

# The Berlin Journal



*A Magazine from the American Academy in Berlin | Number Ten | Spring 2005*

**In this issue:**  
**Barry Bergdoll**  
**Sigrid Nunez**  
**Ronald Steel**  
**Fritz Stern**  
**Peter Wallison**  
**Alan Wolfe**  
**and others**



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## The Berlin Journal

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# Editorial

## In Praise of Different Opinions

We note with sadness the passings of Arthur Miller and Susan Sontag, both of whom contributed to defining moments in the American Academy's young life. Arthur Miller's presence that first week in 1998 ensured that the German *feuilletons* would pay attention when we opened our doors. American culture plays extremely well in Germany, and film teams eagerly tracked Miller throughout Berlin, from his master class on *The Crucible* at the Academy to his public conversation with Trustee Volker Schlöndorff about his work in film.

Three years later, on September 11, 2001, the essayist Susan Sontag was in residence, and her public statement that week epitomizes the ambivalences of her legacy. We cancelled that evening's scheduled discussion, but two nights later she prefaced her reading with a reflection on the tragedy whose sentiments angered many listeners. Although later, in the *New Yorker*, she softened her remarks, many across the Atlantic were also troubled.

Independence of mind is a decidedly American virtue, and the Academy prides itself on presenting not just the best but also the breadth of American opinion. It has proven an especially effective vehicle of cultural diplomacy by virtue of its independence as a private, nonpartisan center. Indeed, despite the best efforts of governments to repair the recent rift in transatlantic relations, a thick residue of alienation is still evident in public attitudes. The Academy seeks to address this and recently welcomed President Bush in Europe with a forward-looking insert on "Atlantic Partnership" in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, which included bipartisan voices from diplomacy, the Fourth Estate, and academia.

This issue of the *Journal* offers a similar diversity of opinion, whether in the trio of essays on American religiosity, electoral behavior, and foreign policy traditions, or in two pieces by American experts on China – the fruit of the new C.V. Starr Public Policy Forum. There are also pieces by Academy scholars and writers in residence: Barry Bergdoll's timely addition to the debate about the architectural simulacra on Berlin's Schlossplatz, Helmut W. Smith's description of the German cartographic imagination, and literary offerings from Sigrid Nunez, John Koethe, and Ellen Hinsey.

The expanded *Journal* provides only a glimpse into the fertile dynamic of the transatlantic imagination, but we hope it is an inspiring one.

– Gary Smith



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**Das Erste<sup>1</sup>**



Albert Einstein at the German Chancellery in Berlin, 1931, flanked by the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, left, and Hermann Schmitz, founder of the chemical company I.G. Farben. The photograph was taken by Erich Salomon, who was murdered at Auschwitz in 1944. Schmitz was later tried and convicted at Nuremberg for I.G. Farben's role in manufacturing the Zyklon-B cyanide gas used at the camp.

Erich Salomon Archive, Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz

# The Lessons of German History

## Reflections on Receiving the Leo Baeck Prize

by *Fritz Stern*

TO HAVE WITNESSED even as a child the descent in Germany from decency to Nazi barbarism gave the question “How was it possible?” an existential immediacy. Along with others of my generation, I wrestled with that question, trying to reconstruct some parts of the past and perhaps intuit some lessons.

Today, I worry about the immediate future of the United States, the country that gave haven to German-speaking refugees in the 1930s. (In 1938, at the age of 12, I came with my family to New York.) We refugees are grateful to the United States for saving us and for giving us a chance for a new start, if often under harsh circumstances. We loved and admired this country that was still digging itself out from an unprecedented depression when we arrived – under a leader whose motto was “The only thing we have

to fear is fear itself,” unlike his German contemporary, who preached fear in order to exploit it.

The United States was the sole functioning democracy of the 1930s – that “low, dishonest decade” – and under President Franklin Roosevelt it was committed to pragmatic reform and maintained inimitable high spirits. I have not forgotten the unpleasant elements of those days – the injustices, the rightwing radicals, the anti-Semites – but the dominant note of Roosevelt’s era was ebullient affirmation.

THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE is a monument that German Jewish refugees built as a memorial to their collective past, a troubled, anguished, glorious past to which many of them remained loyal even after National Socialism sought to deny and destroy it. It is impossible to generalize about German Jews in the modern era, but common to most of them was an earlier deep affection for their country, its language, and its culture. Perhaps they loved not wisely, but too well. Even Albert Einstein, with his abiding antipathy for things German, remembered his unique, never duplicated companionship during his great years in Berlin with his German colleagues Max Planck and Max von Laue.

I remember from my childhood the decent Germans, so-called Aryans, who, being opponents of the Nazi regime, disappeared into concentration camps in and after 1933. The ties between us had been close, and when they were broken – when so many Germans decided they did not want to know what was happening to their Jewish or “non-Aryan” neighbors, when they denied their common past – the pain was deep. But something of what had once been remained in the minds of many refugees, and they founded the Leo Baeck Institute to be a repository of this legacy. Its archives are a treasure for historians, and scholars from everywhere – in recent decades especially from Germany itself – have visited its unique library. The institute has contributed to greater understanding and reconciliation between Americans and Germans, between Christians and Jews.

The founders probably seized quickly upon the name Leo Baeck to recall the last liberal rabbi of Germany, a student of the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey, someone who deepened theological learning by taking a fuller account of the irrational, mysterious elements in human existence. However much Baeck and Paul Tillich had

understood the power of the demonic when they studied it in the 1920s, Baeck could not have imagined that he would live to see the triumph of hate-filled unreason. In the end, he had to endure living under that triumph in a unique position as the last head of Germany’s Jewish community, its representative to Nazi authorities.

Eventually, in 1942, the regime sent him to Theresienstadt, that Nazi mockery of a model concentration camp, where for a time specially selected victims, spared as yet from extermination, were allowed to retain some form of a community before most of them died of hunger and disease. Baeck survived his years there; perhaps he met my father’s sister and her husband there before they were deported to Auschwitz, where they were murdered.

Richard von Weizsäcker, in his extraordinary presidential address on the fortieth anniversary of Germany’s unconditional surrender, warned that sparing German feelings would be of no avail. The

*American friendship supported German reconstruction. I fear that an estrangement is now taking place.*

wounds remain and need to be acknowledged. In that same spirit of candor, let me say that the work of the institute is all the more important in light of what an earlier head of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Gerson Cohen, wrote in the 1945 Leo Baeck Yearbook. He mentioned that German Jewry had received “bad press” in recent literature, being depicted occasionally as epitomizing submissiveness and self-hatred. There is a complex history – hence the importance of the diverse testimony collected at the institute; but it is also appropriate to recall the poet Heinrich Heine’s thought: that Jews are like the people they live among, only more so. Hence German Jews, who came in great variety – orthodox, liberal, secular, converted – were like Germans, only more so: ambitious, talented, disciplined, and full of ambivalence.


After their civic emancipation in the nineteenth century, German Jews made an unprecedented leap to achievement, prominence, and wealth within only three generations, but some special insecurity and vulnerability clung to them, as it did

to many Germans. I remember finding in an obscure book British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli’s confession in the early 1870s to young Leonard Montefiore, the English author and philanthropist: “You and I belong to a race that can do everything but fail.” What a poignant remark, I thought, and mentioned it to my son, who instantly responded, “How hard on the others.”

It probably was hard on the others, but now many Germans regret the absence of that creative, complicated element in German Jewry. They recall the inestimable contributions that Jews made to German life and culture in their century of partial emancipation. But their forbears had more complicated feelings on the subject, and even the most successful Jews felt, as Walther Rathenau once said, that “there comes a moment in every Jew’s life when he realizes he is a second-class citizen.”

Perhaps that strange mixture of German hospitality and hostility to Jews evoked the ambivalent response of some of the greatest of German Jews. They were the brilliant diagnosticians of German-European hypocrisy, the memorable breakers of taboos: think of Heine’s mockery of German sentimental pretense, of Karl Marx’s insistence that the cash nexus trumps virtue, or of Sigmund Freud’s exposure of sexual hypocrisy and falsehood. Disturbers of a false peace are indispensable but rarely welcomed. So anti-Semitism, which comes in many guises and degrees, existed in pre-1914 Germany, as it did more ferociously in other countries. In Germany, it became an all-consuming political weapon only after the Great War.

IT IS NOW CONVENTIONAL wisdom that World War I and its senseless, unimaginable slaughter was the Ur-catastrophe of the last century. It brutalized a Europe that before 1914, although deeply flawed by injustice and arrogance, also contained the promise of great emancipation movements championing the demands for social justice, for equality, for women’s rights, and for human rights more generally. World War I radicalized Europe; without it, there would have been no Bolshevism and no fascism. In the postwar climate and in the defeated and self-deceived Germany, National Socialism flourished and ultimately made it possible for Hitler to establish the most popular, most murderous, most seductive, and most repressive regime of the last century.

The rise of National Socialism was neither inevitable nor accidental. It did 

have deep roots, but it could have been stopped. This is but one of the many lessons contained in modern German history, lessons that should not be squandered in cheap and ignorant analogies. A key lesson is that civic passivity and willed blindness were the preconditions for the triumph of National Socialism, which many clear-headed Germans recognized at the time as a monstrous danger. We who were born at the end of the Weimar Republic and who witnessed the rise of National Socialism should remember that even in the darkest period there were individuals who showed active decency, who, defying intimidation and repression, opposed evil and tried to ease suffering. I wish these people would be given a proper European memorial, not to appease our conscience but to summon their courage for future generations.

After World War I and Germany's defeat, conditions were harsh, and Germans were deeply divided between moderates and democrats on the one hand and fanatic extremists of the right and the left on the other. National Socialists portrayed Germany as a nation that had been stabbed in the back by socialists and Jews; they portrayed Weimar Germany as a moral-political swamp; they seized on the Bolshevik-Marxist danger, painted it in lurid colors, and stoked people's fear in order to pose as saviors of the nation.

In the late 1920s, a group of intellectuals known as conservative revolutionaries demanded new *volkish* authoritarianism, a third Reich. Richly financed by corporate interests, they denounced liberalism as the greatest, most invidious threat and attacked it for its tolerance, rationality, and cosmopolitan culture. These conservative revolutionaries were proud of being prophets of the Third Reich – at least until some of them were exiled or murdered by the Nazis when the latter came to power. Throughout, the Nazis vilified liberalism as a semi-Marxist-Jewish conspiracy, and, with Germany in the midst of unprecedented depression and impoverishment, they promised a national rebirth.

Twenty years ago, I wrote about “National Socialism as Temptation,” about what it was that induced so many Germans to embrace the terrifying specter. There were many reasons, but at the top ranks Hitler himself, a brilliant populist manipulator who insisted and probably believed that Providence had chosen him as Germany's savior, a leader charged with executing a divine mission. God had been drafted into national politics

before, but Hitler's success in fusing racial dogma with Germanic Christianity was an immensely powerful element in his electoral campaigns. Some people recognized the moral perils of mixing religion and politics, but many more were seduced by it. It was the pseudo-religious transfiguration of politics that largely ensured his success, notably in Protestant areas.

German moderates and German elites underestimated Hitler, assuming that most people would not succumb to his Manichean unreason; they did not think that his hatred and mendacity could be taken seriously. They were proven wrong. People were enthralled by the Nazis' cunning transposition of politics into carefully staged pageantry, into flag-waving martial mass. At solemn moments, the National Socialists would shift from the pseudo-religious invocation of Providence to traditional Christian forms, in his first radio address to the German people, 24 hours after coming to power, Hitler

*Malice and simplicity  
have their own appeal,  
force impresses, and  
nothing in the public  
realm is inevitable.*

declared, “The national government will preserve and defend those basic principles on which our nation has been built up. They regard Christianity as the foundation of our national morality and the family as the basis of national life.” German elites proved susceptible to this mystical brew of pseudo-religion and disguised interest. Churchmen, especially Protestant clergy, shared his hostility toward the liberal-secular state and its defenders; they were also filled with anti-Semitic beliefs, although with some heroic exceptions.

Let me cite one example of the acknowledged appeal of unreason. Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, a Nobel laureate in physics and a philosopher, wrote to me in the mid 1980s saying that he had never believed in Nazi ideology but that he had been tempted by the movement, which seemed to him then like “the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” On reflection, he thought that National Socialism had been part of a process that the Nazis themselves had not understood. He may well have been right. They did not realize that they were part of a historic process

in which resentment against a disenchanted secular world found deliverance in the ecstatic escape of unreason.

Although modern German history offers lessons in both disaster and recovery, German has remained the language of politics in crisis. And the principal lesson speaks of the fragility of democracy and the fatality of civic passivity or indifference; German history teaches us that malice and simplicity have their own appeal, that force impresses, and that nothing in the public realm is inevitable.

Reconstruction is another lesson, for the history of the Federal Republic since World War II, a republic that is now 55 years old, exemplifies success despite its serious flaws and shortcomings. In postwar Germany, democracy grew on what was initially uncongenial ground, when Germans were still steeped in resentment and denial. American friendship supported that reconstruction, especially in its first decade. I fear that an estrangement is now taking place; at the least, we must all try to preserve in the private realm what may be in jeopardy in public life.

German democracy and German acceptance of Western traditions have been the preconditions for Germany's gradual reconciliation with neighbors and former enemies, with Poles and Slavs; for efforts at reconciliation with Jews; for a general acceptance of the burden of the past and a collective commitment to the future. This German achievement is remarkable – but it, too, needs constant protection.

My hope is for a renewal on still firmer grounds of a transatlantic community of liberal democracies. Every democracy needs a liberal fundament, a Bill of Rights enshrined in law and spirit, for this alone gives democracy the chance for self-correction and reform. Without it, the survival of democracy is at risk. Every genuine conservative knows this. 📖

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Fritz Stern is University Professor Emeritus at Columbia University and a trustee of the American Academy in Berlin. The remarks on which this article is based were made in November, 2004 at the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, when he was honored with the Baeck Medal for distinguished scholarship in German history and for contributions to good relations between the United States and Germany. This text will also appear in the May-June issue of the American journal *Foreign Affairs*.

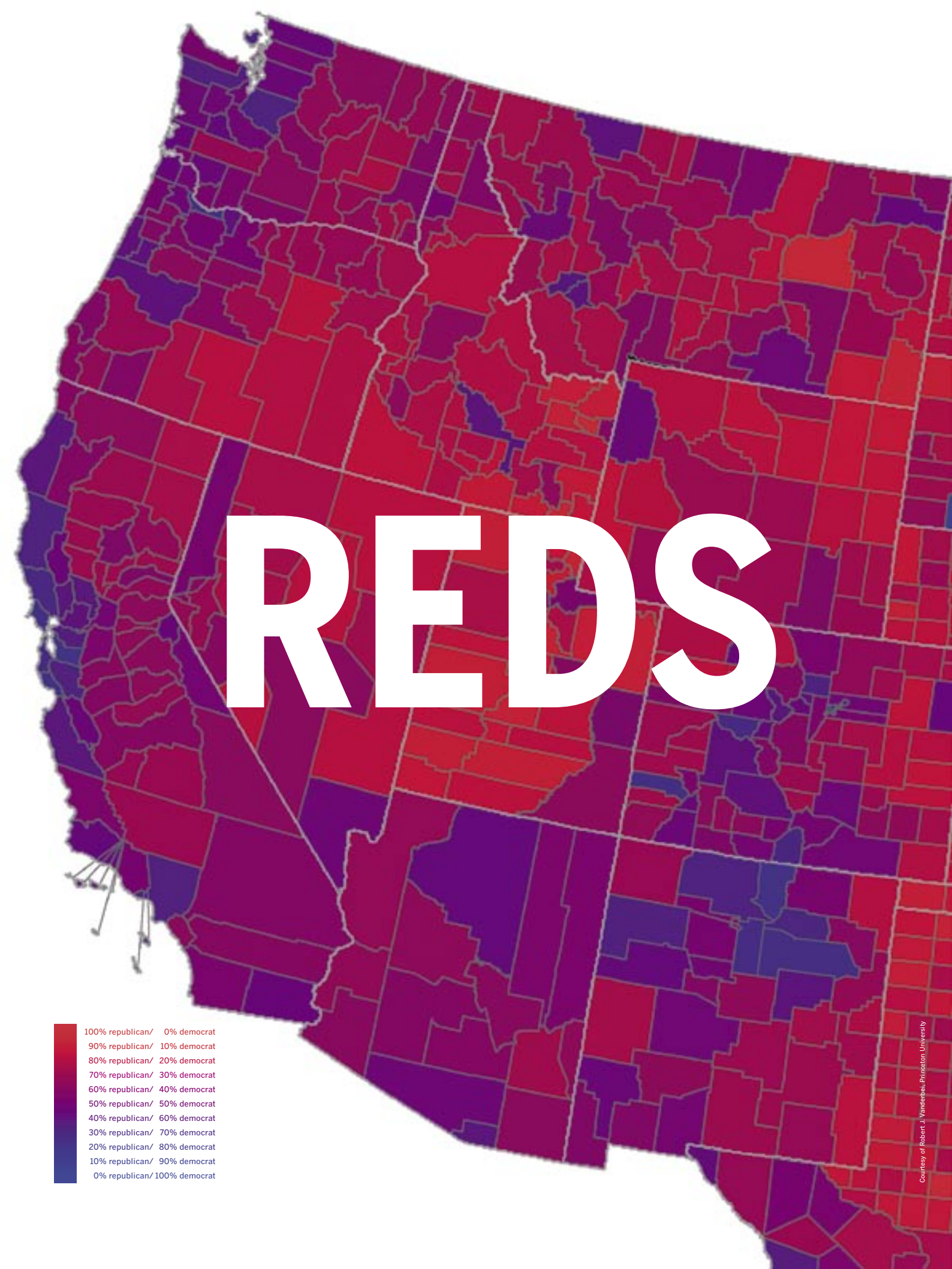




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# REDS



100% republican/	0% democrat
90% republican/	10% democrat
80% republican/	20% democrat
70% republican/	30% democrat
60% republican/	40% democrat
50% republican/	50% democrat
40% republican/	60% democrat
30% republican/	70% democrat
20% republican/	80% democrat
10% republican/	90% democrat
0% republican/	100% democrat

**LEADING UP TO NOVEMBER** 2004, both Democrats and Republicans said the election would be one of the most important in their lifetimes. The Democrats were completely united behind John Kerry and the Republicans behind George W. Bush. The exit polls eventually showed that 89 percent of the Democrats voted for Kerry, and 91 percent of Republicans voted for Bush.

For the first time in anyone's memory, the Democrats had raised more money than the Republicans to wage a presidential campaign. The campaign issues seemed to favor the Kerry camp. By November 2004, polls showed a country deeply divided about the war in Iraq, with around 50 percent saying the war had been a mistake and a majority expressing concern about the insurgency there. Although the economy had been growing since 2003, the number of jobs actually created (according to the Labor Department's employer survey) was not keeping pace with the new entries into the workforce,

and the daily loss of American lives in Iraq. Michael Moore's film *Fahrenheit 911* was a popular success, and there were dozens of books bashing Bush. This news environment must have created a sense for some voters that the Bush presidency was a failure and that Bush himself was incompetent and dishonest.

Just before the election, Bush's approval rating in the Gallup poll, which most election analysts take as the key measure of a president's electability, was 47 percent positive, 48 percent negative. His rating on handling the economy was slightly worse (47 percent positive, 51 percent negative), and the question that asked whether the country was on the "right track or the wrong track" was consistently answered in the negative right up to the election. No president has ever won re-election with an approval rating under 50 percent, and Bush's rating on the economy – traditionally the most sensitive issue for an incumbent president – boded ill for his re-election.

almost entirely to the Republican base was successful. It suggests that by 2004, the electorate contained enough Republicans and Republican-minded independents to provide a winning margin, possible evidence that a realignment of US politics had already occurred.

Of course, each election occurs in the context of a particular time, with its own mixture of candidates, issues, and facts. One can never step into the same river twice. Many have attributed the Bush victory to the peculiar circumstances of the post-September-11 period, just as the 2000 election could be interpreted as a rebound from the unpleasant personal elements of the Clinton presidency. Here I will counter five of the dominant arguments. ↵

"Purple America," conceived by Robert J. Vanderbei, professor of operations research and financial engineering at Princeton University, illustrates the relative proportions of red, blue, and green – Republican, Democratic, and "other" – votes in each US county by blending the three. More information is available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~rvdb/JAVA/election2004/>

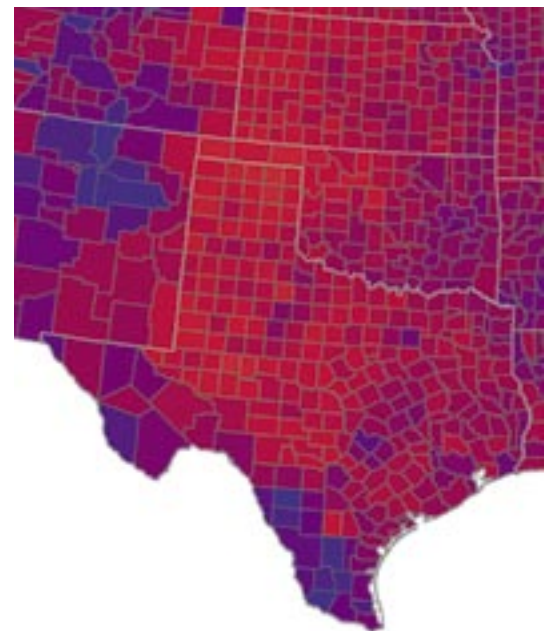
# How the Republicans Won the 2004 Election [and Why Most Explanations are Wrong]

## by Peter J. Wallison

and it appeared that the battleground states were still losing jobs: Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Michigan, and other populous Midwestern states still heavily dependent on manufacturing that has been gradually moving overseas. The media gave sustained attention to a number of issues that created negative impressions of the Bush administration policies. These included the Abu Ghraib torture scandal, spiking oil prices, the failure to capture bin Laden, the 9/11 Commission's contentious public hearings, statements by former government officials like Richard Clarke and Joseph Wilson criticizing Bush's failure to protect the country from attack and opposing his confrontational foreign policy, the failure to find weapons of mass destruc-

tion. Finally, when Bush campaigned almost exclusively in Republican areas and before handicapped Republican audiences, the press interpreted this as an effort to shore up a fracturing base. Kerry's campaign, it was thought, had secured its base and was reaching out to moderates in order to widen its support.

As we will see, this was a misunderstanding of both the Bush strategy and of the country's political conditions. Bush won by over three million popular votes and with 286 electoral votes out of the 270 needed under the Constitution for election. He gained in vote *percentage* over the 2000 election in 45 of the fifty states (losing vote percentage only in tiny Vermont). Apparently, the Bush strategy of appealing



#### BUSH AS A WARTIME PRESIDENT

It is most unlikely that Americans voted Bush back into office because of his wartime leadership. There is always a “rally-around-the-flag” factor for Americans in wartime, but Bush’s ratings as a war leader did not reflect a great deal of this kind of support in the months before the election. Among other polls, Gallup in October 2004 found the country evenly divided on whether the president had a “clear plan” for “handling the situation in Iraq.” Moreover, it was not the highest ranking issue to which Americans gave priority at the time of the election. According to the exit polls, Iraq (at 15 percent) ranked fourth in importance as an issue to voters, after Moral Values (22 percent), Economy/Jobs (20 percent), and Terrorism (19 percent). Moreover, a majority in the exit polls said things were going either “somewhat badly” or “very badly” in Iraq.

#### MORAL VALUES AND RELIGION

Far too much has been made of the fact that 22 percent of the voters cited moral values as the most important issue. Some Democrats (in despair) and Republicans (with delight) interpreted this result as a commentary on Bush’s “values” campaign, which never shied from confirming his belief in God (although he never mentioned his Christianity or his evangelical beliefs in a public forum). But it is impossible to tell what voters meant when they selected this nebulous category. If they wanted to protest the coarsening of public discourse in the United States, they may have voted for Bush. If they were concerned about human rights issues, and particularly about the events at Abu Ghraib, they may have voted for Kerry. In the exit polls, only 8 percent of Bush supporters attributed their votes to his religious faith. Some 9 percent said it was because he cares about people, 11 percent because he is honest and trustworthy, 17 percent because he is a strong leader, another 17 percent because he has a clear stand on the issues, and 24 percent because he will bring change.

#### TERRORISM

The ability to handle terrorism was the one issue on which Bush had a very substantial lead over Kerry in the polls throughout the campaign. In some cases, his margin was over 35 points. For this reason, much of the post-election commentary attributed Bush’s victory to Americans’ fear of terrorism. The exit polls do not, however, confirm this. Terrorism ranked third in priority among voters polled, after moral values and the economy. Finally and probably most significantly, of the 22 percent of the voters claiming to be “very worried” about terrorism, 56 percent voted for Kerry. Bush won among voters who said they were “somewhat worried” (53 percent), “not too worried” (19 percent), and “not at all worried” (5 percent).

#### OPPOSITION TO GAY MARRIAGE

Constitutional amendments banning gay marriage were on the ballot in a number of states, some of which were important toss-up states. All such initiatives passed by wide margins, but their presence did not determine the outcome in individual states in favor of Bush. For example, anti-gay marriage amendments passed handily in both the battleground states of Ohio and Oregon. Bush carried Ohio, but Kerry carried Oregon with a higher percentage of the vote than Bush received in Ohio.

#### CAMPAIGN FUNDS AND THE QUALITY OF THE CAMPAIGNS

Candidates and campaigns can certainly make a decisive difference in an election, and after the 2004 election some Democrats blamed the Kerry campaign and the candidate himself for the loss. This seems too easy an explanation. Similar things were said about Al Gore in 2000, when he also lost an election many Democrats thought he should have won easily. It is true that Kerry never seemed to stir much emotional excitement in the Democratic base, but he really didn’t have to. The hatred of Bush was so strong among Democrats that they didn’t need much energizing to support their own ticket. There is evidence for this in the collapse of the Nader campaign, as virtually all Liberal voters returned to the Democratic line to vote for Kerry.

