

**In this issue:**

- From ancient Greece ...
- ... to 19th century Europe ...
- ... to 21st century Europe.

**ACROSS THE CENTURIES**

Welcome to the September 2013 issue of *The Individual*.

It has become a melancholy tradition to start with death notices of our friends. George Paget, the seventh Marquess of Anglesey (1922 - 2013), joined the SIF in the 1950s. Although not active within the Society for some time, he had continued to pay a subscription. Alongside his illustrious forebears – including one who famously lost a leg at the Battle of Waterloo – he was best known as a military historian, a soldier during the Second World War, and as a Lord-Lieutenant of Gwynedd and a president of the National Museum of Wales.

New Zealand-born Professor Kenneth Minogue (1930 - 2013) was another long-time member who, although not recently active, continued to take an interest in the Society's affairs. He was a renowned classical liberal and Eurosceptic political theorist and was Emeritus Professor of Political Science and Honorary Fellow at the London School of Economics.

I knew of but did not personally know either of these gentlemen. It is a different story with David Botsford who has died at the age of just 49. He was only tangentially associated with the SIF – at least one appearance in a previous issue of *The Individual* – but was much more involved with the Libertarian Alliance (of which I have also been editor since 2002) and through which I met him on numerous occasions.

David's claim to fame in this respect was his large output of LA pamphlets written from the mid 1980s until the very early "noughties". Of particular note was his multiple-pamphlet analysis of the British educational system written from a libertarian perspective. More recently he had put aside his writing to concentrate on his career as a hypnotherapist in which he met with some success both here and in the USA.

In all cases, the SIF extends its sympathies to the family and friends of the departed.

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## POLITICAL REASONS FOR LEAVING THE EU

**Professor David Myddelton**

Britain's membership of the European Union may soon be the subject of an 'In/Out Referendum'. So those of us who want the United Kingdom to leave the EU are starting to assemble our arguments.

### Economic arguments

People who want us to stay in the EU usually focus on economic matters. As they did when arguing for Britain to join the Common Market in the first place. But most studies<sup>1</sup> show no net economic benefit from our EU membership.

We can trade perfectly well with the continent whether we're in the EU or not. America, Brazil, China and other countries manage to trade with the EU from outside.

Some people pretend 3 million British jobs might be lost if we left the EU. But there's no reason to expect any permanent job losses. It's not as if we *gained* 3 million jobs when we joined the EU! Both sides to voluntary market deals normally expect to gain from them – and that'll remain true whether we stay in the EU or not.

Moreover tariff levels are much lower now than they were back in 1973. So being outside the EU's customs union would matter far less than it might once have done.

Exports are 30% of our national output; but less than half our total exports go to other EU countries. A smaller proportion than any other member-state. So UK exports to the rest of the EU represent less than 15% of our GDP. And demographic changes on the continent mean that this fraction – one-seventh – will get even smaller in future.

Meanwhile the economic 'benefits' of EU membership, such as they are, apply to less than 15% of our GDP. But the EU's extensive regulations and red tape are a disproportionate burden on 100% of our economy.

No British political leaders currently argue that we should enter the single currency. If the economic reasons for staying in the EU

itself are so strong, one wonders why not? The fact is, any such suggestion would be laughable.

### Why did we join in the first place?

In 1970, the Common Market was viewed as an economic and trade arrangement and Ted Heath, the Prime Minister, was keen that the UK should enter. For 25 years after the war the French and German economies seemed to have been relatively successful; while everybody agreed that, by comparison, the British economy had been weak.

In 1973 we did join – together with Ireland and Denmark; and in 1975 we voted by two to one in a referendum to stay in.

After Mrs Thatcher became Prime Minister in 1979, the British economy started to recover, while the continental economies faltered. So the economic conditions that had made it seem sensible to join the Common Market in the 1960s and early '70s began to reverse, in the 1980s and '90s, after we had joined!

Ever since the 1975 Referendum I've been arguing for the UK to leave: first the Common Market, then the European Economic Community, then the European Community, and now the European Union.

Confucius said: "A person who's made a mistake and doesn't correct it is making another mistake." Joining the Common Market more than forty years ago has turned out to be a serious mistake for the UK. Now we *may* get the chance to put that right, though an In/Out referendum by 2017 is by no means certain to happen.

### Political arguments

In my view, the political arguments against Britain's membership of the European Union are more important than the economic ones. That's not surprising, since from the beginning it's always been essentially a political project. But Europhiles always tend to gloss over that aspect.

**"For 25 years after the war the French and German economies seemed to have been relatively successful..."**

## 1. WE'RE DIFFERENT FROM THEM

In January 1963, President de Gaulle of France rejected our application to join the Common Market. He said:

*“England is bound by its trade, its markets, its food supplies to the most varied and often very distant countries. Her activity is essentially industrial and commercial not agricultural. She has very strong, very individual habits and traditions. In short, the nature, structure and circumstances peculiar to England are different from those of the other continental countries.”*<sup>2</sup>

He was absolutely right and his words still resonate fifty years later.

I remember the 1975 Referendum asking: ‘Should we stay in?’ *The Economist* newspaper, strongly pro-EU as always, produced a big book with a yellow cover setting out its economic arguments in detail. But I just felt, we’re too different from the continental Europeans. In effect, I shared the Gaullist view! So I voted ‘No’.

The continental countries’ histories and traditions aren’t the same as ours. ‘Different’ doesn’t mean ‘better’ or ‘worse’. But our ways suit us, and many of their ways don’t. It’s not just the historical experience, but the language, the money, the legal system and the general political culture too. That’s why we call them ‘foreigners’.

After the war, Churchill was keen to reconcile France and Germany and called for a ‘United Europe’. But he didn’t envisage us being part of that ‘Europe’. He told de Gaulle:

*“Every time Britain has to choose between Europe and the open sea, it is always the open sea that we shall choose.”*<sup>3</sup>

Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary for many years, shared that view. He said:

*“Suggestions have been made that the United Kingdom should join a federation on the continent of Europe. This is something which we know, in our bones, we cannot do. For Britain’s*

*interests lie far beyond the Continent of Europe.”*<sup>4</sup>

That’s still true today. The British are an island race of global traders. We’ve always had a world-wide outlook, rather than a parochial European one. Far from being Little Englanders, the world is our oyster!

At last year’s Olympic Games in London, athletes from some two hundred nations marched past in the Opening Ceremony. I reckon about half of those countries had at one time in their history been British colonies or had close links with the British Empire. That’s a remarkably high proportion. No other country has anything like such a wide network of overseas connections – on every continent.

