaret. The hub of power shifted from the Gaelic to the Saxon side. Royal administration, borough life and church government were all modelled upon an English prototype and English took over too as the language of the court.[1]

The pernicious longevity of this image of medieval Scotland, which is by no means restricted to English historians such as Professor Hastings, is undoubtedly a reflection of the general presumption that England and its institutions have provided the world with a model for constitutional and administrative development; equally, the sense of inferiority which has been seen to characterise Scottish political and intellectual life since the Union of 1707[2] has created a mentality evident even today whereby it is easy to believe that any sophistication evident in the structure and government of the medieval kingdom must be due to influence from the south.

However, it is becoming increasingly clear that these basic presumptions about medieval Scottish government and society have resulted in the continuing application of an inappropriate model, based on English and also French experience, to which Scotland consistently fails to conform adequately. The development of parliament – assumed to be a major indicator of the emergence of a dynamic and effective state, which is in turn presumed to be a natural and desirable element of progress – is one aspect of this model in which Scotland appears backward. Equally, it is often assumed that the lack of a strong agrarian base was, by definition, a barrier to wealth creation and even to the ability of a country to sustain its population. It is even generally accepted that the failure of Scottish kings to exploit to any great effect the military potential of the kingdom through classical feudalism is a further indication of a basic inferiority.

There is no doubt that, compared with England and France, the Scottish kingdom remained obviously uncentralised, both institutionally and in terms of the distribution of wealth. There is also no doubt that this factor alone has served to create and foster the image of a weak state. Ironically, however, in comparison with polities such as Wales and Ireland, Scotland's basic power structures were certainly centralised and Scottish kings had far more in common with their colleagues in England or France than they did with the Welsh or Irish princes.[3]

But, as Scottish historians have become increasingly aware, analysing medieval Scottish government in terms of the two extremes of centralisation or uncentralisation, especially if the former is regarded as most desirable and the latter as least desirable, has been hugely misleading. The idea that medieval Scottish kings attempted to slavishly imitate their English counterparts, only to fail due to institutional, social and economic weaknesses, is one that does little justice to a society for which there is clear evidence of rather different criteria governing its development. If we leave aside the idea that there can be *a* model for medieval government and concentrate instead on working out the needs of this particular kingdom, we will be in a far better position to judge success or failure.

Having said that, there is no need to deny the considerable impact which the importation of Anglo-Norman ideas, administrative structures and personnel had on the Scottish state. The establishment of sheriffdoms and dioceses, the spread of lands held explicitly of the crown, the eclipse of the Celtic church, the plantation of the kings' Norman followers in 'problem' areas (ie. those which remained relatively immune to control by the crown) and the latter's dominance at court, are all undeniable features of the twelfth century.

But an acknowledgement of the benefits of new ideas does not necessarily imply the wholesale abandonment of the existing system. Indeed, the perception of radical change in this period can be extremely misleading for the simple reason that the arrival of Anglo-Norman practices included the habit of writing things down; thus we may, in fact, be witnessing an increasing tendency to commit land grants and government actions to parchment rather than any profound shift in the relationship between landlord and tenant, royal officer and society. Equally (and this was also true in Norman England), the Norman-derived terminology generally employed in such documents often conceals the same office or institution which already existed under a Celtic (or Saxon) name but for which written evidence does not usually remain. It is now acknowledged that most of the bishoprics which emerged into the light of written record during the reign of David I were of much older origin.[4] It is equally likely that royal officers were already at work in areas which later became sheriffdoms.

The establishment of knights' fees was certainly a noticeable innovation in the twelfth century. But the ubiquity of this form of land-tenure is poorly understood and certainly overestimated. However, some limited research would seem to suggest that, after their initial introduction predominantly under David I, there was a further expansion in the number of knights' fees in the later twelfth century, implying that William the Lion was keen to maximise the kingdom's military capacity. However, the following century witnessed a marked decline, including the abandonment for other forms of tenure of many which had been created in that previous phase. In particular, it seems likely that feu-farming – the holding of land in perpetuity for a grassum and a higher rent – was becoming a more common phenomenon.[5]

The implications of such a trend are intriguing, since it necessarily involved the surrendering of the kingdom's military potential in favour of developing its economic capacity. Much work requires to be done in order to understand more fully Scotland's development between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. However, if such a trend appears well-established, then we will be forced to confront the fact that the conditions in which England's strongly centralised institutions evolved – essentially, periods of relatively concentrated warfare – were not relevant to Scotland, except on very limited occasions. The lack of a military spur to development, especially when combined with evidence for economic activity predicated on peaceful conditions, was surely no bad thing, but, rather, pushed this particular medieval kingdom in a different direction.

From one point of view, there might nevertheless seem to have been a price to be paid. The English and French crowns undoubtedly appear more powerful as a result of the centralisation which necessarily accompanied the successful prosecution of large-scale warfare. For example, the Scottish crown could not, except on very rare occasions, justify the levying of taxation, something to which the English people particularly became far too inured (though certainly not happily), again because of the exigencies of war. The king of Scots therefore had at his disposal only the income from crown lands and the customs from trade which would not have maintained him in a style comparable to those who had access to these additional resources.

On the other hand, it can surely be postulated that the comparative lack of pressure exerted on the country's economy from the top allowed resources to be more evenly distributed both geographically and socially. It has certainly been contended that the benefits accruing from the Scottish wool trade in the thirteenth century were by no means confined to the elites, since the keeping of sheep was a practical proposition even for peasants, given Scotland's geography.[6] Of course, it may certainly be true that the absence of substantial centralisation meant that Scotland also lacked a major impetus for economic development, particularly in the extremely lucrative sphere of overseas trade. However, while the opportunities for a large-scale increase in prosperity, albeit for the select few, might have been missing, the alternative – the maintenance of local economies with relatively little interference from the state – perhaps paid dividends in terms of minimising social tensions. As we should know from our own times, the existence of extremely sophisticated economic systems does not necessarily lead to the optimum social good.

There is also a danger in equating too rigidly overt wealth with actual power. In Scotland, the role of the crown was certainly far more restricted than it was in England or France, but that often meant, in reality, that it chose to leave many aspects of administration to others. The relationship between crown and higher nobility was characterised, in this period at least, by co-operation; each was clear about the role of the other and was usually content to maintain the status quo. If individuals were perceived to have overstepped the mark or to have failed in their duty, then there might certainly be trouble. One such example was the reaction of the native earls to Malcolm IV's personal military service, as an English landowner, to Henry II on campaign to France; this was deemed to be demeaning to the Scottish crown and these magnates felt no compunction about telling the king so.[7] This episode also indicates that, while the Anglo-Normans incomers might have dominated the court, this did not mean that the 'Celtic' nobility had lost power. It means, rather, that in a form of government where authority was largely devolved, politics at the centre (ie. the court) was only one element of the power structure; looking at the relationships among those exercising authority in the localities is just as important to understanding how the system works as a whole.

However, if matters of state were thus comparatively few, there is also no doubt that the king usually got his own way in situations which were legitimately regarded as his concern, even in the face of opposition from the nobility as a whole. Of much more importance than the issue of knights' fees was surely the crown's success – beginning with the earldom of Fife – in establishing in writing the notion that even the highest in the kingdom held their land of the king, rather than autonomously as a long-established reward for the ancient service of their ancestors in the war-band. Equally significantly, in 1284 Alexander III was able to name his grand-daughter, Margaret of Norway, as potential heir to the Scottish throne – thus keeping the crown within the immediate dynasty – despite the fact that his nobility were extremely reluctant to contemplate the notion of a queen.

Sadly, the outbreak of war profoundly altered Scotland's economic and political future. In the first phase (1296-1307), the relationship between crown and nobility was of course fundamentally changed by the fact that the Scottish king, John, was stripped of his crown. The Scottish nobility acted with great unity in their defence of the sovereignty of the kingdom, as vested in their king, however surprising that might appear to a modern audience which has a quite different impression of them. They did so, despite their very varying backgrounds and different political allegiances under normal conditions, because that was their role, their responsibility. A few did not join in the war against King Edward on behalf of King John: the Bruces most obviously saw this as an opportunity to finally make good their claim to the throne; Gilbert d'Umfraville, earl of Angus was an English landowner with a Scottish earldom; Patrick, earl of Dunbar and March also seems to have considered that he owed a greater allegiance to the English king. But these few exceptions do not detract from what was a convincing national reaction to King Edward's erosion of Scottish independence.

The political community of the kingdom of Scotland (essentially the great and the good who took part in the decision-making process at a national level) were led, as they had been for most of the latter half of the thirteenth century, by the Comyn family. This fact is one of the most important in understanding the events relating to the wars with England; equally, our perceptions of this family's role in Scottish politics is profoundly influenced by the effects of King Robert Bruce's murder of the head of the family, John Comyn of Badenoch.[8]

Prior to this momentous event, and Bruce's subsequent seizure of the Scottish throne, the issues involved in the struggle with England were relatively straight-forward. The effects of the short, sharp shock of the English conquest of 1296 (including the massacre at Berwick), together with the intense demands which Edward was making of all his subjects to fund his war against Philip IV of France, rendered the English garrisons dotted throughout Scotland the subject of fierce opprobium at all levels of Scottish society. The uncentralised nature of pre-1296 Scottish government which needed little in the way of taxation, together with the fact that Edward and his officials went to very little trouble to offer the Scots any small palliative, such as good justice, ensured that the new administration was quickly hated. This reaction soon produced another national movement, but its origins probably lay with feelings of gut patriotism as local communities spontaneously sought to defend themselves against what was seen as the exorbitant demands of a grasping and intrusive alien regime.

The Scots, after the enormous confidence-boost of the victory at Stirling Bridge in September 1297, went on to wage an effective guerrilla and diplomatic offensive against the English for nearly seven years. But, as with the original resumption of the war, the decision to end it, although ultimately taken at a national level, was partly a result of the fact that local communities had again acted on an individual basis. There is clear evidence that, from 1300 onwards, Edward felt that it was worthwhile to direct his officials to encourage the 'middling sort' – the very same men who had reacted so badly to the idea of taxation and potential military service overseas in 1297 – to submit. For these men, who had an important voice at a local level even if they rarely made an impact on national politics, a long-term war was now a more unpalatable prospect than having Edward as overlord. The disruption of daily life, particularly in terms of the ability to make use of an effective system of justice, is very difficult to sustain and the Scots faced the unpalatable certainty by 1303 that, while they were not losing this war, neither were they winning it. Of course, those living north of the Forth were in the luxurious position of not experiencing an English presence until the campaign of 1303, but for those in the south, with an English garrison on the doorstep, patriotism, in the sense of defending one's native land but not necessarily the larger political unit in which it is situated, dictated a pragmatic acceptance of current realities.

Scotland's leaders, under the direction of John Comyn of Badenoch as guardian of Scotland, held out against Edward for as long as they could. However, the campaign of 1303, which brought the English army as far north as Kinloss for the first time since 1296, together with the diplomatic isolation which the Scots now felt in the courts of France and Rome, marked the end of any hope of a successful return of King John. The lenient settlement (compared with 1296) which Comyn and his advisers reached with King Edward in 1303, attests to the ability which the Scots had exhibited during the previous seven years in waging a remarkably effective war against one of Europe's most impressive war machines.[9]

The resumption of hostilities provoked by the murder of Comyn and the inauguration of Bruce in 1306 created a quite different set of issues for Scots, who now had to decide which side to support. For the Comyn family and their large network of supporters, the issue was admittedly extremely clear-cut: they could under no circumstances support this murderous usurper and were thus forced, in their opposition to him, to side with the English king. Having once been the mainstay of the Scottish patriotic movement, they had little choice but to join forces with the enemy against an even greater foe. The Comyns were also inextricably linked with the Balliol cause, even though they had also been behind the removal of executive power from King John to a council of twelve in 1295, when the monarch proved firmly unwilling to contemplate war with Edward. The Comyns were the power behind the Balliol throne, but without King John sitting upon it, they were left without a legitimate mandate to exercise that power.

We should also not forget that, at a time when the personal bond of allegiance was the glue that held society together, the oaths which the nobility had sworn, by their own mouths, to, first, King John and then, in 1303, to King Edward, were not something to be cast off lightly. Whatever their personal opinion of either monarch, the leaders of medieval society could hardly expect their own social inferiors, who had made similar oaths to them, to respect such solemn promises if they themselves showed so little respect to their superiors. The Scottish nobility had argued, before the pope, that the

oaths which Edward had extracted from them in the 1290s were made under duress and were thus invalid; the ones they had sworn in 1303, however, were not forced out of them. Besides, Edward could not have had much longer to live and each could have examined his own conscience in deciding whether or not to renew the oath of allegiance to his son. Bruce was now demanding that the Scottish nobility should cast off not only the newly-forged bond to the English king, but the far longer-standing relationship with the king of Scots, the man in whose name they had all been fighting up until 1303. Many must have agreed with the earl of Strathearn, who refused Bruce's demands for homage and fealty with the words that his oath was not 'like glass, to be shattered at will'.[10]

Some did feel able to give the new king their loyalty – the earl of Atholl is an obvious example. But most did not. However, Bruce was extremely fortunate in having the support of a significant part of the Scottish church, including the extremely influential Robert Wishart, bishop of Glasgow, his younger colleague, William Lamberton, bishop of St. Andrews, and the militant David, bishop of Moray. It was the Scottish church, having long fought a war of independence against the claims of the English church, which articulated Scotland's own fight for liberty, first on behalf of King John, and then, most daringly, on behalf of King Robert. These men do seem to have understood patriotism as defence of that nebulous concept of 'Scotland'. For the nobility, patriotism was, and could only be, the maintenance of the king, who symbolised the nation. Unfortunately, they were now hamstrung by the fact that they were extremely unsure who should occupy that position and those not directly associated with the Comyns tried as hard as possible to sit on the fence. They were not cowards – they had proved that in the previous decade; but Bruce's actions had made it very difficult for them to know any longer what was right and wrong.

Of course, we have already seen that the 'middling folk' had an important influence on the course of the war, even if this is rarely recognised in history books. And Wallace and Murray had fought with a largely peasant army. However, even Bruce's hagiographer, John Barbour, admits that the common folk would not fight for the new king, out of fear, something which had not stopped them in 1297. The 'middling folk', or at least significant numbers of them, do seem to have found something worth fighting for in Bruce. Perhaps, again, after two or three years of English rule, the extent of the demands made upon them, and the unscrupulous nature of Edward's officials, gave them new heart to fight. The English king's ferocious treatment of those found to have supported Bruce also turned a degree of public opinion in the latter's favour, though we should not forget that King Robert could also be extremely ruthless, as the people of Buchan would have willingly testified.

The history of medieval Scotland, including the period during which most of the country's energies were directed against England, is being fundamentally rewritten at the end of the twentieth century. In part, the nature of this reworking reflects contemporary concerns with the nation state and the centralisation/devolution of power which has allowed us to consider a comparatively uncentralised system of government as no longer backward and ineffective. There is also a greater willingness among historians to challenge orthodoxies, including perceptions of as great a hero as Robert Bruce. The history which is now being written – and which will doubtless itself be upgraded in the future – is no less fascinating than the more romantic images of the past which prevailed earlier in this century and certainly in the last. The warts-and-all approach may be a little less comfortable than a history of heroes and victims, but it is arguably more interesting and certainly a lot more informative.

NOTES

1 Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: 1997), pp 70-1.

2 See, for example, Tom Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain* (London: 1977), p 156.

3 Robin Frame, *The Political Development of the British Isles, 1100-1400* (Oxford: 1995), p 108.

4 Michael Lynch, *Scotland. A New History* (London: 1992), p 82.

5 Fiona Watson, 'Adapting tradition?: the earldom of Strathearn, 1114-1296', in R. Oram and G. Stell eds., *Lordship and Architecture in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland* (forthcoming).

6 Alexander Grant, *Independence and Nationhood. Scotland 1306-1469* (London: 1984), p 72.

7 Andrew of Wyntoun, *The Orgynale Cronykil of Scotland*, D. Laing (ed.), vol. ii (1879), pp 422-23.

8 See A. Young, *Robert the Bruce's Rivals: The Comyns, 1212-1314* (East Linton, 1997) for the first full-length study of the family.

9 See F. Watson, 'Settling the stalemate: Edward I's Peace in Scotland, 1303-1305' in M. Prestwich, R.H. Britnell & R. Frame, eds., *Thirteenth Century England VI* (Woodbridge, 1997) for a fuller discussion of why the Scots submitted.

10 *Documents and Records illustrating the History of Scotland*, ed. F. Palgrave (London, 1837), pp 319-21.

The Revolution of 1688 in Scotland

DR LIONEL K J GLASSEY

The flight of the Catholic King James VII into exile in the last week of December 1688, and the elevation, after an interval, of King William II and Queen Mary II to the Scottish throne, do not seem, on the face of it, to be promising materials when contemplating the more significant 'turning points' of Scottish history. The dynasty did not change. Mary was James's elder daughter, and William was Charles I's grandson and James's nephew as well as Mary's husband. None of the three set foot in Scotland during the respective periods when they wore the Scottish crown. Indeed, neither William nor Mary ever set foot in Scotland during their lives. Even in the middle of a period of history when politics and government bore a strongly monarchical character, the substitution of one monarch for another would not normally affect the mass of the Scottish people below the élite.

In any case, the Revolution is sandwiched between two more plausible candidates for the title of turning points in Scottish history in the early modern period. Earlier, the Covenanters' Revolution of the late 1630s, plus Scottish involvement in what it is now fashionable to call the War of the Three Kingdoms in the 1640s, produced a most drastic upheaval in Scottish political and religious institutions in the middle of the seventeenth century. Later, the Act of Union of 1707 can justifiably be regarded as the single most decisive event in the whole of the history of Scotland since the Reformation, with consequences extending down to the present day. Both these episodes have been studied in depth by historians, and the bibliography of monographs and articles relating to them would stretch over many pages. There is no monograph, so far as I am aware, on the Revolution of 1688 in Scotland. The recent historiography of the subject is contained in a series of essays, many of which were commissioned at the time of the tercentenary of the Revolution in 1988.[1]

The dramatic events of the Revolution took place in England. The letter of 30 June 1688 inviting William (then Prince of Orange) to intervene in person in English politics, was drawn up by seven Englishmen. William landed at Torbay, in Devon, on 5 November 1688. He and his substantial army marched in slow stages through the south of England in November and December. James's army, which incorporated the bulk of the Scottish land forces (withdrawn from Scotland in the early autumn for the purpose of confronting the invader) was at Salisbury in late November. The battle on Salisbury Plain which contemporaries briefly regarded as the inevitable outcome did not, however, materialize. James left Whitehall on the night of 10-11 December. He was recaptured on the coast of Kent, taken back to London, and then escorted under a Dutch guard, which had been ordered to be less than vigilant, to Rochester, whence he escaped, this time successfully, to France. A map of these stirring and exciting events would not need to extend further north than Oxford. Local rebellions on behalf of William on the Lancashire-Cheshire border and at York in November represented the closest approach of the decisive episodes of the Revolution to Scotland.

Subsequently, the English Convention offered the throne of England to William and Mary jointly on 13 February 1689, four weeks before the Scottish Estates even met, which they did on 14 March. One of the Scottish Convention's first acts was to address a letter of thanks to 'the King of England'.[2] Faced with a *fait accompli* south of the border, it may well have appeared that all Scotland could do was to follow England's lead. The Claim of Right, the document which confirmed and validated the Revolution in Scotland, was similar in general outline to the English Declaration of Rights drawn up two months earlier. It consisted, like the Declaration of Rights, of the following sequence: a statement of the main features of James's misgovernment; an assertion to the effect that he had ceased to be King; a list of abuses deemed to be 'contrary to law'; an announcement that William and Mary were King and Queen; and a new oath of allegiance. Some of the phrases in the Claim of Right, such as 'vindicating and asserting ... antient rights and liberties' at the head of the list of abuses, were identical to those in the Declaration of Rights, although 'contrary to law' was preferred in Scotland to the English 'illegal'.[3] In due course, William and Mary accepted the Scottish crown, and the Revolution

was, it appeared, complete. One enthusiastic amateur historian was so carried away by these parallels as to write, as recently as 1988, that 'the Revolution in England was exactly copied in James's northern kingdom'.[4]

It hardly needs to be said that this reading of the Revolution in Scotland does less than justice to the distinctive character of Scottish history in the seventeenth century. The immediate background to the Revolution in the politics of the previous decade was different. In Scotland, there had been no parliamentary campaign to 'exclude' James from the throne in the late 1670s and early 1680s. The English House of Commons had then debated Exclusion Bills; the Scottish Parliament passed the Act Asserting the Right of Succession of 1681, which explicitly stated that no difference in religion and no parliamentary ruling could divert the hereditary succession to the Scottish crown.[5] In Scotland, there had been no ideological division between Whigs and Tories arising out of the conflicts over 'popery and arbitrary government' during the period of the 'Popish Plot' and the 'Exclusion Crisis', as there had been in England. James, when still Duke of Albany and York, had resided in Scotland for long stretches between 1679 and 1682, when it was deemed necessary for his own safety at the height of the Exclusion Crisis that he should be out of London. He had then presided over a royal court at Holyrood, and over a kind of viceregal government in Scotland in general, with efficiency and success.[6] For some Scottish politicians the experience of James's capable direction of autocratic government produced a sharp revulsion against the political regime and the ecclesiastical system he represented. For other Scots, a greater psychological barrier had to be crossed before they could acquiesce in the downfall of James than was the case in England, where the arguments for and against the possibility that the hereditary succession might be set aside had been rehearsed in Parliament and in the pamphlet press a few years earlier.

The background of recent Scottish history was therefore dissimilar to that of England. In 1688-9, the Scottish Revolution itself was neither parallel to, nor copied from, that in England. The motives of those who conducted it and the context in which they acted were different. The principal divergence between the Revolution in Scotland and the Revolution in England emerges from a consideration of how those who acquiesced in the Revolutions perceived their respective purposes. In England, the Revolution was, for many of those who submitted to it (whether willingly or grudgingly), essentially a restoration. James had been the revolutionary. He had interfered with the law, with the Church of England, and with local and central government to the point where William's invasion was welcomed, not necessarily to depose James, but rather to persuade him to abandon his radical programme. If James could be made to understand his own best interests, the country would revert to the settled tranquillity of Charles II's last years in the mid-1680s. In the event, James deposed himself by his flight to France, so William's succession was a minor adjustment to the hereditary succession designed to allow for a return to normal. In Scotland, those who wanted to resurrect the golden age of Charles II were few, and their influence on events in 1688-9 was small. For many, indeed for most Scots, the Revolution represented an opportunity for a drastic restructuring of the polity associated with the regime of the Stuart Kings since 1660. The powers and prerogatives of the crown, the relationship between kings and parliaments, and above all the character and constitution of the Kirk, were in the melting pot; and the Revolution in Scotland was intended to produce a settlement that would be completely different from the conditions which had prevailed since 1660.

The authority of the crown in Scotland did alter abruptly in 1689 because of a decision, embodied in the Claim of Right, to define the end of James's reign in different terms from those adopted in England. The English Convention had decided that James's flight was his abdication. He had abandoned the realm and left it without a government. But James had never been in Scotland during his reign. The circumstance that he was now in France rather than in England made no difference; wherever he was, he was not in Scotland. This argument was used by Lord Arran, the son of the Duke of Hamilton, in defence of the proposition that James was still King of Scotland.[7] Since James could not be said to have 'abdicated' in Scotland, some different formula had to be found. After much discussion, which included a suggestion that an obsolete word, 'fore-letting', should be employed to describe what James had done, Sir John Dalrymple moved that James should be deemed to have 'forfeited' the crown.[8] The Claim of Right eventually stated that James had:

> ... Invaded the fundamentall Constitution of the Kingdome, and altered it from a legall limited monarchy To ane arbitrary despotick power ... wherby he hath forfaulted the right to the Croune, and the throne is become vacant.[9]

These phrases (except the last five words) are not an echo of anything in the English Declaration of Rights. They imply that James had governed so badly that he had been deposed. The constitution of Scotland had suddenly become contractual. It was presumably open to the people of Scotland in their Parliaments to depose future kings for maladministration. Charles II and James VII had been, in the contemporary European context, absolute monarchs in Scotland, or something not far short of absolute monarchs. The Scottish crown as worn by William was now, at least in theory, one of the weakest in Europe.