Kerry might not have run the perfect campaign, but no one ever does. Indeed, he won 16 percent more votes than Gore did in 2000. In the exit polls, 26 percent of the voters said they had been contacted by the Kerry campaign, while only 24 percent said they had been contacted by the Bush

campaign. Finally, the Kerry campaign kept pace with the Bush campaign in fund-raising – no small feat, given the fact that the Bush campaigns in both 2000 and 2004 set new fund-raising records. In this campaign cycle, Bush raised almost \$375 million, and Kerry raised \$346 million. But independent expenditures put the Democrat far ahead. There were \$63 million in independent expenditures for Kerry, and \$73 million in independent expenditures against Bush (George Soros alone is said to have spent \$27 million to defeat Bush), while there were only \$17 million in independent expenditures for Bush and \$11.5 million spent independently against Kerry.

None of these factors – or all of them together – can explain Bush’s win in 2004.

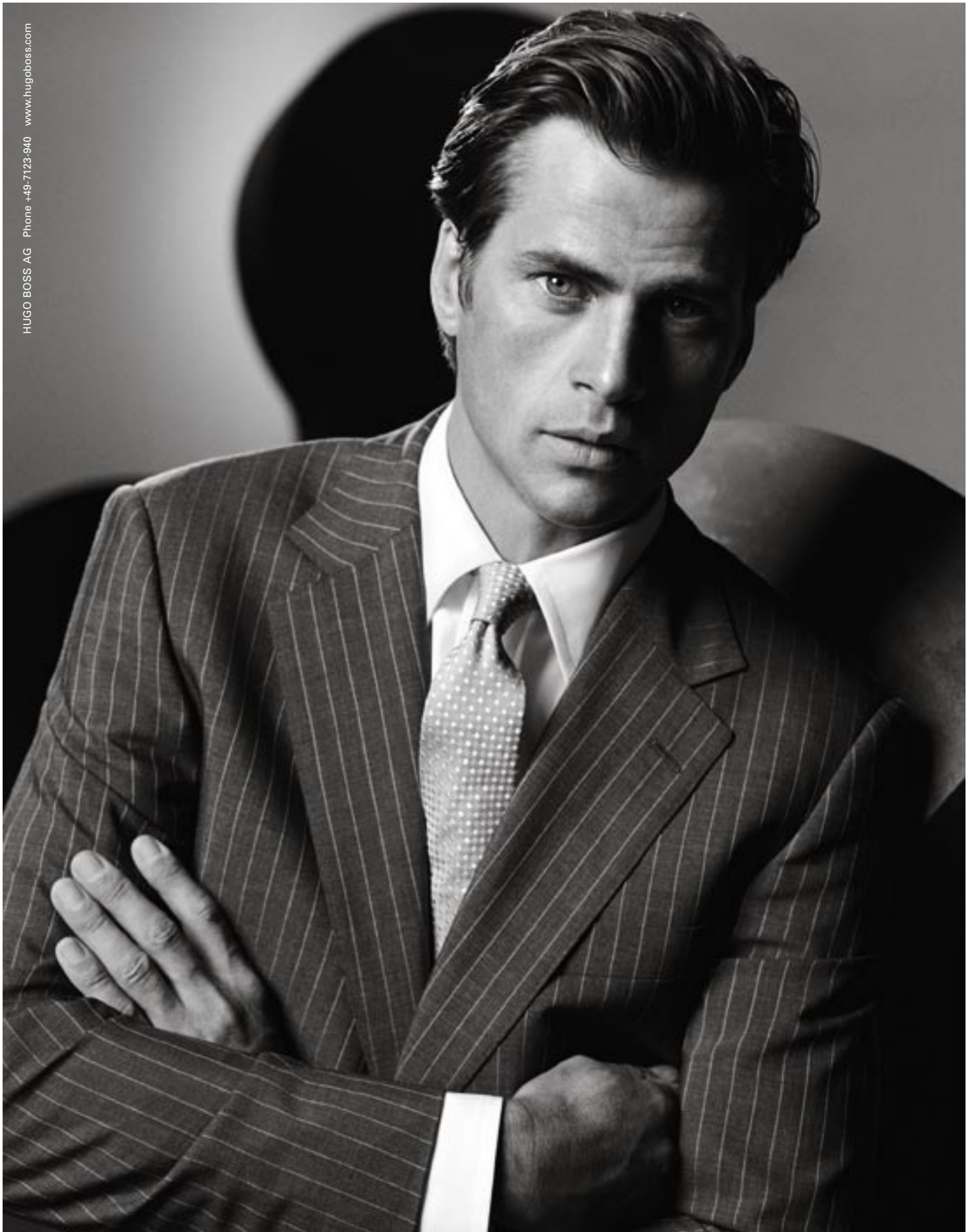
The fact remains that in a year when the US was involved in an unpopular and controversial war, when job losses in an earlier recession had not been recovered, when the news on every front was relentlessly bad,

**When Bush campaigned almost exclusively in Republican areas and before handpicked Republican audiences, the press interpreted this as an effort to shore up a fracturing base. This was a misunderstanding of both the Bush strategy and of the country’s political conditions.**

when the Democrats were as united and energized as anyone has ever seen them and had more money to spend than an incumbent Republican president, they still did not win.

The outcomes of both the 2000 and the 2004 elections defy conventional patterns of analysis. How could it be that in 2000 a virtually unknown challenger could beat an incumbent vice president in a time of peace and unprecedented prosperity, but in 2004 a well-financed challenger with a united party behind him could not beat an incumbent president who was besieged by bad news? ➡

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S E L E C T I O N

**THESE TWO UNUSUAL** elections, it seems to me, say something important about what is happening – or has already happened – politically in the US. The close Bush victories in both cases may have obscured the fact that major changes had occurred in the balance of the parties. I would argue that, since Ronald Reagan's victory in 1980, a majority in the US electorate has been moving gradually to the Republican party and that the Bush victories in 2000 and 2004 reflected rather than caused a gradual realignment of American politics already long underway. This conclusion is strongly supported by the fact that Republicans won in 2004 without "moving to the center" or beyond what they perceived as their own base.

Poll data seem to reflect enormous growth for the Republicans since the 1970s. Thirty years of Harris poll data on voter identification, for example, show that the lead of Democrats over Republicans has dwindled – from 21 percentage points in the 1970s, to 11 points in the 1980s, to 7 points

**Perhaps the most important reason for Republicans to be sanguine about future success is that the party is in tune with the basic attitudes of the American electorate. Polls show a large majority of Americans share ideas that are strongly associated with the Republican Party.**

in the 1990s. The Harris poll from this March shows the Democrats at 34 and the Republicans at 31 percent.

Actual turnout in US elections is well below the number of voters registered and still further below the number of eligible voters. In 2004, voter turnout was around 60 percent, one of the highest turnouts in many years. Although the Democrats hold a slight advantage in party identification among registered voters, it appears that those who actually go to the polls are more likely to vote Republican. The Republicans thus have what might be called a working majority.

This seems to be demonstrated in several recent US elections, which polls confirm. In 1994, the Republicans took control of the House of Representatives for the first

time in forty years and have managed to hold control for ten years. In the five elections since 1994, the total Republican vote for the House of Representatives has been higher than the Democratic vote, except in the Clinton election year of 1996. The Republicans took control of the Senate in 1994, and held it until 2001, when a single defection by James Jeffords of Vermont switched control of the chamber to the Democrats. The Republicans regained control again in 2002 and increased their Senate margin in 2004, in part by unseating Tom Daschle in South Dakota and winning five Senate races in the South. For the first time in eighty years, the Republicans have firm control of the presidency and both Houses of Congress.

Perhaps the most important reason for Republicans to be sanguine about future success is that the party is in tune with the basic attitudes of the American electorate. The book *What's Wrong* by Everett Carll Ladd and Karlyn Bowman, based on some

**In a year when the US was involved in a controversial war, when job losses had not been recovered, when the Democrats were as united and energized as anyone has ever seen them and had more money to spend than an incumbent Republican president, they still did not win.**

three decades of polling data through the late 1990s, suggests some interesting conclusions about Americans' fundamental views of themselves, their country, their government, and the institutions of society. According to these polls, a large majority of Americans share ideas that are strongly associated with the Republican Party. They believe that people have an obligation to take care of themselves rather than rely on the government, and they support smaller government with fewer services rather than larger government with more services.

Indeed, in the 2004 exit polls, voters were asked whether they thought government should do more to solve people's problems. Forty-six percent said yes, and they went for Kerry by 66-33; 49 percent said no, and they went for Bush, 70-29.

As the exit poll on government's role demonstrates, the central appeal of the Democratic Party is a more activist government. Its main interest groups – public employee unions, community action groups, environmental activists, consumer advocates, and trial lawyers – depend for their success on the growth of the bureaucracy, government spending, and regulation.

The Democrats are likely to come back into office when – because of an economic calamity or some other event that seems to require government intervention – the American people see a need for more government action. Right now, that is not the case, and until it is, the Democrats are likely to remain a minority party.

Thus, one reason that the Republican Party may have become the dominant party in the United States is that its central appeal – for lower taxes, smaller government, more individual responsibility, and a strong military in the post-September-11 era – is closer to the views of a majority of Americans about the role of government than are the positions of the Democratic Party.

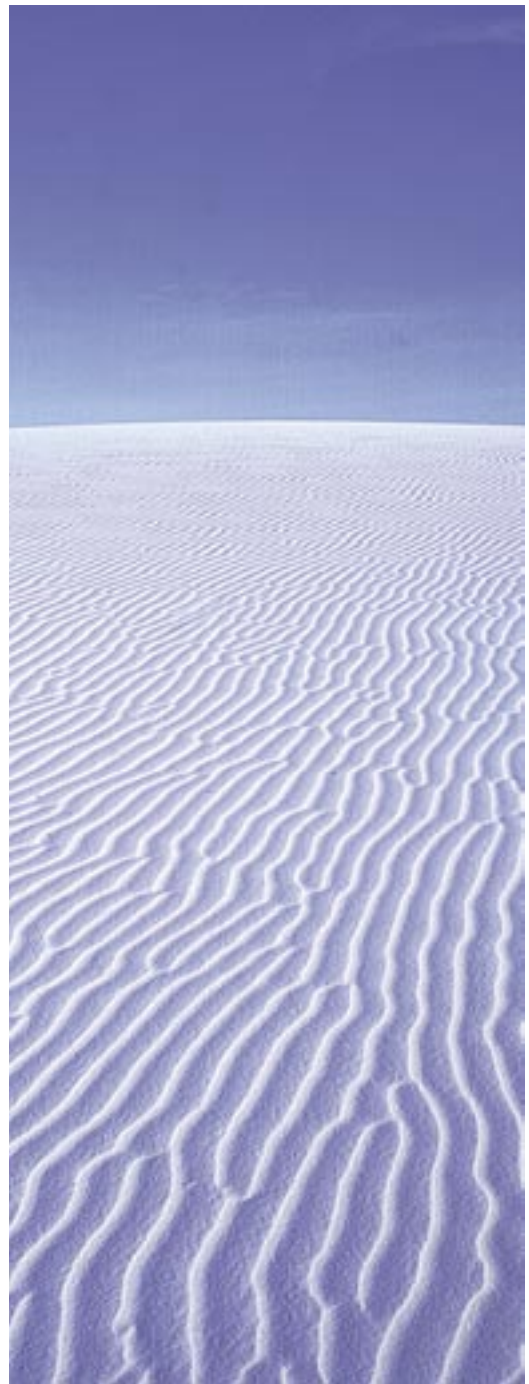
George W. Bush's two victories – despite strongly adverse conditions in both 2000 and 2004 – suggest an underlying strength in the Republican vote. Polls show that party allegiance of American voters has been shifting toward the Republicans since the 1960s, accelerating a bit in the Reagan era, and consolidating its strength in the 1990s with the takeover of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The 2004 Bush campaign exploited this trend by concentrating its effort in the Republican areas of the toss-up states, seldom reaching out to independents and Democrats in the cities and inner suburbs.

These factors suggest either that a realignment has already occurred in American politics or that a period of sustained Republican hegemony is ahead. This does not necessarily mean that there will be no Democratic presidents in the foreseeable future. Events, issues, and candidates are still more important than party identification, but as the success of the Bush campaign in 2004 shows, a majority party has the wind at its back. ↩

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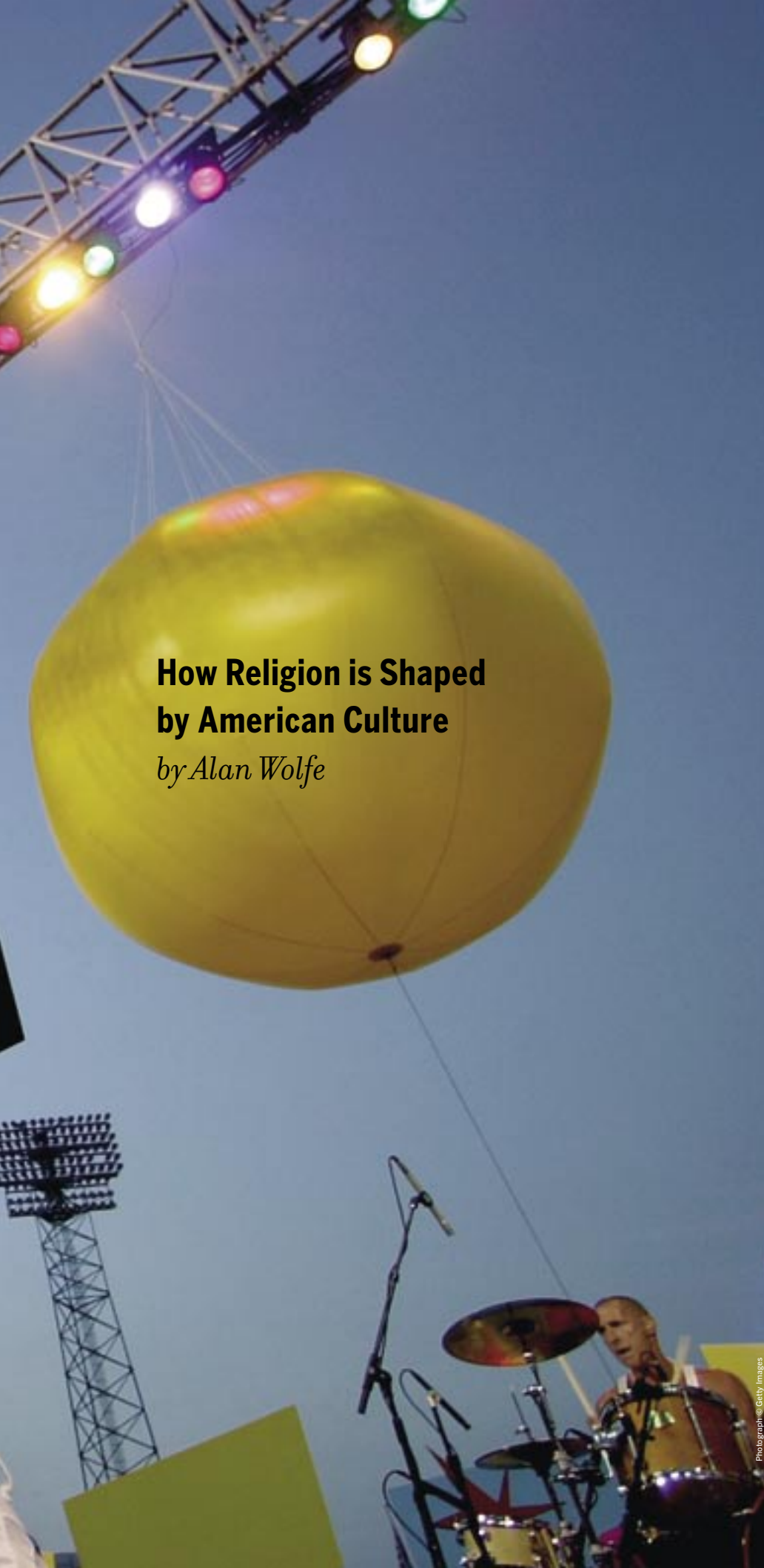
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A concert by the evangelical rock group Delirious, July 2001.



# Evangelical Entrepreneurialism





## How Religion is Shaped by American Culture

by Alan Wolfe

**M**ax Weber was one of the greatest sociologists of religion, not only for *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905/20) but also because of a wonderful little essay, “The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism” (1906), written after taking a train through Missouri on his way to the 1904 Saint Louis World’s Fair. The essay, which presents what he learned about the role of evangelical religions in the social construction of small-town life in America, does what I believe sociology does best: it lets people speak for themselves. If sociologists have a particular contribution to make to the study of religion, it is to give voice to ordinary people, how they experience religion, what it means to them in their daily lives, in short, to understand religion as it is actually practiced. In recent years social scientists have produced a huge outpouring of literature on this topic, but this material has been sadly missing from the public debates on religion, especially those that deal with American politics. We are now hearing those voices. What I try to do in my work is bring them to bear on some of the larger debates we have in our public life and in the media.

We can start with the idea of tradition. If tradition is understood to be something that is unchanging, evangelical Protestants are anything but traditional. For a Jew, honoring the traditions is the most important part of his faith, more important than believing in God. An evangelical Protestant, on the other hand, places the emphasis on belief. In fact, if your grandparents and great grandparents believed in the wrong things, the *worst* thing you can do is to honor them and replicate their false beliefs.

The very term that evangelicals frequently use to describe themselves – Born Again Christians – conveys the exact opposite of what it means to be traditional. To be traditional is to inherit something from your parents and to see your primary obligation as passing it on unchanged to your children. To be a Born Again Christian is to reject that process, to experience your own personal rebirth and your own discovery of the power of the Lord. In fact, it almost requires a repudiation of what your parents believed in.

Authenticity of belief is enormously important to evangelicals. The great religious leaders who founded the earlier evangelical sects dismissed tradition out of hand. Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples of Christ and an immigrant from Scotland, wrote in 1815, “During this period my mind and circumstances ↵

Photograph © Getty Images

have undergone very many revolutions. I have renounced the traditions and errors of my early education.” A.J. Tomlinson, who founded one of the most important American Protestant sects, the Pentecostal movement, in Los Angeles in the early part of the twentieth century, said, “We must break loose from the yoke of bondage we have gotten into by tradition and custom.”

It is wrong then to describe evangelicals’ cultural and moral views as traditional, no matter how “conservative” their political views may be. They are in fact as enterprising and entrepreneurial as the rest of Americans. They break with tradition and find it to be an obstacle to what to them is far more important.

Out in the world of American evangelicals, the last things you experience are

of the US – places that are neither urban, nor suburban, nor rural, but in some “other part” of America. Imagine the place where two interstate highways connect – say forty

## The very term that evangelicals frequently use to describe themselves – Born Again Christians – conveys the exact opposite of what it means to be traditional.

miles from downtown Memphis, Denver, Minneapolis, or even Boston. Applying the usual categories of religious traditionalism simply will not help us to understand mega-churches, but they do share some unusual characteristics.

First of all, there is no cross – the great symbol of Christ’s crucifixion – on the exterior of the building. Such churches want to bring in “uncharted” people, to reach out to those who might be turned off by a particular religious identification. Some, like Willow Creek, outside of Chicago, keep a cross in the basement to bring out only on certain occasions.

Secondly, there is no religious music in the traditional sense of the word. There are praise songs – with the lyrics flashed up in PowerPoint – but you’ll never hear an organ or the *Saint Matthew Passion* in a mega-church, nor Verdi, nor Faure.

Thirdly, they do a lot to attract an audience. Mosaic, a church in downtown LA, seems to embody many of the tensions and contradictions of American religious life. It was formerly a member of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest of the conservative Protestant denominations in the US. Baptists are famous for frowning on smoke, drink, and dance. But Mosaic meets in a glamorous night club (albeit in the morning rather than at night) and functions quite close to Hollywood. Its members are very young; the pastor’s goal is to reach

These churches are so successful because they speak to people’s needs. Rick Warren’s church Saddleback, in Orange Country, CA, is one of the largest mega-churches. About

twenty million copies of Warren’s best-seller, *The Purpose Driven Life*, have been sold, and he is not only a terrific preacher but is the best public speaker I have ever heard – on any occasion. Warren has developed a highly therapeutic message, even as he denounces therapy. At the same time he appeals to people’s needs. It is hard to describe the combination of qualities that goes into his sermons, but attracting 16,000 rapt listeners on a Sunday afternoon – the hour of professional football broadcast – is quite an accomplishment.

Such churches utilize every conceivable method. Many words describe them, but tradition is not one of them. It is misguided to envision America’s conservative Protestants as people desperately afraid of change and of the modern world. While some may live in rural parts of Tennessee and others may oppose teaching evolution, it would be a distortion to conclude that all evangelicals want to turn back the clock.

**A** SECOND IMPORTANT AREA TO EXPLORE IS THE MATTER OF BELIEF, TO ASK IN SOCIOLOGICAL RATHER THAN THEOLOGICAL TERMS THE QUESTION OF WHAT PEOPLE BELIEVE.

MANY RELIGIONS HAVE VIOLENT AND SECTARIAN HISTORIES. I NEED NOT REMIND GERMANS OF THAT, CONSIDERING MARTIN LUTHER’S REVOLUTION. LUTHER WROTE EXTENSIVELY ABOUT HIS BELIEFS, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT AMERICANS SHARE THEM. (INDEED, MANY THINK HE WAS A 1960S CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER.) PARTICULARLY FASCINATING IS THE RECEPTION OF THE DOCTRINE OF JOHN CALVIN, THE INTELLECTUAL GODFATHER OF PRESBYTERIANISM, ONE OF AMERICA’S MOST IMPORTANT RELIGIONS. IF YOU TRY TO EXPLAIN CALVIN’S CONCEPT OF PREDESTINATION TO AMERICANS – THE IDEA THAT NOTHING ONE CAN DO CAN CHANGE ONE’S FATE – THEY WILL SHAKE THEIR HEADS IN ASTONISHMENT. THE STRICT CALVINIST CONCEPT KNOWN AS “DOUBLE PREDESTINATION” – IN WHICH NOT ONLY THE FATE OF THE SAVED BUT ALSO OF THE DAMNED IS PREDETERMINED – WILL ASTOUND. IT RUNS COUNTER TO THE QUINTESSENTIALLY AMERICAN BELIEF THAT YOU’RE IN CHARGE, THAT YOU’RE THE CAPTAIN OF YOUR FATE, THAT YOU CAN, IN FACT, INFLUENCE YOUR LIFE.



Photograph © Getty Images

single people rather than families. And even though it is a conservative church that states that homosexuality is a sin, I find it hard to believe that there are not gay members in its congregation.

traditional forms of worship. Take for example, the phenomenon of so-called “mega-churches,” one of the fastest growing trends. They can hold 16,000 worshippers. They are located in the “ex-urban” communities

At a fast-growing church outside of Cincinnati, the Vineyard Community Church, I asked the pastor to describe his message to me, which he readily summed up as “Love, Love, Love, Love, Truth.” It is not that truth is unimportant to him, only that it is not as important as *love*. Getting to know Jesus is what counts for him and for so many Americans. Theology, doctrine, and creed are of secondary importance.

This is a rather strikingly American Protestant phenomenon. It has not always been this way. Most religions have creedal statements, but attesting to certain sets of

## There is a kind of reciprocal influence between American culture and American religion. Religion is not a countercultural force resisting the dominant culture.

beliefs is not that important in American religious life. What really matters is the sense that you are at one with the Lord. The specifics are not that important.

In his book *Serving the Word: Literalism in America from the Pulpit to the Bench*, anthropologist Vincent Crapanzano (a former American Academy fellow) quotes a student describing his own faith and his very specific beliefs about redemption. “There was no total turn about in my world view at any moment of time. You see, ‘becoming a new creature in Christ’ (II Corinthians 5:17) does not remove the indwelling that is part of our fallen human condition. This is part of our moral being, to be sinful and corrupted. In redemption, God proclaims us righteous, objectively based on the finished work of Christ.”

This is a minority voice in American religion. As Reverend Jess Moody of California puts it, “If we use the words redemption or conversion in our sermons, they think we’re talking about bonds.”

Wheaton College near Chicago – most famous for its alumnus Reverend Billy Graham, who founded the contemporary evangelical strain in the US – is America’s leading undergraduate evangelical institution and a major part of the world of conservative Protestantism today. Only evangelicals can attend it, and faculty members must sign a pledge of faith in Jesus. I thought it would be interesting to attend the theology classes there, since I teach at a Catholic school, Boston College, where theology is a required course for every undergraduate. I think students, whatever their own beliefs, should read Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine. To my astonishment

I learned that Wheaton College has no theology department! Theology, it seems, is for *Catholics*. If the Bible is the literal truth, only people who *doubt* it need to study theology. Wheaton has a department of “Bible and Theological Studies.”

Whatever it is, this concept of belief is not a process of interpretation or deep reflection. The way Americans think about religion corresponds very much to the way they think about matters such as politics. One might say that Americans do not *know* very much about politics; last fall many people in the red states said they *trusted* Mr. Bush in a

way they did not trust Mr. Kerry. One could conduct a similar sort of poll of how people choose particular churches. If you ask somebody, “Why do you choose this church?” he or she does not respond by talking about doctrine but more likely answers “This pastor inspires in me a certain sense of trust.”

There is a kind of reciprocal influence between American culture and American religion. Religion is not a countercultural force resisting the dominant culture. It is very much influenced by culture. And our culture is not committed to the interpretation or discussion of doctrines.

My goal as a sociologist of religion is not to poke holes in the hypocrisies of small-town religious life. Indeed, I have enormous respect for the self-confidence and sense of empowerment that Americans gain from such churches. I have talked to many women who attend evangelical churches, and they do not fit the stereotype of submissive helplessness. Rather, they give the impression of incredible personal strength and seem to have a sense of who they are and of their role in the world. While most evangelical women would not describe themselves as feminists, there is no difference statistically between the number of evangelical women who work outside the home in the labor force and the number of secular women who do. And without knowing it, evangelical women are striking examples of the kind of feminism put forward by the anthropologist Carol Gilligan – that is, of women who “speak in a different voice.” They bring a distinctly feminine perspective to faith. In their words, men run the church, but women are in charge of the spirituality. They keep the faith in Jesus.