Last year, an opinion poll asked people: “Which of these [five selected] nations would you say Britain has most in common with, culturally, politically and economically?” 2% said India, 10% Germany and 11% France. But 28% said Australia – more than India, Germany and France combined – and 49% said the United States of America.<sup>5</sup>

Geography matters much less now than it did even fifty years ago. Air travel is faster and cheaper, as are telecommunications. And the internet is revolutionising business. So being next door to the continent of Europe is no longer that important.

## 2. THERE ARE BASIC DIFFERENCES IN PHILOSOPHY

There are basic differences in philosophy too. Britons tend to hold that knowledge depends on experience (one might say ‘trial and error’). We’re sceptical and cautious, while tolerant of different approaches. But continental Europeans claim that ideas matter most. They tend to be less flexible and more dogmatic.

Harold Macmillan expanded on this point, when discussing Concorde, the Anglo-French prestige project. It was an engineering triumph but a commercial disaster. He said:

*“The difference is temperamental and intellectual. The continental[s] like to reason from the top downwards, from general principle to practical*

**“We’re sceptical and cautious, while tolerant of different approaches. But continental Europeans claim that ideas matter most.”**

*application ... the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas. The Anglo-Saxons like to argue from the bottom upwards, from practical experience ... the tradition of Bacon and Newton.*"<sup>6</sup>

These contrasts in national style and approach persisted throughout Concorde's development. French elite technocrats had trained academically at the Ecole Polytechnique; whereas the British engineers had gone through a long apprenticeship on the shop floor. The French were more hierarchical; while the British tended to regard a firm instruction from above merely as a basis for discussion.

(This was reminiscent of the Duke of Wellington's alleged comment on his first Cabinet meeting as Prime Minister in 1830: "*An extraordinary affair. I gave them their orders and they wanted to stay and discuss them!*"<sup>7</sup>)

### 3. 'THE NATION-STATE IS DEAD'

More than one European leader has proclaimed that 'the nation-state is dead'. That gives a clue to the United Kingdom's future inside the European Union: disintegration!

The Committee of the Regions aims to foster direct links between the centre and 'regions' of member-states. Thus it by-passes national governments. That's why so many regions now have their own offices in Brussels.

Peter Shore suggested that:

*"European federalists will pursue any objective provided that it achieves two basic aims: it weakens the powers of the elected governments of nation-states and it strengthens the powers of the European institutions..."*<sup>8</sup>

Europhiles like to talk about increasing the UK's 'influence' in world affairs by being part of a larger and more powerful bloc. But it's clear the EU would gladly elbow us out of our Security Council seat at the United Nations. That's a strange way to maximise British 'influence'!

Much of the legislation affecting us now originates abroad, not just from the EU. (The precise proportion isn't entirely clear.) Hayek foresaw such a development in his book *The Road to Serfdom*.<sup>9</sup> If we stay in the

EU, how many of our laws will be externally sourced in twenty years' time? Will it be even more than the 80 per cent coming from Brussels that Jacques Delors boasted about many years ago?<sup>10</sup>

Roy Jenkins has been the only British President of the European Commission so far. In 1999 he said:

*"There are only two coherent British attitudes to Europe. One is to participate fully, and endeavour to exercise as much influence and gain as much benefit as possible from the inside. [That is what he favoured.] The other is to recognise that Britain's history, national psychology and political culture may be such that we can never be anything but a foot-dragging and constantly complaining member; and that it would be better ... to move towards an orderly and, if possible, reasonably amicable separation."*<sup>11</sup>

### 4. 'EVER CLOSER UNION'

The preamble to the Treaty of Rome sets out the EU's fundamental objective of 'ever closer union'. But as David Cameron implied in his Bloomberg speech earlier this year, we in this country have never been comfortable with it.

For a long time most British people simply couldn't believe the continental politicians were serious about 'ever closer union'. Many Eurosceptics still make this mistake. But be in no doubt: whatever the views of their electorates, the European *leaders* are deadly serious. They really *do* mean it!

Some years ago, the EEC official general guide said:

*"Economic integration isn't meant to be an end in itself, but merely an intermediate stage on the road to political integration."*<sup>12</sup>

Over the years many political leaders on the continent have clearly explained that what they aspire to is nothing less than a United States of Europe. Especially, one can't help noticing, rather a lot of Germans.<sup>13</sup>

Had it been called 'The United States of Europe' from the start, we'd have understood better what we were getting into. But those British politicians who wanted us to go

**"For a long time most British people simply couldn't believe the continental politicians were serious about 'ever closer union'."**

in realised that such a goal, if openly proclaimed, would have been extremely unpopular. Ted Heath's 1971 White Paper was deliberately not telling the truth when it said: "*There's no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty.*"<sup>14</sup> This was the lie on which our so-called 'full-hearted consent' was sought.

Hardly anyone in Britain wanted to join a United States of Europe in 1972; and hardly anyone in Britain wants to join a United States of Europe today. It would mean abandoning our national soul to become an insignificant part of a European collective.

For more than four hundred years, a key element in Britain's foreign policy has been to prevent any single power dominating the continent of Europe: whether Spain, France, Germany or Russia. We've opposed Philip II, Louis XIV, Napoleon, the Kaiser, Hitler and Stalin, sometimes all on our own.

But now, if most countries in Europe want to combine in a single would-be super-state, Qualified Majority Voting means that we British can't stop them. We don't want to join them; but do we even really want to encourage them? That seems to be our government's policy.

The 17-strong euro bloc can often now out-vote the UK; and this imbalance is likely to get worse over time. Of the 10 non-euro member-states, all but Denmark and the UK are legally bound to join sooner or later. So if we were to stay inside the EU, but outside the euro – assuming they both survive – that would eventually make it only 2 countries outside the euro versus 25 in.

Sweden voted against joining the euro in a referendum in 2003. The reaction in Brussels and Frankfurt was typical. Instead of asking: "What's wrong with the euro?", their question was: "What's wrong with the Swedes?"

As far as I know not a single leading British politician, however Europhile, has openly argued for us to be part of a Europe-wide political union. Not Heath, not Howe, not Hurd, not Heseltine, not Clarke. This appears to be the urge to merge that dare not speak its name!