William, of course, did not agree. He fought a stubborn rearguard action to preserve the traditional rights of the Scottish monarchy. He was able to do this, because it was not exactly clear when his reign in Scotland had begun. The Convention proclaimed him King, and Mary Queen, on 11 April 1689, immediately after reading and approving the Claim of Right. The proclamation was to be made public at the market crosses of Edinburgh and of the other burghs as soon as possible thereafter. Another proclamation against recognising James as King, and authorising public prayers for William and Mary as King and Queen, was agreed on 13 April. However, on the same day a list of 'Grievances', different from those described in the Claim of Right, was approved, and on 18 April the form of the oath to be tendered to William and Mary was settled. The Claim of Right and the list of Grievances were to be presented to William and Mary in London along with the invitation to accept the crown. A covering letter from the Estates to William, entreating him to remedy the grievances, was agreed on 24 April. The three Commissioners (the Earl of Argyll, Sir James Montgomerie and Sir John Dalrymple) deputed to wait upon William in London were given instructions on the sequence of the successive transactions by which William and Mary were formally and finally to become King and Queen. The offer was made on 11 May. Argyll made a short speech and presented the covering letter; the Claim of Right and the list of Grievances were read; William said that he was 'ready to redress all grievances'; Argyll then read the oath, with William and Mary repeating the phrases after him; finally, the new King and Queen signed the oath.[10]

But there was room for doubt on exactly when and how William had become King (it was assumed by everybody, including Mary herself, that in practice her rôle would be limited to that of consort). If his reign began from the time of the proclamation on 11 April, then his elevation to the throne was unconditional. If his reign began with the solemnities in London on 11 May, then he might be deemed to have ascended the throne only on condition that he had agreed to remedy the abuses and grievances described in the Claim of Right and the separate list. Even in the second case, some doubts remained. In the course of the reading of the oath, William had objected to that part of it which required him to swear to 'root out heretics'. William required the Commissioners to observe that he did not bind himself to 'become a persecutor'. The Commissioners had assured him that indiscriminate persecution was not intended. But William's commitment to his oath, and the whole complex transaction by which he had become King of Scotland, might have been regarded as incomplete and therefore imperfect.

These details are somewhat intricate, but they occupied much attention at the time for two reasons. The first is that the programme that was being presented to William in the Claim of Right and the list of Grievances was a very substantial set of proposals for reform. Not all of the demands were controversial, even when they embodied an important point of principle. Nobody was likely to make difficulties about the clauses in the Claim of Right condemning proclamations claiming a power to annul laws, or declaring the use of torture 'without evidence, or in ordinary Crymes' contrary to law. Some demands were on technical legal points on which William presumably had no opinion, such as the assertion that 'forefaulters in prejudice of vassalls, Creditors and aires of entaile are a great greivance'. But the Claim of Right and the separate list together did contain a number of clauses which would radically alter the civil and ecclesiastical constitution. Probably the most important were: that no Catholic could be King or Queen; that episcopalian church government should be abolished; that the Committee of Parliament called the Articles (by which the Court had controlled the conduct of business in Parliament) was a grievance; that standing armies in peacetime without consent of Parliament was a grievance; that unparliamentary taxation was a grievance; that Parliaments ought to be frequently

called and allowed freedom of speech and debate; and that royal nomination of burgh magistrates was unlawful.

The second reason why the sequence of events leading up to the acceptance of the Scottish crown by William was of significance to contemporaries is that most Scottish politicians assumed that William had accepted this reform programme, whereas William himself plainly did not regard himself as bound to remedy all the grievances and abuses to which his attention had been drawn on 11 May. This division of opinion over the correct interpretation of what had happened when William became King was to have far-reaching consequences for the future. The first indication that William's attitude was to be one of stubborn insistence on the maintenance of his royal powers was his letter to the Scottish convention on the same day – 11 May – that he had accepted the crown.[11] He acknowledged, but did not specifically approve, the Claim of Right and the list of Grievances. He promised that he would remedy what was 'justly greivous', with the implication that it was for him to decide on the validity, or otherwise, of the grievance; and he promised that the powers of the crown would not be exercised against the 'true interest of the Kingdome', with the implication that William still had these powers and would decide for himself what the true interest of the kingdom was.

It soon became apparent that William wanted to retain influence over the business of the Scottish Parliament through the retention in some form of the Lords of the Articles. Within eight weeks of William's acceptance of the offer of the crown, Parliament had come to fear a return to the 'old channels' and Sir John Dalrymple (who agreed with William that the royal powers should not be too much diminished) was observing that there was now much regret in Scotland that William had been proclaimed King before he had explicitly promised to remedy the grievances.[12] William himself told the Marquis of Halifax, his English confidant, that he did not wish to lose the Lords of the Articles, and if the Scottish Parliament objected he would dissolve it.[13] More openly, William informed the Scottish Parliament that he was resolved to redress only such grievances as '... Wee discerne to bee as well for the good of the Nation as for the Crowne'.[14]

The settlement of the Scottish church was an even more fundamental occasion for disagreement between William and the Scottish political nation. This was not so much because of any desire on William's part to retain a hierarchical Church of Scotland as a buttress to his royal authority; rather, it was because William had no clear idea as to which of the contending ecclesiastical parties in Scotland was the stronger in the winter of 1688-9. He was resolved to wait on events until he could be sure that the settlement of religion, whatever form it took, would command the support of a majority of Scots without permanently alienating those tempted to think that James was more sympathetic to their aspirations. William was aware that many moderate Presbyterians had welcomed James's Scottish Declaration of Indulgence, granting freedom of conscience and worship, in 1687.[15] The retention of an episcopalian church might drive the Presbyterians into Jacobitism. He was also aware that the news of James's departure had led some revengeful presbyterian congregations to expel episcopalian clergymen violently from their parishes in the south and west of Scotland. He knew that the reputation of the bishops in Scotland had declined sharply with an address to James in early November 1688 which had expressed amazement at the news of a planned invasion and prayed for the delivery to the King of 'the necks of his enemies'.[16] But William could not be sure that the 'rabbling' of the episcopalian clergy in the south and west reflected attitudes all over Scotland. He seems to have been informed that 'the great body of the nobility and gentry' in Scotland favoured the retention of the bishops, and that an episcopalian settlement would win these powerful classes away from Jacobitism.[17] Above all, William recognised that the destruction of the Scottish episcopal church and its replacement by a presbyterian system of church government would damage him in England, where the defence of the Church of England and its bishops had been one of the principal reasons for supporting him and where Dissenters, including the English Presbyterians, were distrusted as the inheritors of a fanatical Puritan tradition. This was given some weight by the warnings of the Archbishops of Glasgow and St Andrews, who urged that Presbyterianism in Scotland had not lost its proselytising character and still sought a godly reformation in England as well as Scotland.[18] William was accordingly prepared to make discreet overtures to the Scottish bishops, and his ambivalence on the character of the settlement of religion in Scotland gave hopes to those inclined to the maintenance of the pre-Revolution church until long after it was clear to most people that episcopacy was doomed in Scotland. William was compelled to

recognise that a presbyterian settlement was inescapable, but his reluctance to agree to persecution, his desire for moderation, and his determination not to allow himself to be represented in England as a King who had cheerfully sacrificed a sister episcopalian church all produced great difficulties for his parliamentary managers as they steered the necessary legislation through a hostile Scottish Parliament in 1689 and 1690.

William's pragmatic approach to the problems of governing his new kingdoms gave offence in another respect. He valued experience in government and administrative ability, and he was willing to disregard the past record of competent candidates for high political and legal office. In England in the mid-1690s he was prepared to listen to the advice of the Earl of Sunderland, who had been James's Secretary of State and briefly a Catholic convert in 1688. In Scotland, the elevation of politicians such as Sir James Dalrymple, who had been an ally of the hated Duke of Lauderdale in Charles II's reign, his son Sir John Dalrymple, who had been James's Lord Justice Clerk, and Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat, who had been Lord Justice General from 1678 to 1688, aroused passionate resentment. Proposals were made to exclude James's ex-ministers from office for ever, and were rejected on the grounds that many now in favour of the Revolution would then be incapacitated and that factional purges would intensify, not ameliorate, discontent. There were also complaints that those who had been in exile in Holland in the 1680s, such as Melville, enjoyed too much of the new King's favour.[19] Some of the correspondence of those who jostled for power in the aftermath of the Revolution was written in a spirit of personal malevolence, and historians have drawn the conclusion that the characteristics of Scottish politicians in general, and of the aristocratic magnates in particular, were ambition, cynicism, egocentricity and opportunism.[20] The same concept has been extended into the study of the eighteenth century in Scotland in an influential essay which introduced the apparently indispensable phrase 'gravy train' into the investigation of the Scottish patronage system.[21] Scottish politicians were certainly factious and difficult to manage. The 'Club', the parliamentary opposition to William's ministers in 1689-90, almost made Scotland ungovernable.[22] The Revolution of 1688-9 perhaps intensified this aspect of Scottish political culture, inasmuch as the penalty of failure and of lack of foresight was now the same as the penalty of treason, while the rewards of success were considerable. But there is no particular reason to suppose that Scottish politicians were more self-seeking than politicians anywhere else in the late seventeenth century. They cannot readily be shown to have been more corrupt or ambitious than those of England. It was after all an English politician, the Earl of Danby, promoted to be Marquis of Carmarthen and Duke of Leeds in William's reign, one of the seven signatories of the invitation to William and a prominent English minister, of whom William said in 1689 that '[he] did never speak of anything but to recommend men'.[23]

The Revolution of 1688 was a turning point in Scotland in one final, wide-ranging sense. William was a statesman on the European stage, the acknowledged head of a coalition of powers designed to place limits on the expansion of Louis XIV's France. A European war broke out in the autumn of 1688 as William prepared his invasion fleet and Louis XIV assaulted the Rhineland. William may well have regarded his difficult northern kingdom simply as a resource of men, money and material on which he could draw to help to sustain the war effort of the alliance. Scottish merchants found that France, a lucrative market before 1688, was now closed to them, and that their ships were subject to the attacks of French privateers. Trade slumped, and a succession of bad harvests produced severe economic hardship in the late 1690s. The good effects of the end of the war in 1697 were offset by the disastrous failure of the Darien scheme during the years at the end of the century when William was trying to resolve the question of the Spanish Succession by the Partition Treaties.[24] Queen Anne (who, unlike her sister and brother-in-law, had visited Scotland for a few months as a teenager in 1681-2) succeeded William in 1702; but war broke out again in the same year, and Anne was confronted with the multi-faceted crisis in politics, religion and the economy that was to produce the Union of 1707.

There can be few topics in Scottish history to which the phrase 'more research needs to be done' can with more justice be applied than the Revolution of 1688-9. W.A. Speck, preparing a monograph on the Revolution timed to coincide with its tercentenary, freely admitted that he had originally intended to cover Scotland as well as England but had '... backed off when I became aware of the mass of materials in Scottish repositories and the little use which had been made of them ... there is a wealth of virtually unexploited evidence for the subject'.[25] Some aspects of the Revolution in Scotland that

would repay investigation are: the reception of, and response to, the Revolution in the Scottish localities, especially the burghs; the extent to which episcopalian clergymen were replaced in the parishes, and the mechanics of the process by which this was done; the organization of Scottish defence against the enemies of the Revolution in the context of the Killiecrankie campaign and the opening of a theatre of the European war in Ireland in 1689; and, above all, the structure and inner workings of the Scottish Parliament in the period of the Revolution and its aftermath. There are encouraging signs that scholars are beginning to exploit the material in the archives to enquire into at least the last of these themes. The publication in 1992-3 of *The Parliaments of Scotland: Burgh and Shire Commissioners* is a promising start to the enterprise of illuminating both the nature of the Revolution and the political culture of Scotland in the 1690s.[26]

The prospect of the opening up of the archives of late seventeenth-century Scotland may seem somewhat remote to those teachers of history who are necessarily preoccupied with more familiar topics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and who may not be attracted by the possibilities of a part-time research degree in a neglected field. A period of history in which politics was inextricably bound up with religion may seem uncongenial or inaccessible to modern schoolchildren; or, worse, it may be of interest to them for the wrong reasons, as confirming unhistorical myth or as justifying sectarian prejudice. To set against this, it can be argued that the advent of a devolved Scottish Assembly may conceivably stimulate interest in the study of pre-1707 parliamentary institutions in Scotland. In any case, the transformation of the monarchy, the church, and the political and governmental structure of Scotland, in a short space of time in 1688-9 and in a fashion which ultimately produced consequences of enormous and lasting significance for the whole Scottish people, can hardly be disregarded when reckoning up the turning points of Scottish history.

NOTES

1. I.B. Cowan, 'The Reluctant Revolutionaries: Scotland in 1688', in *By Force or By Default? The Revolution of 1688-1689*, ed. E. Cruickshanks (Edinburgh, 1989); I.B. Cowan, 'Church and State Reformed? The Revolution of 1688 in Scotland', in *The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact*, ed. J.I. Israel (Cambridge, 1991); B.P. Lenman, 'The Scottish Nobility and the Revolution of 1688-1690', in *The Revolutions of 1688*, ed. R. Beddard (Oxford, 1991); B.P. Lenman, 'The Poverty of Political Theory in the Scottish Revolution of 1688-1690', in *The Revolution of 1688-1689: Changing Perspectives*, ed. L.G. Schwoerer (Cambridge, 1992); L.K.J. Glassey, 'William II and the Settlement of Religion in Scotland, 1688-90', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, xxiii (1989); H. Ouston, 'York in Edinburgh: James VII and the Patronage of Learning in Scotland, 1679-1688' in *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland*, eds J. Dwyer, R.A. Mason and A. Murdoch (Edinburgh, 1982); M. Goldie, 'Divergence and Union: Scotland and England, 1660-1707', in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707*, eds B. Bradshaw and J. Morrill (Basingstoke, 1996); R. Hutton, 'The Triple-Crowned Islands', in *The Reigns of Charles II and James VII & II*, ed. L.K.J. Glassey (Basingstoke, 1997). An influential older essay is J. Halliday, 'The Club and the Revolution in Scotland', *Scottish Historical Review*, xlv (1966). The closest to monograph studies of the Revolution in Scotland, both of which embody extensive archival research, are B.P. Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746* (London, 1980), ch. 2, and P. Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War* (Edinburgh, 1986), ch. 4, though in both books the emphasis is less on the Revolution itself than on later periods. Mention should also be made of D.L. Jones, *A Parliamentary History of the Glorious Revolution* (London, 1988), the 'Introduction' to which contains an essay on the proceedings in the Scottish Convention.
2. *The Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, eds T. Thomson and C. Innes (Edinburgh, 1814-1875) [hereafter *APS*], ix. 20.
3. *Journals of the House of Commons* (London, 1803-25), x. 23-4, 28-9; *APS* ix. 37-40. The Bill of Rights, in which the Declaration was embodied, and the Claim of Right are conveniently printed in A. Browning, *English Historical Documents 1660-1714* (2nd edn, London, 1966), pp. 122-8, 635-9.
4. M. Howarth, *A Plain Man's Guide to the Glorious Revolution 1688* (London, 1988), p. 101. The author is described on the back cover as being of 'Scottish Border stock'. It is only fair to add that this volume has no pretensions to be a contribution to scholarship.

5. Browning, *English Historical Documents*, p. 631.
6. Ouston, 'James VII and the Advancement of Learning', *passim*, especially pp. 133-4.
7. *An Account of the Proceedings of the Estates in Scotland 1689-90*, ed. E.W.M. Balfour-Melville (Scottish History Society, third series, xlvi-xlvii, 1954-5), ii. 297.
8. Colin, Earl of Balcarres, *Memoirs Touching the Revolution in Scotland ... Presented to King James at St Germains, MDCXC* (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1841), p. 35.
9. *APS* ix. 38-9.
10. *APS* ix. 40-1, 43, 45, 48-9, 60-1, 62-3; *Account of the Proceedings of the Estates*, i. 85-9.
11. *APS* ix. 93-4.
12. Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Hamilton MSS*, p. 177; Sir William Fraser, *The Melvilles, Earls of Melville, and the Leslies, Earls of Leven* (Edinburgh, 1890), ii. 112.
13. H.C. Foxcroft, *The Life and Letters of Sir George Savile ... first Marquis of Halifax* (London, 1898), ii. 223.
14. *APS* ix. 102.
15. Browning, *English Historical Documents*, pp. 621-2; Gilbert Burnet, *History of His Own Time* (Oxford, 1833), iii. 183; *Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1687-1689*, pp. 35-6, 44-5.
16. R. Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution* (Glasgow, 1836), iv. 468n.
17. R. Keith, *An Historical Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops Down to the Year 1688* (Edinburgh, 1824), pp. 69-70.
18. *A Collection of Letters Addressed by Prelates and Individuals of High Rank in Scotland ... to Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. W.N. Clarke (Edinburgh, 1848), pp. 92, 103, 106.
19. Fraser, *The Melvilles and the Leslies*, ii. 110-11; *Letters and State Papers Chiefly Addressed to George Earl of Melville, Secretary of State for Scotland 1689-1691*, ed. W.L. Melville, (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1843), pp. 29-30; Balcarres, *Memoirs Touching the Revolution*, pp. 42-3.
20. For example, P.W.J. Riley, *King William and the Scottish Politicians* (Edinburgh, 1979), pp. 161-2; and, from a different standpoint, W. Ferguson, *Scotland's Relations with England: A Survey to 1707* (Edinburgh, 1977), pp. 174-5.
21. John M. Simpson, 'Who Steered the Gravy Train, 1707-1766?', in N.T. Phillipson and R. Mitchison (eds), *Scotland in the Age of Improvement* (Edinburgh, 1970).
22. Halliday, 'The Club and the Revolution in Scotland', *passim*.
23. Foxcroft, *Life and Letters of Halifax*, ii. 210.
24. T.C. Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union, 1660-1707* (Edinburgh, 1963), pp. 63-71, 168, 244-56.
25. W.A. Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 14-15 n. 25.
26. Margaret D. Young (ed.), *The Parliaments of Scotland: Burgh and Shire Commissioners* (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1992-3). It is to be hoped that the technique of studying the operation of the Scottish Parliament through its committees, applied with notable success to the Parliaments of 1639-51 and 1660-1 in John R. Young, *The Scottish Parliament 1639-1661: A Political and Constitutional Analysis* (Edinburgh, 1996), will be adapted by Dr Young to the Parliament of 1689-1702.

The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707; a turning point in Scottish History?

PROFESSOR IAN WHYTE

For nearly 300 years the Union of 1707 has generated controversy, debate and misunderstanding. With current moves towards devolution and the re-establishment of a Scottish assembly, the terms of the Treaty of Union, the circumstances in which Scotland entered into it, and its impact on Scotland's economy and society are particularly topical. The significance of the Union has been interpreted in markedly different ways. It was 'ane end of ane auld sang' in the words of the Lord Chancellor Seafield, one of the architects of the treaty. It was a betrayal of the Scots people in which Scotland was 'bought and sold for English gold' by a 'parcel of rogues' in Burns' magnificent polemic song. It was a source of opportunity, a gateway to the 'road west awa' yonder' of Baillie Nichol Jarvie.[1] The Union has also generated a remarkable amount of misunderstanding. In a recent popular scientific book discussing the impact of climatic changes in the past I came across the statement that in the 1690s Scotland lost around half her population as a result of famine and disease, and that the Scots were desperate to enter the Union in order to obtain food aid from England![2] The real circumstances were, needless to say, far more complex. This article reviews recent debates by historians on the nature of the Union and its subsequent economic and social impact.

First, though, we must consider the background economic circumstances which helped to precipitate the Union. The Union of the Crowns in 1603 was just that and no more. Scotland and England shared the same monarch but little else. Scotland had, admittedly, being growing closer to England since the Reformation in 1560, an event brought about largely with English support. However, the extent to which the two societies really converged in the late sixteenth century can easily be overstated. Under the umbrella of similar religions and languages, societies in Scotland and England were, arguably, more different than in the late thirteenth century.[3] Despite an increase in the volume of trade, the English were still the 'auld enemy' to the Scots. The disasters of Flodden, Solway Moss and Pinkie were vividly remembered.

James VI and I soon abandoned plans for closer economic and political union.[4] The Union of 1603 brought trade with England on slightly more favourable terms but Scotland's horizons remained firmly fixed on Europe; on trade with France, the Low Countries, the Baltic and Scandinavia. Large numbers of Scots travelled to Europe as traders and mercenaries, and to Ulster as settlers, but Scots migrants to England were relatively few.[5] The Union of 1603 also brought Scotland some of the disadvantages of a political merger without the advantages of an economic one. British (effectively English) foreign policy dragged Scotland into unwanted wars with the French and Dutch which badly affected trade. Scotland was too shattered by war and high taxation to derive any benefit from the short-lived Cromwellian union. In the later seventeenth century the Scottish economy faced increasing difficulties as other European states erected higher tariff barriers. Some branches of trade with England, notably cattle and linen, prospered. The English Navigation Act, however, banned Scotland from trading directly with England's American colonies, though this did not prevent them from doing to illicitly.[6]

The 1690s brought Scotland a series of disasters. The impact of severe harvest failures was exacerbated by poverty. Higher taxation to finance William III's wars with France, disruption of trade due to French privateers, and chaos within the kirk following the Revolution of 1688 which reduced the efficiency of an already hit and miss system of poor relief, all contributed to the crisis.[7] The resulting famine mortality was all the more shocking after 40 years of generally low food prices. The population of Scotland may have fallen by up to 15% between 1691 and 1700 due to a higher death rate, a drop in the birth rate and a wave of emigration to Ireland.[8] The failure of the Darien Scheme due in part to English opposition, drained Scotland of a massive amount of capital and highlighted her inability to act as a major independent trading nation without English support.[9] In such a climate it is hardly surprising that many Scots began to consider more seriously the possible advantages of

economic union with England.

But the motivating forces which precipitated the Union were political. Of particular importance was the passage in 1703 by the Scottish Parliament, reinvigorated after the Revolution of 1688, of two key acts. One, the Act of Settlement, gave Scotland the right to determine independently a successor to Queen Anne, not necessarily England's choice of the House of Hanover. The other, the Act Anent Peace and War, required Scottish consent to major decisions regarding foreign affairs. As late as 1702, English politicians were uninterested in closer union with Scotland but these developments forced them to revise their views. When it became clear that the Scots would not accept the Hanoverian succession within the framework of the Union of 1603, the case for a full incorporating union was considered more seriously by English politicians. The Scots in turn were influenced by the passage in 1705 of an Alien Act by the English Parliament in response to the Scottish legislation of 1703. This stated that unless the Scots agreed by Christmas 1705 to start negotiations towards a full union, or accepted the Hanoverian succession under the Union of 1603, all Scots in England would be treated as aliens and their lands and assets liable to seizure. The import of Scottish linen, cattle and coal would be banned and a blockage imposed to prevent Scottish trade with France.[10] This crude, but effective blackmail, directed especially at the Scottish nobility, concentrated minds and led to a more careful consideration of possible options.