It is not easy to debunk the myth that religious believers in the US constitute an alternative to dominant American culture. For it is entrenched on both sides of the secular divide. Religious believers – such as Duke’s Stanley Hauerwas – describe themselves as “resident aliens” within liberal society. I do not see this at all; believers are, and ought to be, full citizens. For his part, the late philosopher John Rawls had great doubt that religious believers could make good democratic citizens because they were not committed to the Rule of Reason, as all liberal democrats should be.

I find both arguments empirically and sociologically wrong. Democracy must include religious believers, given that America has so many of them. They are, moreover, modern in sensibility, even if in their own peculiar ways.

Before the 2004 election, I would have predicted that “moral and religious values” would not divide the parties to the extent that early exit polls subsequently suggested. But there is no doubt that conservative Protestants vote Republican, and Karl Rove’s success in getting a few more million evangelicals to go to the polls on behalf of George W. Bush was undoubtedly a help. It is a mistake, however, to assume that they voted for primarily religious reasons. They simply happen to be politically conservative.

I do not think that George Bush’s victory is the harbinger of an impending theocracy, or that America is being swept by a fundamentalist wave. My view is rather more optimistic. For while American religion is a powerful force that shapes how people



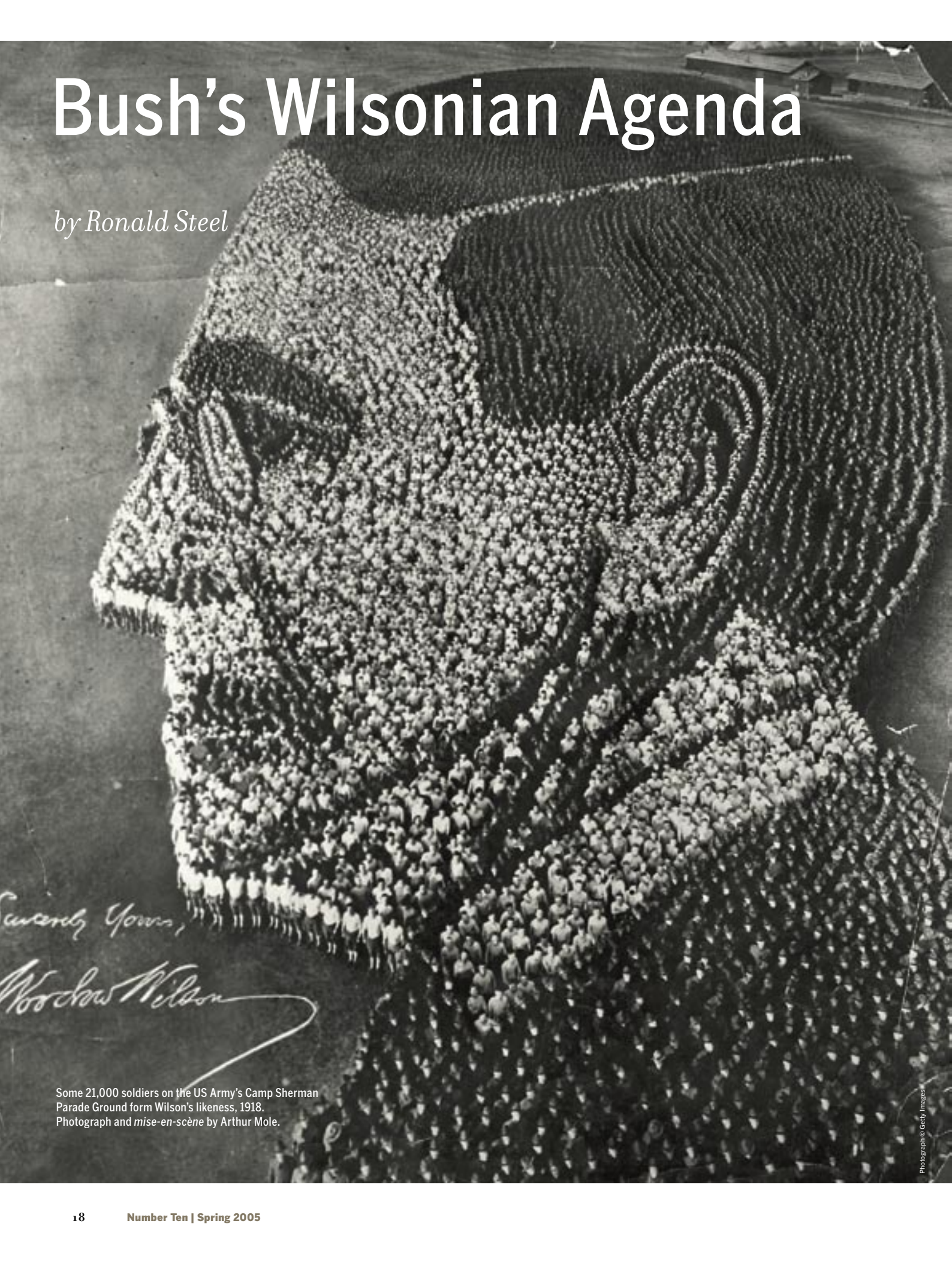
act and think, other aspects of American culture are equally powerful. American religion is as American as it is religious. And I, for one, am grateful for that. ➔

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Alan Wolfe directs the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College, where he is a professor. He was a George H.W. Bush Fellow at the Academy in the fall of 2004.

# Bush's Wilsonian Agenda

by Ronald Steel



Twenty Years,  
Woodrow Wilson

Some 21,000 soldiers on the US Army's Camp Sherman Parade Ground form Wilson's likeness, 1918. Photograph and *mise-en-scène* by Arthur Mole.

Photograph © Getty Images

AMERICANS ARE REPUTED TO BE A PRACTICAL PEOPLE, MORE CONCERNED WITH GETTING THINGS DONE THAN WITH PHILOSOPHY. BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY LACK AN IDEOLOGY. LIKE ALL IDEOLOGIES THEIRS IS A SYSTEM OF BELIEF, ONE WHOSE TENETS ARE SO ENGRAINED THAT IT IS NEVER QUESTIONED OR EVEN CAREFULLY DEFINED. IT IS CALLED DEMOCRACY.

NEARLY A CENTURY AGO AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT TOOK THE UNITED STATES INTO WAR DECLARING THAT "THE WORLD MUST BE MADE SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY." WOODROW WILSON DID NOT ACHIEVE THIS AMBITIOUS GOAL, NOR DID ANY OF HIS SUCCESSORS. PERHAPS NONE EVER WILL. BUT THEY HAVE ALL INSISTED THAT THE NATION'S PRINCIPLES, AND EVEN ITS HONOR, DEPEND ON ITS ATTAINMENT.

SOMETIMES, IN THEIR PURSUIT OF WHAT THEY BELIEVED TO BE THE NATIONAL INTEREST, WILSON'S FOLLOWERS HAVE LOST TRACK OF THEIR GOAL BUT THEY NEVER QUESTION ITS VALIDITY, HOWEVER DISTANT, OR EVEN THEORETICAL, IT MIGHT BE.

GEORGE W. BUSH ALSO EXTOLLS THE VIRTUES OF DEMOCRACY AND THE NEED TO BRING ITS BLESSINGS TO PEOPLES EVERYWHERE – EVEN BY FORCE OF ARMS. TO BE SURE, BUSH IS NOT USUALLY COMPARED TO WOODROW WILSON. FORM ANY, BOTH IN THE US AND AROUND THE WORLD, BUSH EPITOMIZES THE WORST EXCESSES OF AMERICAN

*The ideology is, of course, democracy. Its application to societies everywhere is not even debated. It is simply assumed. Unfortunately the doctrine is a fuzzy one and rarely carefully defined.*

NATIONALISM, MILITARISM, UNILATERALISM, AND INTRUSIVE RELIGIOSITY. BUSH'S AMERICA, IN THE EYES OF ITS CRITICS, CONSIDERS ITSELF TO BE SUPERIOR TO OTHER NATIONS, FLAGRANTLY BRANDISHES ITS MILITARY POWER, AND ACTS WITHOUT REGARD TO THE WILL OR INTERESTS OF OTHERS.

WOODROW WILSON, BY CONTRAST, IS EXTOLLED AS THE APOSTLE OF INTERNATIONALISM, THE RULE OF LAW, THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF ALL PEOPLES, AND, OF COURSE, UNIVERSAL DEMOCRACY. HE ARGUED ELOQUENTLY FOR A "COMMUNITY OF POWER" TO REPLACE THE DISCREDITED BALANCE OF POWER AND FOR A GLOBAL PARLIAMENT OF NATIONS TO ENSURE JUSTICE AND KEEP THE PEACE.

LITTLE ABOUT WILSON OR HIS FOREIGN POLICY AGENDA WOULD SEEM TO RESEMBLE BUSH IN ANY WAY. YET THE FACT IS THAT THESE TWO WARTIME PRESIDENTS HAVE MUCH IN COMMON.

THERE IS A STRIKING SIMILARITY IN THEIR POLITICS AND THEIR RHETORIC, THEIR PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF EVANGELICAL RELIGIOSITY, THEIR MUTUAL

conviction of absolute certainty and even divine guidance, their methods for achieving their goals, their willingness to brandish American military power, and their belief

*Not only was Wilson the prophet of democracy, to which all the world pays at least lip service, but he was also the champion of American exceptionalism.*

in the leadership role that the US must play in the world. Like Wilson, Bush has drawn up schemes for global democratization through American power, is convinced that American values are universal and divinely sanctioned, and insists that the US must not be constrained in the pursuit of its idealistic goals by the ambitions of other nations.

Many of Wilson's traditional admirers will find this comparison distasteful. But Wilson was a complex man, and his inspirational rhetoric carried more than one agenda. That is why this idealist, inspired by utopian visions of global engineering, has now been given a new identity as a crusading warrior in the service of a virtuous American empire. To the chagrin

of his old liberal admirers and the applause of his new neoconservative champions, Wilson has been reborn as the patron saint of the Iraq war and of an American

imperial vocation. When George W. Bush declared that the invasion of Iraq would launch a drive to "bring the hope of democracy ... to every corner of the world," he was speaking as a disciple of Wilson.

Not only was Wilson the prophet of democracy, to which all the world pays at least lip service, but he was also the champion of American exceptionalism. This rests upon the belief that the US has not only the power but also the right to remake the world into a more perfect place. That is, into one more resembling itself.

Since Wilson's departure from the political scene in 1920, his influence has waxed and waned. This has depended almost entirely on the ability, and the willingness, of the US to make its indelible imprint upon other societies. In this sense Wilsonianism is not really internationalism. Rather it is the restructuring of the world to con-

form to a more perfect plan. It is, in effect, Americanization.

This is why the war in Iraq can be called a Wilsonian project. It is a war fought not only over oil and bases and other tangible instruments of power. It is also a war – both for the Americans who invaded and the Iraqi militants who have resisted – to transform an entire society.

Although Bush's unilateral war in Iraq is in significant ways different from Wilson's participation in the coalition war against imperial Germany in 1917–1918, these very different wars have two vital qualities in common.

First, both were wars of *choice* in that neither of them involved an attack on the US by the country that Americans declared as an enemy and invaded. Neither Wilson nor Bush was responding to a direct act of aggression. Theirs were not wars of self-defense, even though they attempted to make this seem to be the case.

Second, both wars were linked – and justified in part to the public – to a wider plan to remake the world order in ways more favorable to American interests and American values. In this sense they were, for the presidents who waged them, primarily wars of *ideology*.

The ideology is, of course, democracy. The application of this doctrine to societies everywhere is not even debated. It is simply assumed. Unfortunately the doctrine is a fuzzy one and rarely carefully defined. Normally it is simply taken to mean: one person, one vote. By this measure, however, virtually all regimes, even the most tyrannous, can officially qualify as democratic so long as periodic elections (or plebiscites) are held.

Democracy is now the doctrine of the current age, though not necessarily its mode of operation. For this reason Wilson's exaltation of the democratic imperative can be viewed as an endorsement of the American system. In Wilson's mind a world "made safe for democracy" was not merely a hope. It was a mandate. For true Wilsonians the democratic imperative is not negotiable.

There is, however, a paradox here. Democracy, with its presumed emphasis on tolerance of contrary views, can in fact

be intolerant. Indeed it can even be authoritarian in its absolute demand for acceptance. Those who promulgate its dictates do not hesitate to use military power to enforce submission to its imperative.

In this way democracy is like other crusading faiths. To be indifferent to the spread (by force if necessary) of American-style democracy is to be unpatriotic. To ask *why*

*To be indifferent to the spread (by force if necessary) of American-style democracy is to be unpatriotic. To ask why the world must be made safe for democracy is to ask a hostile, or even subversive, question.*

the world must be made safe for democracy is to ask a hostile, or even subversive, question. Democracy, along with its handmaiden “freedom,” is the American system. That is usually reason enough.

The fact, however, is that not everyone wants democracy – not people who enter a monastic or holy order, or who join the military, or who find meaning by fusing their identities in the anonymity of crowds, cults, or mass political movements. Democracy is not a universally endorsed good.

Rather, democracy is a faith. And in certain hands, a revolutionary faith. Like all faiths it can be authoritarian in imposing what it conceives as virtue. The same is true of other incendiary but hard-to-define concepts, such as liberty and freedom, or even good and evil.

Yet it is an American faith. And no one since Woodrow Wilson has proclaimed it with more seeming earnestness than George W. Bush, who often fuses it with the word “freedom.” “The United States will extend the benefits of freedom around the world,” he declared in the wake of the Iraq war. It would, he continued with breathtaking sweep, lead the “great mission ... to further freedom’s triumph” over “war and terror, ... the clashing of wills of powerful states, ... the evil designs of tyrants, and disease and poverty.”

Again, in his second inaugural address, Bush drew a parallel between the promulgation of American values and American security, thereby finding ideological grounds for a war that he had originally justified as one of anticipatory self-defense.

“The survival of liberty in our land,” he declared in January 2005, “increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

America’s vital interests and our deepest faith are now one.”

Thus it would seem that America cannot be safe until the entire world adopts American values and institutions. This is clearly a task not of a single military campaign, or of a single president, or even of a generation. This is an agenda that is likely to keep Americans occupied, and

fighting wars of liberty and freedom, for a very long time.

Lest Americans tremble at the formidable obligation he proposed, Bush assured them that the values he enumerated are truly universal. “And if these values are good enough for our people,” he explained, “they ought to be good enough for others ... because they are God-given values.”

Bush is not alone in believing that he understands the workings of God. Woodrow Wilson, when seeking the presidency in 1912, informed voters of his conviction that “God presided over the inception of this nation, [and] we are chosen to show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty.”

Following World War I Wilson assured American legislators that his plan for a world assembly of nations to ensure peace “has come about by no plan of our own choosing, but by the hand of God who led

*Wilsonianism can be a cloak for the pursuit of a dominant nation’s strategic and political goals. Its great utility is that it does so not as nationalism or dominance, but in the name of freedom.*

us into this way.” But the plan, whatever its inspiration, was rejected by the US Senate. America turned inward during the 1920s and 1930s. World War II and the American-led victory over the fascist aggressors for a time revived Wilson’s dream of a more perfect world resting on American power and ideals, but because of Soviet opposition there were now two worlds, and Wilson’s dream was put back on the shelf.

The end of the cold war has changed everything. Revised and updated for a globalized economy, Wilson’s formula for

democracy, self-determination, and free markets for capital and labor aligns neatly with American interests at a time when the US has gained new power to pursue those goals.

Thus it is that Wilsonianism, so internationalist in rhetoric, can also be a cloak for the pursuit of a dominant nation’s strategic and political goals. Its great utility is that it does so not as nationalism or dominance, but in the name of freedom. For this reason Woodrow Wilson has been resurrected as a prophet of the age – the inspiration for reconstructing the world according to American principles and interests.

While traditional nationalists may still be suspicious of Wilson’s internationalism, it is understandable that conservatives of the “neo” variety should find a hero in Wilson. They hail him as inspiration for democratizing the Arab world, rejecting containment as a method for dealing with recalcitrant states, and for tearing apart and then rebuilding undemocratic (or uncooperative) regimes.

They describe the invasion of Iraq as a Wilsonian war. By this they do not mean its unilateralism, of course, but rather that its declared purpose is to spread the American ideology of democracy through the Middle East and beyond. This ambitious goal is appealing to many liberals as well, for it plays upon their eagerness to use American power for virtuous ends. But this should not be surprising. Many of today’s neoconservatives were yesterday’s liberals, and some of today’s self-described liberals find much to admire in the ideology and practice of neo-conservatism.

One must emphasize, however, that Wilson should not be held responsible for all the actions taken in his name. It is true that when George W. Bush declares an American “mission to further freedom’s triumphs” over “war and terror, ... the clashing of wills of powerful states, ... the evil designs of tyrants, and disease and poverty,” he is using Wilsonian language.

But Bush is using this language in pursuit of non-Wilsonian ends. He is a Wilsonian of convenience. A hallmark of Wilson’s vision of a just world was a “com-

munity of power” exercised in the name of an international assembly. Bush, by contrast, has created “coalitions of the willing” who accept American control: a benevolent global police force immune from international direction or sanction.

The new strategy was laid out in 2002 in a sweeping revision of the cold-war policy of “containment.” The US, Bush explained, “has and intends to keep military strength beyond challenge, making arms races of other eras pointless.” Because of this virtual monopoly of power, he continued, “our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military buildup in hopes of surpassing or equaling the power of the United States.”

The justification for this virtual monopoly of power is said to stem from the virtues of the nation’s institutions and intentions. As he explained, “wherever we carry it, the American flag will stand not only for our power, but for freedom.” It was a stirring vision; in some ways as stirring as Wilson’s Fourteen Points, though less specific. But behind the inspirational rhetoric lay the reality: an American military hegemony that would make resistance futile and could be used without

the approval of any other powers, whether friend or foe.

This is, one might reasonably protest, a perverted kind of Wilsonianism. But in fact that doctrine is a bottomless basket in which policymakers can find an idealistic justification, complete with inspiring rhetoric, for pursuing whatever strategy suits them. Consider, for example, Henry Kissinger, adept phrase-maker and calculating Realist, who informed us that Richard Nixon often invoked “Wilsonian rhetoric to explain his goals while appealing to national interest to sustain his tactics.”

Statesmen find Wilson to be a useful political model. His political genius was to find a policy that corresponded perfectly to America’s strategic and political interests while packaging it in the language of idealism.

What is required for a true Wilsonian diplomacy is not merely the desire to reshape the world but also the conviction that the US has the power to do so. This means not only military power but also the economic power to sustain the costs and the political support from the American people, who pay the price. For the moment those who direct American policy continue to believe that this is the case.

Wilsonian rhetoric is a heady elixir. It suits a nation, or at least a political class, that is eager to remake the world in an American image and believes it has the right and the power to do so. The “war on terror” is its functional equivalent of the cold war, and Bush’s declared crusade for the “expansion of freedom in all the world” is its version of making “the world safe for democracy.”

Woodrow Wilson had his hand on the pulse of American idealism. Today’s interventionist warriors believe that they do as well. It is natural that they look for sanction to the words of Wilson – the apostle of open markets, free trade, democratic elections, the righteous use of American power, and of American exceptionalism. His is a powerful and dangerous legacy. ➔

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Ronald Steel, George H.W. Bush Fellow at the Academy this spring, is a professor of international relations at the University of Southern California. This piece draws in part on his article “The Missionary,” published in the *New York Review of Books* (November 20, 2004).

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Photograph by Mark Leong

# View from a Veteran

**Nicholas Platt on the Transformation of Modern China**

*Interview by Ian Johnson*



**Ian Johnson** You spent some time in Europe recently, and it seems that China is becoming a significant factor in transatlantic relations. How do you see this having come about, and is it going to be a major stumbling block?

**Nicholas Platt** First of all, I think that China has become a big topic of interest simply by virtue of its commercial and economic significance. This is a result of the EU being China's biggest trading partner. Everybody is interested in what is going to happen in China, and I think people have fairly exaggerated ideas about it. Will it grow to be a threat? The main issue right now is the EU lifting the arms embargo. Frankly, I think that can be managed between the US and Europe over time as long as the Europeans figure out another way of dealing with American concerns.

**Johnson** The EU is proposing that it replace its outright ban with a code of conduct that would set standards for which countries receive which kinds of arms and how to handle dual-use technology. Would this be a solution?

**Platt** Yes, but what is in the code has to be the result of careful consultation. The US has to be more specific about which particular weapons systems are of most concern.

**Johnson** You said there are concerns about China being a threat. These concerns have been in the US for a while. Did you see that also in Europe? Or is the mood there mainly one of euphoria?

**Platt** I wouldn't describe it as euphoric, but there is a great deal of interest in getting into the Chinese market and making the European market available to the Chinese. The sense you get in Southeast Asia of anxiety over competition for resources is less prevalent in Europe – although I think Europe will be competing with China for energy sources. It's the Chinese *rate* of growth that is exciting people. The actual size of the Chinese economy is not all that big. Last year it was roughly the size of Italy's (about \$1.5 trillion in terms of GDP). When you mention that to people, they are surprised because they have this sense that China already has a large GDP. Well, it's not there yet. It's growing, but it starts from a relatively low base.

**Johnson** The billion figure is what gets everybody excited: the population and the huge potential market.

**Platt** Chinese planners are quite philosophical about their population size. When every opportunity is multiplied by a billion, or even three hundred million, the potential

seems huge. But every gain that you make is divided by the same number and seems tiny in per capita terms.

**Johnson** The European interest in China today seems similar to what had started up again in the early to mid 1990s in the US; do you think Europe is going through a phase of discovering China, in which it is becoming less of an exotic place and more of a country to take seriously, economically and politically?

**Platt** Certainly economically, and I think increasingly politically, too. The Chinese have been invited to consult with the G7. Clearly, the Europeans see China as a major player on the economic, and at some point, on the political, scene. The connection between the US and China is more direct because of a very personal element: a growing group of Chinese Americans who live here, who are playing a growing role in America's culture – from cuisine to film, photography, and fashion, to name a few elements – as well as in finance. The relationship between China and America is multi-dimensional, and I do not have that sense in Europe. In Hamburg I saw large numbers of containers coming in from China into Europe – it's the entry point for Chinese goods – but I did not have time to get a sense of cultural linkage. I expect that will grow, however.

**Johnson** Part of that might come from tourism, which is expanding quickly thanks to China's economic growth. Can you say something about China's plans for future economic growth? They have ambitious plans to triple the GDP by 2020, don't they?

**Platt** Their plan is to quadruple it by then! In other words, they want to reach a GDP level roughly the size of Japan's, about \$5 trillion. There are three main challenges, Chinese planners tell us. First, the environment: how do you grow that fast without ruining it? There are already great shortages of water, the air is polluted, and there are other environmental issues. Second, availability of resources is a huge challenge; how do you grow that fast with the energy that is available? Chinese energy consumption will at least double by 2020.

**Johnson** Which will put huge pressures on Western countries that are oil importers.

**Platt** I'm not sure that their goal is reachable. The Chinese idea is to quadruple the size of their economy while doubling – only doubling! – their energy use. They must be much more efficient in their production of energy and much more diversified. In addition to standard fossil fuels, there are plans to add power from nuclear, hydrogen, ☞

## Fostering Transatlantic Dialogue

The C.V. Starr Public Policy Forum  
Looks at China

This spring the Academy launched its C.V. Starr Public Policy Forum with visits from two outstanding American experts on Asia, Nicholas Platt and Stapleton Roy. The forum, made possible by a generous \$750,000 grant from The Starr Foundation, emphasizes the Academy's role as an important platform for addressing current political questions and undertaking informal private diplomacy.

Distinguished Visitor Nicholas Platt, interviewed here by Ian Johnson of the *Wall Street Journal Europe*, has been president emeritus of the Asia Society in New York since 1992. His 35-year diplomatic career included work in Washington as a China analyst, Director of Japanese Affairs, National Security Council staff member for Asian Affairs, and Executive Secretary of the Department of State (1985–1987). His assignments abroad included US Ambassador to the Philippines (1987–1991) and Pakistan (1991–1992) and posts in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Tokyo. During his stay in Germany, he met with officials in the chancellery and the foreign office.

As the *Berlin Journal* went to press, the Academy was looking forward to the arrival in late May of its second C.V. Starr Distinguished Visitor, Stapleton Roy, chairman of the advisory council of the Brookings Institution's Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies (CNAPS). Born to American parents in Nanjing and fluent in Chinese, Roy had a 45-year career with the US State Department, serving as ambassador to Singapore (1984–1986), ambassador to the People's Republic of China (1991–1995), and as ambassador to Indonesia (1996–1999), and, finally, as Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (1999–2000). He became managing director of the consulting firm of Kissinger Associates in 2001. Ambassador Roy's talk on May 24 will be moderated by Bernd Mützelburg, chief foreign policy adviser to Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.

The Starr Foundation, established in 1955 by the late Cornelius V. Starr, founder of American International Group, Inc. (AIG), has committed to funding the forum's first three years.

and hydroelectric sources. The third challenge comes in the coordination of economic and social development, which by implication involves political reform as well. Rapid growth has created big gaps between different parts of the country, the economy, and society. Coastal provinces are getting the lion's share of the foreign direct investment. Interior provinces are getting short-changed. There are big disparities between the countryside and the cities, between farm income and urban income, between rich and poor. The challenge is to manage growth and prosperity more fairly.

Only a government that is extremely responsive and well-informed can meet this challenge. Last year roughly 170 incidents of civil disobedience occurred every day – riots or demonstrations against corrupt officials, city governments – most of them very local. The party must know about these, deal with them, and keep them from developing into nationwide movements. It understands the magnitude of the problem. It knows that it will lose its grip if it does not respond. But party members also realize that more fairness may impede rates of growth. The need for the personal freedom to fuel growth must also be balanced against the requirement for stability and control over the politics of the nation. Sorting out these competing pressures represents a very tall order for the leadership.

**Johnson** Under a classic modernization theory, increasing wealth would cause – not in a linear fashion, but in some sort of way – demand for more political participation.