The euro experiment has failed, like the snake and the ERM before it. I well remem-

ber the UK's ejection from the ERM over 20 years ago. It wasn't *leaving* the ERM that was the disaster – it was *joining* it. In fact, as soon as we left and reduced interest rates to suit ourselves, the UK economy recovered almost at once.

In the same way, it was setting up the single currency that was the real disaster. I can't understand why the British government keeps telling EU leaders to 'save' the euro. Since the euro never made economic sense, 'saving' it is a futile policy.

They'll never be able to agree on an orderly dismantling of the euro. So a disorderly break-up is now very much on the cards. The Eurocrats say they've got the political will to save the euro. But let's remember it was their misguided 'political will' that created the mess in the first place!

Another aspect of ever closer union is the EU's *acquis communautaire* – the 'ratchet'. Which means that powers always flow towards Brussels and the centre, never back towards the member-states. As Bernard Connolly observed, to offend against it appears to be "*a mixture of heresy, blasphemy and treason*".<sup>15</sup>

Continuing stealthy EU progress towards 'ever closer union' has been graphically described as "*a coup d'etat by instalments*".<sup>16</sup>

Could Britain ever convince the rest of the EU to 'reform'? Not a chance. The eurofanatics, many of them perfectly sincere, are incorrigible.

## 5. THE RULE OF LAW

The European Union doesn't respect the Rule of Law. In 1998, there were a dozen applicants to join the new single currency. Denmark, Sweden and the UK chose not to join, while Greece's application was put off for two years.

How many of the eleven countries actually met all five of the Maastricht criteria for entry to the euro? Only one – tiny Luxembourg – with a population of less than 1 per cent of the EU total! Strictly speaking, therefore, Luxembourg should have broken its currency union with Belgium, entered the euro all on its own, and thus increased by one the number of separate currencies in Europe!

**"Could Britain ever convince the rest of the EU to 'reform'?  
Not a chance."**

What a paradox for the so-called ‘single currency’ that would have been ... *if they’d stuck to the rules*. But instead they chose to ignore the terms of a solemn international treaty. When the rules are inconvenient, that’s what the EU does.

For example, within the first few years both France and Germany blatantly ignored the Stability and Growth Pact. So the foundations of the experimental single currency were flimsy indeed. It’s no surprise that it’s now on the verge of collapse.

So far, there have been bail-outs for Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus, and various kinds of ‘assistance’ for Spain and Italy. These all clearly breach the terms of the Treaty of Maastricht.

Unelected technocratic governments have been imposed on Greece and Italy; and in the eurozone elected national governments are being thrown out almost every time democratic elections are held.

Earlier this year, the government of Cyprus proposed to seize a chunk of people’s bank deposits despite the absence of any law permitting such action. This immoral scheme had the approval of the European Commission and the European Central Bank, as well as the IMF. In the Cyprus parliament there wasn’t a single vote in favour. One might describe their revised effort as ‘modified confiscation’.

The EU’s Charter of Fundamental Rights purports to ‘give’ Britons rights we’ve enjoyed under Common Law for a thousand years! But a sinister clause allows the EU to ‘suspend’ these rights if it deems that to be in its collective interest.

And, talking of a thousand years, let’s remember that even William the Conqueror in 1066 promised to uphold the laws of England. The Eurocrats have never done that.

Maitland said the Star Chamber was a court of politicians enforcing a policy, not a court of judges administering law.<sup>17</sup> Much the same is true of the European Court of Justice, which sees its main purpose as being to promote European integration. That’s very different from the British view that law should protect individuals against the state.

Hence *habeas corpus* and trial by jury – both now under threat.

Sir Patrick Neill has observed: “*A court with a mission is a menace. A supreme court with a mission is a tyranny.*”<sup>18</sup>

## 6. THE EUROPEAN UNION IS AN ALIEN TYRANNY

Indeed, I regard the European Union as an alien tyranny. ‘Alien’, because it’s mostly run by foreigners; and ‘tyranny’, because we can’t throw the rascals out.

We’re happy to trade with people on the continent, as we’ve done for many hundreds of years. And we’ll gladly play football with them. (Of course, they don’t play *cricket!*) But we don’t want to be ruled by them.

I should perhaps explain that I strongly agree with David Hume, who wanted all our neighbours to prosper. He expressed this view in the middle of the Seven Years War with France. But that doesn’t mean we want political union with them.

The European Union has been carefully designed to be not ‘inter-national’ (*between* nation-states), but ‘supra-national’ (*above* nation-states). So the EU is ‘anti-democratic’. The ‘democratic deficit’ isn’t just a regrettable by-product. All along it’s been a deliberately-planned part of this Project of an Empire.

None of the three key EU institutions is elected: The Commission, the Central Bank or the Court of Justice. And the peoples of Europe certainly don’t regard themselves as belonging to a single country. So even if there were an elected government of a ‘United States of Europe’, it would hardly be legitimate.

European Union leaders are always desperate to prevent the public expressing their opinion about anything that matters. And when a referendum can’t be avoided, if the result goes the ‘wrong’ way, the people concerned – the *culprits!* – are placed on the naughty step. They’re told to go back and vote again until they get it right! That’s the EU’s totalitarian mindset.

Many Europeans have experienced that approach within living memory, whether in pre-war Italy or Germany or Spain, or in France

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during the war, or in the Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe after the war. Some people may indeed prefer dictatorship to democracy. But it doesn't suit the British. You can hardly imagine Hitler stepping down after the war if he'd lost an election – which is exactly what Churchill did.

### Conclusion

If we in this country were to regain our political freedom by leaving the European Union, it would do more to restore national self-confidence than anything else one could imagine. And, not for the first time, we'd be setting an example for others!

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"If we in this country were to regain our political freedom by leaving the European Union, it would do more to restore national self-confidence than anything else one could imagine."

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#### About the author

As well as being a Vice-President of the SIF and the Chairman of its National Council, Professor David Myddelton is Emeritus Professor of Finance and Accounting at Cranfield University and a Trustee of the Institute of Economic Affairs. He is also the author

of numerous publications including *The Power to Destroy*, a study of the British tax system, a revised version of which was published by the SIF in 1994.