There has been sometimes vitriolic debate over whether the Union was forced through by Scots commissioners and parliamentarians against the opposition of most ordinary Scots, primarily for economic reasons, or as a result of shrewd political management. Victorian ideas that the treaty was steered through by statesmanlike, far-sighted politicians are now seen as implausibly simplistic. At the other extreme, Ferguson, Riley and Scott have painted a cynical and sordid picture of political corruption in which Union was achieved for short-term, squalid political advantage by means of direct bribery.[11] The economic argument, put forward by Professors Smout and Mitchison, and most recently by Professor Whatley, argues that while individual gain certainly played a significant part, the political manoeuvring took place against an economic background in which the options open to Scotland were considered carefully.[12] It has been pointed out that the correspondence of the protagonists in the Union debate makes little mention of economic concerns.[13] Professor Mitchison has countered by arguing that the economic situation was taken as given, as an ever-present backdrop to the day-to-day minutiae of party politics.[14] Most of the Scots nobles and landowners involved in negotiating the treaty had economic interests which would be directly affected by the outcome of the Union debate, especially cattle and linen but also coal and salt, grain, woollens and fish. They were closely in touch with what was happening on their estates and were likely to be concerned about the effects on their income from rents of any decisions that they took. Political management and bribery undoubtedly played a part in bringing about the Union, especially in gaining the support of some fence-sitting parliamentarians, but its significance may have been over-emphasised. What is clear, however, is that 15 of the 25 clauses in the treaty were directly economic in character.[15] It is probably a mistake to think that all Scottish pro-Unionists supported the treaty for positive reasons, enthusiastic about the opportunities it offered. Many seem to have acquiesced grudgingly for negative reasons, through fear of what would happen to Scotland, economically and politically, if they did NOT join with England.

The wide-ranging concessions contained in the treaty were partly the result of hard bargaining by the Scots commissioners, and partly designed to placate hostile popular opinion. One reason that England was prepared to grant so many concessions, in return for assured political stability, was that Scotland was not seen as an economic threat. Her economy complemented rather than competed with that of England, notably in sectors like cattle and linen manufacture. With Scottish industries like coal mining and salt making, production was geared mainly to domestic markets and would not interfere significantly with English producers.[16]

So Scotland did quite well out of the treaty, to the dismay of the Irish. In return for a reduction in effective autonomy which was quite limited, Scotland gained tremendous potential opportunities. But these opportunities had to be seized. The Union offered a new framework for Scottish growth but no guarantees of success. The start of the post-Union era was not auspicious. There were high, but unrealistic hopes in Scotland for immediate, dramatic results. Disillusion set in rapidly when the promised economic miracle failed to materialise. The abolition in 1708 of the Scottish Privy Council

without the creation of any replacement institution was a mistake. Its presence in 1715 and 1745 might have done much to co-ordinate more effective resistance to the Jacobites. Within a few years the Westminster Parliament (effectively still English with limited Scottish representation) began to flout the spirit and even the letter of the treaty: meddling with church patronage and the imposition of new taxes on malt caused widespread resentment in Scotland.[17] There was, morever, a danger that Scotland might sink into the position that Ireland occupied in the eighteenth century: a dependent economy supplying England with raw materials, low-grade manufactures and cheap labour. That this did not happen was due to developing Scottish enterprise. But how much of this related to elements already present in Scottish society, and how much was a direct outcome of the Union itself?

How much of a watershed was the Union? The conventional view is that it provided the basis for all subsequent economic growth and social development including the changes which have been traditionally labelled the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions, and the intellectual flowering of the Enlightenment. More recently, however, the significance of the seventeenth century in providing a firm foundation for eighteenth-century achievements has been emphasised. The old view of the seventeenth century in Scotland has been a bleak one: an intellectual wilderness dominated by a narrow-minded kirk, a society firmly under the stern control of the kirk sessions, and an economy trapped in a medieval mindset, with an inefficient agriculture prone to catastrophic failures in food production. Recently more positive images have emerged.

In agriculture, important changes can be discerned, especially in the decades following the Restoration. Some were conspicuous but superficial, such as the enclosure of land on the policies and mains adjoining castles and country houses, with the planting of trees, experiments in selective livestock breeding and new crop rotations. Others were more widespread, less obtrusive but in the long run more far-reaching in their significance. These included a trend towards granting longer leases with greater legal security of tenure, the commutation of traditional rents in kind to money payments, increasing tenants' involvement in the market, and a gradual reduction in multiple tenancies, with consequent increases in holding size. In areas like the Lothians by the end of the seventeenth century, such changes had created a countryside dominated by large farms, occupied by substantial tenants and worked mainly by cottars and servants.[18] In terms of trade, too, a number of new business practices pre-dated 1707. Some, such as the use of joint stock companies and the employment of factors in foreign cities providing rudimentary banking services, had been developed early in the seventeenth century by Edinburgh's merchant princes.[19]

In intellectual terms too the later seventeenth century was a period of important advance. During the period when the future James VII and II, as Duke of York, was resident in Edinburgh, his patronage encouraged a range of developments in the city. These were not solely associated with aristocratic dilletantes, as in traditional courts, but increasingly with the gentry and urban professional classes, notably Edinburgh's lawyers and doctors,[20] anticipating the later achievements of the Enlightenment. There were also changes in the universities, particularly in the teaching of mathematics and science as well as in law, with the ideas of Brahe, Kepler and Newton, among others, becoming accepted and taught. These developments culminated in the most notable and far-reaching reforms at Edinburgh in 1708, where the Principal of the university, William Carstares, abolished the restrictive system of regenting, replacing it with a professorial structure which allowed greater specialisation and the teaching of a wider range of subjects.[21]

So many post-1707 developments were really initiated before the Union. But if the Union was so significant why did it take so long for its benefits to become evident? The traditional view that it was not until after Culloden that political conditions in Scotland were sufficiently stable to encourage economic growth, is an oversimplification. Nevertheless, economic growth in the first four decades after 1707 does appear to have been modest. Exports of cattle and linen certainly rose but livestock rearing and linen weaving both fitted into the traditional economy and could be expanded without involving major structural changes. In part, the lack of expansion was due to the fact that economic growth in England, now Scotland's major market, was also sluggish at this period. However, progress in the early decades of the eighteenth century was not entirely lacking, and may have been underestimated. Professor Devine has shown that the organisational changes in agriculture mentioned

above continued. By the mid eighteenth century, over much of the Lowlands an embryo class of capitalist farmers had developed, ready to work with their landlords in the process of improvement and with the capital reserves to fund some of the work themselves.[22] Recent research has also suggested that the growth of coal output, so significant for industrialisation, was also greater in the first half of the eighteenth century than has previously been accepted. Revised figures by Professor Whatley suggest that output rose from perhaps 225,000 tons a year in the late seventeenth century to at least 700,000 tons by 1750.[23] Earlier growth in the tobacco trade is also suggested by the realisation that official figures substantially underestimate the level of imports due to the amount of smuggling.[24] While official figures suggest that tobacco imports increased most rapidly in the 1740's, an allowance for smuggling, which was more significant before c1725, would place the onset of growth earlier.

The Union brought other opportunities. One example was the increased migration of Scots to England. Scottish emigration in the eighteenth century, especially from the Highlands, has been extensively studied but the flow of Scots to England has received less attention partly because it is much less well documented. The published marriage registers for eighteenth-century Edinburgh provide an indirect indication of this movement by listing Edinburgh-based brides and grooms who married partners resident in England, many of them, from their surnames, clearly of Scottish origin. In 1701-10 a mere 0.4% of marriages registered in Edinburgh involved a partner from south of the Border. By 1781-90 the figure had reached 4.6%: an eleven-fold increase. The way south, which had been pioneered in 1603 by the cronies of James VI, had become by the mid eighteenth century, Samuel Johnson's famous 'high road to England'

Nor was movement across the Border a one-sided process. Scotland also began to benefit from an inflow of English capital and technical expertise, a process which deserves more detailed research than it has so far received. The activities of that dubious bunch of speculators, the York Buildings Company, in the Highlands after 1715 have given this process a bad image[26] but by the mid eighteenth century more positive results were emerging. The partnership between William Cadell, a Scottish merchant, Samuel Garbett, a Birmingham manufacturer and John Roebuck, an English chemist, first at Prestonpans where they set up a plant for making sulphuric acid, and then in 1759 with the founding of the Carron Ironworks is one of the best examples of how Scottish business acumen could be merged with English technology.[27]

By the mid eighteenth century the Scots were, in the view of many Englishmen, starting to exert power and influence within Britain to a disproportionate degree. Scottish universities were turning out more trained professionals than Oxford or Cambridge; inevitably many of them went south. The British army provided a new outlet for younger sons of Scottish landed families. By the mid eighteenth century one army officer in four was a Scot. The expansion of empire also created increasing openings in colonial administration as well as trade.[28] The Scots may, in the main, have been reluctant partners to Union but within a generation it was providing a far wider stage for their talents and ambitions than an independent Scotland could ever have done

So the Union was forced through by English politicians for the sake of political expediency against the wishes of most Scots. Scottish commissioners and members of parliament supported the treaty for a mixture of reasons. Direct bribery and manipulation undoubtedly played a part. More significant perhaps were indirect inducements; financial ones like the repayment of the Darien losses but also economic ones such as support and protection for some Scottish industries and the encouragement of cattle and linen exports. But behind all this there does seem to have been a longer-term view combining both pessimism and optimism. The Alien Act, with the potential threat of English military intervention, represented a worst-case scenario for a Scotland which tried to go it alone both politically and economically. On the other hand there was the lure of free access to English markets. In the prevailing circumstances there was no realistic alternative to Union. But the form that it took was shaped by hard negotiations in which the Scots won important concessions. Some of these, such as the continuation of her church and legal system, made major contributions to the survival of a separate Scottish identity. The Union certainly provided the Scots with opportunities. That they were seized, however, depended on social characteristics and economic structures which were already in place, if sometimes only in embryo form. The Union was certainly an important turning point in

Scottish history, bringing many changes, but there were also important elements of continuity which have frequently been underestimated.

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The Static Society: A Sceptical Look at the Later Russian Empire

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Having worked on aspects of the cultural and political history of the later Russian Empire, I am now looking at its social history. What has struck me is that the society of the later empire was not as ripe for revolution as it has been said to be.[1] Historians' natural inclination is to study the things that change rather than the things that stay the same. When they study periods immediately prior to revolutions, the natural inclination becomes a compulsion. But to take the propositions I advance in the nine chapters of the book I am writing, modes of employment diversified only slowly in the Russian Empire of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the many different regions of the empire continued not to coalesce; the 'demographic explosion' of the years after 1861 needs to be set in the context of a tendency towards population growth that had been marked in the eighteenth century and had merely receded for a few decades in the first half of the nineteenth; literacy grew at a snail's pace; 'communality' continued to prevail over intimations of individuality; neither geographical nor social mobility was extensive; belief systems remained traditional or even pagan; the authorities' intermittent 'urge to mobilize' tended to bear little fruit; and the real solvents of the imperial order were war, foreign invasion, and a loss of heart on the part of the tsarist authorities.

Going so far as to say, in the light of these propositions, that the society of the later Russian Empire was 'static' is probably to strive for effect. I do feel the need, however, to get away from the idea that the Russian Empire fell apart because its society had been getting increasingly dynamic. Christopher Read emphasizes at a number of points in his recent book on the years 1917-21 in Russia that the social revolution came not before but after the fall of the Romanovs.[2] Although he underestimates the importance for Russian society of domestic developments occasioned by the First World War (and overestimates the extent of the social transformation that actually occurred in the years 1917-21, though this is not my subject here), I agree with his implication that long-term social trends prior to 1917 were not leading inexorably towards collapse.

For reasons of space I shall look in what follows at just one of the nine propositions I outlined above – the sixth, that neither geographical nor social mobility was extensive in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Russian Empire.

I admit at the outset that this proposition seems to be perverse, that it probably needs a little modification, and that it certainly needs a great deal of elucidation.

So far as geographical mobility is concerned, getting around undoubtedly became easier towards the end of the life of the Russian Empire. If, between about 1500 and 1861, the distances travellers could cover went up only from something between twenty and forty-five kilometres a day to something between forty and 125 kilometres,[3] in 1889 aspiring Siberian colonists could make the sea journey from Odessa to Vladivostok in six weeks.[4] In 1894 they could get to central Siberia from the European part of the empire by rail.[5] In 1912 a voter in the province of Archangel was prepared to undertake a round-trip of 1000 kilometres simply in order to cast his ballot in the elections to the Third Duma.[6] At the end of 1912 the trams went electric in Tashkent.[7] In 1915 a garage in Petrograd was servicing ninety motor-cars a year and undertaking minor repairs on thirty-five a day.[8]

If, moreover, geographical movement became easier, the government believed that the reforms of the 1860s also made it likelier. In 1881 the Ministry of State Properties wrote:

When the landlords' peasants were enserfed and when they had more extensive tracts of territory at their disposal, the question of migration cropped up rarely and lay beyond the bounds of government action. With the coming of free labour, with a certain restriction of peasant land use, with the replacement of the natural economy by a money economy and with the opening of vast markets by virtue of the

construction of a railway network, the relative standing of individual agricultural undertakings has changed greatly (both among communal owners and among owners with household tenure). Under the influence of these circumstances, peasant demand for land has increased enormously. The cost of leasing it has therefore gone up. In the densely populated black-soil provinces the cost of leasing land is now so high that working rented land is virtually beyond the reach of weak undertakings. Owning too little land of their own and unable to acquire more by renting it, peasants have naturally started thinking about migration.[9]

Peasants were indeed thinking about migration. Having applied for re-settlement on government land in 1878, some ex-serfs in the province of Tambov were still pressing their suit in 1886.[10] Many went beyond application to action. 36,015 peasant migrants passed through Nizhnii Novgorod on their way to Siberia in the ten weeks between the opening of navigation on the river Volga on 1 April 1894 and the following 10 June.[11] Others went south rather than east, forsaking farming for the factories. Their number was so great that employers could hire and fire at will. 'The big influx of workers in the province,' wrote the Chief Factory Inspector for Ekaterinoslav in 1904, 'makes their position in the factories insecure'.[12]

Evidence of this kind might lead one to suppose that the population of the later Russian Empire was newly, very largely, and well-nigh continuously on the move. But there are at least six counter-arguments:

(1) that geographical mobility did not increase as much after the reforms of the 1860s as some contemporaries thought or some scholars have implied;
(2) that the efforts of the government to keep the movement of the population within certain limits betwen the 1860s and at least 1906 enjoyed a degree of success;
(3) that although geographical mobility increased up to a point after the 1860s and can be made to look large, it remained small relative to the total size of the population;
(4) that although physical mobility is often associated with social mobility, the correlation may not be very strong in the case of the Russian Empire;
(5) that many of those who moved from the countryside to the towns retained links with their places of origin; and
(6) that some of those who thought they were leaving their homes for good came back.

I shall look at these counter-arguments in turn. It may be that geographical and social mobility ought not to be assigned an unduly prominent place on the list of solvents of the tsarist regime.

The first counter-argument – that geographical mobility did not increase as much after the reforms of the 1860s as some contemporaries thought or some scholars have implied – turns on the fact that movement was by no means insignificant in the decades prior to the abolition of serfdom. Serfowners sometimes obliged peasants to move to new estates. The government sometimes encouraged peasants to move in order to consolidate Russian possession of shifting frontiers. Above all, peasants seem to have needed only the flimsiest of pretexts to move of their own accord. In February 1823, for example, the government issued an edict on the despatch of vagrants to Siberia; by 1825 large numbers of peasants in the provinces of Penza, Saratov, and Simbirsk were interpeting this edict to mean that they were being encouraged to cross the Volga and settle in Orenburg.[13] Comparable instances of 'misinterpretation' could be cited.[14]

One reason for peasant 'misinterpretation' of edicts on movement was that it sometimes paid off. Even prior to the reforms of the 1860s, the regime's hostility to voluntary movement on the part of the lower orders was far from total. Its representative in Bessarabia may have been looking, in 1826, for ways to put an end to the near-nomadism of the local gypsies,[15] but gypsies were a special case (and were still troubling the authorities in 1893[16]). If mobility could be monitored and controlled, the authorities could see the point of it. Some sorts of movement were profitable not in the sense that they played a part in tying frontier regions more firmly to the centre, but in the literal sense that they brought in cash: income from the sale of internal passports benefited the exchequer to the tune of more than a million silver rubles a year in each of the years 1823-55.[17]

By law, moreover, state-owned peasants – about half the total before the reforms of the 1860s –

could move relatively easily. An official pointed out in 1832 that state peasants took frequent advantage of their opportunities for physical mobility.[18] Senator Evgraf Mechnikov submitted a long memorandum to the Committee of Ministers in 1833 complaining about the inconvenience and disorder that ensued when state peasants moved to vacant land in other provinces,[19] but neither he nor the discussants contemplated bringing movement to an end. As an official put it in the post-emancipation era, until 1866 'the migration of state peasants from places where land was short to places where it was plentiful ... was not only permitted by law, but regulated by precise rules and even encouraged by special benefits for migrating peasants and governmental concern for them'.[20] Ironically, the reforms of the 1860s had the effect of actually reducing the former state peasants' right of movement, for the law that inaugurated their redemption of state allocations of land said that they were not to be allowed to embark upon the redemption of more state land than they had been allocated in the first place (in case they proved unable to meet the increased level of repayment). If, in a given community, some former state peasants decided to leave for another place, their departure had the effect of increasing the land allocations of those who remained; so departure had to be prevented.[21]

This first counter-argument – that geographical mobility did not increase as much after the reforms of the 1860s as some people have said – may necessitate some modification of the original proposition. Instead of reading 'neither geographical nor social mobility was extensive', it should perhaps read 'neither geographical nor social mobility was much more extensive at the end of the imperial period than it was in the first half of the nineteenth century'. Even this revised version of the proposition, however, implies less change than some students of mobility discern.

The second counter-argument – that governmental efforts to keep the movement of the population within certain limits between the 1860s and 1906 enjoyed a degree of success – is hard to illustrate in view of the fact that it is impossible to know how much movement there would have been if the government had made no effort at all; but unless peasants simply ignored what the government said and moved around at will (which, admittedly, many did), restraining legislation must have had a certain importance.

Listing the legislation on re-settlement is easy. Under an edict of 15 December 1866 'all financial assistance for migration from the state treasury was abolished, and migration on the part of former state peasants was made dependent on governmental permission'. Under 'temporary rules' of 10 June 1881 the government retained the right to grant or withhold permission for migration necessitated by economic circumstances. 'In 1892 the government again stops issuing permissions for migration'. Only on 7 December 1896 was 'each family given the right to send scouts to places of settlement in order to inspect and choose a plot of land and familiarize themselves with local conditions'.[22] Only after Stolypin became Prime Minister in 1906 did the government promote migration with a degree of enthusiasm.

Archival evidence sometimes gives the impression that, in an ideal world, the government would not have given any ground at all in respect of geographical mobility. Having promulgated the 'temporary rules' on migration of June 1881, the regime set up a Special Council to deliberate on a permanent version. This produced three variants, which the Minister of Internal Affairs sent to provincial governors for comment in August 1882. In an accompanying circular the minister raised eleven questions.[23] The summary of the governors' replies occupied more than 200 printed pages.[24] The issue was getting bogged down in red tape. Migration increased, but many governors did their best to spike it. In March 1889, for example, the Governor of Chernigov dwelt at length on the difficulties involved in the departure of local peasants for the Far East.[25] Although a law of 13 July 1889 permitted the peasants of thirteen provinces to apply for re-settlement elsewhere in the European part of the empire as well as in western Siberia, Kazakhstan, and part of Central Asia, interested parties had to show good cause to both the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Properties and could move only when designated plots of land were available.[26] Not all applications succeeded.[27] The Minister of Internal Affairs stated explicitly in April 1890 that 'the law of 13 July 1889 ... by no means had as its goal the intensification or encouragement of the migration movement'.[28] In March 1892 the law was suspended, ostensibly because of a shortage of demarcated plots of land in Siberia,[29] but actually because, at a time of famine in the European part of the empire, peasants were trying to

exploit it to a far greater extent than the government was prepared to allow. When the Minister of Internal Affairs lifted the suspension just over two years later, he was careful to explain that 'migration is not being encouraged by the government, but merely sanctioned', and that 'too great development of migratory movement could undermine established economic patterns in entire regions and in general give rise to extremely unwelcome complications'.[30] Governors were not to 'raise vain hopes and expectations among peasants, but on the contrary to convince them that applications for re-settlement can be decided in their favour only when the reasons which have given rise to them are acknowledged to be worthy of consideration'.[31]

Migration for the purpose of permanent re-settlement, furthermore, was only one sort of movement to which the authorities related equivocally. They were not very keen on temporary absence either. Inhabitants of the empire had been obliged to possess internal passports since the time of Peter the Great. As we have seen, the charges levied for passports provided the government with a significant source of revenue. Passports showed whether their bearers had paid their taxes, what their permanent places of residence were, and how long they had the right to be away. The authorities thought of the passport as a valuable instrument of control. They considered abolishing it at the end of the 1850s, modified the passport regulations in 1894,[32] and modified them again, radically, under Stolypin, but they could never bring themselves to abandon the passport system altogether. It could be circumvented, of course,[33] but at least until 1906 it often caught out the unwary. Indeed, 'In 1896 in St Petersburg, in a population of 1.2 million inhabitants, there were 23,000 arrests for passport violations, compared to 46,000 for criminal offences'.[34]

The third counter-argument – that although geographical mobility increased up to a point after the 1860s and can be made to look large, it remained small relative to the total size of the population – may be illustrated by pointing to the fact that only about a seventh of those enumerated in the census of 1897 (18,368,000 people out of 125,640,000) were 'non-local inhabitants of all categories'.[35] The fraction was rising (just under one-fourteenth of the proverbially mobile population of the province of Iaroslavl' was to be found in the cities of St Petersburg and Moscow at the turn of the 1870s[36]), and it was to rise further after Stolypin became Prime Minister in 1906; but a large majority of the empire's inhabitants remained at home.

The fourth counter-argument – that although physical mobility is often associated with social mobility, the correlation may not be very strong in the case of the Russian Empire – turns on the fact that many of those who engaged in geographical movement in the later Russian Empire did so not in order to escape the culture in which they had been reared, but in order to preserve it. Distinguishing between 'rural-urban' and 'rural-rural' migration makes the modernising overtones of the phenomenon as a whole, less clear than they are sometimes made out to be.

Admittedly, migration from the countryside to towns was evident in the Russian Empire at least as early as the second half of the eighteenth century. Fraught with difficulty (because, for example, a peasant who enrolled in the merchantry had to pay taxes as both peasant and merchant until the next time the government counted the tax-paying population), it was nevertheless the main way in which towns grew in size.[37] And towns did grow in size: 'Between 1724 and 1796 the population of the towns grew from 328,000 to 1,301,000, i.e. almost four times'.[38]

But the urban population of the empire was small relative to the total population until at least the end of the nineteenth century. Whatever the extent, therefore, to which eighteenth-century towns grew in size as the result of an influx of peasants, the importance of the influx in the context of the history of the peasantry was minor. Not many peasants were turning into townsmen. Peasant migration prior to the abolition of serfdom was mainly from one part of the countryside to another. Educated contemporaries knew this. Indeed, some of them apparently argued that, because the countryside lay overwhelmingly at the centre of the population's attention, the construction of railways would damage rather than benefit St Petersburg by encouraging departures rather than arrivals.[39]

The reverse, of course, proved to be the case. St Petersburg grew mightily in the generation after the abolition of serfdom. Nevertheless, according to official figures it seems to be the case that the number of migrants who went to towns exceeded the number who went from one part of the countryside to another only at the very end of the tsarist period. Of those 18,368,000 'non-local inhabitants of all

categories' enumerated in the census of 1897, only 42.1% were to be found in towns.[40] Even if one excludes from the total those who had migrated within their province of birth (i.e. if one looks only at people who migrated over longer distances), the proportion in towns rises only to 43.3%. Although the 1897 census's definition of the difference between town and country almost certainly underestimated the size of the empire's urban population, it may still be the case that rural-urban migrants became more numerous than rural-rural migrants only after the turn of the twentieth century.