**Platt** That's right. If you look at what happened in Taiwan, South Korea, and other Asian economies, the creation of wealth and widespread prosperity coincided with the emergence of a multiparty democracy. The Chinese would prefer to have a single-party system like Singapore or Japan. Japan has a multi-party system on paper. But in fact, a single-party, with different factions alternating in power, has ruled for most of the past fifty years. At the same time, the Japanese government has had to become more responsive and participatory as it governs. The same must happen in China. Accordingly, the government has begun to conduct hearings in recent years, as a way to find out what is on the people's mind and as a tool to devise solutions. But the problem is that governance in China – and we in the West have no idea what it is like to govern 1.3 billion people – is many layered.

Most of the discontent is leveled at local governments. That local governments are

not all that responsive to Beijing is nothing new. There is a centuries-old saying in China, "The heavens are high, and the emperor is far away." This adds another complication to the challenges faced by the central leadership.

It is very competent, and its members work very hard, but they've given themselves a very tall order. For all the reasons we have discussed, my personal view, having done the math, is that the 9-percent annual compound growth rate necessary to achieve a quadrupling of the economy by 2020 is just not going to happen.

**Johnson** When would it taper off?

**Platt** Straight-line projections do not work. It is hard to predict when the rate of growth will slow, but it will. Even so, the prospects for a decent rate of growth compounded over time may be 7 percent, by 2020. This would result in a tripling of the GDP, which in itself would be no mean feat and would multiply China's influence worldwide.

**Johnson** Would that put it on par with the German GDP?

**Platt** Well, it would be a little bigger actually. But hopefully by that time, the German GDP would be bigger, too.

**Johnson** Having met the top leaders in Beijing at interesting phases of the country's history over the past few decades, you have an interesting historical perspective. How do you compare your experience during the Mao years with that of the current leadership? It's almost amazing to think of how the government has changed. It has engineered, so far at least, some sort of political soft-landing in the change from a totalitarian system to a more responsive authoritarian system. Who gets credit for that transition?

**Platt** Since the Communists took power in China in 1949 there has always been a competition between revolutionaries and pragmatists, between "Red" and "Expert" factions. The revolutionaries led by Mao believed you could manage a nation-state in the same way that you seized power: through mass campaigns and the barrel of a gun. The Great Leap Forward in 1959, an economic disaster involving the creation of agricultural communes and backyard blast furnaces, was the high watermark of the "Red" approach to governance.

The pragmatists, led later by Deng Xiaoping, understood that the management of a modern nation-state required different muscles and more practical methods. After the Great Leap Forward, the "Experts" stripped Mao of his command of the government structure, left him as chairman of the

party, but put others in charge of the daily running of the economy.

The Cultural Revolution from 1966–1976 was Mao's last great effort to restore his power, purge the party, and inspire the younger generation so that the revolutionary approach might prevail. The chaos that resulted marked his failure, and the restoration of order by the military set the scene for the final victory of the "Experts." But Mao remained enormously influential until his death. Once he stopped breathing, the transition to modern-day China began.

The key figure was Deng Xiaoping, a pragmatist who had managed various different provinces (particularly Sichuan, which has a population the size of France and Germany combined). After Deng consolidated his power in 1979, he retired the old leadership, opened the economy, mobilized material incentives, and permitted natural Chinese entrepreneurial instincts to take over. The result was the explosive growth that continues to this day. The government has been riding the tiger of this economy ever since, trying to figure out how to manage it without stifling the growth. The new leaders are collective managers, well schooled in the mistakes of the past and the techniques of today.

**Johnson** If the "Experts" have won, who are the next "Reds" that could threaten them? Could nationalism be the equivalent irrational force that could threaten the current pragmatist makeup of leadership?

**Platt** Nationalism is a force in the country, particularly among the younger generation and the military. But it does not compete directly with the practical approach to governance. Everyone realizes that a lot of things can go wrong: a sharp drop in the growth rate or a sharp rise in the inflation rate, for example. All of these things could result in an economic crisis that would change the makeup of the leadership.

The leadership in China is like that of any other country, you use the issues of the day as weapons against your competitors. I do not rule out the possibility of change or of friction, or even some kind of meltdown in certain parts of the country. These will all have to be dealt with. But pragmatism is at a premium in handling China's problems, no matter what ideological labels are used.

**Johnson** Looking at this over the last few decades, despite all the changes that have taken place, are there any common points in how the Chinese conduct their diplomacy? What has remained constant in their dealings with other countries?

**Platt** The Chinese are great experts in the exercise and balance of power. They have been for a long, long time. Their interest in a peaceful world is based on a practical need for the stability to reach their development goals. They will exercise the power that they have as it grows. The tradition of seeing China at the center of the world and the desire to reclaim its place as a global player provides strong motivations. The Chinese also understand that they are the great beneficiaries of globalization and will update their techniques to mobilize this force.

**Johnson** Do you think that if China manages to triple or quadruple its economy the country will be more self-confident on the world stage than other countries with the same sized economies – Japan for example? Will it be able to parlay that economic power into greater diplomatic or political weight in the world?

**Platt** I think that's already true. The Chinese are much more willing to use their economic weight to further their political goals. The Japanese economy is four times as large as China's but does not exercise the same amount of influence.

My bet is that the Chinese and Taiwanese economies will grow together and that this

will change the context of political discourse. The process is already well underway. Taiwan is the biggest investor in China and a major trading partner. There is \$100 billion invested; 70,000 Taiwanese firms, all different sizes, including small, have a presence in China; something like a million Taiwanese work or live in China – a little less than 5 percent of Taiwan's population. That is going to continue.

The integration of Taiwan and the Mainland is a natural process, given the fit of the economies and the cultures. The jousting between the political leaders will continue, but over time the weight of economic reality will force the governments to make adjustments. I don't know what the shape of those adjustments will be. The Chinese have a talent for solving problems in a Chinese way.

**Johnson** Looking back over how the West has dealt with China over the past few decades, how would you characterize the changes in relations, especially between the US and China?

**Platt** When our countries resumed diplomatic ties in 1972, we were united by a common enmity toward the Soviet Union in a rather simple geostrategic relationship. This

laid the groundwork for the trade and investment, cultural, academic, athletic, and diplomatic ties that hold us together now.

Our strategic imperative collapsed along with the Soviet Union, and the revulsion that swept the world after the Tiananmen crackdown threatened to destroy our relationship. But an economic imperative had formed in the meantime, providing the ballast that kept us from being blown too far off course.

The nature of the relationship has changed. It has become much more economic and much more multidimensional. A new strategic imperative may be forming as we grapple with major global problems like terrorism, AIDS, and the environment.

Our link used to resemble a single, hand-cranked tactical phone line with Henry Kissinger at one end and Zhou Enlai at the other. Now it looks like a thick fiber-optic cable with innumerable messages going back and forth, over which the governments have little control. That is the way it should be. Friction and competition will always be factors, but our goal should be to foster a relationship that is ultimately so intertwined that the kind of confrontations and conflicts that marred the twentieth century are no longer options. ☞

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# Mr. Mao's Idea

## A Tale of Micro-Credit in China

by Ian Johnson

WHEN CHINESE CIVILIZATION began to take shape about three millennia ago, China's Loess Plateau was part of the country's heartland. It is nestled inside a giant half-loop that the Yellow River makes as it passes through Shaanxi province. The Yellow Emperor, mythic founder of the Chinese people, is buried in one of its hills. The area was so important that China's first emperor linked a series of forts across the plateau to form the Great Wall. Seventy years ago the highland's mountains and gullies sheltered the Communist Party for a decade, first during China's civil war and later during World War II. Now, the plateau is a dusty wasteland. Centuries of overpopulation have stripped it of grass and trees, causing the topsoil to blow away in giant windstorms. Each year thousands of tons wash down rivulets and streams into the Yellow River, giving the river its name.



Photographs by Ian Johnson

The town of Longshuitou was rich by rural standards, and I came to find out why.

When I first went to the Loess Plateau in the 1980s, I had been most struck by these environmental problems. Water and environmental problems in general are often seen as great hindrances to China's development. And while the environment remains a key issue, I began to wonder if other factors weren't more important. My thinking crystallized in the year 2000 when I made a trip to Longshuitou, a village of three hundred people. The town was rich by rural standards, and I came to find out why.

The rural poor are often excellent borrowers for two reasons: peer pressure in the village makes sure they will pay the money back, often within a matter of months, and they can make small investments with big payoffs.

Longshuitou is located at the top of a small range of hills, its roads so bad that it took an hour just to get up the first hill. We ended up walking most of the way, occasionally pushing our car through patches of mud and ice. From the village's perch, the Loess Plateau spread out endlessly, its rows of yellow and gray mountains fading into the horizon.

Most of the village's 48 families lived in caves carved into the side of hills. They were linked by small footpaths that seemed like a game of snakes and ladders – one path would lead straight up the side of the hill not detouring for any caves, others bafflingly descended to one cave and one cave only. Flat land was precious, so there was no real center of town, just a tiny, packed-earth plaza, really no more than the intersection of two footpaths in front of the one-room schoolhouse.

My friend and I were accompanied by government officials. As usual, they quickly lost interest in the countryside and retreated to a cave to play cards. We wandered freely for a day, talking to peasants and following the village party secretary, Luo Yuao. Mr. Luo was also the village teacher and lived in one of the poorest houses in town – a rarity, I thought, and a sign that he must be untouched by the corruption that is common among party officials.

He invited us to his tiny cave. Caves in this part of China come in two models: old and new. Old ones have low ceilings supported by crooked tree trunks wedged between the walls as crude beams. Newer

caves are higher and use concrete pillars to hold up the ceiling. Mr. Luo had an old model, which we could just stand in.

Besides his government functions, Mr. Luo headed a rare experiment in civil society – he ran an independent development fund modeled on the celebrated Grameen Bank. This is a small-loan bank developed in Pakistan to make small

amounts with big payoffs – like buying a cow that soon produces a steady stream of milk and income.

Mao Yushi, one of China's most forward-looking and contrarian economists, had hit upon the idea when he saw a television report about Longshuitou and its lack of water. He had made a donation to one of the country's few charities – state-run of course – and was outraged at the 30 percent administrative fee that it took. Mr. Mao had heard about the Grameen Bank but knew that banking in China is controlled by a handful of big, state-run banks. So he took it upon himself to bring micro-credit to China and promptly established a charity that made loans available to this village.

Professor Mao donated 1,500 yuan, or about \$200, and asked friends to kick in money as well. A couple of foreign economists put in 10,000 yuan each, and another friend put in 5,000 yuan. Over time, he assembled 80,000 yuan, or about \$10,000. In 1994, the 65-year-old made the ten-hour trip from Beijing and, after talking to locals, chose as his representative Mr. Luo, who



amounts of capital available to the poorest of the poor. Unlike traditional bankers, who would see a big credit risk in a poor person with no collateral, the bank's founders realized that the rural poor are often excellent borrowers for two reasons: peer pressure in the village makes sure they will pay the money back, often within a matter of months, and they can make small invest-

was widely respected for his honesty and literacy.

His decision to set up a bank was based on a growing consensus among economists and development officials around the world that micro-credit is one of the best ways to help poor people. The idea is simple: have a board of community representatives loan out small amounts of money to help



locals buy goods they really need – a tool, a calf, seeds. Paying the money back is crucial because it teaches responsibility. Most programs found that repayment rates were high because the amounts were small and the money managed by one’s peers. Except in cases of illness, death, or exceptional circumstances, the money always was repaid.

Professor Mao’s presence was ubiquitous in the village, a rarity in a country where Father State tries to control all key decisions. In the back of Mr. Luo’s 20-foot-deep cave was a small bed and next to it a copy of one of Professor Mao’s books, *Economics in Daily Life*, a description of some time he had spent in the US in the 1980s. Above Mr. Luo’s desk was a placard listing the fund’s rules: “The regulations are set by Mao Yushi” and “Funding is Mao Yushi’s responsibility.”

Mr. Luo had a bad leg but was eager to show us the village’s chief problem: lack of water. We followed him as he hobbled down a treacherous path into a ravine where sheer walls of loess soil towered up around us. This was the location of the town well, the true center of life for this cracked-earth village. Like most other parts of the Loess Plateau, this area was so dry that it was rapidly desertifying. Rainfall averaged just 300 mm (12 inches) a year. In the year before, 1999, drought seemed to be a regular occurrence, with only 100 mm (4 inches) of rain.

A few two-gallon buckets were lined up on an honor system. Once the villager

whose bucket was next up figured that the well was full – about once every three hours – he would come by, fill up his bucket, and let the next in line know that his bucket had made it to the front. I looked hard into the well, spotted some water, and heard a drop of water splash in every few seconds.

Further down the trail was an older well, which was even drier. The path to the school was lightly dusted in snow, and the richest man in the village, Mr. Han, walked ahead of us, sweeping the powder from the dirt path. It was a touching sign of local hospitality and showed how much the villagers valued anyone associated with Professor Mao.

We could see why when we stopped in on one village member, Li Gangsun, a 46-year-old farmer who looked about sixty. Mr. Li had borrowed 500 yuan (roughly \$60) and repaid it six months later along with 30 yuan interest. He bought a calf and now was fattening it. He expected to sell it in two years for 2,000 yuan. Now he was contemplating a loan to pay for his children’s tuition. Once he got paid for his harvest in the autumn he would be able to repay the loan, but the government had to have its tuition money up front; elementary school is not free in China. Essentially, Professor Mao’s credit system functioned like working capital for a company; people needed it to tide them over until they got paid. The maximum size of a loan was 1,000 yuan and interest was fixed at 1 percent per month. That works out to 12 percent a year – high by

today’s standard – but it had the advantage of being simple and much lower than the black-market rate of around 30 percent that peasants pay for capital.

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Enthused by Longshuitou’s success, other villages clamored to join, and micro-credit seemed poised to spread across the Loess Plateau.

The scheme seemed perfect except for one hitch: it was illegal. Professor Mao was charging interest on his loans, which development experts say is key to the program working. People tend to only value things that come with a price. Even though he wasn’t making a profit on the bank, which plowed profits back into the fund’s capital reserve, he was essentially operating as a bank, and banks are all state-run in China.

A few months earlier, an entrepreneur who had read about Professor Mao’s fund in a local newspaper wrote to him saying he would like to donate several hundred thousand yuan but wanted to be sure the donation was legal. Professor Mao wrote to the People’s Bank of China (the country’s central bank) in August 1999, asking to register his charity as a bank. He got a reply from the Communist Party’s United Front Work Department, which is a sort of feel-good liaison office charged with building a “united front” of party and non-party sympathizers among foreigners, religious types, do-gooders, and others who do not belong in the party but can be useful to it. The letter acknowledged that Professor Mao was doing a good deed. “Unfortunately,” it continued, “this is an interest-paying fund. We’re afraid that there’s a possibility of it accumulating capital illegally.”

As usual in China, the events could lead to two interpretations. The government hadn’t closed down Professor Mao’s fund, leaving room for optimists to argue that it was essentially tolerating an independent organization. But the flip side was that government polices had stunted the fund by preventing the entrepreneur from making his big donation, thus radically setting back poverty alleviation in the area. And without the government’s approval, the bank could not spread beyond this one village to the roughly 900,000 other villages in China.

Back in his cave, Mr. Luo pulled out a copy of the government’s rejection letter, which he kept in a folder. “They don’t under-

stand how good this is," he said, running his hands over the characters line by line as he read it out aloud. "A village next door tried to do the same thing and set up a bank. "They want to pay into our system and join us. Imagine if we could grow to include all the villages in the county!"

Mr. Luo seemed perplexed by the government's stand. He pulled out a list of regulations and carefully balanced ledgers, which he sent back to Professor Mao four times a year for auditing. "Our books always balance," he said, reading out the medicine, fertilizer, and tuition that villagers had bought with the loans. "If I could only go to Beijing and make the leaders understand how good this is."

Back in Beijing, I went back to see Mr. Mao, whose analysis was typically brief and succinct. "They don't want competition for the state banks," he said. They want to keep their monopoly. At least they want things registered with them so they can control it if needs be."

Of course, Mr. Mao acknowledged, poorly run rural-credit cooperatives were dangerous and such operations needed to be monitored carefully. In recent years, reports had surfaced of corrupt bank branch managers

making off with deposits and spurring runs on banks. But instead of allowing independent checks and balances to be set up – independent auditors, for example, or a media that could police official corruption – the government solution was a heavy-handed ban on all non-government banking institutions.

Mr. Mao's convictions are typical of those who donate money or start a cause. The government, though, is only interested in charities that basically transfer money to its causes and that are set up according to its priorities. So when annual floods hit the Yangtze, companies are hit up for contributions that flow to government-run charities that hand out blankets. These are worthy causes but no more than a tax on companies – a transfer of the government's responsibility to the private sector. True charity work, based on moral convictions or ethical principles such as those that inspired Mr. Mao, is rare.

That gets to the heart of how much autonomy the Communist Party will allow society. Over the past decade, academics have debated how much "civil society" the country has – how many organizations are outside the state's effective control. In some countries, these are called non-govern-

mental organizations, or NGOs. In China, people are wary of using this term because all organizations have to register with the government – except those like Mr. Mao's that operated in the gray zone of illegality – and few are truly spontaneous groups set up by citizens who care passionately about an issue. Optimists point to the number of organizations that have formed. Yes, the argument goes, they have to register with the government, but the government isn't able to effectively control them all. True autonomy may be impossible, but it is better than what China had before.

True enough, but the costs are high. For about a decade, China has been stuck at this phase, unable to move toward a fully civil society and only tolerating those that do not challenge it. It is better than what China has had before, but the current system is not without its costs. The lost chance for Mr. Mao to spread his ideas was one. ➔

Ian Johnson won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of China. He works in Berlin for the *Wall Street Journal* and has lectured at the American Academy. His book, *Wild Grass: China's Revolution from Below*, came out this year.

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# Inside the Fed

Anthony Santomero

## on the Future of Monetary Policy and Life after Greenspan

ANTHONY M. SANTOMERO, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, does not fear any trouble in the financial markets when Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan leaves office at the beginning of 2006. “It is understandable that the markets will ask ‘what will happen?’ when a central banker of this stature retires,” Santomero told the German financial newspaper *Handelsblatt* during a visit to Berlin as a guest of the American Academy in Berlin. “They will come to realize, however, that the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has 19 members and that our decision-making process will remain essentially the same.” The FOMC is the decision-making committee for monetary policy in the Federal Reserve System. As president of the Philadelphia Fed, Santomero has voting rights on this committee.

Increasing concerns are flaring up in the markets over the direction of US monetary policy in the post-Greenspan era. Since 1986 Greenspan has successfully steered the Fed’s fortunes primarily by his charisma. He understands monetary policy as crisis management and has always rejected monetary policy strategy that publicly commits the central bank. In the run-up to his departure, the lack of such a strategy and the continuity that comes with it makes for uncertainty.

“Greenspan has not only raised his profession to an art but has also institutionalized the process that leads to good decisions and consensus,” explained Santomero. “The chairman will change. But everything else remains the same.” For Santomero, the last four years have proven how constructively the FOMC works together as a committee. Since the beginning of 2001, the committee has reduced the federal funds rate to its lowest level in fifty years. [The federal funds rate is the interest rate at

which depository institutions lend balances at the Federal Reserve to other depository institutions overnight.] Now it is being raised again. The interest rate moves were accomplished with practically no opposition, Santomero said. The Fed has achieved more than two decades of price stability.

For Santomero, who presented a lecture at the American Academy while in Berlin, announcing an inflation target would be the clearest signal that the FOMC will continue this successful legacy. “If we tell the markets openly what target we are striving for and let ourselves be measured by this and in how far we stick to it, we increase the credibility we have acquired over more than 25 years. It would be a further logical step on the Fed’s way to more transparency.”

Within the FOMC the possibility of an inflation target is being discussed with controversy. (An inflation target sets a specific rate of inflation or, more likely, a band, usually at a low level such as 1–3 percent a year.) The issue was deferred at the meeting at the beginning of February. Along with Santomero, proponents include Ben S. Bernanke, a member of the Fed Board of Governors, and Janet L. Yellen, president of the San Francisco Fed, while other members maintain that an inflation target is incompatible with the Fed’s dual mandate to simultaneously ensure price stability and maximum employment. Santomero is not sure whether the FOMC can succeed in reaching an understanding about an inflation target before the change in the head of the Fed. “I can only say we will discuss the details further. Anything else would be pure speculation.” The timing is not crucial for the former professor of finance at the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania. It is only important that the FOMC fully support the strategy, he said.

Santomero promotes a target band from 1 to 3 percent, measured by the 12-month

moving average of the price index of personal consumption expenditure (PCE) – excluding food and energy prices. For the last decade, the US inflation rate has fluctuated between 1 and 2 percent. The PCE is broader than the consumer price index, and its weighting is continually updated. It corresponds to the actual consumption pattern. “Such a band would coordinate the decision making in the FOMC, improve communication with the markets, and strengthen the confidence of the public that prices would remain stable over the long run as well,” declared Santomero. “It allows monetary policy enough leeway to react to shocks and imbalances. There can be no talk of conflict with the Fed’s dual mandate: price stability furthers growth and employment.”

Santomero suggested that the markets cannot assume they will always be as clearly informed about the future course of monetary policy as they are now. Since August 2003 the Fed has expressly communicated its interest rate intentions rather than communicating them indirectly as it did in earlier periods. In a statement from August to December 2003, the FOMC said, “The accommodative policy can be maintained for a considerable period.” Since May 2004 the committee has repeated that the tightening “can likely be achieved at a measured pace.”

“It is neither customary nor necessary for the Fed or any other central bank to make known its longer-term course of action in its policy statement,” Santomero said. According to him, the FOMC believes that the economy has entered a period of sustainable expansion and that monetary policy should react accordingly. “That has been communicated to the markets; however, it is not meant to be an exact plan of action for the Fed, even if the markets have been correct in this interpretation until now. Fundamentally, monetary policy actions will be dependent on the incoming data.”

Santomero does not see evidence of a price bubble in the bond markets. “The bond market tries to ascertain how short-term interest rates will develop over the next twenty years.” They are thus assuming continued low inflation. “I lean toward believing the markets. In any case, I would not bet against them at the present time.” ☞

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By Marietta Kurm-Engels  
From *Handelsblatt*  
March 9, 2005



# Celebrating Holbrooke

## Academy Friends Endow Fellowship

LAST NOVEMBER, many of the Academy's closest friends and supporters were not to be found on the Wannsee but at the fifth-avenue apartment of Steven Rattner and Maureen White for a cocktail party honoring Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. The Academy's trustees announced the creation of a special endowed prize named for the Academy's chairman, founder, and most spirited and determined advocate. The Richard C. Holbrooke Berlin Prize will

bring outstanding American policy makers, cultural leaders, and educators to Berlin as Fellows or Distinguished Visitors to present their views to a broad German public.

It was as US Ambassador to Germany in 1994 that Holbrooke first conceived of the idea of replacing the departing American military troops in Berlin with a lasting cultural presence. In a remarkably short span of time, the diplomat convinced a number of eminent

American and German statesmen and businesspeople that the project would flourish.

Ambassador Holbrooke's relation to Europe has always been a special one. Berliners got to know him well during his time as ambassador to the German capital (1993–1994). "Dick was surely one of the two or three most influential Americans in Europe at the end of the twentieth century," said Wolfgang Ischinger, Germany's ambassador to the US. As Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (1994–1996), Holbrooke was the driving force behind the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, which ended the war in Bosnia. As a private citizen, he served as President Clinton's special envoy to Bosnia and Kosovo and later to Cyprus, taking up the post of US Ambassador to the UN from 1999 to 2001. Today he is vice chairman of the private equity firm Perseus LLC, president of the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, and vice chairman of the Asia Society.

The prize honors Holbrooke's "significant contributions to realizing the Academy's mission," said Academy president Robert Mundheim. Trustee Wolfgang Mayrhuber summed up the reasons for the extraordinary outpouring of support. "He has created a new kind of institution in the American Academy in Berlin – bipartisan, entrepreneurial, effective – which should serve as a model for American private diplomacy in the future."

Over \$600,000 for the prize was quietly raised in the course of the summer and fall of 2004. Spearheading the drive in the US were Robert Mundheim and

Gahl Burt, aided by many other trustees. Between them, Wolfgang Mayrhuber and new trustee Heinrich v. Pierer solicited over \$200,000 from the German business community. Other important funds on the German side were raised by Mathias Döpfner, Jürgen Schrempp, Horst Teltschik, and Trustees Nina von Maltzahn and Erich Marx. Many trustees were on hand to celebrate in New York. Others, like Vartan Gregorian, who secured support from several important donors in New York, were present in spirit.

Perhaps no praise was higher than that of Professor Fritz Stern who, indulging in what he called a "historian's fantasy," imagined what Holbrooke would have done in the Balkans had he negotiated there in 1914 instead of in the 1990s. "I know the man who could have averted the Great War if he had been born in time. Richard Holbrooke would have gone on alert as soon as the Austrian Archduke was assassinated in Sarajevo. Hearing the rumors of the Austrian ultimatum on Serbia, he would have jumped on the Orient Express and told the Serbs in Belgrade, 'For God's sake, accept the ultimatum with minor face-saving provisions. Cheat later.' Then it would be on to Vienna. 'If you let the Germans put you into war, you'll destroy your multinational empire,' he would have told the Habsburgs. 'Don't do it.' On to Berlin: 'You're risking your growing strength, your clear ascendancy, by linking yourself to a living corpse, the Habsburg Empire, your ancient enemy.' And so on, to Saint Petersburg, Paris, and London... As it is, Richard went to Belgrade much later and told the world how *To End a War*." M.R.



Photograph by Michael Dammes

ANYONE WHO HAS EVER gazed at the lake from the Hans Arnhold Center's wood-paneled library might be forgiven for imagining that this elegance has always existed. But just ask Gahl Hodges Burt about the hot-dog stand that used to be in the front hall. The first time she set foot in the villa it was a US Army recreational center. The year was 1985, and some four decades of Army use had worn it down.

of the State Department during the turbulent transition from the Nixon to the Ford administration. She soon moved to the office of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, brought aboard by his executive assistant Jerry Bremer (most recently President Bush's special envoy to Iraq). For a young woman in her early twenties, one can only imagine the sort of trial-by-crisis this involved.

Rollins when her husband was appointed US Ambassador to Germany.