This essay is a revised and somewhat expanded version of a talk given by Professor Myddelton to a meeting of the Campaign for an Independent Britain held on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

#### Bureaucracy

*Nothing is more threatening to a Bureaucracy than ordinary people finding their own solutions.*

**The Cunningham Amendment, Vol. 14, No. 1.  
Room 6, Tangleford House, The Street, Bawdeswell, NR20 4RT.**

#### From cajoling to compulsion.

**SIF member Eric Old had the following letter printed the in *North Wales Daily Post* on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2013...**

*I think that it is wonderful how doctors are able to make transplants and that it is brave of people to volunteer as donors.*

*Lately I've noticed increased coverage on subjects of transplants in the Daily Post and television, and we have been told that propaganda is to come from Cardiff in favour of "opting-in".*

*It reminds me of 1965 when all new cars had to be fitted with seat belts. Before long, well known people like Jimmy Savile and Esther Rantzen were paid to persuade people that they would have a charmed life if only they did on every journey what the celebrities said. But in 1983 cajoling became compulsion unless you qualified for medical exemption at a cost of £19.*

*How long would it be if donor compulsion became law, before a large fee would be charged if one dared to apply for an opt-out certificate? Funeral time is traumatic enough without the distraction of unknown medical staff hovering near, ready to make a dissection of me.*

## THE MARXIAN THEORY OF EXPLOITATION: A CRITIQUE

Richard Garner

### Marxian “exploitation” versus reality

Socialists have railed against the market economy as inherently exploitative. One of the most well known and influential examples of this is in the writings of Karl Marx. This theory was developed most completely in his massive three-volume economics treatise *Capital*, but is neatly summarised by Arthur P. Mendel:

*The entire argument in Capital rests on the labor theory of value. As was the case with virtually all the parts that Marx fused into his system, this concept was borrowed from earlier writers, in this case from the ‘classical’ economists such as Adam Smith and, especially, David Ricardo. It is primarily a price theory, according to which ‘commodities’ should exchange on the basis of the ‘socially necessary’ labor time devoted to their production. In other words, the amount of time a laborer works to produce a particular item determines its “exchange value”: two products of equal labor value would thus be exchanged for one another.*

*Having incorporated the labor theory of value, Marx derived from it a second step in his demonstration: the theory of ‘surplus’ labor value. According to this theory, the worker does not receive in wages an amount equal to the value of the goods he produces. We must keep in mind that the influence of the “pessimistic economists” still prevailed, as did the conditions promoting their pessimism. Drawing their conclusions from their own observations and from official government reports on working-class conditions in England during the industrial revolution, economists like Malthus and Ricardo argued that an “iron law of wages” existed that would keep wages down to a minimum necessary to meet the workers’ basic needs. Marx ac-*

*cepted this and drew the conclusions he desired: on the one hand, the labor theory of value argued that labor created all the value of the goods sold by the capitalist; on the other hand, an ‘iron law of wages’ kept the laborer’s income down to a subsistence minimum consequently, it must follow that the workers were not receiving the full value of their labor, that there was a ‘surplus’ kept by the capitalist owner of the means of production.<sup>1</sup>*

Our first response to this argument is to look at the “Iron Law of Wages.” This theory is clearly false, for numerous reasons. The theory is, basically, that if wages rise for a time above enough to pay for mere subsistence then population will increase, resulting in increased competition for jobs amongst workers, resulting in lower wages. If, on the other hand, wages are lower than subsistence, fewer children are born, malnutrition kills off a certain percentage of the population, so competition for wages falls, and wages rise. Thus, it is argued, wages will always tend to a mere subsistence level.

It was in the nineteenth century that Malthus, Ricardo and Marx held to the theory of the Iron Law of Wages. However, in that century wages doubled and population increased over two and a half times. Rising real wages after 1850 did not lead to a rise in the birth rate, but the exact opposite: the birth rate fell from 35 per thousand in 1850 to 28.7 per thousand in 1900.<sup>2</sup> So empirical evidence doesn’t back up the Malthusian argument.

Secondly, the Iron Law of Wages only approaches the question of what determines the price of labour from the perspective of supply and not demand (and then only crudely, for it doesn’t recognise that the worker is buying a wage at the same time as selling their time, and thus take in the relative value they place on their uses of it). For instance, it is likely that a rise in population will result in a rise in demand for labour, so if population were to rise as a result of higher wages (as the

**“It was in the nineteenth century that Malthus, Ricardo and Marx held to the theory of the Iron Law of Wages. However, in that century wages doubled and population increased over two and a half times.”**

Iron Law says it would), there is not necessarily a reason to expect a fall in wages as a result, because of an increase in demand for labour. This is, in fact, why an increased population as a result of free immigration or an absence of state control of reproduction will actually be likely to increase wages in the long term: increased population means more mouths to feed, means more demand for workers to feed them, means higher wages. Indeed, the Iron Law of Wages doesn't even take account of how productive a worker is. Surely, an employer would offer more to a skilled and dedicated worker than a talentless layabout, because the former will get more work done than the latter. If so, then, at least to that degree, wages will reflect productivity.

Thirdly, the phrase "subsistence level" is so ambiguous as to be almost useless. Cave men subsisted on a lot less than the average UK worker – or even the least paid UK worker – so why haven't UK wages fallen to the level needed to provide subsistence to a cave man? Workers in today's Britain live a lifestyle many would have thought luxurious by the standards of one a hundred years ago.

Therefore, the "Iron Law of Wages" doesn't hold water. Given this, Marx's presumption that wages will always tend to be less than the true value of the labour spent producing becomes untenable, and, if this is the case, his claim that capitalism is exploitative looks shaky too.

### The value of labour

However, we may go further. Having disposed of the theory about what determines how much value a capitalist gives a worker, let's turn to the theory about how much value a worker gives to the capitalist. This theory, as stated above, is "...primarily a price theory, according to which 'commodities' should exchange on the basis of the 'socially necessary' labor time devoted to their production. In other words, the amount of time a laborer works to produce a particular item determines its 'exchange value': two products of equal labor value would thus be exchanged for one another." In short, the exchange rate, or price, of one hour of socially necessary labour time, in a free market economy, would be another hour of socially necessary labour time: an hour of work from a farmer will buy an hour of work from the builder. Hence the belief, also iter-

ated above, that "labor created all the value of the goods sold by the capitalist."

However, it is obvious that labour doesn't create all the value of the goods (remember that the argument isn't that only labour creates goods, but that only labour creates the value of those goods, or, in other words, only labour gives those goods value). Surely if a group of identical workers spent an identical amount of time building an identical house next to a landfill site or sewage works as they did building one next to a site of great natural beauty, the latter would fetch a higher price than the former. Isn't this obvious? If so, then it must also be obvious that the exchange value, the price, of each house is not solely determined by the labour put into producing it but also by the geographical position and by the attractiveness of that position to those who would live in the house. Hence it is the utility, the preference satisfaction derived from owning that house, which determines its price.