The fifth counter-argument – that many of those who moved from the countryside to the towns retained links with their rural places of origin – is common currency among students of urbanisation in the late Russian Empire and need not detain us. By way of example, one might cite the response of the Chief Factory Inspector for the province of Khar'kov to a government circular of April 1904 which enquired whether the recent downturn in the fortunes of industry (in part the effect of the dislocation brought on by the Russo-Japanese War) inclined him to the view that there might be trouble in the city of Khar'kov on 1 May (already the traditional day of worker protest). Despite recent contraction at the local brick and sugar-beet plants, the inspector said, he did not expect trouble as virtually all the workers at the plants were peasants, three-quarters of them incomers, the remainder local. The implication was that if the workers' circumstances in the city deteriorated, they could live off the land.[41] Like many if not virtually all Russian townsmen, the workers of Khar'kov were still close to their rural roots.

The sixth counter-argument – that some of those who thought they were leaving their homes for good came back – relates mainly to peasants who made their way to Siberia but found they were unable to establish themselves there. The Governor of Nizhnii Novgorod commented on this phenomenon as early as 1894.[42] In the same year officials in Kursk asked St Petersburg what was to be done with 'returnees' whose villages refused to give them back the land they had parted with before they set out.[43] Between 1896 and 1909 about 10 percent of all migrants returned.[44] Thus movement has to be weighed against counter-movement.

In the light of these six counter-arguments, it seems to me that it is at least worth looking a little harder at the possibility that geographical and social mobility have been given undue weight in the hunt for explanations of the tsarist regime's demise.

Or at least, they have been given undue importance in the hunt for *long-term* explanations of the tsarist regime's demise. I would be the first to acknowledge that they increased dramatically as a result of the First World War. The many references in the St Petersburg archives to war-time dysfunction on the railways and the value (or worthlessness) of refugee labour imply a strong degree of physical displacement between 1914 and 1917. The phenomenon of displacement may be further illustrated with reference to the extent of military recruitment. At any one time in the Crimean War, the empire had roughly 400,000 troops under arms.[45] The equivalent figure in the First World War varied greatly, but it was always much higher and the trend was ever upwards. The Military-Sanitary Administration reckoned that there were two and a half million men under arms in 1914-15 and around four million in 1916-17; the General Staff that there were something under three million in 1914, three to four and a half million in 1915, and over six million for most of 1916 and 1917.[46] One authority says that the Russian Empire recruited 15,123,000 troops *in toto* during the First World War; another that 'Sixteen million men were mobilized, i.e. more than twelve times more than for the Russo-Japanese War. This amounted to 40% of all men aged between twenty and fifty'.[47] Setting this degree of adult male displacement in context is difficult, but it may be worth bearing in mind that, at 18,368,000, the total number of people enumerated who were resident in places other than those in which they had been born at the time of the census of 1897 was only a little higher than the total number displaced between 1914 and 1917 for the single purpose of fighting the war. When one adds to the number of those recruited into the armed forces the number of those obliged to flee the enemy (let alone the number of those displaced for any other reason), it seems likely that the empire was witnessing a much higher rate of departure from home between 1914 and 1917 than it had ever seen before.

I hope by now to have given some sense of how my 'continuity rather than change' argument might be elaborated for just one of the nine propositions I listed at the beginning. I have leant too far, of course, in the direction of continuity. One of the problems even western historians faced, however,

when studying Russian history in the days of the Soviet Union's existence, was escaping that 'ever onward and upward' sensation you got from almost all Russian-language historical writing of that time. The peasant historian Steven Hoch said in 1993 at an American conference on 'Revisioning Imperial Russia' that we have to contemplate the possibility that 'Russia [before 1917] wasn't necessarily going anywhere'.[48] This is the possibility I have been exploring here.

NOTES

1 Celebrated examples of the 'ripe for revolution' approach include, in respect of cities, Leopold Haimson, 'The Problem of Social Stability in Urban Russia, 1905-19171, *Slavic Review,* vol. 23 (1964), pp. 619-42, and vol. 24 (1965), pp. 1-22, and, in respect of the countryside, Geroid Tanquary Robinson, *Rural Russia under the Old Regime* (New York, 1932).

2 Christopher Read, *From Tsar to Soviets: The Russian People and Their Revolution* (London, 1996), p. 45 (it is essential to bear in mind that it was not the social revolution that brought about the collapse of the Russian state, but the collapse of the state that facilitated the social revolution'), 118 ('The Russian revolution ... was characterized by the overthrow of the state preceding the social revolution), and 287 ('the fall of the autocratic state preceded the explosion of the social revolution ... The widespread image of a hated tsarism succumbing to waves of popular revolt, like the French monarchy between 1789 and 1793, has to be returned to the realm of myth').

3 A. V. Dulov, *Geograficheskaia sreda i istoriia Rossii: Konets XV - seredina XIXv.* (Moscow, 1983), p. 130.

4 St Petersburg, Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (Russian State Historical Archive), *fond* (classmark) 391, *opis'* (sub-division) 1, *delo* (file) 25, *list* (folio) 71. All citations in numerical form refer to material in this archive.

5 Though in goods wagons: 391/I/47/169.

6 23/17/528/18-19.

7 23/17/539/17.

8 23/17/539/113.

9 391/I/4/21.

10 391/I/16/13-38.

11 391/I/47/190.

12 23/30/3/156.

13 G. A. Kavtaradze, 'K istorii krest'ianskogo samosoznaniia perioda reformy' 1861g.1, *Vestnik leningradskogo universiteta,* 1969 no. 14, p. 57.

14 See, for example, David Moon, *Russian peasants and Tsarist Legislation on the Eve Of Reform* (London, 1992), ch. 2 (on Peasant movement to the North Caucasus in the 1830s and 1840s).

15 379/2/35/2-3.

16 1405/542/70/33.

17 R. M. Vvedenskii, 'Metodika analiza pasportnoi statistiki Rossii pervoi poloviny XIX v.', in *Istochnikovedenie otechestvennoi istorii: Sbornik statei 1981,* ed. V. I. Buganov (Moscow, 1982), p. 172.

18 379/2/118/5.

19 379/2/139/4-22[a]

20 391/I/4/44.

21 Loc. cit.

22 All quotations from A. I. Gozulov, *Ocherki istorii otechestvennoi statistiki* (Moscow, 1972), p. 108.

23 391/I/4/14.

24 391/I/9/1-103.

25 391/I/25/119-25.

26 391/I/27/2-5.

27 For typical rejections see 391/I/26/30-5, 52-8.

28 391/I/27/135.

29 391/I/47/328.

30 391/I/47/211.

31 391/I/47/214.

32 1405/542/70; 577/50/375.

33 See, for example, Ivan Stoliarov, *Zapiski russkogo krest'ianina* (Paris, 1986), pp. 28-9 (on the dubious travel documents of pilgrims in the Voronezh countryside in the 1890s).

34 Steve Smith, 'Writing the History of the Russian Revolution after the Fall of Communism', *Europe-Asia Studies,* vol. 46 (1994), p. 574.

35 i.e. people resident in places other than those in which they had been born: B. V. Tikhonov, *Pereseleniia v Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIXv.* (Moscow, 1978), p. 159.

36 Iu. E. Ianson, *Sravnitel'naia statistika Rossii i zapadno-evropeiskikh gosudarstv,* vol. 1: *Territoriia i naselenie* (St Petersburg, 1878), p. 369.

37 Iu. R. Klokman, *Sotsial'no-ekonomicheskaia istoriia russkogo goroda: Vtoraia polovina XVIII veka* (Moscow 1967), pp. 93-100.

38 M. M. Shul'gin, *Zemleustroistvo i pereseleniia v Rossii v XVIII ipervoi polovine XIX vv.* (Moscow, 1928), p. 51.

39 1290/2/59/64.

40 Tikhonov, *Pereseleniia,* p. 159.

41 23/30/3/92.

42 391/I/47/169.

43 391/I/47291.

44 Donald W. Treadgold, *The Great Siberian Migration* (Princeton, 1957), p. 173.

45 L. S. Kaminskii and S. A. Novosel'skii, *Poteri v proshlykh voinakh (1756-1918): Spravochnaia kniga* (Moscow, 1947), p. 23.

46 Ibid., pp. 48-51.

47 K. G. Vasil'ev and A. E. Segal, *Istoriia epidemii v Rossii* (Moscow, 1960), p. 345; B. Ts. Urlanis, *Rozhdaemost' i prodolzhitel'nost' zhizni v SSSR* (Moscow, 1963), p. 21.

48 Jane Burbank, 'Revisioning Imperial Russia', *Slavic Review,* vol. 52 (1993), p. 564.

Russia after 1905: was Tsarism doomed?

DR PETER WALDRON

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the history of the Russian Revolution has received new attention. The failure of the Bolshevik experiment has shown that there was nothing inevitable about the revolution of 1917 and it has been possible to take a more balanced view of the fate of Tsarism. Some of the work produced over the last seven years has represented a clear reaction against the Soviet portrayal of the downfall of the old regime as arising from the 'exceptional revolutionary nature of the Russian proletariat, led by the Bolshevik party'.[1] Pipes argues that it was political problems which brought down Nicholas II and his regime and that 'initially neither social discontent nor the agitation of the radical intelligentsia played any significant role in these events'.[2] Other historians have ranged more widely and Figes, for example, attributes the failure of the Imperial Russian state to its failure to modernize before 1914.[3] Much of the recent work on the revolution has, however, continued to focus on 1917 itself and less attention has been paid to the years preceding it.

The last decades of Tsarism, however, demand close attention since the 20 years immediately before the 1917 revolution contained both intimations of the regime's mortality and seeds of hope which offered encouragement to Tsarism's supporters. The revolution of 1905, described by Lenin as the 'dress rehearsal' for 1917,[4] represented the greatest threat to the existence of the Tsarist regime since the Pugachev revolt more than 130 years earlier. The towns and cities of Russia were engulfed by strikes in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday in January and again in the autumn as more than 400,000 people stopped work on each occasion. In the countryside, there were more than 3,000 separate incidents of rebellion during the year as peasants burned landlords' estates and crops. The Ekaterinoslav nobility dramatically declared that all that was left of their estates were 'smouldering ruins'[5] and called for decisive action to quell revolt. The popular discontent evident throughout 1905 provided the opportunity for the liberal intelligentsia to press their demands for constitutional reform and for some degree of popular involvement in government. The combined weight of opposition to the Tsarist regime was all the more threatening, since Russia was recovering from the trauma of defeat in war with Japan and the prestige of Nicholas II's government was in rapid decline. The war also presented more tangible difficulties for the Tsarist regime: many of the empire's troops had been sent to the Far East to fight the Japanese and – with the Trans-Siberian Railway still under construction – it was a very slow process to move them back to European Russia to cope with rebellion in town and countryside.

The unlimited autocratic nature of imperial Russian government meant that any decision to make concessions to popular opinion had to come from Nicholas II himself. The Tsar was deeply committed to maintaining his authority intact and was extremely reluctant to make any move towards allowing popular participation in government, even when the existence of his regime was self-evidently under threat. While in the summer of 1905 he was prepared to allow the establishment of a consultative national assembly, the Bulygin Duma, named after the Minister of Internal Affairs of the time, it took the resurgence of national discontent in the autumn to push the Tsar into agreeing to the formation of a legislative parliament. Even then, he was deeply unhappy about the decision and wrote that 'Yes, Russia is being granted a constitution. There were not many of us who fought against it'.[6] The constitution devised for Russia turned out, however, to represent only a very slight reduction in the Tsar's authority. Although a popularly elected Duma was to be introduced, this was to be only one part of the new legislative process. A second chamber, the State Council, half of whose members were appointed by the Tsar, was put in place to provide a counterweight to the Duma and at the pinnacle of the parliamentary system sat the autocrat himself. Each of these three bodies – Duma, State Council and Tsar – had to approve a bill before it could become law and as both State Council and Tsar were guaranteed to take a conservative line, the post-1905 settlement looked to have only a slim chance of delivering real change to Russia.

This was accentuated by the change to the Duma electoral law in June 1907. Frustrated by the radical nature of the First and Second Dumas, the government decided that the only way to achieve a Duma which might be able to work with it was to adjust the franchise to reduce the voice of the peasantry who had voted for radical parties which promised them land, and to increase the weight given to voters from the nobility and the prosperous urban classes. The very nature of the new Russian parliamentary system demonstrated the confused attitudes towards reform that existed. On the right of the political spectrum, Nicholas II and conservative groups saw the establishment of the Duma as representing the full extent of the concessions that they were willing to make and wanted, if possible, to restrict the power of the new Duma as much as possible. Parties on the left of Russian politics, such as the Kadets and the Trudoviki which together had dominated the First and Second Dumas, saw the 1905 revolution as providing a beginning to a much wider process of radical reform. The only political group which accepted the new constitutional arrangements and which was prepared to work within them was the Octobrists, determined to uphold the principles of the October manifesto which had established the Duma, and drawing their support from the urban middle classes and from middling nobles.

The nature of the 1905 revolution was thus ambiguous. The position was further complicated by the emergence at the head of the government of a man who proved to be fundamentally out of step with the opinions of Nicholas II and who wanted to use the new constitutional system as the springboard for further reform. Peter Stolypin was appointed as Minister of Internal Affairs in April 1906 and within three months had become Prime Minister. As provincial governor of Saratov, Stolypin had come to the monarch's attention when he had acted with great vigour and personal courage to put down revolt during 1905. Stolypin was an unusual figure to head the St Petersburg government and had gained a perspective on Russian government that was very different from most of his ministerial colleagues. He had spent more than 15 years living and working in the provinces, so that the move to the capital represented a radical change in direction. Stolypin's experience was even more untypical since his base was in the northwestern provinces of the empire. His family home was in the province of Kovno, an area where two thirds of the population was Lithuanian and where Polish landowners retained great strength. The emancipation of the serfs in the 1860s had been welcomed by these nobles, tired of the government's attempts to promote the interests of the Russian peasantry at their expense. The regime had, however, drawn back from introducing elected local councils – *zemstva* – in 1864 in the province, wary of the type of assembly that would result from a population that was only seven per cent Russian. Stolypin's brief experience of governing Saratov between 1903 and 1906 was his only real exposure to the problems of a more typical province in which the population was almost exclusively Russian and where *zemstva* played a part in local government.

The new premier's experience was not, however, as limited as the bones of his career might suggest. Stolypin and his wife did own estates in Russia proper and this gave him some exposure to the problems which faced the majority of the empire's population. Furthermore, Stolypin's own provincial roots concealed his family's links with the elite of Russian society. His father had served in the army, reaching the rank of general and had been appointed as adjutant to Tsar Alexander II and then as governor-general of Eastern Rumelia, ending his career as commandant of the Moscow Kremlin. Stolypin's wife's family – the Neidgarts – was also part of Russia's social elite. Based in Moscow, they played an important part in the management of the city's charitable institutions and were welcome guests of the Moscow governor-general, Grand Duke Sergei. When Stolypin moved to the capital in 1906, therefore, he possessed the social background and connections which enabled him to fit easily into the St Petersburg environment, but lacked recent direct experience of the central government bureaucracy.[7] This did provide Stolypin with some advantages. He came to St Petersburg free from the burden of ministerial debate and dispute that had served to inhibit reform during the nineteenth century. His lack of ministerial experience meant that, in 1906, he was not perceived as attached to any particular faction or viewpoint, so that it was easier for Stolypin to set out a new course for the government. His extensive and direct experience of life in the provinces gave him a perspective on the tasks of the government that was rare. Stolypin's view of reform was focused on the needs of the empire's population, seeing attention to the conditions in which the people lived as providing the key would ensure the durability of the Tsarist regime itself. The reputation which he

brought with him to the capital – as a firm opponent of rebellion – paradoxically gave the new premier an advantage in promoting reform. He was initially seen by the stalwarts of Tsarism as devoted to the regime and committed to its preservation, and avoided the immediate antagonism that earlier reforming ministers, such as Prince P. D. Sviatopolk-Mirskii, briefly Minister of Internal Affairs between 1904 and 1905, had succeeded in arousing.

Stolypin's radicalism became quickly evident, however, once he had taken office as Prime Minister. He sounded out leading liberal political figures about the possibility of their taking up ministerial posts, approaches which eventually came to naught, and indicated that he wanted to work with the Duma. In his first speech to the Duma, Stolypin stressed that the actions of both government and legislature 'should lead not to mutual struggle, but to the good of our motherland'.[8] Most importantly, he produced proposals for a major programme of reform which would encompass almost every element of Russian life. While Stolypin was firm in his determination to quell discontent by not flinching from taking severe repressive measures against rebels, he believed that the only way to deal with the real causes of popular revolt was to implement reform. Reform was to be a means of preserving and strengthening Tsarism and was aimed at ensuring that the survival of the autocracy would never again be threatened by events like those of 1905. This was in sharp contrast to the aspirations of many political parties such as the Kadets, who believed reform was a step on the road towards the introduction of full parliamentary democracy in Russia and who saw reform as being a way to weaken the existing regime. The reforms that Stolypin's government proposed were intended to provide a new bulwark of support for Tsarism and give it new strength to overcome revolt.

Stolypin understood that gaining the support of the peasantry – some 80 per cent of the population – was the key to preventing unrest and he aimed at creating a class of independent peasant landowners who would have no reason to attack the government. This was to be achieved through fundamental agrarian reform, but the political and social structures of the Russian empire were also to be altered to allow the peasantry to take a much greater part in the life of Russian society. By giving the peasant population of the Russian empire a much greater stake than ever before in the organisation of the state, Stolypin's government hoped to create a new bond between the regime and society as a whole. The basis of Stolypin's programme was an agrarian reform that ranked alongside the 1861 emancipation of the serfs in its importance. Emancipation had not resulted in any great increase in prosperity for the rural population, and the growth of the urban population made increased agricultural productivity vital if the workers in the rapidly expanding cities were to be fed. The policy of rapid industrialization pursued during the 1890s, together with the agricultural depression in the early part of the decade, did little to improve the situation. Russian agriculture continued to exist on an archaic basis: farming was still largely practised on the strip system while modern machinery and techniques had hardly penetrated the Russian countryside. While the emancipation had freed the serfs from the bondage of their masters, the communal system of agricultural organisation continued to dominate the Russian countryside. The commune was perceived by large sections of Russian society as exerting a negative influence on agriculture by restricting individual enterprise, and by 1905 it was the commune which was the focus of proposals for reform. Stolypin envisaged a two-stage process for the break-up of the communal system: first, individual peasants inside the commune could ask for their pieces of land to be separated from the commune and become their own private property; second, they would be able to consolidate all their strips of land into a single plot. The government envisaged that this would lead to substantially increased agricultural production as the removal of communal constraints would provide a much greater incentive for the individual peasant to maximise the output of his own land. The agrarian reform had clearly defined aims, but the means adopted to achieve them were untested and represented a huge gamble by the Tsarist regime. Stolypin was aware that his policy was one of high risk: the removal of the 'safety-net' of the commune from the peasantry could mean that many would be unable to cope, but the Prime Minister emphasised that his policy was a "wager on the strong". He expressed faith in the Russian peasant, whom he described as "the able, work-loving peasant, the salt of the Russian earth".[9]

Stolypin and his advisers believed that once individual peasants were the owners of their own land, freed of the restrictions placed upon them by the communal system of agriculture, the fundamental demand for land which had been made by the peasantry for generations would have been satisfied.

The government envisaged that this transformation in the property status of the peasants would bring about a shift in their political outlook. This was based on the view that peasant revolt had been caused by the poor economic condition of the rural population and their inability to take any positive action themselves to rectify this situation. The government believed that the peasantry were not inherently radical and felt that the situation could be transformed by improving the living conditions of the rural population. A class of small independent landowners would provide a conservative base of support for the government in the countryside, since the peasants would jealously preserve their newly-acquired land and would support a regime which promised to maintain their new status. The acquisition of land by the peasantry was, therefore, intended to engineer a fundamental shift in the political structure of Russia and to guarantee the survival of the Tsarist regime.

Alongside this, Stolypin proposed a series of further reforms designed to give the Russian peasantry a social and political position commensurate with their new economic position. Local administration was to be reformed to reduce the influence of the nobility and to establish an elected council or *zemstvo* in each rural district. A unified system of justice was to be established, so that for the first time the peasantry would be subject to the same courts as the rest of the population. A critical part of Stolypin's vision for Russia was to see civil rights extended; in essence he wanted to transform the population of the empire from subjects into citizens by ensuring that individuals were not discriminated against by virtue of their political, social or cultural position. Reforms were proposed to increase religious toleration, to enshrine personal inviolability in law and to allow for freedom of the press, of association and of assembly. Action was promised to improve conditions for working people by introducing a scheme of sickness insurance, and Stolypin also intended to improve education dramatically by making primary schooling compulsory for children aged between eight and twelve. This was a programme as far-reaching as the Great Reforms of the 1860s and Stolypin recognised that the implementation of his reform programme would be a slow process: he spoke of the need for 20 years of peace in which his plans could be realized.

Time was not, however, a commodity which the Prime Minister had in abundance. The work of implementing the land reform was slow and complex, and by 1915, the last full year of land settlements before the 1917 revolution, only some ten per cent of eligible peasants had taken advantage of the Stolypin reform.[10] The government also ran into difficulties in the process of steering its reforms through the legislative system. While the agrarian reform was enacted under emergency procedures, none of the other pieces of reform legislation that Stolypin introduced succeeded in becoming law. Part of the difficulty lay in the structure of the legislature: the delays that a bill encountered in the Duma had their roots in the fundamental relationship that existed between the government and the legislative institutions. The Russian Duma was not controlled by a government party and the government was therefore unable to guarantee that its legislation would become law. No party in the Duma was under any imperative to see a bill approved, for as there was no governing party, a party's position did not depend on its ability to see a piece of legislation successfully through parliament. The government was placed in the role of an observer, with little power to influence the course of events in the Duma, while the political parties had little power to lose by opposing or delaying government bills. Even the Octobrists, who liked to portray themselves as having special links to Stolypin's government, were unable to provide consistent support for legislation and, in any case, had no majority in the Third Duma. Furthermore, at the same time as the Duma was burdened by a huge programme of major legislation, this new institution was trying to develop its own rules of procedure. The Third Duma, which sat between 1907 and 1912, was never able to limit the length or number of speeches by its members. Furthermore, the committee system established to examine bills involved was cumbersome in the extreme: each committee contained 66 members, in a system designed to replicate in miniature the complicated party structure of the Duma as a whole. As a result, debate in committee was prolonged and undisciplined and it was not unusual for a committee to take up to eighteen months to examine a major bill. Ironically, if Stolypin had been able to legislate without the Duma, his proposals would have undoubtably had more chance of becoming law.