"Germany was really our first home," she recalls of the years in Bonn from 1985 to 1989. The Burts' first child, Christopher, was born there in 1987. After a dozen heady years in Washington, however, acclimatizing to life in what Le Carré called "a small town in Germany" did not come eas-

where she might be seen at Saint Hedwig's Cathedral by day and East Berlin's clubs by night. Both situations called for a bit of low-level smuggling: a case of California wine for the Cardinal, tapes of Western music for the young East Berliners. She would bring letters from East Germans westward.

In February of 1989, the Burts left Berlin for Geneva, where Ambassador Burt served until 1991 as President George H.W. Bush's chief negotiator with Moscow in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START). "That November, Friede Springer [the widow of the German publisher Axel Springer] called me in Switzerland from the top of the Springer building, and I could hear the emotion in her voice. 'Gahl,' she said, 'You won't believe it. There are people *coming over the Wall*.'" Was she surprised? Yes. "Even now, when I walk down Unter den Linden I have to pinch myself. To think that the city has come so far in such a short span of time is astounding."

At times Gahl Burt is no less astounded by the progress that the Academy itself has made. She was working as a consultant in Washington and had just had her second child, Caroline, when Richard Holbrooke approached her about the Academy. If Ms. Burt's work for the Academy began with the gargantuan task of refitting the house – "like having a third child" – it certainly did not end there. She remains involved in all aspects of the Academy's life, large and small, from chairing the development committee and bringing trustees like Otto Graf Lambsdorff and Lloyd Cutler to the board, to recruiting distinguished visitors from the halls of the US Congress and the State Department.

Richard Holbrooke and Gahl Burt may seem like a bit of an odd couple, coming as they do from different political backgrounds, but they share a com-

ily. "It was kind of like falling off a log," she admits. "I hadn't changed my name, and suddenly everyone called me 'Frau Burt.' My first thought was: 'My life is over. I've become Frau Burt.'"

Two things helped keep her afloat during that first slightly disorienting year: the warmth of the Germans she met – "so many people were anxious to help" – and her frequent excursions to Berlin, a city she found fascinating. The US ambassadorial residence in Dahlem became their home away from Bonn. Before too long, "Frau Burt" had established herself as one of the city's most glamorous hostesses, introducing artists, designers, and celebrities into the diplomatic mix. "There was something Lady Di-like about her," recalls Martial Boulan, who worked as a butler in the Berlin residence. "They were one of the most popular American couples in Germany in the 1980s."

Ms. Burt was also drawn to the "undercurrent of non-conformism" she found in Berlin. Here was a city on the edge, culturally as well as politically. The US ambassador's wife crossed the Berlin Wall quite easily, traveling to Leipzig and Dresden and frequently to East Berlin

Later, as the assistant chief of protocol for foreign visitors from 1977 to 1983, Gahl Hodges supervised hundreds of state visits. In 1983 she moved to the White House to be social secretary to President and Mrs. Reagan. For the career civil servant, leaving the State Department was a political "roll of the dice," but it was a gamble she gladly took. Between congressional breakfasts and state dinners, while Nancy Reagan served coffee to Mrs. Mubarak and Mrs. Mugabe, Gahl Hodges was backstage with her staff juggling guest lists and orchestrating photo ops and anti-drug rallies. Working with Nancy Reagan was a pleasure, she recalls, not least because of the first lady's clear-cut ideas about what she wanted. "It was all black and white. There was very little gray."

How, with a schedule like this, she found time to meet Richard Burt and, in 1985, to marry him is something of a mystery. The international relations specialist and former diplomatic correspondent for the *New York Times* was then Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs. Ms. Hodges was considering moving closer to politics to work with Lee Atwater and Ed

# An Indispensable First Lady

## Trustee Profile: Gahl Burt

by *Miranda Robbins*

After Richard Holbrooke tapped her in 1994 to serve as the Academy's first Vice Chair, Ms. Burt oversaw the painstaking, day-to-day construction work that transformed an army club into an arcadian scholarly retreat, one that brought back the refined prewar atmosphere of the Arnhold family home. "We took this place down to its studs," she remarks with a little grimace that indicates just how bad it really was.

Ambassador Holbrooke knew that Ms. Burt had all the necessary qualities to bring the best of Berlin to Washington and the best of Washington to the Wannsee. And indeed, Ms. Burt's extensive political network, determination, and charm have been a boon to the Academy. "Gahl is a savvy, hands-on perfectionist," says Gary Smith. "In the first years we spoke on the phone at least twice a day, figuring out everything from our fundraising strategy to the length of the curtains."

Ms. Burt's career at the State Department began in 1973 after recruiters arrived on the campus of Wesley College in Dover, Delaware. Within a few months, she was at the center

mitment to opening the intellectual doors of the Academy to intense discussions of public policy. “Gahl is an indispensable colleague and tenacious leader,” Holbrooke says. “She has also been my dear friend for over twenty-five years, ever since we worked together during the Carter years. Gahl has a way of getting everyone to agree to do it her way and making you enjoy it. It is just fun to work with her, and even more fun to be her friend.” Both appreciate the freedom and frankness that the institution’s independence from government allows. Ms. Burt also serves on the board of the International Republican Institute, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization chaired by her friend Senator John McCain. “Along with the American Academy in Berlin, IRI is one of the most important American institutions in the world right now,” she says. “I feel blessed to be involved with both projects. Both are very successful in furthering a positive image of America abroad.

Ms. Burt is also deeply committed to the quality of the Academy’s fellowship program, encouraging potential fellows to apply and sitting in on selection meetings in New York. She visits the Hans Arnhold Center as often as she can, partly to see how the members of this small residential community get along. “They need to *like* each other, to encourage and applaud each other.” She also feels that Academy fellows must represent a balance of American political views. “The Academy is a nonpartisan institution.”

How fitting that a woman who once officially represented America in Germany is now Berlin’s most eloquent booster in Washington. Her job is becoming a lot easier, she notes with satisfaction. “I used to have to beg people to come here, but now the tables have turned. It is so gratifying to see how far our institution has come.” 🐾



# Annals of Mentorship

## The Academy Welcomes Three New Trustees

AT ITS SPRING MEETING this May, the Academy board will welcome Kwame Anthony Appiah, John P. Birkelund, and Heinrich v. Pierer, three distinguished new trustees who will contribute significantly to the Academy's cultural and transatlantic mission.

The Academy has already profited from the guidance and expertise of seasoned academic KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH, who chaired its fellows selection committees in 2004 and 2005. The philosopher, writer, and Princeton University professor employs classical philosophy to scrutinize contemporary practices of racism and cultural identity. A glance at his long list of publications – from *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992) to *Thinking it Through: An Introduction of Contemporary Philosophy* (2003) and *Ethics of Identity* (2005) – reveals both the scope and depth of his intellectual exploration. So do his articles in the *New York Review of Books*, where he has published on a range of subjects from African history and culture to legal theory, feminism, and race relations and their manifold points of intersection. The French publication *Le Nouvel Observateur* even recently named Appiah one of the world's "25 greatest thinkers."

Little did he know it then, but banker JOHN P. BIRKELUND'S connection to the Academy began almost exactly fifty years ago. While stationed in Berlin as an intelligence officer for the US Marines from 1953 to 1956, he began cultivating his relationship with the city, a bond he also drew on for his recent biography *Gustav Stresemann: Patriot und Staatsmann*. Acclaimed for its refreshingly objective view of the German statesman, Birkelund's book places novel emphasis on Stresemann's complex rela-

tionship with the US and his critical misunderstanding of the American mentality prior to World War I. Academic pursuit is only a part, albeit a large and extremely important one, of Birkelund's life. While researching and writing, restructuring the National Humanities Center, founding and chairing the Polish American Freedom Foundation, and serving on other boards such as those of Brown University and the Frick Collection, Birkelund also established a distinguished career in banking. The former director of the New York Stock Exchange was president, CEO, and chairman of the investment bank Dillon Read and now serves as a senior advisor to the UBS Investment Bank.

Inaugurated into *Manager Magazin's* prestigious Hall of Fame in 2004, HEINRICH V. PIERER was touted as a "paradigm for the future," a man who commands "without megaphone or ego." After serving for over a decade as chairman of the board

for Siemens AG – and increasing the company's sales by nearly 300 percent – he has become recognized, perhaps above all, for his internationalism. As a result of v. Pierer's leadership, Siemens now enjoys a larger market share in the US than in Germany. Although a new board member, v. Pierer belonged to the original consortium of German industry titans – Jürgen Schrempp, Horst Köhler, Henning Schulte-Noelle – whose five-million-DM contribution in 1997, before the Academy opened, was a prescient expression of German confidence in Holbrook's idea. He demonstrated his support yet again in 2004 by helping to create the Academy's Siemens Fellowship. He also lends his expertise to other industrial and philanthropic ventures, among them Bayer AG, Münchener Rück AG, Volkswagen AG, UNESCO's "Children in Need," and the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft. As founding chairman of the Asia-Pacific Committee of German Economic Affairs, v. Pierer leads a coalition of German companies in a mission, unparalleled in aptitude and success, to strengthen economic relations with Asia.

R. M.



Heinrich v. Pierer



John P. Birkelund



K. Anthony Appiah, center, and Robert Mundheim, right, talking to Robert and Anabelle Garrett.

Photograph by Michael Damess

# Guest Appearances

## Notes from the Spring Program

In its spring 2005 semester the Academy welcomes five Distinguished Visitors to the Hans Arnhold Center: Roel Campos, Commissioner of the US Securities and Exchange Commission, writer Anthony Lewis, and Margaret Marshall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, as well as C.V. Starr Distinguished Visitors Nicholas Platt and Stapelton Roy (see page 23).

This June, ROEL CAMPOS, one of the five commissioners of the US Securities and Exchange Commission, will spend a week at the Hans Arnhold Center, thanks to Jochen Sanio, president of the German Financial Supervisory Authority. The Academy's ongoing program of inviting SEC commissioners and other American regulatory leaders to Germany has proven especially attractive to the German business community. Following the tradition established with former SEC chairman Harvey Pitt's visit to the Academy in the spring of 2003, Mr. Campos will give the keynote address to the Munich Economic Summit. Mr. Campos was nominated by President Bush to his five-year term at the SEC in 2002. Prior to joining the Commission, he was one of two principal owners of El Dorado Communications, a radio broadcasting company in Houston, Texas.

Mr. Lewis and Justice Marshall, who are married, spent a week in early April at the Hans Arnhold Center. ANTHONY LEWIS, a two-time Pulitzer award winning writer and former columnist for the *New York Times*, has followed legal matters in the US for over four decades. Since September 11 he has been an uncompromising critic of the US treatment of "enemy combatants"

overseas, from Abu Ghraib to Guantanamo, and has taken apart the reasoning of the Bush administration's legal advisors on the matter. "Today government lawyers argue that the president is above the law – that he can order the torture of prisoners even though treaties and a federal law forbid it," Lewis wrote in February. He has consistently reminded readers of the importance of the separation of powers into executive, legislative, and judicial branches and urged Americans to be vigilant in opposing the claims made since September 11 of "unreviewable presidential power."

JUSTICE MARSHALL has served on the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts since 1996 and became its Chief Justice in 1999. The court's November 2003 ruling that the state must perform gay marriages attracted nationwide attention. "Without the right to marry – or more properly, the right to choose to marry," Marshall argued in her opinion, "one is excluded from the full range of human experience and denied full protection of the laws." A student leader in the anti-apartheid movement in her native South Africa during the 1960s, Marshall earned her law degree from Yale University and went on to serve as vice president and general counsel at Harvard University. Today she presides over the oldest court in the US. "Even Americans who are deeply devoted to the law take judicial independence for granted," Marshall said. In her talk on April 12 at the Academy, "Global Jurisprudence and US Constitutional Law: Isolation or Engagement?" Marshall suggested that American judges would be well served to "look

beyond American constitutional law" to analogous decisions abroad when they construe the individual rights provisions of the US Constitution.

A number of other guests participated in the Academy's wide-ranging winter and spring program, beginning with Editor-in-Chief of Time Inc. NORMAN PEARLSTINE, on a rare visit to Germany. Pearlstine discussed his perspective from the top of the world's largest media corporation (see page 42). The following day he presided over a roundtable focused on international news and publishing. Soon after, STEPHEN S. SZABO, former Bosch Fellow and professor of European studies at Johns Hopkins University, joined current George W. Bush Fellow Ronald Steel and Michael Zürn of the Hertie School of Governance in a candid discussion of what he sees as the deteriorating German-American relationship, best summarized by the title of his recent book *Parting Ways*.

The visual and performing arts were vividly present in February. Comedy legend JERRY LEWIS, in town to receive the Berlinale film festival's prestigious Golden Camera award, held an informal press conference at the Academy peppered with one-liners and observations on the differences between his French and German fans (see page 41). Soon after, artist JENNIFER BARTLETT joined fellows for a week while she and Academy Trustee Volker Schlöndorff brought to fruition their year-long collaboration on a new production of Janáček's *From the House of the Dead* at the Deutsche Oper. In a public conversation on the eve of the premiere, the two spoke about their work together and the challenges of bringing to life Dostoyevsky's descriptions of a Siberian prison camp, which form the opera's libretto. The painter JAMES ROSENQUIST drew a large audience to the

Academy during a visit that coincided with the arrival of his Guggenheim retrospective at the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg. In dialogue with two of the show's curators, Walter Hopps and Sarah Bancroft, Rosenquist recalled his early days as a billboard painter and described his more recent work.

Economist ANTHONY M. SANTOMERO, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, came to Berlin in March at the Academy's invitation and gave an optimistic prognosis of the most recent American business cycle (see page 30). His talk was widely disseminated in publications on both sides of the Atlantic, including in a live broadcast by Bloomberg Radio.

April opened with a lunch roundtable with GIDEON ROSE, former National Security Council official in the Clinton administration and current managing editor of the magazine *Foreign Affairs*. The international conflict and economic sanctions expert led the discussion on foreign policy in Bush's second term. Soon after, architect PETER EISENMAN joined Academy friends for luncheon, a prelude to the official opening in May of his *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*.

Each May the academic year culminates in the prestigious Fritz Stern Lecture, a critical summing up of society and history by a distinguished historian. Past lecturers were Dieter Grimm and Jürgen Kocka. This May NORBERT FREI, professor of modern history at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena, will offer an in-depth examination of German political culture.

As the *Journal* went to press, the Academy was looking forward to a June 2 dialogue on German-American relations with JOSCHKA FISCHER. It will be the German foreign minister's second visit to the Hans Arnhold Center during the current academic year. ☞

# Resounding Support

## Deutsche Bank Hits a High Note with New Fellowship

Deutsche Bank announced this spring its sponsorship of a new prize for composers, musicians, and musicologists at the American Academy. Thanks to Sir Simon Rattle and Peter Riegelbauer of the Berlin Philharmonic as well as to Dr. Tessen von Heydebreck and the rest of the Deutsche Bank Foundation, this sonorous addition gives yet another form to the bank's belief in the power of *Musik als grenzenlose Sprache* – music as a language without boundaries. The Deutsche Bank Berlin Prize will enable a music-minded fellow to spend a full

semester at the Hans Arnhold Center for each of the next three years.

Deutsche Bank's support strengthens the already prominent presence of music at the Hans Arnhold Center. Composers, music critics, and musicologists have been part of every year's class of fellows since the institution opened its doors, from the eminent Bach scholar Christoph Wolff to *New Yorker* music critic Alex Ross.

The new prize will make it possible for these activities to resonate beyond the villa to the very heart of Berlin. Funds have

been earmarked for concerts at the Berlin Philharmonie's Kammermusiksaal and other premiere music venues.

Composer Sebastian Currier inaugurates the prize next fall. The Columbia University professor is no stranger to Berlin, where his piece "Night Time," composed in 2000 for violinist Jean-Claude Velin and the Philharmonic's harpist Marie-Pierre Langlamet, was performed at the Philharmonie's Hermann-Wolff-Saal this February.

As a major partner with the Berlin Philharmonic as well as the co-manager of the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin, there is no refuting that the Deutsche Bank Foundation is a fixture on the *Hauptstadt's* cultural horizon.

A. F. B.

## Call for Applications

Starting in May, the Academy welcomes applications from scholars, writers, and professionals who wish to engage in independent study for a semester in 2006–2007. Benefits include a monthly stipend, airfare, housing, and partial board. Application forms, available on the Academy's Web site ([www.americanacademy.de](http://www.americanacademy.de)), are due in Berlin on October 17, 2005. US citizens and permanent residents are eligible to apply. Fellows will be chosen by an independent committee following a peer review process.

Rising competition for the Guna S. Mundheim Berlin Prize has prompted a restructuring of the visual arts selection procedure. A small number of invited candidates will be considered by an independent international jury. The jury for music composition will not convene in 2006, as the 2006–2007 Deutsche Bank Fellow has already been selected.



"Flying Buttress, Cosmic Ship," 2005, by Lisi Raskin (Guna S. Mundheim Fellow in the Visual Arts), crayon and color pencil on paper mounted on board (55cm x 75cm).



## LIFE & LETTERS at the Hans Arnhold Center

# The Spring 2005 Fellows

## Profiles in Scholarship

FOR MASON BATES, the journey through Berlin's soundscapes, from his arcadian studio overlooking the Wannsee to the all-night techno clubs of Mitte and Prenzlauer Berg, is perfectly natural. Rather than divide his time between composing "classical" and "electronica," Bates enjoys connecting the two. As the Juilliard-trained composer is gaining a reputation for his sym-



phonic and chamber-music compositions, he is also active under the handle "Masonic" as a DJ in San Francisco, Rome, and now Berlin. His most recent work is "Omnivorous Furniture" for sinfonietta and electronica, which he performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in November 2004. He has performed his concerto for synthesizer with both the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Phoenix Symphony. As Anna-Maria Kellen Fellow this spring, Bates is focusing on a work for organ and electronica commissioned to celebrate Juilliard's one hundredth anniversary, while making the transition from observer to regular DJ in the city's techno scene.

With two recent studies of twentieth-century modernist architecture behind him – the illuminating exhibition "Mies in Berlin" and a book on Marcel Breuer – architectural historian BARRY BERGDOLL returns to his home base of nineteenth-century European architecture to examine its intersection with that century's burgeoning natural sciences. In his research, Bergdoll shows how the romantic period's challenge to architecture's fixed classical ideals coincided with broad public interest in science. Archeology, geology, botany, and comparative anatomy, among others, were fields that opened "new windows into the very structure of the natural realm" and "new dimensions of historical time." The study of



crystals, for example, in shedding new light on the dynamics of organization and growth, inspired new thinking on "spatial planning at various scales, from apartments to cities." The JPMorgan Fellow, on a break from chairing Columbia University's department of art history, is at home in Schinkel's Berlin, much as he is

in Paris, where Schinkel and his German colleagues flocked to the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle to ponder Cuvier's displays of skeletons and fossils.

PAUL BERMAN's book *Terror and Liberalism*, written after September 11 but prior to the American invasion of Iraq, argues that Islamist extremism imbibes the same brew that fueled totalitarian movements from Hitler's to Stalin's to Pol Pot's: a hatred of liberalism. Rather than subscribe to the theory of the "clash of civilizations," Berman emphasizes the continuity between the lethal ideologies of the last century and those that threaten democratic values today. Beware the movement, whether of the far left or the extreme right, that makes a cult of death and sacrifice, recycles racial and nationalist rhetoric, and promises that utopia will arise from some purifying cataclysm, he warns. Berman backed American intervention in Iraq for promoting what he saw as a progressive message for the world, its opposition to incipient fascism, totalitarianism, and anti-Semitism in the Middle East and beyond – despite his skepticism toward the current US administration. Berman, who contributes to *Dissent*, the *New Republic*, *Slate*, and the opinion page of the *Times*, among other publications, comes to the Academy during the month of May for a short-term Bosch Berlin Prize.

MYRA MARX FERREE's career has been marked by the ongoing success of her book *Controversy and Coalition: The New Feminist Movement* (1985), which quickly became essential reading for

scholars and students in the sociology of gender. The professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison and prolific writer and editor – of some forty articles and numerous edited volumes – is using her Berlin Prize to complete a study of contemporary German feminism, *The Struggle for Sisterhood*. This comprehensive account of the movement in English has been in the works for more than fifteen



years – indeed, ever since German unification prompted its critical reassessment. The policy issues confronting Germany since reunification make it a unique case study for the intersection of gender politics and wider political transformations. Ferree is building on years of conversations with Germans, both academics and non-academics, while taking on both the theoretical and empirical aspects of the subject.

Poet and translator PETER FILKINS has embarked on his own journey in order to complete his translation of H.G. Adler's *Eine Reise* (The Journey), a forgotten masterpiece of Holocaust literature that was admired by Elias Cannetti and Heinrich Böll. Written in 1950, the book recounts a single family's deportation from Vienna to Theresienstadt. It remained

unpublished until 1962 before disappearing again until it was reissued in 1999, to great critical interest. When he read it, Filkins immediately recognized a major writer of German postwar literature. "Imagine Elie Wiesel's *Night* written by Virginia Woolf or Hermann Broch," he says. Filkins was the first to make the works of postwar Austrian poet and novelist Ingeborg Bachmann available to an English-speaking audience. His poet's sensibility is ideal for the



complex, singular style of Adler's novel, in which a "tightly interwoven set of voices illustrates the degree to which horror infused an entire society," writes Filkins. The Commerzbank Fellow is on leave from Simon's Rock College of Bard, where he is associate professor of languages and literature.

Coca-Cola Fellow BRANDEN JOSEPH explores works of postwar American art not as definitives but rather as portholes into a larger idea of interconnected media. His recently completed study of "Andy Warhol's Sixties" explores those "missing years" when the artist turned away from painting to concentrate on such enigmatic projects as the five-hour film *Sleep*. Similarly, Joseph's book *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avanti-Garde* traces the artist Rauschenberg's collaboration with the composer John Cage and investigates Rauschenberg's exclusion of film references in preference to music. Joseph's current book project on the New York underground filmmaker-artist-composer Tony Conrad, member of the Dream Syndicate and the Fluxus art movement, uses chapters of Conrad's life to

frame and investigate, through his wide-ranging acquaintances and associations, the seemingly disparate realms within contem-



porary art, happenings, and ideas. While teaching as assistant professor of art history at University of California, Irvine and nurturing his private penchant for experimental music, Joseph also co-edits *Grey Room*, a quarterly scholarly journal committed, like Joseph, to trans-media studies.

"Someone asked about the aura of regret / And disappointment that surrounds these poems / About the private facts those feelings might conceal, / And what their source was in my life," writes JOHN KOETHE in the poem that gives the name to his 2002 collection, *North Point North*. "I said that none of it was personal, / That as lives go my own life was a settled one, / Comprising both successes and misfortunes, the successes / Not especially striking, the misfortunes small. // And yet the question is a real one, / And not for me alone, though certainly for me. / For even if, as Wittgenstein once claimed, / That while the facts



may stay the same // And what is true of one is true of both, / The happy and unhappy man inhabit different worlds, / One still would want to know which world this is,

Milwaukee, / And how that other one could seem so close." Both a highly-regarded poet and a professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Koethe has just finished a new collection, *Sally's Hair*. As Ellen Maria Gorrissen Fellow he is at work on poems inspired by his indefatigable daily forays into Berlin, a sample of which may be found on page 54.

Holtzbrinck Fellow SIGRID NUNEZ's novels defy standard categorizations. Her breakthrough *A Feather on the Breath of God* (1995), based primarily on the intricacies and difficulties of her multicultural family, nonetheless employed the guises of fiction. Similarly, later works like *Naked Sleeper* (1997) and *For Rouenna* (a New York Times notable book in 2001) seem to lean – although perhaps deceptively – as much on memoir as on fiction, and her forthcoming novel *The Last of Her Kind* (2006) draws up a solid social commen-



tary on today's prison system without leaving narrative behind. The project Nunez is tackling during her stay in Berlin may be quite a departure, in style if not in subject: her new, short book will remain wholly non-fictional, as much an objective study of postwar notions of culture and identity as an exploratory autobiography. Inspired by her first stay in Germany, her mother's birthplace, she hopes to address frankly the disparate attitudes of her German relatives toward the outside world – and toward their very own family.

For LISI RASKIN, Guna S. Mundheim Fellow in the Visual Arts, phrases like "weapons

of mass destruction" take on entirely new meanings, personas, and forms. Conjuring cold-war ghosts and their present-day avatars, Raskin creates visual fictions of nuclear-waste sites, control rooms, and escape pods; inhabits characters such as Herr Doktor Wolfgang Hauptman II, the inventor of a fictitious thermophilic fungus; and publishes an online magazine for the "off-world" residents of HorizonMars ([www.nukepack.org](http://www.nukepack.org)). Her Berlin



project, "The Bunker," to be exhibited at Künstlerhaus Bethanien this June, explores the area's bunkers and atomic shelters, which are now attempting to reintegrate themselves innocuously into today's environment and consciousness. Her work *Suite U234* was on display this winter at Guild and Greyshkul Gallery in New York, and *Transporter Cable Box* (2004) and several of her drawings are on view in the show "Greater New York 2005" at PS1 in New York until September 22. Raskin also writes for various art publications and teaches as an adjunct professor at the New School University.

The dilapidated state of counterterrorism information sharing between the US and the EU has increasingly haunted public and political consciousness since the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001. Does the problem lie in cosmetic political discrepancies or in deeper-seated ideological perceptions? For two months this winter, Bosch Public Policy Fellow THOMAS SANDERSON focused his view on Germany, conducting firsthand interviews with his German counterparts to ascertain possible explana-



tions of this international issue and with the goal of crafting policies aimed to strengthen transatlantic communication. Other



projects Sanderson has tackled while directing the Transnational Threats Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington have included a study comparing terrorist groups to organized crime, published in the SAIS Review in 2003, which explored how the offensive against the latter might aid in defending against the former.