An old complaint against the traditional labour theory of value (as stated by Adam Smith and David Ricardo) was that it implied that useless labour would fetch an equal price as useful labour. For example, an hour's worth of delicate and life saving brain surgery would buy an hour's worth of digging holes and filling them in again. This is obviously not the case, so the price of a good cannot be determined by the amount of time spent working on it.

However, this was not Marx's claim. As Robert Nozick points out,

*Marxist theory does not hold that the value of an object is proportional to the number of simple undifferentiated labour hours that went into its production; rather, the theory holds that the value of an object is proportional to the number of simple undifferentiated socially necessary labour hours that went into its production.<sup>3</sup>*

This claim is backed by reference to Marx's own words in the first volume of *Capital*.<sup>4</sup> The point is that Marx qualifies the traditional labour theory of value by also requiring that labour hours be socially necessary, and this, he believes, saves him from the above argument.

**"Marx qualifies the traditional labour theory of value by also requiring that labour hours be socially necessary..."**

Marx writes that, “Nothing can have value without being an object of utility. If a thing is useless so is the labour embodied in it; the labour does not count as labour, and therefore creates no value.”<sup>5</sup> However, even accepting the condition that an object has to be of some utility, there still remain some problems. For instance, what if a worker works for 893 hours on something that is of only very slight utility. This satisfies the condition that it must be of some utility. So, should we now believe that here on in only the time spent making it matters, that only the amount of labour matters, so that now that it is of some utility it will buy 893 products that are of incredible utility but only took an hour to make? No, because, as Marx says, “...the labour spent on them (commodities) counts effectively only in so far as it is spent in a form that is useful to others.”<sup>6</sup> In other words, the 893 hours of labour are only valuable insofar as they are of utility to those that consume them, as is the hour of the other goods mentioned, which implies that the value of a good depends on its degree of utility to its consumer, that the labour embodied in it is only as valuable as it is of utility to its consumer.

**“... hours of labour are only valuable insofar as they are of utility to those that consume them ... which implies that the value of a good depends on its degree of utility to its consumer...”**

Marx even claims that “Whether that labour is useful for others, and its product consequently capable of satisfying the wants of others, can be proved only by the act of exchange.”<sup>7</sup> In other words, the only way to tell if a commodity is valuable or not, or even if it has value, is by observing the action of the market process – the act of exchange. This is a hell of a concession! But what becomes clear is that, by tacking on the qualifying condition that labour need be socially necessary in order to have value, Marx has in fact ended up with something very different from a labour theory of value. He has claimed, in effect, that the value of a product is determined in so far as it is useful in satisfying the preferences of the consumer and not by the amount of labour time spent producing it at all!

### Marx the market enthusiast

However, we can approach this from a different direction. Imagine that things are being produced as efficiently as they can be, but that too many of them are produced to sell at a certain price. The price at which the market clears is lower than the apparent labour values of the products: a greater number of

efficient hours went into producing them than people were willing to pay for. Does this show that the number of average hours spent making an item of sufficient utility doesn't determine its value? Marx's answer to this question is to say that if such overproduction occurs that the market won't clear at a certain price, then the labour devoted to making an object was inefficiently used – less of the thing should have been made – even though the labour itself was efficient. Thus, not all those efficient labour hours constituted socially necessary labour time. The product does not have less value than the number of socially necessary labour hours expended on it, because there were simply fewer socially necessary labour hours expended on it than meets the eye.

*Suppose that every piece of linen in the market contains no more labour than is socially necessary. In spite of this, all the pieces taken as a whole may have had superfluous labour-time spent on them. If the market cannot stomach the whole quantity at the normal price of 2 shillings a yard, this proves too great a portion of the total labour of the community has been expended in the form of weaving. The effect is the same as if each weaver had expended more labour-time upon his particular product than is socially necessary.<sup>8</sup>*

Robert Nozick neatly sums up the consequences of this view:

*Thus Marx holds that this labour isn't all socially necessary. What is socially necessary, and how much of it is, will be determined by what happens on the market! There is no longer any labour theory of value; the central notion of socially necessary labour time is itself defined in terms of the processes and exchange ratios of a competitive market.<sup>9</sup>*

So on one hand Marx concocts a theory about prices that actually tells us that prices are not determined by labour, and then on the other he tells us that workers are exploited because all the value of the product they create is determined by labour! This is simply intellectual dishonesty!

## Utility and explaining value

The classic labour theory of value is clearly wrong because it cannot explain why a sawdust sandwich won't buy a cheese sandwich when they both take the same amount of time to make. In fact, the labour theory of value is not even useful in economics because it cannot explain what goes on in an economy. For instance, I can buy cola in one-litre-bottles, and I can also buy it in two-litre-bottles. However, the price of a two-litre-bottle is not twice that of the one-litre-bottle even though it holds twice the contents. Why is that? Modern economics, abandoning anything approaching a labour theory of value, can answer this, but the labour theory of value cannot.

In terms of modern economics, it is easy to explain. It is less important to me that I get a second litre of cola than it is that I get a first. Once I have one litre, I care less about getting the second; the marginal utility of a second litre is lower than the first. Thus, if the company wanted to sell me a second litre, they have to make it cost me less than the first, because it is less important to me than the first. This is why the two litres of cola in a two-litre bottle will not be the same price as the two litres in two one-litre bottles.

But the amount of labour time spent producing the second litre was exactly the same as that spent producing the first litre. Therefore, the labour theory of value cannot explain why two-litre bottles of cola are cheaper than two one-litre bottles. Marx's changes to the labour theory of value lead us further and further away from an account of exploitation, because he would have to say that the labour embodied in the second litre in the two-litre bottle was less "socially necessary" than that of the first, but can only do so on the grounds that the market for cola wouldn't clear if it was twice the price.