The delays which the existence of the Duma introduced into the Russian legislative system allowed opposition to Stolypin's reforms to crystallize. The level of popular discontent declined after 1906 as the government's repressive measures took effect: Stolypin became best known for the 'Stolypin

necktie' – the hangman's noose – and even during the 1930s when Stalin's repression was at its height, the railway trucks which took prisoners to labour camps were known as 'Stolypin wagons'. As it became clear that the regime was being successful in reasserting its authority, so elements of the social and political elites of the empire became convinced that they could ride out the remnants of the storm without making further reforms. This view was strengthened as the traditional twin pillars of the Tsarist regime – the nobility and the Orthodox Church – recognised the threat that Stolypin's reforms posed to their position. The nobility formed a very powerful pressure group and their umbrella organisation, the United Nobility, held annual congresses from 1906 until 1915 and took a keen interest in the government's reform programme. Many of its leaders were prominent members of the State Council, the second chamber of the post-1905 Russian legislature, and they enjoyed easy and direct access to Nicholas II himself.[11] It was easy for the nobility to persuade the Tsar and the conservative majority in the State Council that the diminution in the nobility's role in the provinces that Stolypin's reforms presaged was unacceptable. The Orthodox Church was deeply unhappy at the government's proposals to extend religious toleration, seeing this as a move which would reduce the Church's influence. The Holy Synod, the governing body of the Orthodox Church, launched vigorous attacks on the government's plans, while large numbers of the Orthodox faithful in the provinces agitated against reform by signing petitions directed at the Tsar. In common with almost all of Stolypin's programme, his proposals to reform local government and to extend religious freedom both foundered. The success of the Orthodox Church in preventing reform that would have affected its own position only indirectly was further evidence of the power which the traditional conservative bulwarks of Russian society were able to wield. This resistance to change was symptomatic of the weakness of both nobility and Church in early twentieth century Russia. Both groups had witnessed a sharp reduction in their influence and tried hard to cling to the remaining vestiges of their traditional roles with great tenacity. The post-1905 political structures of the empire failed, however, to reflect the changing nature of Russian society and, despite the decline in their social position, continued to give nobles and the Orthodox Church the ability to exert very great influence on the political direction of Russia.

Reform failed in the Russian Empire after 1905. By 1909, Stolypin had retreated from the ideals with which he had come into office and, conscious of the way in which the political wind was blowing, had resorted to pursuing polices aimed at promoting Russian nationalism. Finland's autonomy was reduced and various measures were taken in the empire's western borderlands to enhance the influence of the Russian population in a region where non-Russians made up a significant proportion of the population. The revolution of 1905 had aroused great hopes that the Tsarist regime could modernize its political structures to reflect the dynamism that the economy and society of imperial Russia had demonstrated after 1861. To carry through his transformation of Russian society, Stolypin needed to persuade the traditional political elites of the empire that the long-term interests of the state required them to forgo their power and privileges. This most difficult of political tasks had to be carried out in the post-1905 environment when the empire's elites were congratulating themselves on having survived revolution. The Tsar and his coterie took a short-sighted view of Russia's future, believing that antiquated political structures and attitudes could continue to hold sway. The period after 1905 gave Russia a brief opportunity in which action could be taken to stave off the further onset of revolution, but the chance was missed. The Russian state failed to learn from the experience of other European monarchies and, in 1917, it paid the price.

NOTES

1. B. V. Anan'ich et al, *Krizis samoderzhaviia v Rossii 1895-1917* [The Crisis of Autocracy in Russia 1985-1917] (Leningrad 1984), p. 649.
2. R. Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime 1919-1924* (London, 1994), p. 490.
3. O. Figes, *A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891-1924* (London, 1996), p. 810.
4. Quoted in A. Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray* (Stanford, 1988), p.1. Ascher's two-volume study of 1905 is the most comprehensive work on the revolution.
5. G. L. Freeze, *From Supplication to Revolution: A Documentary Social History of Imperial Russia* (New York, 1988), p. 204.
6. A. Verner, *The Crisis of Russian Autocracy: Nicholas II and the 1905 Revolution* (Princeton. 1990), p. 238.
7. P. Waldron, *Between Two Revolutions: Stolypin and the Politics of Renewal in Russia* (London, 1998). pp. 45-8.
8. *ibid*, p. 59.
9. *ibid*, p. 74.
10. P. Waldron, *The End of Imperial Russia, 1855-1917* (London, 1997), pp. 53-4.
11. G. A. Hosking and R. T. Manning, 'What was the United Nobility?' in L. H. Haimson (ed.), *The Politics of Rural Russia, 1905-1914* (Bloomington, Ind., 1979), pp. 123-41.

James Ramsay MacDonald, the 'betrayal of 1931' and the response of the Labour Party

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No political leader this century has been more reviled than James Ramsay MacDonald, Britain's first Labour Prime Minister in 1924 and 1929-1931, who formed a National Government after a split within the Labour Government in 1931. William Lawther remarked that he was 'bereft of any public decency'.[1] Harold Laski described him as 'betraying his politics' and 'betraying his origins'.[2] The esteemed man of principle of the 1920s, who had given up party leadership to oppose the First World War, was suddenly cast as the villain of the 1930s by his actions in 1931. A whole genre of labour history has subsequently emerged in order to distance the movement from its estranged creator. The prime criticism, of course, came from the Labour Party itself and MacDonald's former colleagues who condemned him vehemently at Party conferences. A popular catch of the time ran

> We'll hang Ramsay Mac on a sour apple tree
> We'll hang Snowden and Thomas, to keep him company
> For that's the place where traitors ought to be

The most damaging accusation, however, came from L. MacNeil Weir's book *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald* which stated that

> The members of the Labour Cabinet naturally assumed on that Sunday night, 23 August (1931) that Mr. Baldwin would be asked to form a government. But it is significant that MacDonald had something quite different in view. Without a word of consultation with his Cabinet colleagues, without even informing them of his intentions to set up a National Government with himself as Prime Minister, he proceeded to carry out his long-thought-out plan.[3]

It is only recently that historians have begun to re-assess MacDonald. In the late 1960s the late Charles Loch Mowat made an appeal for a reappraisal along the well-worn socialist line that it is movements not individuals that counts. He argued that the failings of 1931 were those of the Labour Party rather than MacDonald – a view later taken up by Michael Foot in 1977.[4] In 1977, David Marquand wrote the definitive *Ramsay MacDonald,* a book which attempted to provide a dispassionate view of MacDonald and to dispel some myths. It is still the most detailed and best evidenced of all the works on MacDonald and suggests that he did not scheme to abandon the Labour Government in 1931, a view which is supported in this article.

In broad outline, four accusations were levelled at MacDonald as a result of 1931. First, it is argued that he was Liberal/Progressive but never a Socialist; secondly, that he was an opportunist who cared little for principles; thirdly, that he schemed to form the National Government in 1931; and fourthly, that he betrayed the Labour Government in particular, and the Labour Party and Movement in general, as a result of his actions in August 1931.

Liberal or Socialist?

To MacNeill Weir, MacDonald was a Liberal Progressive at best. He wrote

> MacDonald was always the most accommodating of Socialists. His Socialism was of the kind that Sir William Harcourt meant when he said on a famous occasion "We are all Socialists now." His socialism is that far-off Never-Never-Land born of vague aspirations and described by him in picturesque generalities. It is a Turner landscape of beautiful colours and glorious indefiniteness. He saw it not with a telescope but with a kaleidoscope. [...] Anyone can believe in it without sacrifice or even inconvenience. It is evident that MacDonald never really accepted the Socialist faith of a classless world, based on unselfish service.[5]

What I would like to suggest is that at best this is only a half-truth and that it ignores the influence of much of the social and political culture from which MacDonald emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An examination of MacDonald's life is therefore vital to an understanding of the charges levelled against him.

MacDonald was born in October 1866, the illegitimate son of a farm labourer, at Lossiemouth in Scotland. Despite his working-class background he quickly aspired to the lower middle class. He was a pupil teacher until he was 19 when he went to Bristol and then London, where he became a teacher, a secretary to the National Cyclist Union and, in 1888, secretary to a Liberal Radical politician, Thomas Lough. From then onwards he was a journalist, writer and, eventually, professional organiser of the Labour Representation Committee formed in 1900, which later turned its name into the Labour Party. His marriage to Margaret Gladstone (of good Presbyterian and YMCA stock) in 1898 gave him financial independence as she came with a personal income.

As a professional secretary and organiser, MacDonald was not all that distinct from many of the young men – who often became clerks and civil servants, who flocked to London in the 1880s and 1890s in the hope of discovering a new role in life. MacDonald joined the London Fabians in 1886. Not surprisingly, his socialism was essentially Fabian: he envisioned the gradual modification of existing institutions through the extension of collectivist principles by incremental changes in existing Government policy.

Fabian socialism was well suited to the strategical course MacDonald charted, first in the Independent Labour Party and later in the Labour Party. It permitted him to virtually ignore the differences between the ILP and the left wing of the Liberal Party. This was vital, for MacDonald, like many others in the 1890s, was not sure where his future lay. He only joined the ILP in 1894, after his failure to secure a Liberal nomination for the Southampton parliamentary seat. In the 1890s he was still not sure that the ILP provided an alternative for Liberalism and was, with others, struggling to form a Progressive Alliance. Indeed, in 1896 he became a member of the Rainbow Group, a body of frustrated Liberals and Radicals dedicated to such changes, and he contributed to its journal the *Progressive Review*. Evolution and persuasion, rather than revolution, were to become the words in his litany. Gradual improvements would bring about Socialism, not a catastrophic collapse of society. He argued that:

> Socialism is not to come from the misery of the people... I know that there is a belief prevalent that the more capitalism fails, the clearer will the way to Socialism be. I have never shared that faith.... Poverty of mind and body blurs the vision and does not clarify it.[6]

His gradualism extended to maintaining that there was no incompatibility of interests between classes: 'Socialism is no class movement... It is not the rule of the working class, it is the organisation of the community' – and to the belief that it was necessary to educate the community to the need for socialism.[7] This was evident in his later writings, particularly those produced for the Socialist Library, a publishing library of socialist books which he founded in 1905.

MacDonald was involved in the secret Lib-Lab pact in 1903, which allowed both the Liberal and Labour parties about thirty straight parliamentary runs each in the 1905/6 general election. He was secretary of the ILP between 1900 and 1912 and held the dominant positions in the Labour Party from 1900 to 1914. He gave up his positions in the Labour Party during the First World War, since he was opposed to the War, and lost his parliamentary seat for Leicester, which he had won in 1906, in 1918. In 1922 he was returned as MP for Aberavon, which was regarded as the 'Second Coming of the Messiah' and became leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party again in 1922. Thereafter he was Prime Minister in 1924, was returned as MP for Seaham in 1929 and became Prime Minister of the second Labour government between 1929 and 1931. Having ditched the Labour Government in August 1931 he became Prime Minister of the National Government until 1935, lost his Seaham seat to Manny Shinwell but was found a place for Scottish Universities until his death on 7 November 1937.

Was MacDonald, then, a Liberal or a Socialist? His essential Fabianism and eclectic socialism certainly help to explain his willingness to compromise with the Liberals, or to drop Socialist principles. L. MacNeill Weir, and others, have criticised him for many examples of Liberalism. To them, the fact that the Labour Representation Committee/Labour Party had no collectivisation clause between 1900

and 1918, is tantamount to evidence of his essential Liberal and Radical outlook. The secret pact with the Liberals, the Gladstone-MacDonald pact of 1903, is seen as further proof of his essential Liberalism. But one must remember that the LRC/Labour Party owed its creation to an alliance of groups of socialists and trade unionists – not just to one man – and that in 1903 MacDonald was negotiating with the Liberals from a position of weakness to secure seats in which the LRC would have straight parliamentary fights against Conservative opponents, and that this did help in the return of 30 Labour MPs in 1906 compared to the two who were returned in 1900. Indeed, it might be suggested that he achieved a great deal at relatively little cost since the LRC/Labour Party could not have contested every Parliamentary seat in any case. One must remember that even as late as 1903, hard party divisions had not emerged in the way they were to after the First World War. This was still a period when the 'progressive' and 'socialist' parties were sorting themselves out, and still a period of experiment when socialists, Lib-Labs and New Liberals did intermingle and when Liberal workingmen were just beginning to recognise that there were alternatives in their political spectrum.

Opportunist?

It isn't true, then, to suggest that MacDonald was a frustrated Liberal, turned down by them as a candidate in the 1890s. He was, by the 1890s, a man of eclectic socialist views. But was he the opportunist which MacNeill Weir suggests? There is certainly evidence that he had an eye to the main chance. His ditching of Liberalism in 1894 and his joining of the ILP at the same time; the Lib-Lab pact of 1903, and his seizure of office in 1924 when he had previously suggested that it would be a mistake for a minority Labour government to take power, have also been taken as evidence of his personal political opportunism. But the picture is complicated by the fact that he gave up his political office in the Labour Party in the First World War, going into the political wilderness, attacked by Horatio Bottomley in *John Bull* as a 'Traitor, Coward, Cur', and ultimately losing the Leicester seat in 1918, which he had occupied since 1906.[8] Also, one might reflect that MacDonald never accepted titles, in the way many of his supposedly more principled colleagues had and that he remained, as he said he would remain 'Jimmy MacDonald, without prefix or suffix'.[9] What then is the conclusion, preliminary as it is at this stage, about his opportunism?

No successful politician is without a certain opportunist ability, and MacDonald had his fair share of such ability. But it appears that his opportunism was tempered with principles, and that he was the 'principled opportunist' that Marquand recognises.

The major accusation of his opportunism, however, surrounds the events of 1931. The general gist is that faced with an increasingly troublesome Labour Party, dominated by the trade unions he decided to ditch the Labour Government. As Philip Snowden, Labour's Chancellor of the Exchequer, reflected, 'He neither showed not expressed any grief at this regrettable development.' [10] The argument is given further substance by the fact that MacDonald was attempting to create a Labour Party which cut across class divides in the face of an overwhelmingly working-class dominated Labour Party. Credence was added by the fact that the 1924 Labour Government contained a large group of people from the middle class and aristocracy, such as Russell De La Warr, Arthur Ponsonby and Wedgwood Benn.

Grand Scheme?

The third accusation is that MacDonald schemed to ditch his Labour colleagues. However, one cannot explain the events of 1931 without reflecting upon the economic situation and the rising importance of the trade union movement within the Labour Party.

During the early 1920s the aim of successive British governments had been to get back to the Gold Standard and Free Trade, which had been suspended in the First World War, in the hope that there would be an international trade revival. In 1925 Britain returned to the Gold Standard, raising the value of the £ by 10 per cent in relation to the dollar and, in the process, imposing upon British export industries a competitive disadvantage. This resulted in the decline of British visible exports. In addition, the Wall Street Crash of 1929 destabilised world trade and unemployment rose throughout the World and Britain. Unemployment in Britain rose sharply from about one million to three millions and the

second Labour Government was faced with having to borrow from abroad and to balance its budgets, now so sorely in deficit as a result of the rising cost of unemployment benefits, the fund for which was being supported by the government.

The second Labour Government was thus faced with abandoning the Gold Standard/Free Trade, which was ruled out of the question by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or imposing cuts in Government spending, including benefit cuts. The latter course was amplified by the decision of the (Sir George) May Committee, set up to examine the national expenditure in March 1931, to advise on the need to reduce unemployment benefits by £66.5 million in its report of 31 July 1931 – by a combination of cutting benefits by 20 per cent and increasing contributions.

Given that MacDonald was being forced to stay on the Gold Standard and that he needed to reduce Government expenditure to secure a New York loan, it was inevitable that unemployment benefits would be a target for cuts. The trouble with this was that the influence of trade unionism became increasingly evident in the Party and within Government and Cabinet. Some tendentious reporting by the *Daily Herald* put the trade union movement on its mettle, and, in August 1931, when the issue of the reduction of unemployment benefits appeared before the Cabinet it was obvious that there was going to be a serious split. Indeed, at a vital Cabinet meeting on 23 August (Sunday) 1931, MacDonald only won a vote to reduce unemployment benefits by 10 per cent, by a majority of 11 to 9.[11] As a result, MacDonald announced that he intended to see the King at once and that he would advise him to hold a conference between Stanley Baldwin, Herbert Samuel and himself the following morning, that is, a meeting with the political opposition parties. The Cabinet agreed and authorised him to inform the King that all members of the Cabinet had placed their resignation in the Prime Minister's hand. MacDonald left for the palace at 10.10 pm to offer the Labour Government's resignation. The next day, after several meetings with King George and opposition leaders, MacDonald decided to accept the King's commission to form a National Government with Baldwin and Samuel.

It was these events of the 23 and 24 August 1931 which led to the accusation that MacDonald had schemed the downfall of the Labour Government and had opportunistically jumped on to the bandwagon of the National Government. The 'Grand-Design' idea is given full vent in MacNeill Weir's account in which he suggests that 'The impression left on the minds of those who had heard that speech... was that the whole thing had been arranged long before and that, while in Cabinet and Committee they had been making panic stricken efforts to balance the Budget, the whole business had been humbug and make-believe.' [12] Weir continued and asked why had MacDonald been careful to prevent the Cabinet meeting Liberal and Tory leaders? Why had he misled his junior ministers on 24 August? There were also numerous asides to MacDonald's clear intent to arrange and fix things.[13]

Yet although there is plenty of evidence of the rumour and informal contact type there is little concrete evidence of such scheming. Marquand's book, although based upon the MacDonald papers, something of a conscious and partial source, suggests that MacDonald arrived at his decision to form a National Government on the night of 23 August and the morning of 24 August 1931. He suggests that the letters written by MacDonald to his son, Malcolm, and others suggests that he intended to resign but changed his mind at the last minute. [14]

What led to his change of mind appears to have been a conflation of several factors – the appeal of the King, his own belief that whoever followed would have to be on the Gold Standard, and the constant suggestion of the opposition leaders that he was the man for the job. In the end he convinced himself that to stay on leading a National Government would be in the national interest. Indeed, it has been said that:

> All his life, MacDonald fought against a class view of politics, and for the primacy of political action as against industrial action; for him, the logical corollary was that the party must be prepared, when necessary, to subordinate the sectional claims of the unions to its own conception of the national interest.[15]

On balance, there is little evidence of a scheme, nothing beyond preliminary soundings. On the other hand, the more partial evidence of the MacDonald collections reveals MacDonald to have been indecisive to the last. There was no grand scheme to ditch the Labour Government. But that does not mean that there was no treachery.

Betrayal or Treachery?

MacDonald had stood by two principles in the crisis of 1931, his faith in the Gold Standard and his belief that state interests superseded those of the party, both nineteenth-century principles. He had broken the Labour Government on these principles. Had he remained constant with this twin defence of his position he then might have been able to claim that it was not he but the Labour Party that had changed and was not prepared to face up to the policies it pursued. But in the end, MacDonald betrayed both his Labour supporters and his own principles.

In September 1931 Britain went off the Gold Standard. The main principle upon which MacDonald had sacrificed the Labour Government had been removed. The honourable thing would have been for MacDonald to have resigned at this point but, as we know, he continued to be Prime Minister until 1935.

That betrayal was, perhaps, more damning than the betrayal of faith of those who had supported him up to 1931. The trade union movement, saw him as a 'political blackleg' unprepared to follow majority opinions and his former colleagues denounced at the 1931 Labour Party conference. Yet, as Michael Foot reflected in reviewing Marquand's book: 'there was always something squalid about the affair when Henderson and Co. and other leaders joined the chorus (of criticism) as eagerly as most of them did. The scapegoat theory was an indecency as well as a falsehood and so far as Marquand's conscientious recital of facts rediscovers the truth, he is justified.'[16]

Nevertheless, there were those who felt personally betrayed by MacDonald, including Weir who had been his political secretary and fervent admirer. Many felt that MacDonald deserved the 'traitor's grave' to which he was assigned by Weir in his book written in 1938, a year after MacDonald's death.

Conclusion

The events of 1931 tend to hide many of the achievements of MacDonald. One must remember that for more than thirty years he was the key figure in the Labour Movement, a Fabian, a member and official of the ILP, as secretary of the LRC/Labour Party and as leader of the PLP between 1922 and 1931. He did much to build up the Labour Party and was MP for the Party between 1906 and 1918 and 1922 and 1931. It was his highly eclectic and imprecise brand of Socialism which left the Labour Party sufficiently vague enough to allow many Liberals, as well as Socialists, to join it. He left his mark on the Labour Party, which had traditionally gone for centre and right wing leaders, or for left-wing leaders who have gone right wing. Had it not been for the events of 1931 it is fair to suggest that he would have been considered one of Labour's great heroes. If one examines the accusations levelled against MacDonald, as a result of 1931, it is clear that at best they are only half truths. He was a Socialist, very much of the ilk of many Ethical Socialists and Fabians of the 1890s, and certainly made his departure from Liberalism. He was an opportunist – but of a 'principled type'. He did not scheme to ditch the Labour Government but he did betray his own principles, and many of those who had placed their faith in his hands over a period of thirty years. In the end he was probably a victim of his nineteenth-century principles and upbringing, and stuck to them when they were no longer relevant. In the wake of his departure the Labour Party was heavily defeated in the 1931 general election, and the Party Conference decided that future Labour leaders would be subject to its control on issues such as forming a Labour government.

The last word is left to a remarkably impartial Michael Foot:

> It was part of MacDonald's torture that, even when he was half-blinded, physically and emotionally, he still could see, however dimly, what was happening in Nazi Germany, in Dollfuss' Austria, in Franco's Spain, and how shameful and craven and unimaginative was the response of British Conservatism, wielding the well-nigh almighty power in the state which the 'run away' fiasco of 1931 had yielded into its hands.[17]

In the end, whilst not responsible alone, MacDonald contributed to the handing over of political power to the Conservative Party and the political ditching of the Labour Party for a decade.

NOTES

1 Quoted by D. Marquand, 'A Traitor's Grave', BBC Radio broadcast, 2 March 1977.

2 *Harper's,* September 1932.

3 L. MacNeill Weir, *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald* (London, Secker & Warburg, 1938), p. 383.

4 M. Foot, 'Ramsay MacDonald', review article of D. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald,* in *Bulletin of the Society for the Study of Labour History,* 35 (1977), pp. 76-71.

5 Weir, *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald,* p. xi..

6 ILP *Conference Report* (London ILP), 1909), MacDonald's chairman's address.

7 R. MacDonald, *Ramsay MacDonald's Political Writings,* ed., B. Barker (London, Allen Lane, Penguin, 1972) pp.48-9, 162.

8 *John Bull,* 19 June 1915.

9 Weir, *MacDonald, p.* 62.

10 P. Snowden, *An Autobiography,* II (London. Ivor Nicholson,1934), p. 952.

11 D. Marquand, *MacDonald, p.* 634; MacDonald Diaries, 21-24 August 1931; Cab. 23, report of meetings of 23 and 24 August 1931.

12 Weir, *MacDonald,* p.384.

13 *Ibid.,* p.416.

14 Marquand, *MacDonald,* p. 631.

15 *Ibid.,* p. 11.

16 Foot, *MacDonald*, p70

17 Foot, '*MacDonald*', pp. 70-1.

Smolensk, 1941: The Turning Point of Hitler's War in the East?

DR EVAN MAWDSLEY

The war between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, what the Russians know as the 'Great Fatherland War', continues to hold a particular fascination because of its scale, because of the suffering inflicted, and, many would argue, because of its overall decisiveness in the history of the Second World War. Historians, however, continue to disagree about many aspects of the conflict, and one important question has been about periodisation. What was the turning point of the war on the Russian front? At what point was Hitler doomed, both in the East and, perhaps, in the Second World War in general? The point of the present article is to put this debate in perspective.

The Battle of Stalingrad, 1942-43

One candidate for the status of turning point, perhaps the most obvious, is the Battle of Stalingrad in November 1942 – January 1943. Stalingrad came in what was, for the Russians, the second winter of the war, and followed a dramatic partial failure of the Red Army in the southern part of the front. Twin offensives by the German Army, begun as Operation 'Blue', pushed deep into southern Russia. One drove towards the Caucasus, southeast toward the oil wells of Maikop and Baku. The other aimed due east to cut a major transport artery, the River Volga, at the city of Stalingrad. General Paulus's Sixth Army reached the city, but were unable to gain complete control. In the end it was trapped in a sudden encirclement planned by General Vasilevskii, Operation 'Uranus'. Paulus surrendered early in January, and 200 thousand Germans were lost.

Stalingrad seemed decisive partly because Hitler had invested so much prestige in it. It also marked the high tide mark of the German advance in Russia; from that time on, the Germans would be giving up ground. The Russians would never again face an offensive as threatening as Operation 'Blue'. A large force had been encircled and wiped out, in contrast with the winter of 1941-42, when the Germans had been pushed back but not destroyed.