To social and cultural historian HELMUT WALSER SMITH, a past as vexed as modern Germany's requires a careful consideration of "the many ways in which the histories of groups – whether religious, national, or racial – are interwoven." From Berlin, the JPMorgan Fellow is polishing *Beyond Identity: Religion, Nation, and Race in Modern German History*, a series of tightly focused studies



analyzing, among other issues, the country's particular history of anti-Semitism, German scholars' development of a sustained rhetoric of white supremacy (even as merchants steered clear of the slave trade), and their articulation circa 1900 of a "humanist rhetoric justifying the extinction of nations." In broader projects

as well as microstudies, the Vanderbilt University professor has already delved into the complex relations among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in the nineteenth century, including episodes of religious violence like the 1900 riots in the Prussian town of Konitz described in *The Butcher's Tale: Murder and Anti-Semitism in a German Town*, an *LA Times* notable book in 2002. Smith is also penning a study of German mapmaking.

"The future doesn't belong to the faint-hearted; it belongs to the brave." These words, spoken by former President Ronald Reagan, could also describe the intellectual attitude of Bosch Fellow in Public Policy PETER WALLISON, former White House Counsel to the Reagan administration



and author of *Ronald Reagan: The Power of Conviction and the Success of His Presidency* (2002). Unabashedly opinionated, the resident fellow at Washington's American Enterprise Institute writes frequently in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, and *National Review* about his specialty, financial market deregulation, of which he is a vigorous advocate, as well as on topics as varied as the polarization of the US media and trends in US politics. Wallison, who has spent much time studying the residential mortgage market in the US, turns his attention to Europe this spring and suggests that a government-sponsored entity to support housing finance would probably not be good for the EU.

By Andrea F. Bohlman, Rachel Marks, and Miranda Robbins

# Ronald Steel

## Realist in Residence

Is Atlantica, like the mythical city of Atlantis, going under? Ronald Steel posed this question in his first book, *The End of Alliance: America and the Future of Europe* (1964), and has revisited it several times in the course of his career as a scholar of American foreign policy and political culture. At the height of the cold war, Western Europe quite clearly preferred remaining under NATO's cozy blanket of American military protection – Steel calls it "tutelage." Now that the Soviet threat has vanished and the continent has been reunified, Steel predicts major changes in the structure of the transatlantic bond. In *The Fall of Atlantica*, which he is writing at the Academy, this spring's George H. W. Bush Fellow suggests that "just as Russia's Europe is gone, America's Europe appears to be going."

Steel began to study Europe first-hand in the mid 1950s working for the European Command of the US Army, followed by a stint in the foreign service. His understanding of the military and diplomatic corps has informed much of his work, including the books *Pax Americana* (1967), *Imperialists and Other Heroes* (1971), and, more recently, *Temptations of a Superpower* (1995). But political matters at home, and notably their guiding personalities, have been as important to him as American policy abroad. In his most recent book, *In Love with Night: The American Romance with Robert Kennedy* (2001), he provides both a sensitive psychological portrait of RFK and a hard-headed uncoupling of the man from his myth. *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (1980), Steel's major biography of the long-lived political commentator, drew on personal papers that Lippmann made available to him before his death in 1974. It showed both dimensions of Lippmann's



Fellow portraits by Mike Minehan

career: as a shaper of public opinion through decades of work as an editor and columnist, and as a deeply enmeshed political advisor to American presidents from Woodrow Wilson to Lyndon Johnson.

Steel teaches international relations at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and has been attached to such European institutions as the École des Hautes Études in Paris and Berlin's Wissenschaftskolleg. In addition to his profound appreciation of history, he is also attentive to the subtle shades of culture, sociology, anthropology, and psychology – a breadth and sensitivity that is in rather short supply among international relations specialists today.

Steel has contributed to the American press since the 1960s, covering and commenting on domestic and foreign policy issues for publications such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *New Republic*. "Ronald Steel stands in the tradition of George Kennan and Raymond Aron," said Robert Silvers, editor of the *New York Review of Books*, for whom Steel has written over fifty articles. "He is a truly independent, incisive, and skeptical analyst of foreign affairs – particularly of illusions about American power, whether in government or in academia. Again and again he performs the great service of exposing the reality of power, as opposed to the official policies that ignore it." This is amply demonstrated in his contribution to the current issue of the *Berlin Journal*. M.R.

# Alumni Accomplishments

## An Update

“Action causes more trouble than thought,” warns the newest addition to the Hans Arnhold Center’s art collection, a white marble bench donated by former Philip Morris Distinguished Artist JENNY HOLZER (spring 2000). The reticent sage, relatively inconspicuous despite its 350 pounds, is an appropriate yet nonetheless mildly foreboding addition to the Academy’s learned atmosphere. It is inscribed with “true-isms” composed by the artist. The tone of the piece is not as clear-cut as the carefully chiseled words: “A strong sense of duty imprisons you,” “Ambivalence can ruin your life,” “An elite is inevitable.” Indeed, Academy visitors are unsure whether to use the bench or simply to read it. What is unquestionable, however, is the impression that the artist has left on Berlin – her works are in the Neue Nationalgalerie (an installation co-sponsored by the Academy) and the Reichstag collections – and the Academy’s gratitude for such a distinctive gift.

Other visual arts alumni have been much in view this winter and spring. SUE DE BEER (2001–2002) is having a solo exhibition at the midtown branch of the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria, where her video installation *Black Sun*, shot and edited in Berlin’s Prenzlauer Berg is on view through June 17. The piece *Hans and Grete*, produced during her year at the Academy, is included in the much-discussed retrospective of RAF-inspired art at Kunst-Werke Berlin, which closes May 15. Artist XU BING (spring 2004) followed his stay on the Wannsee with the exhibition *Tobacco Project: Shanghai*, his first show in mainland China since he immigrated to

the US in 1990. Work by KAREN YASINSKY (spring 2003) will be shown on a wide international stage this year, beginning with a solo exhibition of drawings at Munich’s Sprüth Magers Projekte and continuing into the summer with group shows in Tokyo, the Canary Islands, and Madrid. She will take up a residency at the Foundation Center for Contemporary Arts, Prague in 2006.

Works by two recent fellows were showcased at the Sundance Film Festival this winter. REYNOLD REYNOLDS (spring 2004) screened his first full-length film, *Sugar*, made with Patrick Jolley, which follows a woman through the confines of her miniscule apartment. And HAL HARTLEY (fall 2004), premiered his latest film, *The Girl from Monday*, a foray into satirical science fiction. A Hartley retrospective was underway this April at Prague’s FebrioFest. This summer the filmmaker hopes to begin shooting his newest project, *Fay Grim*, in Berlin, where he will now live about half of each year.

Alumni composers and the fruit of their Academy residencies are attracting more attention than ever. GEORGE TSONTAKIS (spring 2002) has been awarded the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition for his Violin Concerto No. 2, which he worked on as a Vilar Fellow at the Hans Arnhold Center. The honor comes with a prize of \$200,000. His concerto for pianist Stephen Hough, also undertaken during his stay on the Wannsee, will be premiered this September by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. KURT ROHDE (spring 2003) saw the release of his first CD, *Oculus*, late last year. “Rohde’s music

is filled with exhilaration and dread. It sounds eerie, but lyrical; sustained, but skittish; free-form, yet dancing,” critic Richard Scheinin wrote of the recording. Rohde’s first oratorio will be premiered by Maestro Kent Nagano this September in Berlin, just as the composer starts a new teaching position at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Meanwhile, the opera *Margaret Garner* by composer Richard Danielpour (fall 2002), with a libretto by Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Toni Morrison, based on her novel *Beloved*, will premiere at the Detroit Opera House on May 7.

Writer WARD JUST (spring 1999) was recently awarded the coveted Heartland Prize for his novel *An Unfinished Season*, released in late 2004. The book follows a Midwestern college-bound boy’s life through the politics of family, the media, and society in the 1950s.

Other kudos went to historian HOPE HARRISON (spring 2004), whose recent book *Driving the Soviets up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953–1961* earned the Marshal Shulman Book Prize by the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies.

Recent and forthcoming alumni publications include two works of valuable commentary on the state of the American legal system. *The Law in Shambles*, a pamphlet based on THOMAS GEOGHEGAN’S Holtzbrinck lecture delivered in Berlin in the spring of 2003, will be released in July. Geoghegan claims that conspicuous party-polarization within the American justice system since the 2000 election has weakened the US legal system, which risks losing the critical trust necessary to preserve the rule of law. PAUL CARRINGTON (fall 2003) traces the long history of the proselytizing of American legal values in his newly published book *Spreading America’s Word: Stories of its*

*Lawyer-Missionaries*. Praised by critics as both “sobering and constructive” and “dazzling,” Carrington keeps one eye fixed on history and the other on today’s political agenda.

*At the Point of a Gun: Democratic Dreams and Armed Invasion*, the newest book by DAVID RIEFF (spring 2003) has been called “brutally articulate” and “savvy” by the *New York Times*. The collection of essays reflects on how the human rights movement was changed by the experience of Bosnia and came to an accommodation with the idea of American military power. Rieff expressed some of the same pessimism about American intervention in Iraq in his article “An American Empire,” written for the *Berlin Journal* almost two years ago, as the statues of Saddam Hussein were toppling in Baghdad.

Journalist MICHAEL MEYER (spring 1999) has returned to New York and his post as Europe editor for *Newsweek* magazine, having spent time reporting from abroad, specifically in Kosovo, as part of the United Nations mission, and in Kiev, where he “spent an enjoyable Orange Revolution.”

Finally, two of the Academy’s growing ranks of Berkeley-based alumni will have publications out this spring. *Mother Stone: The Vitality of Modern British Sculpture*, due to appear this May by art historian ANNE WAGNER (fall 2003), explores the common theme of maternity in the work of artists Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and Jacob Epstein, and offers a rereading of British sculpture’s primary concerns and formal language. Essays by Wagner’s husband, T.J. CLARK (fall 2003) will be included in *Writing Back to Modern Art* alongside writings by Michael Fried (also a former Academy Fellows Selection Committee member) and the celebrated modernist art critic Clement Greenberg.

R.M.



On the WATERFRONT

## The Day the Clown Opined Jerry Lewis at the Hans Arnhold Center

COMEDIAN JERRY LEWIS is wearing a yellow dress shirt and a dark blue, double-breasted jacket, the red stripe of the French order of the Legion of Honor peaking out from his lapel. The seventy-eight-year-old does not look a day older than sixty-eight. Asked when he made his comic debut, he answers with a story. “It was in my parents’ living room, and I was five years old. When you’re five and wearing a tux, you can’t lose. I sang a song that I learned from my father. It was from the depression, and it was called ‘Brother, Can you Spare a Dime?’ I slipped and fell, and it was then I got my first laugh. Since then, I’ve never quit falling down.”

There are not many moments in life that beg to be replayed, but the encounter with Lewis in the American Academy’s villa on the Wannsee belongs in that category. He has the reputation of being obnoxious, but on this February morning he is perfectly easy-going. As Gary Smith holds Lewis’ Golden Camera Award, presented to the actor at the Berlinale the night before, Lewis quips, “You’ve got to rub it, Gary. Then it’ll get bigger!” Lewis nonchalantly waves aside questions like “What does it mean to be a ‘total filmmaker?’” from moderator Eckhard Schmidt, the maker of a Jerry Lewis documentary: “It means never sleeping because you’re thinking about the next scene.” And Hollywood? “What they’re doing is a disgrace. There’s no heart left because it’s too busy being digitized.”

Only when Schmidt asked about Dean Martin – Lewis’ partner in comedy, with whom he split in 1957 – did the mask of composure crack. “Martin’s sense of timing was deep in his bones.... He never knew just how good he really was. When we split up, I wanted nothing but success for him. He was the love of my life.” Jerry Lewis’ memoir, slated for a fall release, is titled *Dean and Me: A Love Story*.

When you come face to face with a legend, the right questions are seldom within reach. For a while nobody says anything, and then finally someone from the audience asks about the fate of Lewis’ 1972 film *The Day the Clown Cried*. The answer is short: “I don’t talk about that.” The movie, in which Lewis plays a German clown deported with Jewish children to Auschwitz, was never completed or distributed. A woman asks about the best comedians in Hollywood today. Predictably, they are Robin Williams (“In his lifetime he will easily surpass everyone that’s ever come before him”),

Jim Carrey, Steve Martin, and Billy Crystal. Another woman wants to know if Lewis will ever tackle a major political film the way his idol Charlie Chaplin did with *The Great Dictator*. Answer: “I don’t have to become a politician; I’m already a comedian.”

All of a sudden, the morning is gone, and the most important things remain unexplained: the

cinema and stage, life and death. The man in the blue double-breasted suit stands up. “Now you all can go home and tell all your friends you talked to Jerry Lewis. And they’ll say, ‘Yeah, so what?’”

By Andreas Kilb  
*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*  
February 11, 2005  
Translated by Rachel Marks



Promotion for the German release of *The Delicate Delinquent*, 1958.

# Print Media in the Electronic Age

## A Chat with Norman Pearlstine

The following exchange between Norman Pearlstine, editor-in-chief of Time Inc., and Carl Graf Hohenthal, deputy editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Die Welt*, took place at the Hans Arnhold Center on February 1. Since 1992, Mr. Pearlstine has been in charge of the editorial content of Time Inc.'s magazines – now numbering over 130 publications – and holds business responsibility for Time Inc.'s new media, international, and television activities.

**Hohenthal** Electronic media have developed a great deal in recent years. Has this weakened the position of the print press?

**Pearlstine** Print, specifically magazine publishing, has been under pressure from new means of distributed information for quite a long time. One need only think of radio and television. I am quite optimistic about the future of magazines in the internet age. In the US, newspapers, as publications of record, have to be very timely, and because they tend to report what happened yesterday, they are very open to competition – be it from 24-hour news channels or from the online world. Magazines, on the other hand, have been providers of synthesis since their inception. My sense is that the more information overload comes from multiple sources of data, the more powerful magazines will be.

**Hohenthal** How have the content and character of newspapers and magazines been changed by the impact of electronic media?

**Pearlstine** I think that in-depth analysis is more difficult to make appealing to a broad audience than it was at one time. I am also beginning to question the viability of objectivity, at least in the American press. For years, the most profitable publications were the most trusted ones, those that did their very best to avoid ideological bias and sought to represent an objective approach to news and information. The *New York Times*

and the *Washington Post* were perhaps the best examples of this in the newspaper world. *TIME*, under its founder Henry Luce, had a strong Republican bias, but Henry Grunwald (the magazine's third editor-in-chief) made a distinct move toward the center in the 1970s. Today, as the media fragments and more choices become available both in print and via the internet, I question if it will be possible for large publications to maintain that commitment to an objective standard.

I don't necessarily subscribe to the "red states" and "blue states" dichotomy, but there has clearly been an increasingly pronounced ideological split within the country. This split exerts increasing pressure to develop an ideological slant and play to one's base. Rupert Murdoch's media empire is a prime example, and it has tapped into a committed audience. Fox News slants its coverage in unprecedented ways. Murdoch's print publications do the same thing. The proliferation of independent bloggers also signals this shift. In the face of this proliferation of media, one begins to ask whether the fragmentation has not in part contributed to ideological splits. It is increasingly hard to be a mass-circulation publication with a kind of middle-of-the-road, objective approach.

**Hohenthal** Nowadays it seems people are already informed about the news before they pick up newspapers, and that they turn instead to print media for good features, analysis, and opinion.

**Pearlstine** Certainly the internet is making small bits of information instantaneously available. For example, on election day in Iraq, a Sunday, I knew by 1pm that 36 people there were dead. A newspaper that made this the lead to its Monday story had to know that many of its readers already had that information. This sort of thing puts tremendous pressure



Photograph by Mike Minahan

on journalists to provide instant analysis, but instant analysis is often wrong. The story may seem straightforward, but it often takes days to draw conclusions.

**From the Audience** How do you explain the lack of media coverage of international news in the US? Is it due to Americans' general disinterest in the rest of the world?

**Pearlstine** In any given week, the international editions of *TIME Magazine* publish as many pages together as we publish domestically. If we can get four to six of those pages into the domestic edition, we consider it a triumph. (This is setting aside coverage of September 11, the Middle East, and terrorism, all of which are considered as much domestic stories as international ones.) I think there are a number of issues at work. First the country's isolationist streak dates back to Woodrow Wilson's failed efforts to get the US into the League of Nations. Second, the US market is so large and complicated that people tend to focus inwardly. Third, we in journalism have done a poor job explaining to the American public why it needs to know about events in Indonesia, even when there is not a tsunami.

If you polled *TIME*'s US subscribers – some four million people – and asked what they would prefer to read in a hypothetical extra five pages, they would

mostly ask for more news about family, science, health, technology – "things that relate directly to me." Somewhere further down the list of priorities would be international news. My hope is that this is an area in which online media can really make a difference. I know that 10 percent of that four million would love more international news, and I think that online availability is one way to provide it.

**Hohenthal** How do you see the future of your distribution?

**Pearlstine** I look forward to the day we can distribute electronic products that are beautiful, compelling, and interesting. From an environmental point of view it would be a boon. But we still have far to go. I do think that every one of our magazines has to develop a strong presence on the internet, and this cannot simply be putting the full text of our publications online. That is not an internet strategy. A great deal of what is happening online is interactive; it involves participation on the part of the readers as well as of the writers. We have to make these sites so inviting that people will want to visit them. And readers will come because they trust a magazine brand like *TIME*'s and see a connection between what is online and what is in the magazine.

If you consider some of the computer speeds now available, you can foresee not only the func-

tional equivalent of a printed page becoming available very quickly but also incorporating video, sound, and other attachments as footnotes, if you will, to that article. And that is with *today's* technology. I expect we will be able to adapt to complete electronic distribution of information and to reading in completely new ways. The challenge for us as journalists is to be able to deliver compelling-enough content that our brands still have value in that world, which requires a better level of journalism and the resources to do things in depth. It probably requires levels of cooperation among news organizations around the world.

**Hohenthal** Given the enormous development of information networks and media companies, many people complain about the lack of control of the media. Are these complaints justified?

**Pearlstone** There is no doubt that there has been a concentration of media and of businesses, from which larger and larger enter-

prises have resulted. Because Time Warner is so large, many of Time Inc.'s magazines focus heavily on other parts of it. For example, *Entertainment Weekly* reviews the movies of Warner Brothers and New Line Cinema, which are owned by Time Warner; *Fortune* has, over the last few years, had to cover the merger of AOL and Time Warner. We take the position that our company is so large and so ubiquitous that we have no choice but to cover it aggressively. A.J. Liebling, the famous *New Yorker* writer, once said that the only person who has a free press is the man who owns one. And though that may sometimes be true, I believe what really matters is the top management's commitment to editorial independence. I know from experience that some very small, single publications are completely restricted to what the advertiser is willing to pay for, whereas I now have, at the biggest media company in the world, more editorial independence than ever. ☞

## Sneak Preview

### The Fall 2005 Fellows

Political and legal theory, along with twentieth-century history and culture, will be strongly represented by next semester's class of Academy Fellows. Journalist JAMES MANN (author-in-residence at Johns Hopkins's School of International Studies) will be the Siemens Fellow. DAVID CALLEO (also at Johns Hopkins University's SAIS) takes up a George Herbert Walker Bush Berlin Prize, as will Hegel scholar LYDIA MOLAND (Boston University). Political scientist BARBARA KOREMENOS (University of California, Los Angeles) will hold a Bosch Fellowship, and legal scholar RALF MICHAELS (Duke University Law School) will be the Lloyd Cutler Fellow. The semester's two JPMorgan fellows in history are German specialist ANSON RABINBACH (Princeton University) and China scholar FREDERIC WAKEMAN (University

of California, Berkeley). Taking up the Holtzbrinck Berlin Prize is writer and memoirist NORMAN MANEA (Bard College). The Anna-Maria Kellen Berlin Prize goes to musicologist and Brecht scholar JOY CALICO (Vanderbilt University).

Composer SEBASTIAN CURRIER (Columbia University) will inaugurate the Deutsche Bank Berlin Prize. And Los-Angeles-based artist KERRY TRIBE will be the Guna S. Mundheim Fellow.

General fellowships were awarded this January by an independent selection committee chaired by Anthony Appiah. Members were Paul Baltes, Scott Brewer, Steven Burbank, Christopher Caldwell, Barbara Epstein, James Hoge, Andreas Huyssen, Jürgen Kocka, Charles Maier, John Mearsheimer, Amity Shlaes, and Leon Wieseltier. Serving on the 2005 arts jury, chaired by Lynne Cooke, were Matthew Drutt, Laura Hoptman, and John Moore. Alex Ross and Joel Lester served on the music jury, which convened in 2004. ☞

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# Dream Maker

## Joel Grey in the City He Embodied in *Cabaret*

THE FACT THAT American actor Joel Grey made his very first trip to Berlin in 2000 may astonish many of his fans. After all, this was the setting that inspired his 1966 Tony-Award-winning performance in the musical *Cabaret*, based on Christopher Isherwood's book *Goodbye to Berlin* about the city's edgy demimonde on the eve of the Nazi takeover. The role of Emcee is almost synonymous with his name. After playing alongside the legendary Lotte Lenya on Broadway, he went on to triumph with Liza Minelli in Bob Fosse's 1972 film adaptation, winning an Academy Award for his performance.

Four years later, on another visit to the *Hauptstadt*, Grey looked to the past as well as to the future in a series of relaxed interviews in venues that included Berlin's Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" and the famous Bar Jeder Vernunft, where a new production of the musical was underway. The American Academy hosted an exhibition of his photos at the Café Einstein on Unter den Linden.

Coming to Berlin was the culmination of a dream, he said, one closely intertwined with his dreams as an actor. "When filming *Cabaret* in Munich, I could only *imagine* Berlin, as actors are wont to imagine characters and places. But now, having seen this city, I know that it has been a part of me for a very long time."

The visit helped actualize an important component for Grey. "At its zenith, being an actor is

about telling the truth – telling the truth about the character that you are playing, combining this with your own truth, putting a part of yourself into the psychology of that character. When these combine in just the right way, magic is created. Beyond the truth, acting is about telling a story."

Grey sought his own "truth and story" as he worked to capture Berlin in his role as Master of Ceremonies. "Back then, I researched and read everything that I could about the Germany of the 1920s and early 1930s. I looked at the art of the period, spoke to many great artists, and constructed an interior perception of this time, drawing from my research and imagination. Something came to life that I had not seen when I first read the script." His character had not appeared so sinister at first. "It was my desperation to make him a real individual rather than just a song-and-dance man that pushed me to look very deeply into the shadows."

Just as no performance is ever the same, so the Berlin that Grey encountered last October is a living, breathing place. Although at first glance contemporary Berlin presents a different veneer, he says, "there are similarities beneath its surface to the atmosphere that we actors imagined as we recreated the city's cabaret atmosphere. There is decadence in Berlin that still resonates. No longer limited to the special realm of the cabaret, it is ram-



Photograph by Lorie Karnath

pant. One need not look too far. Political and economical unease tends to spawn this type of decadence. Although *Cabaret* told a story about the 1930s in Germany, it represents an absolute story, one that could transpire during any time period. It prophesies behavior in the face of impending disaster."

Grey ascribes the disquiet he sensed in contemporary Berlin to a global tension in the wake of September 11. "The current state of our world is very precarious, but I do not and cannot believe that the world will teeter toward the abyss. I am always positive. Sometimes I do not know how, but it is partially because we have no choice but to be positive. The other option is too dark a vision, and there

has been so much progress in the world in the years since *Cabaret* took place, so much intelligence, that this will ultimately balance out the world's darker side."

The celebrated actor will most certainly be back. "I need to return to look deeply into the box whose lid I have only lifted. It holds riches and secrets that I want to discover."

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By Lorie Karnath

# Reconstruction Doubts

The Paradox of Building in Schinkel's Name

*by Barry Bergdoll*



SIXTY YEARS after the fiery end of World War II, reunited Germany is in the grip of a wave of historical replications. Dresden is celebrating throughout the year the completion of the rebuilding from rubble of its baroque Frauenkirche, missing from the skyline for half a century. In Berlin the government has announced, after years of debates, official approval for the replacement of one palace by another. On the Schlossplatz, still so-called despite the fifty-five-year absence of the palace and nearly ninety-year absence of a monarch, it promises to tear down the Palast der Republik, erected by the GDR in the 1970s on the site of the former late seventeenth-century royal palace, dynamited in 1950, and now approved for as historically accurate a recreation as possible. For the moment, all is

## One-story letters spelling the word “ZWEIFEL” in white neon literally cast “DOUBT” day and night over the very heart of Berlin’s monumental rebuilding.

stalled as private funds are sought on the Dresden model for the expense of re-carving hundreds and hundreds of meters of sculpted facades – and as the government hopes to sit out the next election free of the brouhaha that is sure to accompany the final victory of the “Friends of the Berliner Schloss” over the “Association for the Retention of the Palast der Republik.” If all goes according to plan, however, by the end of the decade, the missing gaps of Berlin’s royal processional route from the Brandenburg Gate to the Spree Island will have been filled.

Missing landmarks have reappeared at either end of Unter den Linden, from the commercial ventures of the Adlon Hotel on Pariser Platz (built 1905–07, rebuilt 1997) to Bertelsmann’s Berlin offices behind the newly recreated facades of the Alte Kommandantur Haus (built 1653, thoroughly remodeled 1873–74, and rebuilt 2001–02). The latter proudly flaunts the address Unter den Linden 1 on its bogus neo-Renaissance front while its sleek modern glass and steel interior literally pops out behind. Bertelsmann, masquerading as a nineteenth-century aristocratic mansion, will soon be joined by the Schloss and,

just a bit to the south, a few hundred feet along the Spree canal, by Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s Bauakademie, the architecture school he designed in the 1830s. Of all the projects realized and proposed, this last is the most debated among Berlin’s architects, who hold out faith that somehow its reconstruction can escape the prevailing sense of ersatz luxury and Disneyfication of Berlin’s historical center that the Adlon and Bertelsmann ventures exude.

Some hold that such monumental and well-intentioned undertakings can heal the wounds left by Germany’s Nazi and cold-war histories. But anyone with even the slightest knowledge of the politics of symbols in modern German – and of course not just German – architectural history can scarcely be convinced that reconstruction can avoid playing a role in reintroducing many of the very passions meant to be calmed. As Dresden prepares for the festive rededication in October of its great domed church, leveled by Allied bombing in February 1945, dark clouds are already forming around the new “eighteenth-century” edifice. First, in late January, the National Democratic Party raised the polemical temperature by walking out of the provincial legislature during a moment of silence for victims of National Socialism. Then on Sunday, February 13, 2005, the dome, captured Europe-wide by TV cameras, served as unwilling backdrop to neo-Nazi marches during the sixtieth anniversary commemorations of the bombing of Dresden.