However, we can reject the Marxist theory of exploitation without even rejecting the labour theory of value. David Gauthier sums up the Marxist argument:

*Marxism offers a direct challenge to our account of the Market which, if sustained, would refute the claim that market interaction is impartial. For the Marxist insists that private ownership of the means of production, a*

*fundamental presupposition of the market, is necessarily exploitative. The argument is simple. Under private ownership, nothing can prevent the emergence of a situation in which some individuals (capitalists) own the means that others (workers) need if they are to engage in productive activity. These others are then compelled to sell their labour power to the owners of the material means that production requires. This sale is exploitative. For the essential and distinctive characteristic of labour is that it produces more than the cost of its own production; labour thus reproduces itself and in addition produces what in Marxist thought is called surplus value. Now labour power is bought and sold, as any other commodity, at a price sufficient to cover its cost of production. Hence the buyer of labour necessarily receives the surplus value, since he pays the worker a wage equal to the cost of producing the labour power sold, and receives a price equal to the value of what that labour power produces. The market systematically favours the buyer of labour power over the seller; hence its operation is in principle partial to the capitalist.<sup>10</sup>*

Gauthier begins studying this position from the claim that the market price of what labour produces is greater than the cost of its own production. Imagine that the price of labour power was equal to the cost of producing it. It is obvious that under these conditions there would be a demand for more labour, because buyers (capitalist employers) profit from the difference between the price they pay for labour power and what they receive in exchange for its product, which, under these conditions, would be nothing (because price equals cost). This demand for more labour power would continue until the marginal product of an additional unit of labour power is equal to the marginal cost of producing that additional unit. However, at this point the price of labour – the wage paid – is equal to the price that is received for its product. There can be no surplus value when the supply of labour is brought into equilibrium with the demand for it. "The worker receives a wage equal to the marginal difference her labour power adds to the total

**"It is less important to me that I get a second litre of cola than it is that I get a first... the marginal utility of a second litre is lower than the first."**

product” – workers are paid according to their marginal productivity.

Marxists attempt to escape from this conclusion by denying that supply and demand come into equilibrium. The claim is that the buyer of labour power is able to keep its price, the wage, below the price he receives for its product, because the supply of labour will always exceed demand for it because of what Engels called “The reserve army of the unemployed.” However, we have just seen that if the wage is below the price received for the product of labour, then there will be an effective demand for more labour – demand will be greater than supply. So the Marxist is trapped in a contradiction: The buyer of labour power is able to derive surplus value from labour – to pay the worker less than he receives for the product of labour – only if labour exceeds demand. But if there is a surplus to extract then this creates amongst capitalists a demand for labour in excess of the existing supply. As Gauthier says,

*Or, to put the matter another way, if the supply of labour exceeds the demand for it, this can only be because the cost of producing labour exceeds the price that can be received for its product. So there can only be surplus value if supply exceeds demand but if supply exceeds demand there can be no surplus value.<sup>11</sup>*

So, if, as Marxists suppose, labour power is a commodity, then the operation of a competitive market must bring the supply of labour into equilibrium with the demand for it. Thus, at equilibrium, there can't be any surplus value for the buyer of labour power to extract, and so there can be no exploitation of the seller of labour power – the worker. Thus, in a competitive market, there can be no exploitation of workers, at least in the Marxist sense.

### Notes

(1) Editor's note: Unfortunately, Richard did not reference this passage in the original version of the essay and I have been unable to source it. All that I can say is that the late Arthur P. Mendel was an American professor of history at the University of Michigan. He wrote widely but specialised in Russian intellectual history.

(2) John L. Hanson, *A Textbook of Economics*, Macdonald & Evans, 1966, p. 311. Editor's note: Again, I must apologise. This a guess on my part. Whilst he cited the author, book title and page number, Richard did not cite the edition of the book.

(3) Robert Nozick, ‘Anarchy, State and Utopia’, p. 118, in Kory Schaff (ed.), *Philosophy and the Problems of Work*, Lanham, MD, 2001, pp. 109-122.

(4) Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, 1887/2010, p. 45. The version referenced here can be found at the “libertarian communist” website: <http://libcom.org/library/capital-karl-marx>, retrieved 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

(5) Marx, *ibid.*, p. 28.

(6) Marx, *ibid.*, p. 49.

(7) Marx, *ibid.*, p. 50.

(8) Marx, *ibid.*, p. 80.

(9) Nozick, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

(10) David Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement* (new ed.), Clarendon Press, 1987, p. 110.

(11) Gauthier, *ibid.*, p. 112.

### About the author

Richard Garner was a friend, libertarian philosopher and a frequent contributor to the SIF and the Libertarian Alliance until his premature death in 2011 at the age of 33. He left behind some work that we will try to publish. This article is an edited version of one that appeared on his personal blog on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

**“Thus, in a competitive market, there can be no exploitation of workers, at least in the Marxist sense.”**

### **Detroit, Liverpool, “conservatism” and creative destruction**

*This [the collapse of Detroit] is the same as happened in Liverpool. The main source of employment, shipbuilding and shipping, was competed away from them (not destroyed, it goes on elsewhere now, just as auto-building does). If the governments of the day had not themselves supported those declining industries until they were absolutely bankrupt and could not go on, the workers would have been released in dribs and drabs and been able to retrain naturally into newer technologies. Dumping tens of thousands of them at once overwhelmed that system. And so too with Detroit.*

*Detroit, as with Liverpool, is less a victim of market forces as a victim of those “small c” conservatives who “planned” their cities’ destruction by trying to turn back the tides of progress and locking their workforces into disappearing trades or into less productive working patterns that their equivalents were prepared to work in other locations...*

*[The] impact of that destruction, in Detroit as in Liverpool has been hugely magnified by government action trying to preserve the jobs that are being destroyed by competition without a thought to what will happen to those people when their jobs are finally untenable, as motor manufacture clearly has become for Detroit and ship-building and the docks became for Liverpool.*

*Government didn't cause the creative destruction, but it sure magnified its effects to bring huge misery on hundreds of thousands of people.*

**Jock Coats, Libertarian Alliance discussion forum, 22nd July 2013. Jock Coats runs his own blog at <http://jockcoats.me>.**

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## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE URBAN SPHERE OF DREAMS

Rob Cowley

Do cities dream? You'd be forgiven for writing the idea off as nonsensical. But I would like to suggest that it is possible to talk meaningfully about the dream life of a city, and that this dreaming might actually matter quite a lot.

Before thinking about cities specifically in this regard, I should sketch out the cod-philosophical framework within which I am considering reality more generally here. This is built around the contention that there is a dreamy dimension to our lived spatiality, which is layered on top of a perceptual one.

### The space where we live: Perceptions and dreams

By 'lived spatiality', I mean the world as it appears to us. I have no way of knowing whether 'reality itself' exists prior to our perceiving it (or whether space exists prior to our inhabiting it). By 'material', or 'objective' reality, I mean the external reality that I seem to perceive, which is given shape through my perception.