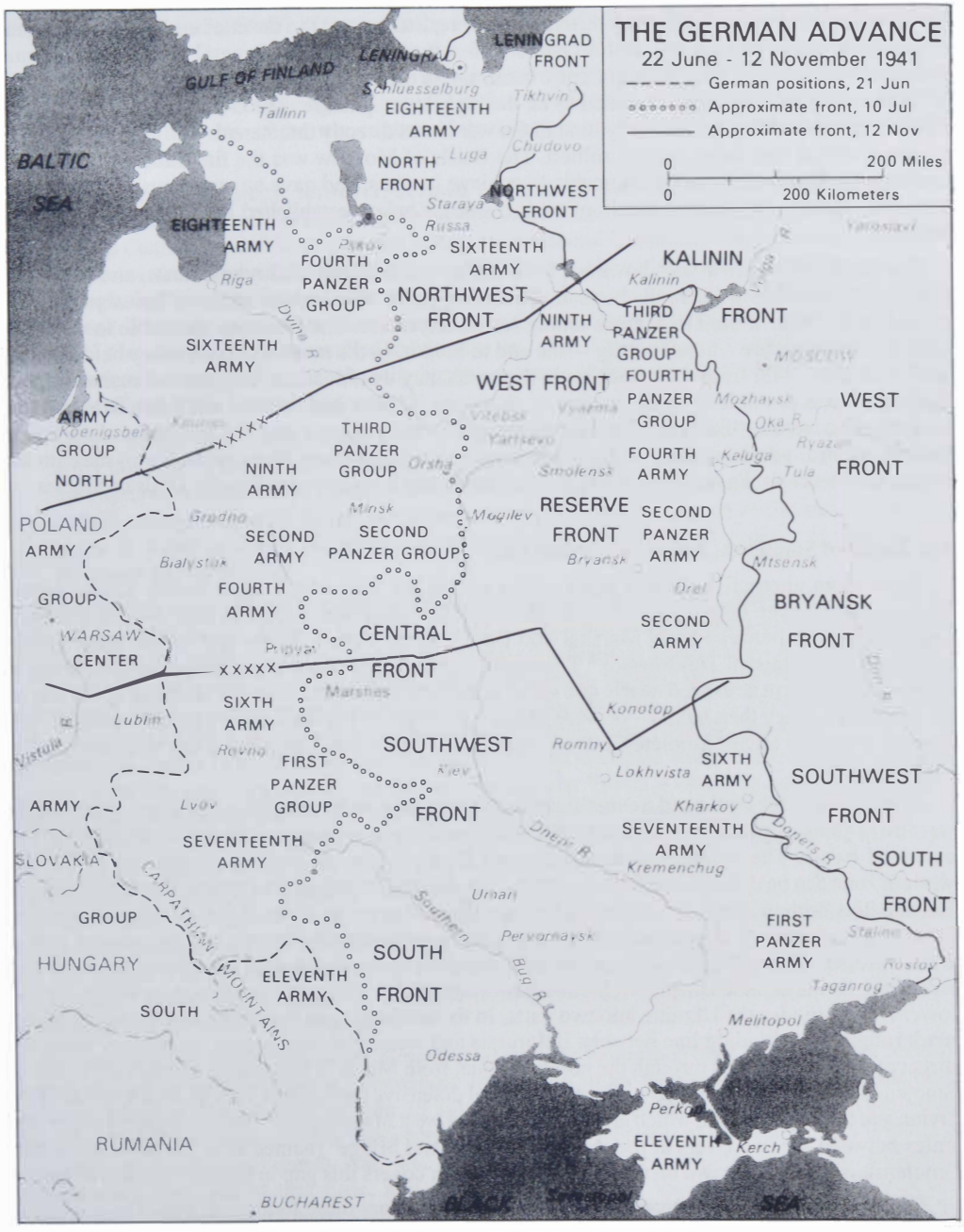
The problem with Stalingrad as a turning point is that the battle did not mark the end of German successes in Russia or even the last time the Germans held the initiative. The Wehrmacht inflicted another severe defeat on the Red Army at Khar'kov in March 1943. The city of Stalingrad itself did not have the strategic or economic importance of either Moscow or Leningrad. Stalingrad was also a winter battle, fought against a foolishly overstretched Axis army group. The Russians probably suffered higher losses, 324 thousand in the first, defensive, phase of the battle, and 155 thousand after the trap closed in mid November.[1] The Germans were, in addition, able to consolidate the position after Stalingrad. They were forced back, but only to the point from which they had launched 'Blue'.

The Battle of Kursk, 1943

The Battle of Kursk, half a year after Stalingrad in July 1943, is also seen as a turning point of the war. Hitler hoped to regain the initiative in the East with Operation 'Citadel', which was intended to destroy a mass of enemy forces in a large bulge in the front line southwest of Moscow. He concentrated advanced weaponry and elite forces north and south of the Kursk bulge. The layered Soviet defences stopped the advance and in the counter attack that followed, the German position in southern Russia and the Ukraine was destroyed. In the later part of the year the Soviets achieved a major series of victories themselves. Kursk probably involved larger numbers of Soviet troops than Stalingrad. Kursk was the last time the Germans had the initiative in the East. It was also the first time that the Red Army faced and outfought the main German force in the summer.

The problem with Kursk as a turning point is that the German offensive was, compared to the Stalingrad campaign, not to mention the 1941 onslaught of Operation 'Barbarossa', a 'local' effort. No

Soviet vital interests were threatened, and it is difficult to see how even another Germany victory, encircling the Kursk bulge, would have done more than put off the inevitable for three to six months. Defeat might have been a repeat of the Khar'kov defeat – but this was something from which the Soviets could quickly recover.[2]



The Battle of Moscow, 1941

A third candidate for the turning point would be the Battle of Moscow in December 1941. This was the end of Operation 'Typhoon', launched by Field Marshal von Bock's Army Group Centre in early October 1941, from a starting point about 200 miles west of the Soviet capital. Huge encirclements of Soviet troops were achieved in the early days, notably at Viazma, but the autumn rains turned the roads to mud, and the advance was halted for three weeks until mid November. Advance elements of the German Army forced their way through Soviet resistance and the onset of a severe winter to the outskirts of the Soviet capital. But a counter-offensive organised by General Zhukov began on 6 December and pushed Army Group Centre back, and in the end the whole German line in Russia had to be moved back. The stakes seemed to be the highest imaginable. The German objective was the Soviet capital, and this was the only time in the war it was directly threatened. The number of Soviet troops involved was large, over a million. The Battle of Moscow was the first time the apparently unstoppable Wehrmacht had been unable to achieve its aims, and gave an enormous boost not only to Soviet morale, but to the morale of all the allies. Zhukov established his reputation as a great soldier.[3]

The Battle of Moscow was, however, followed by another year of Soviet defeats, and this raises doubts as to whether in can really be seen as a turning point. The counter-attack in January 1942 was spread on too wide a front to achieve telling results anywhere. The Germans were able to withdraw back to a more secure – albeit zigzag – line and to hold it. In the north and centre they held that line until well into 1943; from their position in the south they would launch the great offensive towards Stalingrad. It is possible to argue, moreover, that even if Hitler had reached and taken Moscow that December he would – like Napoleon 130 years earlier – still not have won the war. Most of the Soviet Union's central administration had already been moved east from Moscow to Kuibyshev on the Volga, and the capital's factories and their work force had been evacuated to the Urals or Siberia.

The Battle of Smolensk, July – September 1941

There is an alternative turning point of the war in the East which came before Kursk, before Stalingrad, and even before Moscow. The Battle of Smolensk was fought in July, August and early September 1941 between Field Marshal von Bock's Army Group Centre and Soviet army groups commanded by Marshal Timoshenko.[4] The essence of the battle was that the armoured spearheads of Army Group Centre advanced nearly 400 miles in the first four weeks after the outbreak of the war on 22 June 1941. They then halted – or were halted – for eight to ten weeks just east of Smolensk. The epicentre was the city of Smolensk but engagements fought a hundred miles away were included in the battle.

To understand the battle and its significance it is necessary to have a grasp of the geography of the western regions of what was then the USSR and an outline knowledge of the events involved in this extended battle. The common understanding of Russia is one of endless steppe, but in fact the western zone can be divided into four quadrants. The 800 mile north-south expanse from the Baltic the Black Sea is broken into two main zones by the east-west expanse of the Pripet Marshes (Poles'ia). South of the marshes is the Ukraine, to the north of the marshes is Belorussia and the western part of Russia proper. About 300 miles in from the 1941 border and running roughly north and south are two rivers, the Dvina and the Dnepr.[5] In the southern zone, which only concerns this story indirectly, the lower Dnepr divides the Ukraine into two parts. In the northern zone the Dvina and the upper Dnepr mark roughly the dividing line between Belorussia and western Russia proper. In military terms the direct route to Moscow is through the northern zone, from Minsk in Belorussia through the towns of Smolensk and Viazma to Moscow. The main natural defensive line against such an attack is that of the Dvina and the upper Dnepr, which are about 300 miles west of the capital. There is a gap of about fifty miles between the two rivers at the so-called Orsha 'land bridge' (named after the town of Orsha). Smolensk is an ancient town on the upper Dnepr which covers this gap in Russia's natural defences.

The 1941 Russian-German campaign was fought out across these four quadrants. The essence of the Operation 'Barbarossa' plan, worked out by the German High Command and approved by Hitler, was to desroy the Soviet forces on the frontiers, in the two western quadrants, west of the Dvina and

Dnepr rivers. German Intelligence said these forces comprised the core of the Red Army. The 'Barbarossa' directive of 15 December 1940 had made this all clear. 'The bulk of the Russian Army stationed in Western Russia [i.e. the two western quadrants] will be destroyed by daring operations led by deeply penetrating armoured spearheads. Russian forces still capable of giving battle will be prevented from withdrawing into the depths of Russia.'[6] In the southwestern quadrant, the western Ukraine, west of the Dnepr, the Soviet Southwestern Army Group had actually put up significant resistance to Field Marshal von Rundstedt's Army Group South in the first weeks of the war (partly because that was where the Soviet General Staff had expected any attack to come). When the Battle of Smolensk began, Southwestern Army Group was still well to the west of the Dnepr. At the top of the northwestern quadrant, however, the other opposite wing of the huge German offensive, Field Marshal von Leeb's Army Group North, was advancing very rapidly in the direction of Leningrad; the German vanguard there had on the fifth day of the war captured intact bridges over the Dvina and cut deep into the former Baltic republics.

The 'Barbarossa' strategy, however, seemed to be most successful in the lower part of the northwestern quadrant, in Belorussia, where the Wehrmacht had directed its main force, von Bock's Army Group Centre. General Hoth's Panzer Group 3 and General Guderian's Panzer Group 2 executed one of the most stunning operations of the Second World War, the encirclement in rather more than a week of the bulk of General Pavlov's Western Army Group. The Germans claimed 290 thousand POWs in the Minsk-Bialystok 'pocket' in Belorussia, and the Russians have officially admitted losses of 341 thousand.[7] General Pavlov was recalled to Moscow and shot. On 3 July – the twelfth day of the war and just before the Battle of Smolensk really began – General Halder, the Chief of the German Army's General Staff, made his famous diary entry:[8]

> On the whole, then, it may be said even now that the objective to shatter the bulk of the Russian army this side of the Dvina and Dnepr has been accomplished. I do not doubt the statement of the captured Russian corps [commander] that east of the Dvina and Dnepr we would encounter nothing more than partial forces, not strong enough to hinder realisation of German operational plans. It is thus probably no overstatement to say that the Russian campaign has been won in the space of two weeks.

The Germans were now set to cross the Dvina-Dnepr line into the northeastern quadrant, and the Battle of Smolensk began. There is no clear consensus among historians working in different countries as to just when the battle began and ended, and exactly what engagements should be included within it. The present article will follow the standard definition used by Russian military historians: the Battle of Smolensk was a series of engagements lasting for two months from 10 July 1941 to 10 September 1941.[9] They divide the battle into four stages. In the first stage, from 10 to 20 July, Panzer Group 3 (to the north) and Panzer Group 2 drove deep into the region and encircled Soviet Sixteenth and Twentieth Armies in the Smolensk region. One of the most spectacular Soviet attempts to stop the preliminary stages of the advance was a massed attack on 6 July by about 700 tanks of the V and VII Mechanised Corps against the southern flank of Panzer Group 3 as it crossed the Dvina. What turned out to be a death ride was broken up by the German armour. The Russians had little air cover or anti-aircraft artillery, and they suffered especially from the attacks of the Luftwaffe. One of those captured, on 16 July near Vitebsk on the north side of the Orsha land bridge, was Sr. Lt. Dzhugashvili, an artillery officer from the destroyed 147 Tank Division of VII Mechanised Corps – Stalin's elder son Iakov.[10] All this was in vain. The day Dzhugashvili was captured Guderian took Smolensk itself, with its important rail junction.[11] What Guderian and Hoth could *not* accompish in the short term, however, was completely to encircle and destroyed the defenders.

By this time the Soviet command structure facing Army Group Centre has settled down. The disgraced Pavlov was replaced as commander of Western Army Group by the former Minister of Defence, Marshal Timoshenko, and on 10 July Timoshenko was made commander of the whole Western 'Direction' (*napravlenie*). Timoshenko, brought in as Minister of Defence in early 1940 after the fiasco of the Soviet-Finnish War, was the most able and professional of the three regional commanders installed at this time, and he was ably assisted by his chief of staff, Marshal Shaposhnikov.[12] In what the Russians define as the second stage, from 21 July to 7 August, Timoshenko threw in hastily assembled 'operational groups' to patch the holes in the front and hopefully to mount

Marshal S.K. Timoshenko, Commander, Western Direction 1941

a counter-offensive converging on Smolensk. These measures failed to achieve their objective, but they enabled the breakout of part of the encircled armies and – as we will see – stalled the advance of Army Group Centre. It was not until 27 July that the two German Panzer Groups linked up. The fighting within the Smolensk pocket itself continued until 5 August.

In what Russian military historians call the third stage, 8 to 21 August, the Germans wheeled Guderian's Panzer Group 2 to the south in the teeth of Soviet counterattacks. In the fourth stage, 22 August to 10 September Eremenko's Briansk Army Group (under Timoshenko's overall command) attempted to attack the flanks of the (southward moving) German elements. Further north, Timoshenko's Western Army Group also launched another attack towards Smolensk. This was generally unsuccessful, but on the left flank 24 Army took the town of El'nia, 75 miles southeast of Smolensk and an important bridgehead across the Desna River. El'nia was in fact the very first significant Russian counter-attack of the whole war. It was organised by the commander of the Reserve Army Group (under Timoshenko), none other than General Georgii Zhukov. Zhukov had been sacked as Chief of the General Staff at the end of July for urging Stalin to abandon Kiev rather than allow its defenders to be encircled. 'The El'nia operation,' Zhukov recalled, 'was my first independent operation, the first test of my personal operational-strategic abilities in the great war with Hitler's Germany.'[13] On 18 September 1941 the first of the famous Soviet 'guards' units were created, including the 1, 2, 3, and 4 Guards Rifle Divisions, from the 100, 127, 153, and 161 Rifle Divisions which had distinguished themselves at El'nia. (El'nia remained in Soviet hands for less than a month. It was re-captured by Panzer Group 4 in the first stages of Operation 'Typhoon', and only liberated in August 1943.)

The Battle of Smolensk: The Consequences

Although we have used the definition of the battle used by Russian, and before that Soviet, historians, there is a need to be wary. Military historiography in most of the Soviet era was written in the tradition that the Party never made mistakes and the defenders of the Motherland were always heroic. The Battle of Smolensk has been portrayed as something of a victory. A typical assessment appeared in the 1985 *Great Fatherland War Encylopedia*:[14] 'Soviet forces inflicted heavy losses on Army Group Centre. For the first time in the Second World War the German-Fascist forces were forced to go over to the defensive in the main axis of advance .... The Soviet command won time to prepare the defence of Moscow and the defeat which followed in Battle of Moscow of 1941-42.' The fact is that –

unlike the Battles of Moscow, Stalingrad and Kursk – the Battle of Smolensk was ultimately a Soviet defeat. The city of Smolensk fell to the Germans in the first days of the battle, and they would hold it and the surrounding region for over two years, until September 1943. No fewer than 486 thousand Soviet troops were recorded as lost in the two months of the battle.[15] Smolensk was followed in October by an even worse defeat in the early stages of the Moscow offensive, Operation 'Typhoon'. Many of those who survived the Battle of Smolensk would be lost in the huge Viazma and Briansk encirclements between Smolensk and Moscow. The Germans counted 663 thousand prisoners in the first, and over 100 thousand in the second.[16]

But the German armies *did* actually pause just east of Smolensk at the end of July. Hitler issued directives sending his mobile forces to Army Groups South and North and did not resume the offensive towards Moscow until the beginning of October 1941 and the start of Operation 'Typhoon'. As we have seen, the Moscow offensive came so late in the year that it was stalled first by the autumn mud, and then in December by the freezing winter conditions and Zhukov's counter offensive. Was it the Battle of Smolensk that won the Soviet Union critical time?

One interpretation of these events has been put forward R.H.S. Stolfi. Hitler paused at this time and sent his mobile units to the forces flanking Army Groups Centre, to Leningrad and the Ukraine, because his was essentially a 'fortress mentality'. The Nazi dictator wanted to ensure an autarkic 'realistic' greater Reich, incorporating the supposed economic resources of Leningrad and the Ukraine.[17]. Stolfi specifically rejected any 'stiffening Soviet resistance' as a factor in this pause. The initial halt in late July was planned 'to reorganise briefly' before going on to either Moscow or the Ukraine. Much of Stolfi's *Hitler's Panzers East* is devoted to the counter-factual argument that von Bock's Army Group Centre could successfully have advanced on Moscow in mid August and taken the city by the end of the month.[18] It is in fact true that the move to the flanks was consistent with the original December 1940 'Barbarossa' directive. This had stated that after (what was later named) Army Group Centre had succeeded in 'routing the enemy force in White Russia [i.e. Belorussia, the northwestern quadrant]' it would send mobile forces to help secure the position in Leningrad. 'Only after the fulfilment of this first essential task ... will the attack be continued with the intention of occupying Moscow'.[19]

Stolfi is, however, wrong about the importance of Soviet resistance. It is true that Führer Directive No. 33 issued on 19 July, three days after the capture of the city of Smolensk, was caused less by resistance on the 'central axis' than by Hitler's desire to develop the success of Army Groups North and South to the same level as Army Group Centre. That was why panzer units were detached to help them.[20] Certainly this directive, and Directive 33a which followed five days later, envisaged a continuing *infantry* advance on Moscow. However, by 30 July, and Directive 34, Hitler made it clear that the situation was perceived as more difficult. 'The development of the situation in the last few days, the appearance of strong enemy forces on the front and to the flanks of Army Group Centre, the supply position, and the need to give Panzer Groups 2 and 3 about ten days to refit their units, makes it necessary to postpone *for the moment* the further tasks and objectives laid down ...' 'Army Group Centre will go over to the defensive, taking advantage of suitable terrain.'[21] Jacob Kipp cited Hitler's assertion at the command conference of 4 August that a change to a longer-term 'economic' attrition strategy was based on exposure of false assumptions regarding Russian numerical weakness and the need for 'an even more extended pause ... caused by the inability of the panzers to disengage in the face of the Soviet counter-attacks of the last ten days of July'.[22] (The economic resources of Leningrad and the the Ukraine assumed a greater importance in a longer war.) Directive 34a, of 12 August, referred specifically to the 'strong enemy forces which have been concentrated for the defence of Moscow'. And Directive 35 of 6 September, the antecedent to 'Typhoon', which returned the focus to Army Group Centre and the Minsk-Smolensk-Moscow axis, called for 'a decisive operation against Army Group Timoshenko [sic] which is attacking on the central front'. 'Only when Army Group Timoshenko has been defeated in ... highly coordinated and closely encircling operations of annihilation will our central Army be able to begin the advance on Moscow'.[23] Certainly the position of the Chief of the General Staff, Halder, had changed since his euphoric note of 3 July. Halder now wrote in his diary, on 11 August:[24]

> The whole situation makes it increasingly plain that we have underestimated the Russian colossus, who consistently prepared for war .... At the outset of the war, we reckoned with about 200 enemy divisions. Now we have already counted 360 .... [I]f we smash a dozen of them, the Russians simply put up another dozen. [O]ur troops, sprawled over an immense front line, without any depth, are subjected to the incessant attacks of the enemy.

When interviewed after the war by Liddell Hart, Blumentritt, the chief of staff to one of the armies in Army Group Centre, mentioned the importance of the resistance of the Smolensk 'pocket'. 'Half a million Russians seemed to be trapped. The trap was almost closed – within about six miles – but the Russians once again succeeded in extricating a large part of their forces. That narrow failure brought Hitler right up against the question whether to stop or not."[25]

These is another important dimension to the Battle of Smolensk, and that concerns its role in the Japanese decision not to enter the war against Soviet Russia. At the Liaison Conference of military and civilian leaders in Tokyo on 4 August, the Japanese Army High Command noted that 'the fact that at the present time the fighting on the Western Front [i.e. Army Group Centre] is not moving ahead rather means that the Soviets are playing into German hands, and the probability is high that the war will end in a quick German victory'. On the other hand this was a rejoinder to the Japanese Foreign Ministry's perception that the Soviet-German war would be a prolonged one. On 6 August it was the Foreign Ministry that won the argument, and the Japanese government agreed to keep to the April 1941 Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact.[26] The picture is not altogether clear, however. Towards the end of the Battle of Smolensk, on 6 September, the Liaison Conference met again, this time with the participation of the Emperor. It took the view that '[t]he probability is high that the German Army will destroy the main field armies of the Soviet Union by the end of October or the beginning of November [and] occupy the principal European section of the Soviet Union.'[27] It appears, however, that the course of events in Russia was by this time irrelevant. The Japanese were now locked into a confrontation with the United States. On the other hand, looking at the big picture, the fact that the Japanese did not in August decide to attack the Soviet Union contributes to the argument that this period was crucial to the overall outcome of the Second World War. The pause at Smolensk may have played a role.

The Battle of Smolensk, then, can be evaluated in different ways. Neither of the extreme interpretations is fully convincing. Timoshenko's forces did not stop Army Group Centre dead in its tracks by their heroic resistance. But neither was the German pause on the Moscow axis from late July to early October simply a whim of Hitler's. What Smolensk did was to expose fully the falseness of the original 'Barbarossa' conception. The intelligence assessment that the Red Army could be destroyed on the frontiers, and the political expectation that Soviet Russia would collapse from within, were both shown to be wrong. The element of surprise which, thanks largely to the incompetence of Stalin, had been of inestimable value to the Wehrmacht in June-July 1941, had been spent. The Russians now had time to begin mobilising their greater resources. Germany could not win a war of attrition, not against Russia, and certainly not against an anti-German coalition. Hitler and the German High Command had invaded Russia knowing that they had not finished off the British Empire in the West. After the Battle of Smolensk it was clear the Germans were committed to fighting a long war on two fronts. The Wehrmacht would achieve great victories in the future, indeed in the very near future, but it could not now win the war.

NOTES

1 G. F. Krivosheev, et al., eds., *Grif sekretnosti sniat: Poteri vooruzhennykh sil SSSR v voinakh, boevykh deistviiakh i voennykh konfliktov: Statisticheskoe issledovanie*, Moscow, Voennoe izdatel'stvo, 1993, pp. 179, 182. This has now been translated as *Soviet Casualties and Combat Losses in the Twentieth Century*, London, Greenhill, 1997. Throughout this article 'losses' refers to killed, captured, and missing.

2 For an interesting discussion of the merits of both Stalingrad and Kursk as turning points see the chapter in R. H. S. Stolfi, *Hitler's Panzers East: World War II Reinterpreted*, Norman, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1991, pp. 223-235.