In Berlin the controversies have, so far, been more subdued as the city is locked in a holding pattern of budgetary austerity. This January, while projects continued to linger for lack of funds, and old debates had lost some of their urgency, a stealth catalyst appeared on the skyline in the form of a provocative installation by Norwegian artist Lars Ø Ramberg. His one-story letters spelling the word “ZWEIFEL” in white neon literally cast “DOUBT” day and night over the very heart of Berlin’s monumental rebuilding. The letters crown the Palast der Republik, which is now briefly re-baptized, for perhaps its last lease on life, the “Palast des Zweifels” until mid May when the letters should come down along with the building, a complicated affair since the foundations of the building are also retaining walls of the river Spree. Indeed, the Schlossplatz has become something of a Ground Zero for Berlin, not only for such technical and logistical challenges, but for the ideological battles – architectural and political – it has unleashed.

By day ZWEIFEL closes the vista down Unter den Linden. At night the shining trade name – like the letters above a permanently closed department store for which someone still pays the electricity bill – is visible from the most unexpected places around the city, from the wide and always half-empty boulevards of East Berlin to the elevated rail lines that weave their way over and around the Spree in Mitte. ZWEIFEL looms not only over the recently excavated cellars of the Schloss, which tourists and Berliners are invited to view over gangways strangely reminiscent of ancient archaeological sites, but also over the shadow presence of the Bauakademie. This structure made its own more dramatic entry late last summer onto the Schlossplatz’s over-scaled urban

## Schinkel’s masterful placement of a single building was like an urban chess move, reorganizing the relationships of everything else in play.

stage in the form of a full-scale mock-up: enormous vinyl sheets printed with the image of the lost building held in place on temporary steel-pipe scaffolding.

One decade ago, a temporary simulation of the north-facing Schloss facade as a full-scale theater prop was an enormously effective tool for generating support for its replication. So too is the Bauakademie simulacrum. Something of the taut dialogue between the main monuments of Berlin’s political and cultural life, of the dense layering of open spaces and monuments, of gardens and promenades, is immediately suggested by the simple re-addition of Schinkel’s cube. Buildings that seemed too distant to communicate across the vast sweep of East Berlin’s abandoned parade grounds are talking to each other again. Schinkel’s masterful placement of a single building had been like an urban chess move, reorganizing the relationships of everything else in play. (This is clear even today, without the mass of the Schloss to the east, to which the much smaller Bauakademie was a direct response.) The phantom Bauakademie enters into dialogue with the corner of the Altes Museum to the





north and the jagged edges of the other museums of the Museumsinsel behind it. Schinkel understood this telescoping of distinctive corners as the potential of the irregular line of the Spree as it passes along the edge of the city's gridded streets to create a landscape of overlapping fragments of historical time and imagery. The addition of the cube fundamentally changed not only the composition but also the available meanings of these tableaux of palace, museum, arsenal, and architecture school. Most of these were new institutions to which Schinkel was able for the first time to give powerful expression and voice.

Like the earlier Schloss simulacrum, however, the 1:1 Bauakademie mock-up is wrought with paradoxes. The chessboard

## Not since the complex battles between tradition and modernity in 1920s Weimar or in postwar divided Germany have architectural materials been so ideologically coded.

has of course changed dramatically. Surely a modern-day Schinkel – since his name is now used to validate decisions in this part of Berlin – would want to interact with the full range of buildings and meanings layered on the site in the 170 years since he last worked here, but moreover his characteristic desire to explore the latest in technique might well take him to a different material and structural palette. For if the argument of the power of these forms can be made in a large-scale urban maquette, the insistent message of both the Schloss and Bauakademie rebuilding campaigns – that only a precise repetition of the exact details and materials of the irreparably lost originals can succeed in restoring what has been lost – rings hollow. The essence lies in the urban presence and dimensions rather than in the details of the buildings, all the more in that it is impossible in each case to recreate either the use or original function so clearly expressed in those facades, whether in the royal heraldry of the palace's baroque sculptures, or in the nearly transparent way in which the integral

Photographs by example (www.example.org)

vaulted construction of the Bauakademie was inscribed on its brick and terra-cotta facades. Not since the complex battles between tradition and modernity in 1920s Weimar or in postwar divided Germany have architectural materials been so ideologically coded.

The association that supports rebuilding the Schloss has taken upon itself the task of raising the additional eighty million euros required to assure that its concrete framework is clad in hand-crafted baroque replicas, arguing that it is precisely this that will assure that the building's vast facades do not become "monotonous," as they would if they were realized by any means of mechanical reproduction. There is here an astonishingly naïve belief in the almost mystical value of hand labor as a protest

**"History," Schinkel once wrote, "has never copied earlier history, and if it ever had, history would come to a halt with that act."**

against the commercial values that are otherwise building modern cities.

The Bauakademie, on the other hand, has always been hailed by architects for embracing the realities of the Industrial Revolution. It took inspiration from the austere English factory buildings that Schinkel visited during an 1826 tour of modern England. In 1836, its unadorned use of brick and terra-cotta, in a city where these "humble" materials had been hidden for centuries under a fine coat of stucco, brought vibrant new color and texture to the Spree. Schinkel's followers applauded a new ethic of material honesty. (For its part, the public dubbed it the "*häßliche rote Kasten*" – the ugly red box).

Ironically, it is precisely the Bauakademie's original emphasis on the frank expression of these materials – and their reproducibility – that reassures advocates of the rebuilding that they will be safeguarded against the obvious kitsch of the Adlon Hotel or Bertelsmann palace. The Bauakademie is indeed eminently reproducible. The model corner erected by apprentice brick masons three years ago proves that the startling effect of the saturated reds and vermilions of Schinkel's bricks can be closely approximated. So too the terra-cotta panels – some of which

were in continual production and available for years in the museum gift shops of East Berlin – can be convincingly reproduced. Historians have long elucidated the role that the Bauakademie played in the Prussian architect's campaign to temper the technological advances of building in brick and iron with his long interest in art as access to the ideal through proportions and clear material expression. Now many of them have joined with architects who uphold the memory of Schinkel's late brick architecture as a kind of ethical code about honest building in modern construction. They argue that a rebuilding can be inscribed deliberately in the line of Schinkel's progressive architectural experimentation. Schinkel's intent was that the exterior forms of the building grow from and express its interior structure and essence, but the interior of the building is too poorly documented to be accurately reproduced.

More seriously, the proponents for a recreation seem to have deliberately overlooked one of Schinkel's own most potent and timely reflections on the relation of architecture to the experience of history: "History," he wrote, "has never copied earlier history, and if it ever had ... in a certain sense history would come to a halt with that act. The only act that qualifies as historical is that which in some way introduces something additional, a new element ... from which a new story can be generated and the thread taken up anew.... To work historically is always to have the new element at hand, to know that history is movement, and to know to continue history." This was penned even as the Bauakademie was being designed, at a time when Schinkel broke with his earlier explorations of Greek and gothic prototypes in favor of something decidedly new. The building represented a "new element" that could interact with the Ionic columns of his Altes Museum to the north and with the buttresses and turrets of his Friedrich-Werdersche Church (now the Schinkel Museum) to the west.

I doubt Schinkel would pay his membership fee to join the associations working so arduously to rebuild his lost monument. In everything from its material presence to the complex historical-allegorical program of its terra-cotta decorations to the notion that the present grew out of the movement rather than the stasis of history, the Bauakademie was a monument dedicated to embracing the present rather than to cultivating nostalgia for the past.

That said, one can only applaud the evolution over the last decade of the Bauakademie advocates' project. Born of a simple nostalgia for giving Berlin back a lost icon, the project has grown to encompass a purpose: the creation of a central repository for Berlin's dispersed architectural collections and a public forum for the discussion of architecture and urban form. Nothing is more urgently needed in Berlin. Historical research in this city is hindered by a Byzantine labyrinth of sometimes competing and poorly inter-coordinated libraries, archives, and museums. There is no place where the public can come together with the profession to discuss the city's future in ways that have been pioneered with significant success in places like Madrid and Paris in recent decades.

**To work historically is always to have the new element at hand, to know that history is movement.**

**– Karl Friedrich Schinkel**

Unlike the Schloss, whose advocates propose housing Berlin's non-Western art collections and the Humboldt University's science and technology collections behind pseudo-baroque facades, the planned use for the Bauakademie presents no such absurd disjuncture between program and form; it was and will be a building for and about architecture.

But what kind of a message will it send about the future of architecture in Berlin when the one building that took architecture overtly as its subject matter is nothing but an approximate replica? The Bauakademie should be an occasion to imagine something that escapes both the nostalgia for an irretrievable past and the globalizing remaking of the city by corporate capital. With its photo-vinyl walls supported by huge advertisements by and for Mercedes-Benz, this foretaste of the Bauakademie does not hold much promise for the third way so many of its advocates seem to be seeking as they stage a new kind of stand-off between modern architecture and tradition, paradoxically enough in the name of Karl Friedrich Schinkel. ☞

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Romweg-Karte by Erhard Etzlaub, Nuremberg, 1500, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.

# The Mapmaker's Colors

## Discovering Germany along the Road to Rome

by Helmut Walser Smith

Sometime around the year 1500, Germans discovered Germany. They placed it on a map, imagined it in two-dimensional space, conceived of its contours, and rendered an image of it in relation to other countries and to the rest of the world, including that part of the world that they, along with other Europeans, called new. In a sense, Germans saw Germany for the first time when they saw the world. If the hinge is geography, “the eye and light of history,” maps are the doors and descriptions of land and people, the entryway through which Germans, very early on, first imagined their country as a nation.

The first accurate map of Germany – and notably, the first map to show the city of Berlin – was created by a man named Erhard Etzlaub in Nuremberg in the year 1500. For our sensibilities, the most remarkable characteristic of the *Romweg-Karte* (Rome Way Map) is the southern orientation, which draws our attention to Rome – the city to which all roads lead. Indeed, the map was intended to aid the many German pilgrims who streamed southward to the capitol of Christendom in the “Holy Year” of 1500, when some thought the world would end.

If Rome stands at the map's apex, in both religious and geographic terms, the coincidence reminds us that the national imagination arises from, not necessarily *against*, the religious imagination; that the charting of routes preceded the consciousness of roots; and that the nation, far from being imagined as above all things, is here imagined as the starting point for a pilgrimage to Rome.

The pilgrimage was an arduous trek. Travel by land, still restricted to foot or horse, was much what it had been in the days of Julius Caesar, with a pedestrian taking nearly a week to get from Nuremberg to Frankfurt, ambling along for twenty-five miles on a good day, less when the weather was bad.

For those pilgrims willing to undertake the far longer journey south to Rome, Etzlaub equipped them with the tools they would need. Indeed, all evidence suggests that the map was meant for practical use. It appears modest at first; its explanations are in German rather than Latin, and it bears none of the fantastic

images and impressive cartouches that would soon adorn more princely maps. Simple, practical, meant for townsmen and pilgrims, the *Romweg* was printed as a broadsheet from a single woodblock (28.5 cm by 40.5 cm), making its distribution inexpensive and easy. In an epoch of the sun dial (portable clocks being exceedingly rare and expensive), the southern orientation seemed as logical as a northern one.

The compass card at the bottom of the map works with a sun dial; to the left is an explanation for calculating distance, to the right instructions for using a sun compass with the map in order to figure out directions between

The nation, far from being imagined as above all things, is here imagined as the starting point for a pilgrimage to Rome, the city to which all roads lead.

cities. One calculates the distance by counting the intervals between the dots that connect the major cities along the pilgrimage routes. Direction is ascertained by placing the compass at the edge of the map or at the compass card, and the map is then turned around until the cardinal points (sunrise, midday, sunset, midnight) of the compass and the map correspond. The towns are then aligned, and the direction of the needle sets the direction in which the traveler should walk or ride. A gradation on the map would have helped the traveler understand how much daylight he should expect on the longest day of the year – in Rome, at 52 degrees latitude, fifteen hours; in Jutland, eighteen. To the modern observer, gradations on a map seem self-evident, but it was only with the rediscovery of Ptolemy's geography in the fifteenth century that they again became a common feature of European land maps. It is for this reason that Etzlaub believed he must first instruct his map readers how to proceed.

A second, striking feature of the map is that it is centered on Nuremberg. More precisely, it is centered on a “geodesic fixed point” roughly forty kilometers to the west of Nuremberg. Close to the center, the distances between towns proved remarkably accurate, diverging, according to one modern geographer's estimation, no more than 0.17 mm from a map of today.

But as one scans to the edges of the Etzlaub map, the distances between towns seem more elongated, and indeed Etzlaub worked here, perhaps for the first time in cartographical history, with a conformal projection. The projection, which allows curved space to be more accurately rendered on a flat surface, foreshadowed Gerhard Mercator's more famous calculations for his world map of 1569, in which extreme latitudes are elongated (rendering Greenland larger than China, and Europe less small when compared to Africa).

The map's accuracy is arresting, especially when seen in the context of medieval traditions of cartography. For in medieval Europe, maps scarcely attempted accuracy as we know it. Some represented sacred space, with Jerusalem or the Garden of Eden serving as the point of orientation. Others, the so-called “T-O maps,” rendered the names *Europe*, *Asia*, and *Africa* in fine calligraphy, separated the continents by a line, and artistically encased them in an undefined *mare oceanum*. Still other maps charted geography as a succession of places – routes for devout pilgrims, warring knights, or conquering kings. What lay to the west and the east of these routes, to the north and the south, sagas only hinted at, and mapmakers did not say.

There were some notable exceptions to the medieval world's overall geographical ignorance. These include Mathew Paris's map of England from 1250, a singular work of inexplicable genius, in which the outline of England is roughly but recognizably drawn. There are the remarkable early fourteenth-century Portolan charts of the Venetian mapmaker Pietro Vesconti, which show the coastlines of Italy and Western Europe, especially Spain and France, with stunning precision. And there are the impressive, if to our eyes strange, ☞

The printing press gave wing not just to texts but to images as well. Books, heretofore chained to the scriptoria of monasteries and locked in the libraries, became “flying carpets of knowledge.”

*Mappa Mundi* of Hereford (1280s) and Ebstorf (1239). The latter, a giant circular map more than 3.5 meters in diameter, situates the entire earth between the hands and feet of the crucified Christ, suggesting that the world and its peoples are his domain, and all equally redeemable. The Holy City of Jerusalem is, of course, at its center. Below it are Italy and Greece, and at the bottom left is Germany. Here is one of the few two-dimensional images of Germany prior to the fifteenth century; it shows in considerable, if mainly schematic detail, the area of Lower Saxony that surrounded the Ebstorf monastery. But the rest was hardly an accurate representation of space, and from its pleasing but unmeasured lines, Germans could not have imagined what their country actually looked like.

Three events began to lift the veil of ignorance. The first was the sensational unearthing in Constantinople of a copy of Claudius Ptolemy’s ancient *Geography*, lost for 1,400 years to Christendom but known to the Muslim world. By 1406 its admittedly inaccurate Latin translation was available, and the manuscript was soon in great demand, attracting scholars as miraculous relics drew the devout. There are of course mistakes in Ptolemy’s maps, especially around the edges of the known world. Scotland bends around over Germany, the Mediterranean is far too long, and the Indian Ocean is enclosed by a land mass. Perhaps most fatefully – and fortunately, for it fed the illusions of a young Genovese mapmaker and sailor – Ptolemy believed the world smaller than it is, and consequently the distance from Europe’s Atlantic shores across the wide waters to the empire of the Great Khan seemed not as menacing as many others correctly assumed. These are not inconsequential matters, yet it is important to keep the big picture in mind, for it is the big picture, the known earth, that Ptolemy brought together. Following Ptolemy, land maps and world maps were henceforth conceived as grids, marked by longitude and latitude, and subdivided into

degrees and minutes, with space charted with a view to achieving mathematical accuracy.

A second set of events would of course prove to be of still greater consequence for the European conception of geography: Vasco de Gama’s navigation of the Cape of Good Hope in 1497 and into the Indian Ocean, and Columbus’s arrival on what he took to be West Indian shores. The discoveries led to an explosion of map-making activity. Along with Lisbon, Venice, and Genoa, Nuremberg was at the center of this explosion. It was here, in the “secret capitol” of the Empire, the “eyes and ears of Germany,” that in 1492 Martin Behaim crafted the oldest existing globe. Behaim’s globe combined Ptolemaic geography with newer information about Asia brought back by Marco Polo (and set to print in German as *The Travels* in Nuremberg in 1477) as well as with the knowledge recently acquired by Portuguese explorers of the shape of the African coast.

The third salient event turned books, heretofore chained to the scriptoria of monasteries and locked in the libraries of Europe’s few universities, into “flying carpets of knowledge,” as Valentin Groebner has described them. The printing press gave wing not just to texts but to images as well. As the sumptuous pictures that adorned some of the bibles printed in the first generation after Gutenberg attest, narrative and image, as in the great age of manuscript illumination, remained intertwined.

Etzlaub’s *Romweg* was brought forth in the almost Faustian atmosphere of sixteenth-century Nuremberg, a city of astrologer-geographers confidently sounding the possibilities of discovery, plumbing heaven and earth, space and time. Etzlaub seems himself to have been something of a magus, a medicine man as well as a maker of clocks and maps. Unfortunately, we know little about his biography save that he was born in Erfurt in 1460 and was listed for the first time in the Nuremberg register of citizens in 1484. From his contemporary Johannes Cochlaeus, we also know the following: “that [Etzlaub’s] clocks are in demand in Rome,” that “he has an exceptional knowledge of geography and astronomy,” and “that he has finished a very beautiful map of Germany, and in the German language, from which one can discern the distances of the cities and the courses of the rivers more exactly even than from the maps of Ptolemy.” Even if he never signed them, Etzlaub’s creations, whether his hand-held sun dials, compasses, clocks, calendars, almanacs, or maps, remain individual achievements of a high order, a testimony to the remarkable flights of imagination possible in the twilight of the medieval world.

In Etzlaub’s map, centered on Nuremberg even as it points to Rome, German civilization seems to pulse in concentric circles from the center. This image is further reinforced by geographical exaggerations taken from Ptolemy, the most obvious being the overly drawn western bend of Scotland and the sharper angle of the Italian peninsula. As one gets further and further from centers of civilization, other inaccuracies, not all of which can be ascribed to Ptolemy, also become evident. In the backwater of Berlin (two degrees midnight from Prague), the Spree flows not into the Havel and on into the Elbe but into the Pomeranian sea. Moreover, political borders are not rendered, and the difference between countries like France and Germany is no more apparent than between traditional landscapes like Friesland and Flanders. At least in the first uncolored maps, Germany is conceived as a centered space without political borders; its civilization emerges from towns and cities, of which more than seven hundred are depicted, and the nation is not given visual priority over traditional landscapes; indeed, it is rendered in the same way. Etched in block letters across a sliver of space at the top are the words: “This is the Rome-route mile by mile indicated by points from one city to the other through the lands of Germany.” Reflecting common medieval usage, before people imagined Germany as a singular nation, Etzlaub used the plural form – “*durch deutsche lannt*” – through German lands.

Even as Etzlaub’s map points to Rome, German civilization seems to pulse in concentric circles from Nuremberg.

Yet with further printings, and the map’s coloration, the national came more to the fore. This is both true of the *Romweg* and the slightly modified road map of 1501, which featured routes going east and west as well as the north-south pilgrimage routes highlighted in the *Romweg*. “Because man has an inclination to experience far-away countries and strange things,” wrote Etzlaub in a new explanation, “I have printed this map on which one can find the waters and the cities emphasized.” “You should see,” Etzlaub continues, using the familiar, “the white in the middle is German land. Ringing it are seven kingdoms and language areas; each of them has its special color.” Arguably,

Etzlaub's maps comprise the first depiction of Germany among the nations and suggest that a nation cannot be visualized in isolation – that from the start, the consciousness of nation implied a consciousness of other nations. Remarkably, he places great kingdoms and major language groups in the same visual category, with language groups, especially in the road map, given priority. Nation and language thus co-extend, and the complicated contours of dynastic empires grow fainter in the cartographic imagination.

The *Romweg* of 1500 and Etzlaub's road map of the following year spurred more precise reflection about Germany – what it was, where its centers and borders were, and how it might be imagined. The learned Johannes Cochlaeus – a teacher of grammar and the new art of geography in Nuremberg and later a defender of the Catholic faith against Luther – took Etzlaub's maps as the starting point for what would become a remarkable, if largely forgotten, achievement: the first scholarly description of Germany as a geographical space. In Cochlaeus, pride pulses for the achievements of the present, which, as in Etzlaub's map, radiate from Germany's urban centers. The achievements are largely cultural (he praises Albrecht Dürer and Etzlaub

## Nuremberg in the year 1500 was a city of astrologer-geographers confidently sounding the possibilities of discovery, plumbing heaven and earth, space and time.

and signal Germany's place among the great nations that border it.

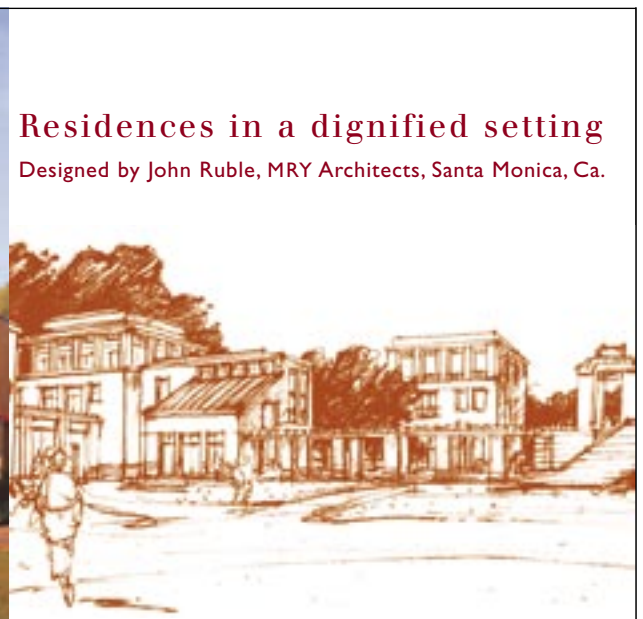
Martin Waldseemüller, the mapmaker famous for first depicting the new world as a separate continent (henceforth to be named after the vainglorious, second-rate explorer Amerigo Vespucci), also followed Etzlaub. In his *Carta Itineraria Europae* of 1511, Waldseemüller used Etzlaub's southern orientation and his point system for distances between cities; the *Carta Itineraria* counts as the first highly accurate printed map of Europe, even if some areas, notably Eastern Europe and Spain, are not portrayed with the same precision as Germany and France. And finally, Sebastian Münster, the author of the *Cosmographia* (1550), a vast compendium of sixteenth-century knowledge, "a panorama on the night sky of

the European mind," as Anthony Grafton has called it, also used Etzlaub's projection and southern orientation. He thus guaranteed the Nuremberg clockmaker a permanent place in the sixteenth-century imagination.

The Etzlaub maps, though largely forgotten in the intervening centuries, remind us of a salient if often overlooked fact about the origins of modern Germany: that those who mapped the country and described it for the first time did so in the spirit of discovery and that the history of the German nation, as a conception in the minds of men, has been more closely twined with the discovery of the world than historians have hitherto allowed. When we accept this conclusion, a different tradition of thinking about Germany emerges, one based on actually seeing it and always in the context of other countries. "More delicate than the historians' are the map-makers' colors," wrote the American poet Elizabeth Bishop. Here is reason enough to look again at the first map of Germany. ↩

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Helmut Walser Smith is the Martha Rivers Ingram Professor of History and co-chair of the department of German studies at Vanderbilt University. He is currently a JPMorgan Fellow at the Academy.



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# Clouds

I love the insulation of strange cities:  
Living in your head, the routines of home  
Becoming more and more remote,  
Alone and floating through the streets  
As through the sky, anonymous and languageless  
Here at the epicenter of three wars. Yesterday  
I took the S-Bahn into town again  
To see the Kiefer in the Neue Nationalgalerie,  
A burned out field with smoke still rising from the furrows  
In a landscape scarred with traces of humanity  
At its most brutal, and yet for all that, traces of humanity.  
What makes this world so frightening? In the end  
What terrifies me isn't its brutality, its violent hostility,  
But its indifference, like a towering sky of clouds  
Filled with the wonder of the absolutely meaningless.  
I went back to the Alte Nationalgalerie  
For one last look at its enchanting show of clouds –

Constable's and Turner's, Ruskin's clouds and Goethe's  
Clouds so faint they're barely clouds at all, just lines.  
There was a small glass case which held a panel  
Painted by the author of a book I'd read when I was twenty-five –  
Adalbert Stifter, *Limestone* – but hadn't thought about in years.  
Yet there were Stifter's clouds, a pale yellow sky  
Behind some shapes already indistinct (and this was yesterday),  
As even the most vivid words and hours turn faint,  
Turn into memories, and disappear. Is that so frightening?  
Evanescence is a way of seeming free, free to disappear  
Into the background of the city, of the sky,  
Into a vast surround indifferent to these secret lives  
That come and go without a second thought  
Beyond whatever lingers in some incidental lines,  
Hanging for a while in the air like clouds  
Almost too faint to see, like Goethe's clouds.

– John Koethe

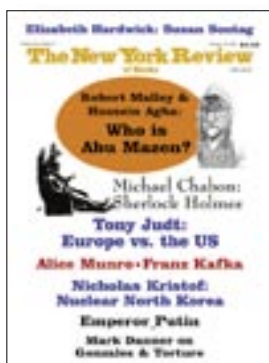
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John Koethe is Ellen Maria Gorrissen Fellow at the Academy this spring.  
His newest collection, *Sally's Hair*, is forthcoming.