To take things a step further, the world *seems* to us (or at least to me) to contain many people, and there seem to be enough commonalities in the way we all perceive this world for a spatialised interactive process of co-existence within it to be possible. Its reality, then, is objective insofar as we all seem to perceive it in the same way. At the same time, though, this objective reality is always inflected, and structured into meaning, by our individual emotions, interpretations and imaginations. In this sense, we can only ever live through a sort of dream of reality; without our dreams, material reality has no meaning.

Do we each create our own world, then? Dreams, it might be argued, are only ever personal; and to think of them otherwise would be at best an intellectual conceit. And yet dreams don't begin and end within an individual's mind; they work in more interactive ways. First, in that the 'raw materials' of our dreams are collectively perceived; each individual's dreams are grounded in what at

least appears to be a shared external world. Second, in that individual dreams may congeal into collective discourses; we may have, or come to have, similar dreams to other people's, and influence each other's dreams through our words and actions. Third, in that, because our dreams shape our actions, and these actions have tangible effects on the physical space that we share, they (or at least their reflections) become visible for all to see. The broader sphere of dreams, then, seems to be a paradoxical one, at once personal and collective, subjective and objective, or flipping backwards and forwards between the two.

### The urban sphere of dreams: A tale of two partial cities

So then, onto cities. I recently visited the ruins of ancient Kourion in Cyprus with various family members. It's always somewhat unsettling to walk around abandoned human settlements of any sort; they seem like very strange types of places. I was there, but was it there? Is 'Kourion' a real place, or perhaps an ex-place, or an image of a place? All of these in different ways? I was dreaming about it – trying to understand what it is, and imagine what it was – so what roles might dreaming play in a place of this type? My intention here in any case is not to engage with the theoretical debates about the nature of 'place'; I am consciously using the term in a lazy way. My circling thoughts grouped themselves together instead into the following question, which is still far from unproblematic, but which I have tried to answer below in simple terms:

*In what senses does the 'city of Kourion' still exist?*

*Socially*, first, the city of Kourion clearly no longer exists. It doesn't function as the setting for, or describe, the ongoing effects of, cultural, economic or political processes. (Of course, it does play host to, and is affected by, the activities and interactions of its maintenance staff and visitors, and is located within broader regulatory, academic and economic networks, and so on – but all this re-

"... dreams don't begin and end within an individual's mind; they work in more interactive ways."

lates to its existence as a visitor attraction, rather than as a city.)

*Materially*, then? On balance, yes. Okay, its physical structure is degraded to such an extent that it would be unrecognisable as a city were it not for the immense amount of archaeological work that has gone into ‘restoring’ it. In fact, what now exists is primarily a selective, conceptual map – a static representation – of an evolving complex of material forms sharing the same space long ago. And yet that space is the same one, and (at least some of) the stones are the same ones; although mediated through excavation, rearrangement and representation for general consumption, they haven’t entirely been abstracted.

*And dreamily?* Sort of. The real citizens, of course, who once gave meaning to the material space around them through their dreams, are long gone, and with them their ability to shape and reshape its physical form. Nevertheless, and in a partial sense only, this city does still exist as a space of dreams; what is left of its materiality induces subjective interpretations and daydreams in the visitors who perceive it. Almost as if, as a frozen artefact, it is able still to emit dreams but no longer to soak them up.

An entirely different ‘partial city’ is depicted in Neil Gaiman’s (2012) *Tale of Two Cities*, which I first read about in Steve Pile’s (2005) *Real Cities*. The hero of Gaiman’s comic-book story – Robert – travels home from work one day on a different train from usual, after working late at the office. This train, unfortunately, doesn’t stop in the normal places; Robert gets off as soon as he can, at an unknown station. On leaving the station, however, he is unable to orient himself (or even find the way back to the station). He walks and walks, and seems to half-recognise much of what he sees and smells, but the city’s geography no longer makes sense to him, and his sense of time is lost. He is in fact unable to decide whether or not he is still in the city he knows. He looks longingly at the marvellous goods on display in the shop windows, but all the shops are closed. There are no other people around, except that “from time to time he could feel eyes on him from the windows and doorways”, and “there were certain other people in the city, but they were brief, fleeting people who shimmered and vanished” (32). On a bridge,

he does find an old man, who explains what has happened: Robert is, it turns out, still in the city he knows, but “the city is asleep, and...we are all stumbling through the city’s dream” (35).

Robert’s city and Kourion complement each other rather nicely. Both constitute partial representations of urbanity, but while Kourion coincides materially with, and corresponds conceptually to, a tangible reality, Robert’s city floats free – to the extent that it is entirely based on the author’s fantasy. Kourion is forever frozen; Robert’s city is entirely fluid. If Kourion can only shape dreams, Robert’s city can only ever be shaped by them. A ‘real city’ would encompass both of these aspects of reality; the physical city and the subjectivities of its individual inhabitants. The relationship between the two would be a dynamic one, with dreams continually translating each into the other. In this sense, the idea that a city might dream is more of a useful idea than it might sound at first.

### The city as a space of concentrated dreaming

I’m thinking about dreams here in a very broad way: imaginations, daydreams, longings, adulations. Dreams of all sorts seem to be magnified in cities. Religion, for example, might be viewed as an important form of urban dreaming. Empirical definitions of the ‘city’ often refer to the tendency for cities to be significant sites of worship (see, for example: Moholy-Nagy, 1969; Lynch, 1981; Short, 2002) – and religion often features in theories of how the earliest cities emerged, and what defined them as cities rather than villages. In such theories, causal links are made in different directions between religious worship and factors such as economic surpluses and social stratification. Somehow, though, power structures emerged, naturalised through religious worship, and reinforced through monumental architecture (Chant, 1999). There was a dynamic relationship between the adulation of the citizens and the existence of this monumental architecture. Did the stones of the city shape their dreams, or was it the other way round?

Cities continue to play host to all sorts of yearnings and adulations, focused on different types of shrines: overtly religious in many cases, but also political, commercial, and cul-

“Did the stones of the city shape their dreams, or was it the other way round?”

tural. Again, such shrines do exist elsewhere, but they are more obviously concentrated in cities (often in potentially contradictory ways). And it is not the case that the city has a pre-existing objective form which simply ‘acts on’ us, which we simply dream about (like Kourion) – rather, the city is also built by us in certain ways that reflect our fears, hopes, and longings (like Robert’s city). I’m jumping around randomly here, but we might also consider the way that housing markets are fuelled by our dreams for a better life: we buy or build particular types of houses, and decorate them in certain ways, for reasons extending far beyond the instrumental. Our own physical presence in a city, as resident or visitor, may well constitute the expression of a dream of what the city will be like; we may seek to realise these dreams in the way we live in the city, and thereby reshape it through our actions.