3 For the argument that Moscow was decisive see [Lt.-Gen.] Klaus Reinhardt, *Moscow: The Turning Point*, Oxford, Berg, 1992; the original German edition appeared in 1972. A short version of Reinhardt's argument is available as 'Moscow 1941: The Turning Point' in J. Erickson and D. Dilks, eds., *Barbarossa: The Axis and the Allies*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1994, pp. 207-224.

4 An army group was made up of a number of field armies; the Germans had three in June 1941 (Army Groups North, Centre, and South). The Russians originally had three (which they called *fronty*), but the number multiplied. An 'army' was made up of a number of corps and divisions; the four German 'panzer groups' of 1941 were roughly similar but had a concentration of tanks and motor transport.

5 Strictly speaking the first of these rivers is the *Western* Dvina, as distinct from the Northern Dvina which flows into the White Sea at Archangel'sk.

6 H. R. Trevor-Roper, ed., *Hitler's War Directives*, 1939-1945, London, Pan Books, 1966, p. 94.

7 Albert Seaton, *The Russo-German War, 1941-45*, London, Arthur Barker, 1971, p. 125; Krivosheev, pp. 163-164. Glantz and House give figures of 417 thousand lost in Belorussia (David M. Glantz and Jonathan House, *When Titans Clash: How the Red Army Stopped Hitler*, Lawrence, Univ. of Kansas Press, 1995, p. 53).

8 Charles Burdick and Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, eds., *The Halder War Diary, 1939-1942*, London, Greenhill, 1988, pp. 446f. To be fair to Halder, he followed this with another more cautious sentence, which is less often quoted: 'Of course, this does not mean that [the Russian campaign] is closed. The sheer geographical vastness of the country and the stubbornness of the resistance ... will claim our efforts for many more weeks to come.'

9 The dates 10 July to 10 September are also the time span of Marshal Timoshenko's 'Western Direction'. Another understanding of the Battle of Smolensk has it begin on 7 July and end on 7 August; see for example Kenneth Macksey in [Col.] David M. Glantz, ed., *The Initial Period of the War on the Eastern Front, 22 June – August 1941: Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Art of War Symposium*, London, Frank Cass, 1993, pp. 345-348. The best outline of the early stages of the battle in English is Jacob Kipp, 'Barbarossa and the Crisis of Successive Operations: The Smolensk Engagements, July 10 – August 7, 1941', in Joseph L. Wiesczynski, ed., *Operation Barbarossa: The German Attack on the Soviet Union, June 22, 1941*, Salt Lake City, Charles Schlacks, 1993, pp. 113-150, and in his contribution to Glantz, *Initial Period*, pp. 345-379, 405-432. A readable narrative is John Erickson, *The Road to Stalingrad*, New York, Harper & Row, 1975, pp. 160-163, 180-182, 195-203, 212f. For a brief modern account, stressing the importance of the battle, see Glantz and House, *Titans*, pp. 58-61.

10 Iakov's lengthy initial interrogation has been printed in Iu. G. Murin, ed., *Iosif Stalin v ob"iatiiakh sem'i (Sbornik dokumentov)* [*Joseph Stalin in the Bosom of his Family: Collection of Documents*], Moscow, Rodina, 1993, pp. 69-89. He subsequently died in a German POW camp.

11 Western historians and political scientists indirectly benefited from this outcome. The regional archive of the Communist Party was removed to Germany, and later to the United States. It provided unique insights for Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule*, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1958.

12 Two of Stalin's cronies were installed to the other senior field commands, the political general Voroshilov to the Northern Direction and the Civil War hero Budennyi to the Southern Direction. For biographies of Timoshenko and Shaposhnikov by Viktor Anfilov see Harold Shukman, ed., *Stalin's Generals*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993, pp. 217-232, 239-254. Jacob Kipp gives much of the credit for what success the Red Army achieved at Smolensk to Shaposhnikov's staff work and strategic conception ('Successive Engagements', pp. 122-124).

13 G. K. Zhukov, *Vospominaniia i razmyshleniia* [*Memories and Reflections*], Moscow, Novosti, 10th ed., 1990, vol. 2, pp. 132f.

14 *Velikaia otechestvennaia voina 1941-145: Entsiklopediia*, Moscow, Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1985, p. 659.

15 Krivosheev, pp. 168-170.

16 Earl Ziemke and Magna Bauer, *Moscow to Stalingrad: Decisions in the East*, Washington, Centre of Military History, 1987. The Russians officially recorded losses on the central axis in October and November 1941 as 514 thousand (Krivosheev, pp. 171-172).

17 Stolfi, pp. 81, 212, 219-222.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 149.

19 *Hitler's War Directives*, pp. 95f.

20 The transfer of forces to the north did not lead to the capture of Leningrad, but in the south it had enormous – if short-term – rewards. Guderian's Panzer Group 2 moved south 250 miles to form the northern pincer of the huge encirclement of Kiev and Southwestern Army Group. This was completed on 16 September, a week after the Battle of Smolensk ended. Zhukov's warning had not been heeded, and 665 thousand prisoners were taken (Ziemke and Bauer, p. 34). Russian losses for 7 July to 26 September in the south have officially been given as 616 thousand (Krivosheev, pp. 167).

21 *Hitler's War Directives*, pp. 139, 143, 145f.

22 Kipp, 'Successive Operations', pp. 147f, citing *Kriegestagebuch OKW*.

23 *Hitler's War Directives*, pp. 150, 152-154.

24 *Halder War Diary*, p. 506.

25 B. H. Liddell Hart, *The German Generals Talk*, New York, Berkeley, 1958, pp. 140f.

26 Nobutake Ike, ed., *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conference*, Stanford, Stanford Univ. Press, 1967, p. 114f. Contrary to the Japanese Army's official position there was evidently an important Army intelligence assessment in early August to the effect that Germany would not defeat the USSR in 1941, that the tide would turn against the Germans, and that war would be prolonged (*ibid.*, p. 113). Such reports were also discussed in A. A. Kokoshin, 'Pochemu Iaponiia ne napala na SSSR [Why Japan did not attack the USSR]', *Voprosy istorii*, 1996, no. 2, pp. 142-144. The importance of Smolensk on Japanese non-intervention was stressed by Dieter Ose in his contribution to Glantz, *Initial Period*, pp. 352f.

27 *Japan's Decision*, p. 157.

Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707

Callum G Brown

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Given the central role which religion has played in the development of Scottish society and the perceived status of Presbyterianism as one of Scotland's defining national characteristics, it is surprising that relatively little attention has been paid by historians to the social history of religion as opposed to the religious history of society which has been fairly well served in the past by ecclesiastical historians. In recent years Callum Brown has established himself as the foremost authority in this field and it is a mark of his achievement that his work is both accessible to the general reader and widely respected by fellow historians - as those who attended SATH's 1997 autumn conference will have witnessed. In what might be regarded as a 'difficult' area given the continuing resonances of religious affiliation, particularly in the west of Scotland, his approach is balanced and objective and he is not afraid to tackle big issues including the role of class, gender, and national identity in religious affairs, questioning previous interpretations and challenging some cherished myths. This book is based on his previous work *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1733* (Methuen 1987) but substantially rewritten and updated to take into account more recent research and debate including his own articles in the publications of the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland.

His preface flags up his two main challenges to previous interpretations and national myths - the view that industrialisation and urbanisation led to secularisation and the decline of religion, and simplistic attempts to seek Scotland's national identity in her religious past. Having established these and other areas of 'discourse', he provides a summary of Scotland's church structure over the period - an essential guide and useful reference when trying to navigate one's way through the sometimes bewildering variety of secessions and reunions later in the book, and including maps showing areas of relative strength of different denominations. He then deals separately with religion in rural and urban areas during the 18th and 19th centuries before going on to deal with 'the Crisis of Religious Ideology' over the 'social question', 1890-1939, and 'the Haemorrhage of Faith', 1939-97. The final chapter is something of a *tour de force* analysing the relationships between religion and Scottish, British, sectarian and gender identities. It brings the book to a memorable and stimulating conclusion, pulling many of the themes right into the present and laying down a number of challenges to perceived political as well as historiographical thinking.

One of his main concerns is to apply to Scotland the relatively recent thesis that industrialisation and urbanisation, far from leading to religion's decline, gave it a new life and vigour which reached its height during the Victorian period and that secularisation is a largely 20th century phenomenon. Thus by the 19th century, Presbyterianism had changed its nature from being a pillar of the established order largely controlled by landowners and Moderates to an evangelically dominated cauldron of churches and individuals from a wide variety of social backgrounds seeking their own and society's salvation through a staggering variety of voluntary organisations, many of them influential in local social reform and linked with temperance attempts to combat the 'rough culture' of the 'home heathens' with the 'rational recreation' of church-based activities, and with a lot in common with the rest of Britain and the industrialised world.

The available statistics are interpreted to show that, although much of this was middle-class led, generalisations about 'working class alienation' are misplaced. The majority of churchgoers continued to be from the working class, especially the upwardly mobile skilled sections. He also takes issue with the long-standing identification of Calvinism and the rise of Capitalism, pointing out that Scotland's entrepreneurs preferred the Arminian possibilities of salvation for all as a result of hard work and clean living to the exclusiveness of predestinarianism and the Elect. In fact, contrary to popular belief, the latter were the generally downplayed "ghosts at the feast" of late 18th and 19th century Scottish Presbyterianism. Nor can religion as such be regarded purely as a bourgeois social control mechanism over the proletariat since Presbyterianism itself was one of the main arenas in which social conflicts

were played out. Secession, dissent, and sabbatarianism, particularly in the Highlands and Hebrides and in isolated fishing and mining communities, could often be a form of revolt and assertion of independence by the have-nots in an undemocratic society where any more forceful action could lead to tragedy rather than liberation. The fact that Thomas Chalmers, the great hero of 19th century evangelicalism and the Disruption, was a reactionary should not be allowed to obscure the socially radical approach underlying the foundation of the Free Church - although, in his final chapter, Brown takes issue with those who try to present it as a crypto-nationalist rebellion. And the irony of the fact that, by 1900, after 150 years of trying to convert the Highlands to puritanical Presbyterianism, the south abandoned it and left the Gaelic speaking 'Wee Frees' of the north as the last upholders of the 17th century Lowland Covenanting tradition is well brought out

Moving on to the late 19th and early 20th centuries Brown provides a convincing analysis of the challenge to organised religion's ideological and social hegemony from science, socialism and commercialised leisure. In relation to the scientific challenge, he notes that it was churchmen themselves rather than scientists who sought to accommodate religion to Darwinism by challenging the literal interpretation of the Bible. But it was not so much this as the main churches' formal abandonment of Calvinism (on the 'back-burner' for over a century) which led to a *fin de siecle* crisis of faith in the midst of church reorganisation. In relation to socialism he shows that, despite the efforts of a small band of Christian socialists, the main Presbyterian churches, although enjoying continued local influence on ad-hoc bodies such as parish councils and school boards, failed to adapt to the new political and social challenges of the 20th century. Voluntary effort and involvement declined as public and professional provision expanded. This led to church reunion and the right-wing anti-Labour and anti-Irish leadership of Rev. John White in the 1920's and 30's with dire forecasts reminiscent of Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech half a century later. But even this was not extreme enough for a significant number of Protestants in central Scotland who gave their support to the quasi-fascist politics of the Scottish Protestant League and Protestant Action. Meanwhile the temperance movement collapsed in the 1920's and church-based social and leisure activities were unable to compete with the expanding commercial leisure sector. Despite, or perhaps because of, these 'hard times' church attendance and affiliation seems to have held up reasonably well until the 1950's. After Billy Graham's 'All Scotland Crusade' of 1955, Protestant church membership went into decline - as did Catholic church involvement after the Pope's visit in 1982. Although these media events were coincidental rather than causal, the visits themselves can be seen as a response to growing secularisation.

The contrasting experience of the Catholic church is dealt with throughout the book in terms of both the older Catholic communities in the Highlands and the North-East and the Irish catholic immigrants in west and central Scotland. Up until recently it was in many ways much more of a success story than its Protestant counterparts. This is partly because for most of the period statistics are based on the Catholic population rather than church attendance and partly because anti-Irish discrimination and poverty gave the Church a sort of *laager* mentality within which it developed its own alternative lifestyle and support organisations. This background of struggling out of poverty largely explains its growing association with Labour in the 20th century and, with the exception of its stand on the Spanish Civil War, its avoidance of the sort of reactionary politics in which the established Church of Scotland became involved in the inter-war years. Following the Second World War, the Catholic Church was also much quicker off the mark in building churches in the new schemes - again partly because its constituents were disproportionately affected by post-war slum clearance and rehousing. In recent decades, however, as the social profile of the Catholic population has moved increasingly into line with the population as a whole, they too have come to share in what has been called the "dechristianisation" of western society.

Explaining the latter is identified as one of the thorniest problems confronting social historians. Having contrasted the churches' experience of the First World War, where they worked with the authorities to maintain both morale and morals, with the Second World War, where they found themselves out of tune with the 'work hard, play hard' attitude encouraged by the government, Brown focusses in on young people, i.e. those born during and after the Second World War and their parents. Many of these families found themselves in new multi-roomed council houses which, whatever their faults, offered a degree of comfort and improved living standards, including in-house entertainment such as radio and later television, with which the church halls could not compete - whereas previously

church halls, pubs, cinemas and dance halls (which also suffered a marked decline) had been regarded as relatively luxurious and spacious venues to which to escape from the overcrowded tenements of the inner cities. They were also now further away - there was no rush to build churches in the schemes similar to the late 19th century spate of church-building in the new middle class suburbs. But Brown maintains the argument that the post-war social composition of churchgoers did not change significantly, leading historians to switch from class to cultural analysis to explain religious decline, specifically the role of prosperity-induced cultural change in reducing the social significance of religion in people's lives.

He focusses in particular on the loss of church connection by young married couples and their children, giving examples of how the churches tried to accommodate themselves to the new idealism and permissiveness of the emerging youth culture but, unable to control it, had, by the early 70's, reverted to condemnation - echoing many deep-rooted and primordial prejudices - "the promiscuous girl is the real problem" -although in my recollections of the 60's it was trying to find her that presented the problem. Since then the growth of home-ownership on greenfield sites and a car-based lifestyle constructed round two incomes and fewer children have gone hand-in-hand with continued decline in religiosity, affecting also the Catholic Church, although "explaining the reasons why prosperity appears to be contributing to rapid secularisation is more difficult than merely drawing the correlation". The victory of the secular Sunday is seen as representing "the failure of the acid test of Scotland's Presbyterian culture" and even the churches in the Highlands and Islands are beset by secularism and scandal. Oral evidence is cleverly used to identify a watershed with those born before about 1950 tending to explain their religiosity in terms of their parents' influence and their loss of it in terms of their children's influence. And the latest research suggests we are now undergoing a further stage of secularisation - 'The abandonment of Christian belief'.

In his final chapter Brown is concerned to 'deconstruct' some of the central myths surrounding the role of religion in Scotland. The first of these, already referred to, is that of a distinctive Calvinist character. This ignores both the extensive influence of Calvinism south of the border on Methodism and the United Reform Church and the extent to which in practice Arminianism was promoted in Scotland at the expense of Calvinism from the 18th century onwards by both Moderates and Evangelicals -although predestinarianism was rarely denied until the 1890's, it was rarely preached, leading him to conclude that "much of what is regarded as distinctive in Scottish Presbyterianism of the industrial period was in fact the product of the same sort of evangelicalism as the English Methodists and other non-conformists", thus reducing the potential of Calvinism as a distinguishing feature of Scottish identity. This is followed by quite a fierce attack on the myth of the 'democratic intellect' and the view that Scottish education and social policy were inspired by more democratic religious traditions. He cites R.D. Anderson's research showing that the educational system was far from democratic in its accessibility to all social classes and both sexes, and points out that the Scottish churches were, if anything, more enthusiastic than their Anglican counterparts in preaching the benefits of industrial capitalism the free market and self-help. The great hero of 19th century Presbyterianism, Chalmers, was an advocate of abandoning poor relief as it undermined self-reliance. So, however objectionable Thatcher's 'Sermon on the Mound' and despite all the havers, she was not that far wrong in her appeal to Scottish history!

The next myth to come in for the deconstruction treatment is the claim that the General Assembly functioned as the quasi-parliament of a stateless nation. But there was more than one General Assembly. And, although the Disruption was more a social than a nationalist revolt, viewing the Free Church's Assembly as a Scottish House of Commons and the Established Church's as a House of Lords is stretching a point way too far - religious divisiveness in Scotland has always been a problem for nationalist writers in search of national identity. Nor do statistics support the contention that 19th and 20th century Scottish religiosity was greater than England's as a result of thwarted political nationalism. In fact in his next section Brown goes on to demonstrate that religion in the 18th and 19th centuries was more of an integrating force within Britain with widepread cross-border evangelical cooperation and, in the 20th century, the coming together of the churches in the face of secularisation. He uses the work of other historians to set up what might be called a 'simplistic' model of evolving identity. Up until the 1830's Scottish identity was locked into Britain's by a common anti-Catholic Protestantism;

from then until the second quarter of the 20th century it was locked into Britain's imperial identity; subsequently Scottish identity has been 'released' by imperial decline (including decline of heavy industry and foreign missions) and the decline of Protestantism as a cultural 'cement'. But he is suspicious of the symmetry of such sweeping historical narratives and points to the schismatic effects of Presbyterian dissent and the survival of anti-Catholic sectarianism into the 20th century as counter-points.

The political and economic roots of this sectarianism are traced, and its tendency to move 'down-market' between the 18th and 20th centuries is noted, as its more recent shift in focus from the field of employment to that of leisure, i.e. 'The Old Firm' and their national followings. Even if the latter owes more to the politics of Northern Ireland including the Orange Lodge than to the 17th century Scottish Covenanters, its residual effects on popular consciousness and even politics should not be underestimated. Scottish national identity has never fully integrated Protestant and Catholic. Whereas the former in their manifestation as Rangers supporters tend to identify with Britain and its symbols as an act of solidarity with Northern Ireland unionists, the predominantly Catholic Celtic supporters identify poorly with both British and Scottish symbols and relate strongly to the Irish Republic. Brown cites the serious Rangers-Celtic cup final riot only two years prior to the famous meeting of Pope and Moderator beneath the statue of Knox as evidence that, even if secularisation has undermined popular Presbyterianism, it has not destroyed sectarian identities.

But, as Brown points out, sectarianism is largely a male preserve and religion has been gender differentiated in other respects. His last section focusses on the more emotional and intimate way in which, since the 18th century, women have been affected by religion, and how evangelicalism in particular sought to use this to transmit its values into the home through the mother. Although leadership remained an almost exclusively male preserve, the majority of churchgoers and voluntary workers were women and this activity provided them with an acceptable entree and outlet in the public sphere, preparing the ground for their wider emancipation. Primary sources are also used to show how Sunday church-going and other activities served as an outlet for femininity as you got to show off your best clothes. But if women got a lot of the credit for saving souls in the 19th century, they also got much of the blame for the religious decline in the 20th - their alleged vanity and obsession with trivia and, as ever, failing in their family duties and leading men astray. Bingo and promiscuity, not necessarily in that order, seem to have been at the top of the list of charges, and the jury still seems to be out on which is worse - the working or the single mother (or now the non-working single mother?). But these are not joking matters and Brown identifies the 'defeminisation of piety' and the 'depietisation of femininity' as major components in the religious decline of recent decades.

It seems churlish to express any reservations about such a good book but my main complaint would be that it is not long enough. The non-presbyterian Protestant churches and Judaism are dealt with at various points but only in passing while the post-war development of Muslim and other ethnic communities is not mentioned at all. Nor is there much analysis of the impact of rationalist beliefs which, even if not strictly religious, must have a bearing on the social history of religion. Some revealing comparisons are made with England but there is tremendous scope for setting the development of religion in Scotland alongside its development on the wider European and world scene. Finally Brown makes some of his points most vividly by using primary and anecdotal evidence such as the words of the unfortunate but feisty north-east fisherwoman, Christian Watt, berating her hypocritical 'betters' in the 1850's; the letter from the Whiteinch widow to the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1961, criticising the churches campaign against Bingo; or the response of a Glasgow slum-dweller to an evangeliser in the 1850's - "You missionaries tell us that carters and factory lassies hae souls as well as ither folk. For my part I aye thocht they had, - why is it, man, you canna tell us something we dinna ken?' I could have done with more of such examples together with some illustrations and photographs to help convey the changing nature of religion over the period. But all this would perhaps be to expand the book beyond the limits of publisher's restraints and the current state of research. It is, as it stands. a major contribution to modern Scottish history.

DUNCAN TOMS

The Women of Royaumont **Eileen Crofton**

Tuckwell Press £17.99 Hbk 347pp 1997 ISBN 1 898410 0

What a beautifully produced book and what a story it has to tell. The Great War is still a rich field to work in to find another angle or cause, a forgotten group whose ardours and anguishes are evocative of a past struggle, but which contain a message or insight for us today. The issue of pardon for victims of firing squads, or the contribution of black soldiers to winning the war, are others that come to mind; showing that the debate does and can move on from "Was the tank a war winner?" or "How useful were the cavalry?". This book on the women of Royaumont gives us new angles on women's war contribution. The comfortable myth of women's war effort being confined to "munitionettes" who got fossy jaw, is satisfyingly demolished by this detailed and thoughtful new work on the Scottish Women's Hospital in France from 1915 onwards.

I used the word 'new' just then, deliberately, because while this is a new work, it is not written by a young research graduate out to make a name for him/herself. This book is all the more satisfying for being written by a female doctor who clearly knows and loves the topic that has taken her interest, but moreover, one who both qualified and served during war, herself (World War II). You see what I mean by an author who has no intention of doing it for fame. This author has demonstrated her 'authority' already! Such an author, who retired in 1984, after a lifetime of medical matters (and still felt there was an important task in front on her, to save the story of other earlier medical pioneers, not so much from the condescension of, as from the sheer neglect of posterity), deserves and gets my complete attention.

One might have thought that any work on Scottish Women's hospitals would have the name Elsie Inglis right high up there in the credits.. but not really in this case. She was involved, but her battlefield was Serbia. This book is about another branch of the same hospital group, but with other heroines, chief of whom was Frances Ivens.

The book starts off with some evocative scene-setting of the place, the old Abbey at Royaumont, a former medieval monastery between Paris and Compiegne, which was taken over in 1915 as a military hospital staffed entirely by women. The building is still there and the author's touching opening description of its beauty now, and indeed its beauty then, sets a tone in the book which never lets up. She has an enormous number of sources to work with... tins and tins of the day-to-day management business of the hospital, all stored in the Mitchell Library.. to which she has added numerous interviews with often the children of nurses or doctors, who have readily given up their mother's diaries/letters/ memorabilia etc to help complete the picture. What a pleasure it is to read, at length, the thoughts of these intelligent women. It appears that the nurses and doctors were almost universally literate and well educated.. they kept diaries or wrote letters which they filled with well expressed, beautifully turned phrases which present a vivid word picture of that time and the experiences they were going through. On occasion they even expressed themselves in verse! (p88)

These women were well aware that they were at the 'female cutting edge' so to speak (no pun intended), and in many cases were anxious to record their feelings since they knew they were 'trail blazing' and taking part in a women's revolution. There was a strong suffragette input into the whole business of the Scottish Women's Hospitals; Elsie Inglis and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (now an old lady) both saw the war as an opportunity for women to advance their cause, and within eight days of its outbreak had proposed the medical involvement of women doctors. They planned and offered medical units with 7-10 doctors, 10 nurses and 17 others.. servicing a hospital with a hundred beds. This offer was instantly rejected by the British government; a refusal that led them to approach Serbia, France, Rumania, Greece and Russia with the same offer.. all of which took them up on it! Considering each unit was provisionally to cost £1,000, (it's not clear how long this was for) it's a sad reflection on the British government's outlook, that they couldn't see the bargain they might have been getting. The author doesn't dwell at any length on how the money was actually raised throughout the war years, (nor the exact bill) although log book entries from all of Alloa's schools for example, record the support within the school population and the regularity with which collections were made. This must have been typical of the wider picture across Scotland, and thousands of pounds must have been raised.