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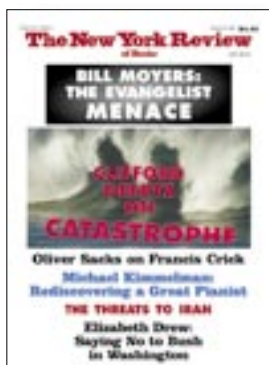
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# Vestiges/Die Spuren

by *Ellen Hinsey*

FOR MOST OF MY LIFE, after poetry, photography has been a critical art. It is a form of visual research that allows me to bring an ever-widening arc of experience into focus. Over the past 15 years, I have been photographing the changing urban landscapes of Eastern Europe, in particular, former East Germany. My involvement in this project began on November 9, 1989 when, after hearing about the day's events on the evening news, I took the last night train from Paris to Berlin. My stay in the

spring of 2001 at the American Academy gave me the opportunity to work on a new collection of poems, centered around the topic of the *vita activa* – human life in action and time – and to continue this photographic research.

In those early spring months, once the temperature had risen above freezing and when poems were still in early drafts, I would travel on the trains, first to document the enigmatic courtyards in former East Berlin, whose light seemed to contain

precious utterances, and then further out to other cities and towns. It seemed that everywhere one turned in Berlin these hidden places were disappearing. Over a period of weeks in April I documented one particular courtyard, returning to it in an attempt to capture the light that seemed to define it. I returned one afternoon only to find that the entire courtyard – indeed a whole inner world of buildings – had been demolished, replaced with a single length of chain from which hung a construc-



tion permit. This happened a number of times. As the weather improved, I traveled to Rostock, Dresden, Leipzig, Halle, and many of the small towns on the train line between Dresden and Weimar.

Much has been said about the objectifying quality of photography, but my experience during these voyages was quite the opposite: in the same way that poetic language seeks to recreate experience through a system of parallel linguistic resonances, these photographic journeys

took place under the sign of empathetic recording. Thus, ancient lettering on a wall near Halle elicited an eerie, indescribable nostalgia; a single window frame was imbued with the pathos of transience, an urban *memento mori*. One sunny morning, I photographed the last blackened wall in Dresden that remains in the town center from the February 1945 bombing. The next day in the rain, I photographed workers relaying the paving stones in front of the cathedral. Destruction, reconstruc-

tion, and time: the Janus-like double face of history.

Of course, during these journeys there were things impossible to photograph or even faithfully describe – like the impact of seeing the rebuilt Frauenkirche on the Dresden skyline at dusk, a last light illuminating its dome. While debates rage regarding the merits of reconstruction, and while certainly not everything should be rebuilt, nevertheless there are moments when we are acutely aware of the impact of ↪



the physical existence of a building, of how it creates possibilities in the human spirit, reinforcing and shoring up that intrinsically fragile estate, of which Hannah Arendt so poignantly speaks, called the human artifice.

In a sense, both poetry and photography are deeply infused with a notion of salvage. While photography visually records, poetry contains not only a compendium of thought and sensibility in a particular language, but also preserves

some aspect of human potential, both linguistic and spiritual. In the same way that sometimes only a single photograph of a destroyed place remains, there are human utterances preserved only in a small fragment of a verse – and in this way they are passed down to us. Like Parmenides' ancient poem, these fragments are critical. Without them we might never have a sense of the whole. And since language is not exempt from the many forces of destruction, we must often subsist on these frag-

ments: photography and poetry imperfectly shoring up vestiges that speak to our terrible unmaking, but also – at times – hopeful remaking of the world. ↗

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Ellen Hinsey was a fellow at the Hans Arnhold Center in spring 2001. Her new collection of poetry, *The Dialogues*, is forthcoming.

## From Notebooks on Poetry and Photography

A poet's work is one of paradox: *darkness underwritten with light.*

The poem is written *here*, which is to say where the darkness of the world is always complete.

*Here*, where the world is broken – but also where it renews under the enduring atmosphere of time.

Poetry and photography sheltering all that is *unharborable* – all knowledge which is exiled to the periphery of being.

Poetry would find a place for *vision* in its eternal homelessness. Photography haunts the edges where *what is* beholds *what might be* in its banishment.

The mind responds to a photograph – *Is that the way of the world? How can it be? How can it be other?*

The mind responds to a poem – *Is that the way of the world? And what is that silence, which has no name, which draws near to the poem's frame?*

To underwrite a poem with light is to engage in a clandestine form of hope.

The opposite of the poem's meaning is not its non-meaning, but *logos*, which is the potential of all utterance.

The opposite of the photograph's positive is not its "film negative," but the unmade potential of the world.

What Novalis wrote about philosophy is equally true for poetry: "Philosophy is really a homesickness, an urge to be at home everywhere."

The drive of poetry towards *affinity*, and therefore wholeness: *to be at home everywhere – to be, at all times, everywhere, at home.*

Or, to reconstitute the wholeness for which one has a nostalgia, which is found everywhere.

Whole, from *hal*: sound, complete, whence, *to heal.*

Poetry and photography: to bring together the *ruined* and the *not yet made.*  
To construct a bridge where *what is* looks over the shore of *all-that-is-coming-into-being.*

In Heraclitus's world all opposites reside in *logos*. The *logos* which divides and which is itself whole.

There are no opposites: there is only homesickness for the world.



THE WOMAN HEARD the children shouting and looked up from her sewing. Through the window she could see them, across the road, the usual band of trouble, with their crooked legs and ringwormy scalps, kicking and poking with sticks at something on the ground. The woman could not see what it was, she imagined some poor creature they were tormenting – it would not be the first time. But what could she do? She could go out and cross the road and try to stop them. But then they would only turn on her, so fierce had the children become, even the small ones. Many were orphans whose parents had been killed in the war. Others had been left behind when their parents, thinking only to save their own skins, had fled. Some had families but had become so unmanageable they were not welcome at home anymore, or in other cases simply could not be stopped from running wild. And these lost children had found one another, just as the many abandoned dogs had found one another, they had formed packs like the dogs, and they carried vermin like the dogs, and they were as dangerous as the dogs or even as the soldiers, and everyone was afraid of them, especially old people.

*Silly old hen!*

This was the woman's husband speaking. Though he'd been gone a good eight years, he still spoke to her now and then, always

in his old familiar voice. *So you've let the pot boil over again, idiot! What are you sitting there daydreaming about? Clean the house!*

Her husband had not needed the war to become unkind. It was the way he had always been, he and all his family. Still, the woman had loved him. Whatever he had asked her to do, she had done. She had mourned his death with a full heart, and instead of marrying again she had remained faithful to him.

*As if any other man wanted you! Or haven't you looked in the mirror lately?*

In fact, like many other things in that house, the mirror no longer existed. It had shattered to bits during one of the raids. But the dead husband, who seemed to know so much else about what was going on in the world he'd left behind, did not seem to know this. He was not as bad now, actually, as he had been in life, when he had called his wife worse names and had spoken to her more cruelly, especially when he was drunk. It goes without saying that he beat her, once even causing her to lose the child they had both prayed so hard for, and

These lost children had found one another, just as the many abandoned dogs had found one another, they had formed packs like the dogs, and they were as dangerous as the dogs or even as the soldiers.

though the woman forgave him even this her husband could not forgive her (*dried-up, useless old bitch!*) for never managing to conceive again.

*What's it to you, what's happening across the road? Keep your fat nose out of it!*

But the woman could not help thinking of Honey, the little blond cat that had disappeared several months ago and had most likely fallen victim to one of the packs, children or dogs. Or perhaps someone even more desperate than most had snatched the cat and made a meal of it. Though she had long given up hope of seeing Honey again, she thought it might well be another cat the children had in their clutches, and she trembled for it.

Yet what would happen if she crossed the road? She was no match for those children. If only they were not so many. It was different when you met one of them alone. Then, he or she (yes, horribly, there were a few girls among them, often the worst of the lot) might approach you meekly, beg you for something to eat or a cigarette. Sometimes, looking around to make sure no one was watching, one might even try to throw himself into your arms. The same child who, the next day, with his gang, would stone you on your way to the market or set fire to your house.

*Mind your own business, nosybody, or would you rather it was you being poked?*

# Silly Old Hen

*Fiction by Sigrid Nunez*



A shudder passed through the woman, and just as if her husband were there she felt the corner of the curtain she was holding drop, and as she turned back to her sewing she felt an impulse of gratitude. Her husband was only trying to protect her.

Now that the electricity was frequently out, the woman tried to get as much done as she could while it was still daylight. She wished it could have been otherwise, because most nights she slept poorly and could do nothing but lie there for hours idle in the dark. Sewing and mending clothes: this was how she got by now that she was alone. (Whatever had become of the soldier's widow's pension she was entitled to, she could not tell you.) The woman had done such work all her life. Once, her specialty had been doll clothes, and she still had some lovely pieces tucked away, but there was no demand for such frills anymore. Happy, well-fed little girls playing with well-dressed dolls – both belonged to another life. Yet that life had existed, which meant it could exist again. In better days she would unpack all those pretty things, iron out the creases, and sell them for a good price.

*You and your ridiculous dreams!*

She must have dozed off. She often fell asleep now in the late afternoon, even right in the middle of doing something. While she slept, the day had quietly slipped away. It had rained on and off, but now the sun was out and the world beyond the window glimmered. The children had scattered with the showers; birdsong had replaced their screeching. The woman was quite warm, with the sun reaching its long arms for her through the glass and the threadbare curtain. As she got up and stretched, she thought she must have had a pleasant dream, because she felt young and light as

she could not remember having felt in a long while.

The woman stuck her head out the door and looked quickly in either direction before crossing the empty road. All her fear returned as she searched through the tall weeds and rubbish. She followed the trail of blood, and when she saw the body lying there she nearly turned and ran. Bloodied, but alive. Half naked, shivering, in wet, filthy tatters that were nonetheless identifiable as the remnants of a uniform. He fixed her with fever-dimmed eyes, clearly too wounded or exhausted or scared to try to escape. At once, the woman's own fear melted to pity. She who knew nothing about politics – *A birdbrain like you would never understand. Stop pestering with your stupid questions!* – and who all these years had never been able to keep straight the many different parties and factions, the endless old grudges and new provocations – she had no idea her country had been fighting an enemy so small. Why, he wasn't even as big as a cat! For shame, she thought. What brutes her people were! And she thought of her husband, his great fists, his giant boots.

*Yes, that's right. I could grind him under my heel! A deserter, no doubt. And you, little fool, what do you think you're doing? Are you mad? Crazy bitch, what are you doing?*

No more than in life would the woman answer when her husband spoke to her in that voice: his five-brandy voice, as she knew it. But to herself she said, I cannot leave the poor creature here for those savages to come back and finish off.

Once she had carried him indoors and washed and examined him, the woman discovered that the man was not as badly hurt as she'd feared. His flesh wounds were many but not so deep. He was bruised all over, but no bones were broken. What the patient needed was rest, antiseptic, and nourishment, and these the woman was able to provide.

*They'll come one day, they'll come for him, or he'll be found during a search, and then you'll both have hell to pay.*

Yes, the woman understood. As soon as possible, the soldier must be on his way. Meanwhile, there was no one she trusted enough to tell about him. Not a soul must know, not even after he'd gone. While he slept almost continually over the next few days, the woman remained wide

awake, every nerve peeled. Already the children had come back looking for him, they had come right up to the house and tried to see in the win-

dows, as if they knew he was there.

And yet, despite her fear, the woman enjoyed having a man in the house again. Cleaned up, he turned out to be rather fine-looking, with young, tender blond skin, long silky hair, a feathery beard, and elegant proportions. The woman had always loved miniature things, and now the seashell from which he ate and the nutshell from which he drank, the bed she had made for him out of the bread basket, napkins, and one of her pincushions, and even the soap dish he used as a bedpan – all this delighted her. They knew a few words of each other's language, which had

The woman was amazed at how quickly he made himself at home, acting at times like a tiny lord.



Stills from *Who's your true love*, 2003, by Karen Yasinsky (Philip Morris Emerging Artist, 2003), 16 mm film.

the same roots, and though they could not hold a conversation they had no trouble understanding what was necessary. When he was well enough to be up and about, she brought out some of the doll clothes, and though she thought he looked darling in feminine dress his cross and miserable face said she had humiliated him. She was going to sew something new for him to wear, but then he made himself a kind of toga out of one of the napkins, and when the woman saw how noble and dignified he looked, and how comfortable he was, she thought he should never have to wear anything else. And she remembered that once upon a time people had dressed in this manner – and wasn't it also true that in those ancient days men were indeed much smaller than they were today?

The woman did not really want to see the man go, and he seemed in no hurry to be off. He had lost all fear and was no

more shy of her than if she'd been a nurse or a doctor. He took his ease all day, lolling naked in a bowl of steaming water, singing songs of his native land (so she guessed), his voice like a spring peeper's. And the woman was amazed at how quickly he made himself at home, acting at times like a tiny lord, and as if she were just an old servant there to do his bidding. Just like a man! The woman had to laugh. Just like a husband – only one you didn't have to be afraid of. And he made her feel – but here the woman fell into confusion. Something about his very smallness and weakness gave her such peculiar sensations.... But she was a simple woman, she was a modest woman, and she did not know how to name

**They'll go through every nook and cranny, they'll find your manikin wherever he hides!**

it, even to herself, the feeling that stole over her, especially when she lay in bed at night unable to sleep.

*Slut!*

These days, fewer and fewer people went to the market, they were so afraid of being killed by a bomb, but the woman had never stopped going, once a week, when Saturday rolled around. (*Go on, get your stupid head blown off. Who'll miss your ugly face?*) And that is how she first heard the rumor about troops preparing to enter their town.

The woman did not know what to do. The man was completely recovered, but how could she turn him out now?

*Silly old hen! Don't you know what will happen?*

It was only a rumor, after all. Dire forecasts were always in the air nowadays; not all of them came to pass. But from that Saturday the woman's husband could not contain himself. *Do you*

*think your toy soldier is going to protect you?* The woman began thinking how she might hide the man. *Where, numbskull, where? They'll go through every nook and cranny, they'll find your manikin wherever he hides!* Alas, it was true: in that bare house (soldiers had been through before) there was no safe hiding place.

And so the woman waited. What else could she do? She waited, as she'd had to wait before, and as others were waiting. What could they do? Many would leave, but most were like the woman: too old, too tired, too numb, or too disorganized to run away. During this time, the only thing that calmed her was the sight of the man, innocently sleeping or relaxing in his bath.

She heard their guns first, then she heard their shouting, then their boots, and finally their fists, banging at the door.

*Hoo hoo! hah hah!* Her husband's five-brandy voice. *Don't say I didn't warn you! Now you'll get it, you and your pocket caesar.*

The man had jumped up out of his bath and come running to her. He stood at her feet with his arms raised imploringly, and it broke her heart to see him, all pink and gleaming, like a skinned cat. "Oh, honey." And the woman forgot her own fear then; it was for him that she trembled.

*Hoo hoo! hah hah!*

*Open up this door!*

And now the woman cursed herself. It was all her fault. (*Of course! It's always your fault, everything is, how often do you have to be told that?*) Oh, why had she waited? Why hadn't she taken the man and tried to escape? (*Because you're a moron, moron, that's why.*)

Was she going mad? Yes, that must be it. It happened to a lot of people, you saw it all the time. People went mad from the constant terror and fighting. You saw them stumbling about the streets, and sometimes the whole neighborhood throbbed with one of them screaming.

*Bang bang bang!*

*Cheap slut, dumb bitch, what are you going to do?*

It was her husband's ten-brandy voice; and in her panicked state, that became *him* on the other side of the door, *his* fists and his rifle butt, his heel and his knife from which poor Honey must be saved.

*Open up!*

The man was now running in hopeless circles around her ankles.

*Where are you going to hide him? Down your blouse? Up your skirt? You fool, they'll*







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*strip you, don't you know that? That's what we do, we strip everyone, from Baby to Grandpa, to be sure we get what they're hiding, and then we teach them a good lesson, for lying to us.*

As the door started to give, a bolt of fear tore through the woman with such force it lifted her straight into the air. But the next instant everything changed. Her husband raging and cursing her, the little man running and crying for his life, the soldiers about to break through the door – all this,

though it did not cease to terrify, now also strangely exalted the woman. She knew that if she could only pass through this moment, beyond it lay a kind of ecstasy she had never known. Somehow, though still standing, the woman blacked out. She saw only darkness at first, and then she saw pinpricks of light in the dark, and then stars, their points sparkling, then circles of light, suns, which grew bigger and rounder until they gobbled all the darkness up. Blindly, she groped at her feet,

and a great shattering joy seized her as she felt the man firmly between her hands.

*Where are you going to hide him, bitch? You old sow. Hag. Witch. You filthy whore. Where are you going to hide him, you stupid disgusting old cunt? Where? Where? Where? Where? Where?*

Sigrid Nunez holds a Holtzbrinck Berlin Prize at the Academy this spring. Her next novel, *The Last of her Kind*, is forthcoming in January 2006.



IT WAS DURING a dinner after screening my film *Legend of Rita* in New York that I had a chance to introduce Richard Holbrooke to Arthur Miller and his wife, the Magnum photographer Inge Morath. I had mentioned the creation of the Academy to the Millers before, but it took our chairman's talent to add credibility to what was then an unheard of enterprise. Inge Morath, even though Austrian, had spent some very tough years in Berlin right after the war. Miller had been all over the world, but more or less consciously had left Berlin out of his program. When he heard the story of the house on the Wannsee and the peregrinations of the Hans Arnhold family, he agreed to come as the institution's first Distinguished Visitor, thinking of some quiet time in a scholarly surrounding combined with visits to the city and its museums. Nobody expected the pop-star's reception Arthur Miller got upon his arrival. Thousands of intellectuals, photographers, and press people showed up and trampled the lawn of the Hans

demeanor. He belonged to the old-timers' league for whom drama, whether in the movies or in the theater, remains a moral institution. He believed in art that causes a stir.

Because the American dream is constantly being reinvented (there's a sucker born every day), Miller's plays will continue to debunk it, shocking winners and losers alike. Not a decade has gone by without a new Broadway interpretation of *Death of a Salesman*, and, thanks to globalization, *Salesman* has opened the all-too-optimistic eyes of audiences from Leipzig to Beijing, Kuala Lumpur to Nicaragua. And yet, apart from his marriage to Marilyn Monroe, Miller personified this very dream. Just as his character Willy Loman would have been happier mixing a heap of cement than as a salesman, Miller was content pouring a cement pontoon for his pond or building a table for the guests at his seventieth birthday party.

He learned his handyman tricks in Brooklyn's Navy shipyards during the war, the same place where he saw firsthand

an out-of-work martyr. "The show must go on."

Arthur Miller did not just live *for* the theater – he lived *in* it. He not only attended his own performances but also continued to offer the actors and directors advice. Even after the hundredth show he would offer suggestions for the delivery of a line or the follow-through of a gesture, never as a pedant but only with the goal of enlivening the conversation and revitalizing the piece.

He continued to collaborate enthusiastically on every new production of his work, be it the *n*th staging of *After the Fall* in some basement theater or a brand new work. We called him our "cheerleader" because no one was more enthusiastic than he. "A hell of a show!" was the faintest praise he gave. Here too Miller was decidedly American, as was his reply "Just do it!" when someone offered an idea.

His persistence to keep going was also very American and always made Miller's European cohorts at PEN events look fairly old-fashioned in comparison. If someone became depressed, like his friend and neighbor author William Styron, Miller would dryly remark, "He probably tried to add things up and realized how little was left on the bottom line."

This is how Arthur Miller saw all of his own battles and initiatives, even in hindsight. "I only had to engage myself in something for it to become a lost cause." But that was no reason to ever regret or give up getting involved, which he proved as he protested the war in Iraq shortly before his death. Had anyone told him that an 89-year-old had passed away, he would have answered dryly, "What do you expect?"

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Part of this article appeared in *Die Zeit*, February 17, 2005 and was translated by Rachel Marks.

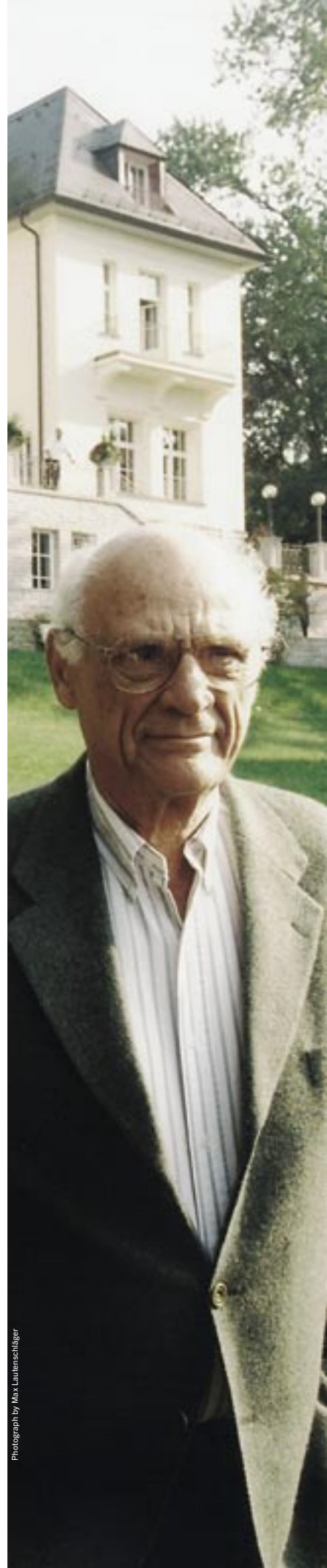
## An American Voice

### Remembering Arthur Miller by Volker Schlöndorff

Arnhold Center – a price paid with joy, for this event launched the Academy's activities in an unforgettable way. Arthur Miller, who had not been used to that much attention since the days of his marriage to Marilyn Monroe, not only coped graciously with the crowd but actually enjoyed it. Ever a partisan of tolerance and of building bridges, he immediately was aware of the importance of German-American relations on a cultural level.

Arthur Miller died this February. Of all of the grand old men, he was the grandest – in his physical size as in his

the corrupt machinations of dockyard life that Marlon Brando battled in Elia Kazan's *On the Waterfront*. Miller's name is not to be found in the movie's opening credits because Columbia Pictures boss Harry Cohn found his screenplay to be "un-American." Kazan, responsible up until that point for all of Miller's premiers, bent, like most, under McCarthyism. Miller, who did not, answered with *The Crucible*. He later forgave his friend since he was allowed to continue writing despite the original ban on his work, while the powerful director became



Photograph by Max Lautenschläger

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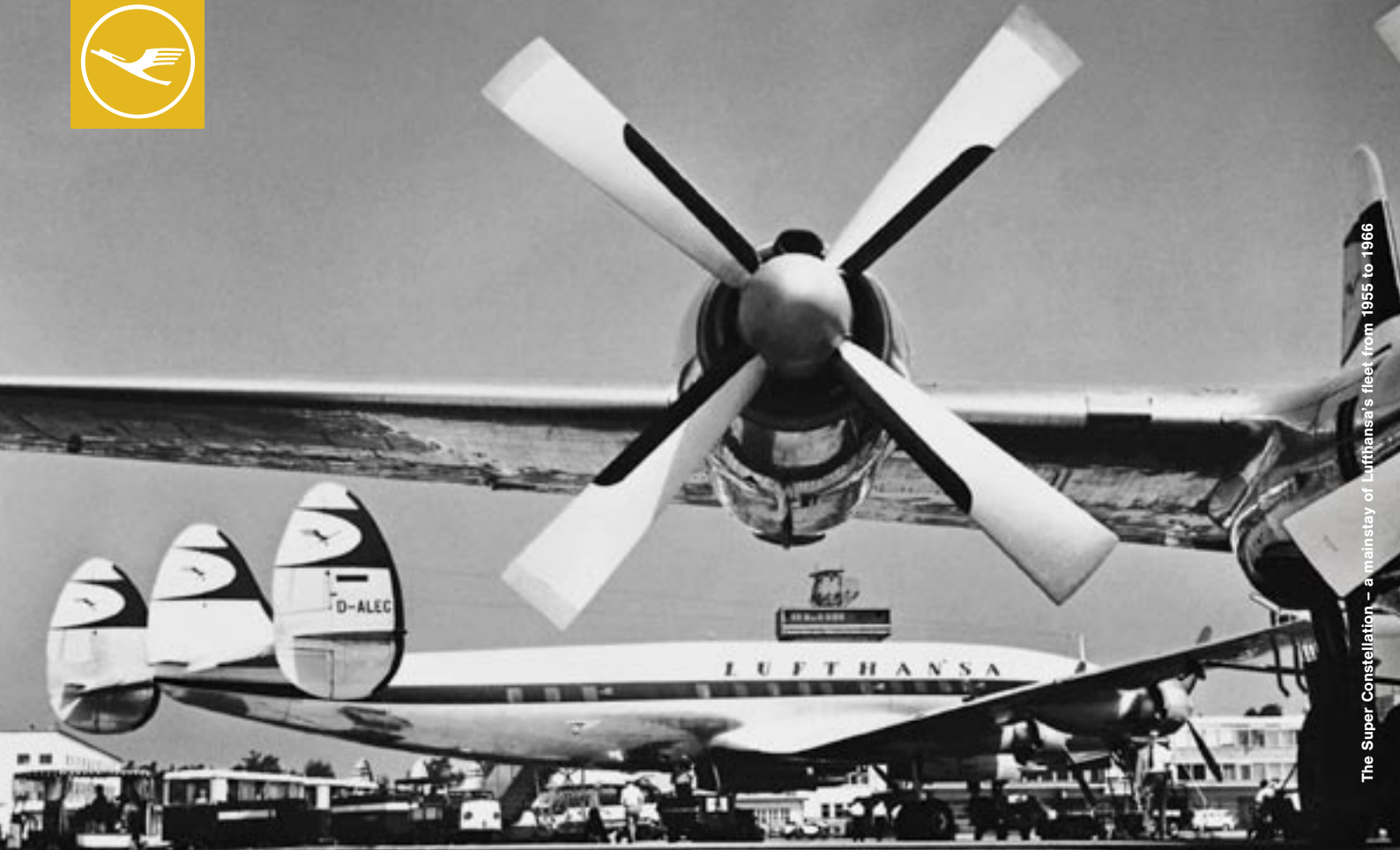
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