The things that stick in the mind when reviewing a book like this are the "episodes" which caught the imagination; the big and little events, the humours and tragedies that shaped the four year life of the hospital and all the women working in it.. yet "episodically" isn't how the book is written at all. This is a wide-ranging and chronological account of all aspects of the creation and development of this unique (in France) establishment.

The story starts in late 1914 with the struggles to get the hospital certified by the French authorities and the problems in kitting out the various sections they needed. The chauffeuses (ambulance drivers) for instance, were often independently wealthy and independently minded women who did their own vehicle maintenance and who smoked! This is hardly what the good ladies on the committee back home thought they were championing. The hospital didn't take long to get "certified". The French, suspicious at the start, just sent their 'sick' who didn't presumably need much treatment; within a month they were sending their 'wounded' and within a few more months asked the hospital to provide a hundred more beds! The extra beds were created in the new Millicent Fawcett Ward, showing their suffrage links and sympathies. Not all the nurses supported the cause however.. a nursing orderly noted in her diary in 1917 about the doctors... "Some are very charming – and some very odd appearances – typical suffragettes!"

One aspect of the book which caught my eye and which I approve of, is that it isn't eulogistic. It tells the story without going overboard on the praise. This is particularly notable in sections where criticism of personalities or staffing problems are involved. It would be easy to miss these out and give the impression of what a cosy community life existed within those monastic walls. 'It is pointless to deny that friction did not occur..' (p90) is as good a way as any of starting this difficult section and, since harmony was not always the case, the author handles with some tact, the descriptions of the inevitable personality clashes, failures and mistaken appointments. This down side does happen and we all know it. To deny it would be to distort history, yet the author's readiness to admit that not all the women appointed, were up to the duties laid upon them, again re-inforces my view that we are getting here a balanced account; a fine blend of compassion and honesty.

This descriptive honesty is seen in plenty of other places in the book. The dramatic and full account of gas gangrene and its treatments, the sadness of the loss of the first of two staff members (by appendicitis), a whole chapter on the treatment and rehabilitation of black soldiers, (the Senegalese ward, entirely staffed by Scottish nurses who spoke no French, dealing with French African soldiers who spoke no French either!), and a nice touch, admitting that the nurses preferred French soldiers to American ones since the latter were overweight which made them more difficult to carry. Then, at the end of the war, there was the story of the visit by some of the doctors to the wastelands of the Chemin des Dames. Reading their awful impressions in late 1918 would add immeasurably as a corrective to the perception of any pupil of mine on a battlefields trip, visualising the present scene at, say Newfoundland Park or La Boiselle.

The hospital, on some occasions, was right in the front line. 1918 was "Royaumont's finest hour." Their sub-branch at Villers Cotterets had to be evacuated and was subsequently destroyed in the battles. In the peak period of May-June 1918, over 3,000 patients passed through the hospital. No wonder one nurse said 'Sometimes we lose track of the month here..' By late 1918 though, some of the nurses were breaking down under the strain. They also were hit by *La grippe*, the Spanish flu. Most caught it although there were no deaths. Even at this hard time, there were still an average of 400 patients in the hospital.

The fine work of the hospital had not gone unremarked even from the start. It was seen as a pioneer in its field, and the great and the good passed through its doors to absorb its unique atmosphere. Laurence Binyon was there in 1917, Elsie Inglis herself before her early death, Millicent Fawcett in 1919, Sarah Bernhardt and the French President and his wife. The visitors book, which went missing in 1918, only to be rediscovered in an antiquarian bookshop in 1974! must be a roll call of the socially famous. It is only a pity that no record has been found (or at least if it has it wasn't mentioned) of any Scottish soldier who was treated there. Some British soldiers were dealt with but the author is not able to identify by name a single Scottish patient treated by the Scottish nurses. By the end of the War, the staff had received twenty three Croix de guerres, they had treated almost 11,000 patients (80% of

which were soldiers) and had 159 deaths. This was a very low death rate of under 2%.

What then was to be done with the hospital once their work was finished? They decided to help restore the shattered French lands by donating the whole lot to the city of Lille. The hospital closed its doors on the last day of 1918 and over the next few months the equipment and fittings made their way north while the staff made their way home. Four years of heroic endeavour was over, but all contributing to an epic story. As a fitting tribute to the leadership and driving force of the hospital – the top surgical team, the author concludes the book with eighty pages of biographical details about their exceptional careers.

This is a superb book. I could see only one typing error (Sarah Siddsons on p12), the photographs, especially the larger ones, have come out admirably and the whole thing is an entrancing story. This is, in essence, what makes it: the attractive and honest tone of the writing. This is a story worth the telling, but with no false decoration or embellishing. The achievement of this is its own tribute to the author.

ANDREW HUNT

Roots of Red Clydeside 1910-1914?

William Kenefick & Arthur Mclvor (Eds)

John Donald £10.00 270pp 1996 ISBN 0 85976 434 6

This collection of eleven essays about industrial relations on Clydeside in the years before the First World War is at the cutting edge of Labour history in Scotland and useful background reading for the *Britain 1850-1979* topic at Higher and even the *Scotland and Britain 1880-1980* option at Standard Grade. It represents a welcome shift from the perennial partisan arguments concerning the relative redness of Red Clydeside into the less well-trodden area of the pre-war industrial unrest. Although, as the question mark in the title implies, it is partly an inquiry into the links between this unrest and the later more famous developments of the war and immediate post-war years, the essays stand up well as investigations into the state of pre-war industrial relations in their own right. In fact the title is rather misleading as the essays deal more with the roots of the pre-war industrial unrest rather than their links with later events. But then *Roots of Industrial Unrest on Clydeside 1910-1914* might not sound so interesting to the general reader.

Although the different writers vary in their views, the general impression which emerges is that the statistical information is inadequate and generalisations are dangerous. There seems to have been a deliberate under-reporting of strikes and other forms of industrial unrest by both government and employers while the trades union records have either disappeared, or, especially in the case of unofficial action, give only a superficial or partial picture. The newspapers would appear to contain the most comprehensive record but there is still much work to be done there in terms of basic research. Apart from inadequate statistics, the dangers of generalisation are further emphasised by the essays on particular groups of workers, their grievances and disputes including the craft workers, the cotton spinners, Glasgow dockers, Lanarkshire miners, Glasgow Corporation employees, and the United Turkey Red and Singer Sewing Machine strikes of 1911. The different experiences and reactions of different groups of workers within the same industry and even within the same works or company - such as the cotton spinners of the English Sewing Company at Neilston and those of Coats in Paisley or Glasgow Corporation's gas and tramway workers -also serve to emphasise the dangers of generalisation.

A number of the essays do not confine themselves to a narrow analysis of the industrial disputes but contain fascinating descriptions of work processes and relationships - such as Alan McKinlay's contrasting of the positions of the craftsmen within the steel, shipbuilding and engineering industries - and their effects on industrial relations. In fact it would probably be a good idea to leave the first three essays until last as they contain a fair amount of more general statistical analysis which it is probably easier to get one's head round once the more accessible 'human interest' material in the later essays has given one a feel for the particular.

Certain issues are highlighted, some of which have not been the subject of much research up to now. Thus McIvor investigates the attitudes of the Clydeside employers - the extent to which they were organised and whether they tended to be more authoritarian/autocratic/'paternalist' than their counterparts in the north of England for example. The answer to the last question, notwithstanding the aforementioned dangers of generalisation, would appear to be 'yes' - although they were not as confrontational as those of the USA. Thus union recognition was more often resisted and consequently was frequently a central element in disputes - including the demand that foremen, who were very much the tool of the management, be compelled to join the union. But the causes of disputes on Clydeside as elsewhere were various - wages, conditions, sackings, work intensification.

The upsurge in militancy in these years throughout Britain and Ireland and indeed further afield seems to have been due to a boom in the business cycle which provided workers with the opportunity to make up for lost ground and encouraged employers to concede more readily - although the story was by no means one of unqualified success, as evidenced by the failure of the Singers strike - one of the few where there seems to be evidence of significant socialist/syndicalist influence within the leadership. The victimisation and sacking of hundreds of activists as a result of the breaking of the Singers strike (following one of the first ever uses of a quasi-postal ballot by the company) led ironically to the dispersal of a considerable number of militants throughout Glasgow and the west of Scotland, contributing in a very direct sense some of the leading personnel of Red Clydeside (e.g. Arthur McManus who went on to work at Barr & Strouds, Albion Motors and Weirs of Cathcart) - as did John MacLean's classes in Marxist economics - although, in the introductory words of the editors, "no hard evidence exists to support the notion of the working class on Clydeside defecting wholesale to socialist, never mind revolutionary socialist ideas on the eve of the First World War". In fact, as James Smyth shows in the concluding essay, it was mainly the ILP which was active in the trade union field with its focus on parliamentary and municipal electoral politics. Although, as Kenefick points out, fear of possible revolutionary trends may have had a disproportionate influence on the authorities and employers thus contributing to the setting up of MI 5 & MI 6 and the reorganisation of the Special Branch at around this time.

On the other hand, the Glasgow Labour History Workshop's gentle criticism of John MacLean's 'In the rapids of revolution' speech of 1911 for exaggerating the situation seems a little unfair. While it is easy to see with hindsight that he misread the post-war situation and can even be seen as the first purveyor (and victim) of the exaggerated myth of Red Clydeside, his 1911 speech was delivered more from an international perspective - with events in Russia and China in mind - than from a narrow Scottish industrial point of view.

The position of women in relation to the wider trade union movement and their more exuberant approach to strikes and demonstrations is well illustrated in the articles on the cotton workers by Knox and Corr and the United Turkey Red strike by Rawlinson and Robinson. The smashing of windows and battles with police are reminiscent of the contemporaneous militant suffragette campaign and surely symptomatic of the more general crisis in the status of women as well as of working class grievances - although possible links are not explored here. It would probably require considerable further research and extend beyond the bounds of this particular volume.

The editors' introduction and the first essay by the Glasgow Labour History Workshop in attempting to analyse the overall significance of the pre-war industrial unrest in the west of Scotland make a number of comparisons with the situation in England which help to put Red Clydeside and its roots into perspective. Thus they state that, although the unrest was less intense than in London and Liverpool, for example, it was more sustained, continuing right up to 1914 and, in some ways, beyond - although after 1914 additional elements came into play such as even higher rents, 'dilution' of Labour and other war-related issues. They also claim that the high, if declining, proportion of independent Scottish unions and the strength of the Trades Councils gave the unrest a more localised, activist-led and democratic nature in Scotland, reminiscent of the later Clyde Workers' Committee. One of the most significant references is to the thesis that the later, more concentrated development of industry in Scotland led to a more confrontational pattern of industrial relations and that the less favourable earnings, workplace control and general living standards contributed to a greater degree of solidarity

between skilled and unskilled. This would seem to support the wider view of revolutionary or pseudo-revolutionary situations as more the result of belated attempts to catch up by those who have fallen behind rather than being the path-finders of a brave new world.

The final essay by Smyth comes closest to attempting an answer to the question of the title in terms of the politics of the period. He concludes that, although Labour benefitted in the long run from the rise in trade union membership, "there was no direct transference of industrial militancy into political class consciousness" - partly because of the continuing Liberal attitudes of the Labour leadership who did not regard the most disadvantaged groups such as the poor, the unskilled and women as part of their 'natural constituency'. If this sounds familiar in Blairite Britain, perhaps it is due to the fact that, despite the history of this century, some people continue to expect too much of the Labour Party in particular and of politics in general, because it has to be said that the nostrums of revolutionary socialism, syndicalism, communism, anarchism (or nationalism) do not seem to have had much success as alternatives - even if they have had some effect as 'frighteners'.

DUNCAN TOMS

A History of Conservative Politics, 1900 - 1996 — John Charmley

Macmillan £12.99 287pp Pbk 1998 ISBN 0 333 722 83

First published in hardcover in 1996, the paperback edition of this book was published in early 1998, including an epilogue to take account of the 1997 General Election and its aftermath. Consequently the title of the publication is rather misleading, implying that the book could have been written in triumphal appreciation of the continuing success of the party, 17 years into their continuous spell of government. Unfortunately the short additional section dealing with the defeat of 1997 and the subsequent leadership contest does little more than acknowledge these events, and adds nothing to the analysis of the changes that have swept through the party in the 1990s.

The choice of illustration for the cover - a painting of Arthur James Balfour and Joseph Chamberlain in the House of Commons signifies the historical perspective of the study. Book covers are always important in attracting the casual reader or purchaser, and this particular choice would definitely direct the book towards the History rather than the Modern Studies market.

Charmley opens with the assertion that "the Conservative Party exists to conserve; it is the party of the status quo". This theme runs through most of his book, although the chapter on "The Iron Lady" appears to dissent from the view. Charmley accepts the view that Thatcher was a 'radical" rather than a "Tory", and implies that although the Party were pleased by their continuing success under her leadership, the "old guard" that represented the Whig tradition, resented her radical edge and populist methods. No observer could ever suggest that Thatcher's policies served to maintain the status quo, except in the sense of maintaining and indeed strengthening the power of a ruling elite. Thatcher's policies, if viewed in the short-term, were radical and far-reaching, striking at the heart of institutions that had become central to the British social and political structure. However, viewing those same policies in the longer sweep of history, it could be argued that she was attempting to return to the structure and values that had existed in pre-war, pre-welfare state days, and in that sense was seeking to preserve a Conservative status quo. Charmley's book examines the changes that have taken place to the Conservative Party within the context of the changes happening in British society. His view is that the Party has been shaped by a succession of influential figures who have enjoyed varying degrees of electoral success, but have each added their personal stamp to the Tory tradition.

Charmley's book provides both chronicle and commentary. The student wishing to check dates, names and events will find that most of them are included somewhere within the work, which is organised on a chronological rather than a thematic basis. The reader will also find that Charmley's commentary is informed and frequently witty.

The statistical appendix gives details of General Election results, but only up until 1992 - perhaps the updated edition could have included treatment of the 1997 election ?

So, is the time right to consign the Conservative Party to the history books? The 1997 General Election left their fortunes at a comparatively low ebb, but examination of Charmley's book reveals that in 1906 they had just 157 MPs, against 400 Liberals and 30 Labour, yet they quickly came back from that crushing defeat. However, the extent of the 1997 debacle is emphasised by the fact that in 1945, when Labour swept to power, there were still 197 Conservative MPs, more than they gained in 1997. However, if Charmley's analysis is accurate then a new charismatic leader will emerge to turn the fortunes of the Party around. However, some observers would contend that because of the change in the Labour Party, adopting a more centralist approach, the job of winning back the middle ground will be much more difficult for the Conservatives now, than it has ever been in the past.

The book is readable and accessible to students and is certainly not a dull academic treatise. It might be tempting to say that school pupils from Higher upwards would be able to read and enjoy this book, but experience of changing reading habits and abilities amongst even the most able school pupils makes one think differently. However, the keen student would have no difficulty in relating to this text which would make a valuable addition to any class library, in History or Modern Studies.

ALLAN GRIEVE

A Perspective on the Historical Legacy in the Re-forging of Moscow

Clive Walton, Department of Arts and Humanities, Moray House Institute of Education.

Local tradition has dictated that an obscure feast shared between two Princes in 1175 would formally mark the founding of Moscow, and in 1997 the city celebrated its 850th birthday extravagantly. The event though was lost on many Muscovites. Their city was in the throws of adjusting to its new financially-challenged role as capital of a diminished and troubled country. But that year, Moscow's post-communist identity was not being forged from some well defined visionary future, but from her pre-Soviet past, (and to a lesser degree her Soviet past) rediscovered and reinvented to address the demands of the present. One commentator described the collapse of communism as the end of history, in fact it was nothing more than the beginning of a new chapter.

As a consequence of its location on the Moskva river trade route, a settlement of significance existed long before that auspicious meeting of the Princes, and for 650 or so of the 850 official years, Moscow has been the centre of the lands and state of Russia. She has also therefore been the centre of the Empires of both the Romanovs and the Soviet Union, at least since Dmitriyi led the Russian army to victory over the Mongols on the River Don. It took a project on the scale of the building of the new St.Petersburg in the early 18th century to temporarily wrest the mantle of primacy from the old city. But the Bolsheviks reinstated Moscow in 1918, dissatisfied with St Petersburg for its Tsarist and western associations and its strategic weaknesses. (It was an act of foresight for which the whole of Europe had cause to be grateful after December 1941). So for most of the 20th century it was Moscow that attracted the eyes of the world as a focus of East-West relations, in doing so characterising the Soviet period, the towers of the historic Kremlin symbolising Russian hegemony over the Eastern sphere. Even post-Soviet, she has displayed both the pride and arrogance of the political centre. But nothing lasts forever, and as Russia's frontiers shrank with each bloody fight for ethnic and political self-determination, and as she was opened to the uncontrollable forces of a free market economy, you could hear the murmuring of discontent at a perceived loss of greatness and autarky. Rome, Paris, London and Berlin have experienced this, now it was Moscow's turn.

It is the Cold War images of Soviet Moscow that dominated western impressions of the city- grey lives lived under cold grey skies in silent tower blocks, crossed by rattling trams and punctuated by bronze leadership statues with bright red socialist-realist banners extolling the heroic proletarian ideal. Then the periodic military spectacles parading before ageing leaders perched atop a granite mausoleum containing the preserved remains of the most celebrated Bolshevik. Although the stamp of the Soviet inheritance is everywhere to be seen in the new Moscow, so is the work of the other 800 years. With hindsight it is now possible to discern that the short Soviet period was just a breath of her

long history, a phase in which she drew from her Tsarist past, exhaled some of it (this was the revolutionary part) and held in the rest in the name of the people. So it is with Russia's more recent transformation to representative democracy and free market economy. Many features of old orders persist, but not only those from the Marxist-Leninist years, also those from the Tsarist era: authoritarian official mentality, the mutuality of church and state, rampant and intractable bureaucracy.

For all its associations with the old regime, Red Square received its name before communism, the 'redness' was a Russian language reference to its beauty. Some Muscovites are reluctant converts to the new order: there used to great parades in the square, a great feeling of togetherness and equality, you never saw old women begging from tourists. Now, it is claimed, Russia is weak and dominated by foreign companies and their money. There was something of the luxury of nostalgia in this view but there is ambivalence in the Muscovite mind about the gains and losses which have come with personal freedom. Stalin is roundly condemned, though perhaps it is more noble to be a nation of dissidents than (perceived) victims of the foreign capitalism.

Moscow's famous Metro is replete with historical references. Each station seems to celebrate Soviet achievement in statue, bas-relief and mosaic: the peasant, worker, soldier. In addition even the Tsars who built the city are immortalised in stone. Ideological cleansing was not so complete in this respect. In one station, built by Stalin to celebrate the bread basket of the Soviet Union, a Metro employee covered an old marble plaque quoting Lenin's word eulogising Russian-Ukrainian fraternity with a gaudy poster advertising the forthcoming Moscow Film Festival. Though reflecting changed priorities in the new Russia such a disrespectful act was still contentious: two of these posters were ripped from the plaque by passing commuters and a furious row ensued. Despite it all, Lenin was still a son of Mother Russia.

And Moscow is suffering for her future. A new shopping mall was being built in the centre. When planning permission was granted citizens thought they were promised that the archaeology would be preserved, it seemed not. One barely reconstructed communist was upset at this destruction of the foundations of our great buildings so foreign companies can make money. To add insult to injury the contractors imported Italian marble when they could have used Russian. On the other hand there was a real need for jobs that pay. And so it went on in the scramble for wealth and the struggle for sheer material survival in the era of what became universally described as 'Wild Capitalism'. Someone else complained that Russia had sold everything, clothes, cars, even Christ.

Nonetheless, this was another remarkable transformation. With the possible exception of Germany, no other country of the European sphere has voluntarily and so fundamentally transformed its economic, social and political systems twice in the space of one lifetime. Russians have survived oppression, murder and mass famine under the Tsars and under the Communists, not long ago they endured and overcame a bitter war of racial conquest unleashed from the west, and yet life in this unimaginably vast country goes on, and because so many Russians are educated, literate and basically discontented with their material lot, there is a powerful dynamic for historical change.

Far from being grey, Moscow's architectural beauty rivals the great central European capitals, and is more reminiscent of Berlin than London, with miles of tall "turn of the century" buildings housing great national and municipal institutions, separated by broad avenues. There was a significant amount of repair and rebuilding in the city's expansive centre, much of it with the 850th celebrations in mind. Moscow's buildings have reflected western as well as native trends. Seven of Stalin's skyscrapers dominate the cityscape, like gothic rockets in an Orwellian nightmare, classic examples of mid-century authoritarian architecture. Here and there are sixties tower blocks, far from the worst of their genre, known locally as Khrushchev buildings. On most streets and public buildings, stars, hammers and sickles now sit comfortably beside reinstated double-headed Imperial eagles and Russian flags. There the recent past, much of it already swept away to be melted down in the 'graveyard of statues', has already become heritage and lost some of its potency.

Although impressive in grandeur, the central part of Moscow is served by a vast acreage of dormitory suburbs made up of tower blocks from the Soviet era: monuments to the bland collectivism that now explains so much of the post-Soviet lethargy. On the other hand 'New Russians' have the work ethic, town flats, foreign cars with drivers, access to foreign currency, compounded and patrolled

dachas in the country. This group constitutes Russia's growing bourgeoisie who have benefited most from foreign investment and the free market, they seem to be everywhere in Moscow: smart mobile-telephoned and BMWed. But for the majority of Muscovites it has become a case of more choice but too expensive.

The Church whose eastern Orthodoxy has so firmly disconnected Russia from mainstream Europe, is re-discovering its role after its brief sojourn. Near to the neo-classical Pushkin Museum where some of the finest examples of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art are housed, a monumental Orthodox cathedral commemorating the 850th year has been rebuilt on the site of a repressed predecessor. Replete with post-communist symbolism, its guild domes equalled the tallest cranes that serviced the construction day and night. However the great public works did not received universal acclaim. The new cathedral was reported to have cost $150m, an extravagance for a city that had so little money it is reputed not to be able to maintain its basic social services, or to pay its own employees. Some had dismissed all this activity as Mayor Luzhkov's self-glorification, others had been amazed that the city has managed to deliver the project. But however it was judged, each political order has to make a statement about itself and this new order courts the support of the Orthodox Church and Russian nationalists seeking to rebuild Moscow and Russia's role and self-image in the world. With the Church's power and influence re-emerging so strongly, its suppression under the Soviets will have to be reappraised.

An imposing small-windowed edifice of a building was the old headquarters of the KGB (the same building still holds Russia's new national security Organisation). There is a Muscovite joke which says from that travel agent you used get a ticket to anywhere in Russia. It was a very Russian joke routed in an era where travel within Russia was restricted, and where people were sent on sudden and unrequested holidays into internal exile. Now there is freedom of movement for those who can afford to travel but here democracy is equivocal. In the year of Moscow's 850th anniversary, with typical Russian irony, in a democracy with a parliament and an executive, Boris Yeltsin continued to rule by presidential veto, even while on holiday. It is Russian history at it again. The English language *Moscow Tribune* quoted Yeltsin in Karelia as saying, "No Russian leader had come here on holiday since Peter 1, now Boris the First has been". He was joking of course. The names have changed, the system has changed, the official religion has changed, but continuity is also everywhere. Soviet communism was unique, uniquely Russian you might say, so then was Russian democracy on Moscow's 850th birthday.

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