### The sphere of dreams and the sphere of publics

Specific dreams may come eventually to be understood as illusions. But the perceived physicality of the city can never entirely be separated from its dreaminess. If the urban ‘sphere of dreams’ is somehow simultaneously subjective and objective, a bridge between the two, it may function in the same way as what we call the ‘public sphere’ does, or – since publics are generally thought of as multiple – what might be called the ‘sphere of publics’. In this respect, I am interested in nature of Robert’s fellow citizens: either temporary, flickering forms; or vaguely perceived strangers whose are watching him. His partial city seems to end where what I think of as the public dimensions of the city begin. Although alone in his city, Robert can comprehend the fact of the connectedness of his subjectivity with unpredictable, various others, and the fact that his actions are often observed by unknown others. The physical reality of these other human beings, however, eludes him; he has no way of knowing if they are anything other than imaginary.

In the real city (or society more generally), publics – like dreams – are ontologically and epistemologically paradoxical. (I mean here in terms of what they are (or how they might be described), and how we know about them (or come to imagine them).) They seem to form a sphere which is neither personal, nor fully part of perceptual external reality, and

yet they are both of these at once. I’ve been reading Michael Warner’s (2002) take on publics. On the one hand, he points out, publics – like Robert’s ‘flicker people’ – are notional and imaginary: “[a] public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than the discourse itself” (67), and open-ended: “a public is by definition an indefinite audience rather than a social constituency that could be numbered or named” (55-56). On the other, they are empirically grounded: their “imaginary character is never merely a matter of private fantasy” (74); they “have become an essential fact of the social landscape” (65); and they have social effects, in that we can “attribute agency to a public, even though that public has no institutional being or concrete manifestation” (89). Publics, in short, like dreams, are simultaneously ethereal and agentic. And their significance for democracy lies precisely in the way that, as forms of association which emerge unpredictably and coalesce mysteriously out of the fragmented subjectivity of the social world, they nevertheless hover outside the institutions of state authority:

*“Imagine how powerless people would feel if their commonality and participation were simply defined by pre-given frameworks, by institutions and laws, as in other social contexts they are through kinship. What would the world look like if all ways of being public were more like applying for a driver’s license or subscribing to a professional group – if, that is, formally organised mediations replaced the self-organized public as the image of belonging and common activity? Such is the image of totalitarianism: non-kin society organised by bureaucracy and the law. Everyone’s position, function, and capacity for action are specified for her by administration” (Warner, 2002, p.69).*

Perhaps, then, in talking about the dream life of the city, I am in fact thinking about its public sphere. In a way, that’s true – but dreams go wider than this; perhaps dreams are preconditions for the emergence of a public; perhaps they are also what is captured in the material effects that publics have. And there is no guarantee that a public will emerge from a dream; individuals may have the same dream but have no means of knowing that they share this dream with others. A

“... we may seek to realise these dreams in the way we live in the city, and thereby reshape it through our actions.”

dream may never be ‘publicised’ in the sense of being mediated through an address to a (simultaneously imaginary and real) audience of strangers. The individual, or the kinship group, may forever dream alone. But even the dream of one person may have social effects.

The sphere of publics is in any case firmly associated with modernity. In pre-modern times, it is more reasonable to think that dreams underscored what Habermas calls the “*publicness (or publicity) of representation*”, which was “not constituted as a social realm, that is, as a public sphere; rather, it was something like a status attribute” (Habermas, 1989: 7, italics in original). There is little in this older form of publicness which is democratic; rather, it describes a situation where the “domain of common concern...remained a preserve where the church and state authorities had the monopoly of interpretation” (36). The dream of religion is, furthermore, still active in this sense: “In church ritual, liturgy, mass, and processions, the publicity that characterised representation has survived into our time” (8). I wouldn’t single out religion in this respect; our dreams go on supporting other ‘representational’ institutions and formations which have little to do with democracy. Our dreams, then, are just as likely to lead to authoritarianism, feudalism, demagoguery, or nationalism.

It is only in a static utopia, or a perfectly realised totalitarian state, that all of our dreams would be identical, and in harmony with the physicality of the city around us: a city whose power structures were hegemonic and uninterrupted. Real cities will always go on dreaming in all sorts of unpredictable ways. Yet their materiality will always to some extent constitute a (shifting) landscape of power: dreams which are common to many, and/or backed by power, are more likely to be visibly represented in their physical form.

### **To dream or not to dream? That’s not the question**

Of course, power takes all sorts of different forms. I see the workings of power in a society as rather closely related to the qualities of its dream life – to the particular mix of dreams (and nightmares) that it evokes, gathers together, gives concrete expression to, fragments, and represses. Cities, as intense concentrations of both artefacts and subjectivities, are the arenas where the sphere of

dreams has always done most of its work. And if it is the particular qualities of this dream life, rather than its presence or absence, that have positive significance, then the post-Enlightenment emphasis on shedding our ‘illusions’ about life, on seeing things ‘as they really are’, seems misplaced. As an ambition, it relates only to the apocalyptic idea which so terrifies Robert on his return to the real world – and which places like Kourion present to us so disturbingly – of the pile of stones revealed at the end of history, dreaming no more, forever frozen into objectivity: the prospect of the city which has ‘woken up’.

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### **About the author**

Robert Cowley is a doctoral researcher and lecturer in the University of Westminster’s Department of Politics and International Relations. His PhD project examines the socio-political dimensions of urban sustainability,

“Cities, as intense concentrations of both artefacts and subjectivities, are the arenas where the sphere of dreams has always done most of its work.”

with a special focus on the place of the 'public' in planned and implemented eco-city initiatives. He also provides research assistance within the International Eco-Cities Initiatives.

His first degree was in Modern Languages and Literature at the University of Oxford.

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After graduating, he taught English abroad and then worked in the commercial world of market and social research for many years before taking an MA in Urban and Regional Planning at Westminster in 2010.

*(Continued from page 1)*

To the current issue of this journal: three articles whose reflections span the centuries. First up is the SIF's own Vice-President, Professor David Myddelton. His contribution is a slightly revised version of the talk that he gave after the 2013 AGM of the Campaign for an Independent Britain held in London. The article speaks for itself. Instead, writing in a purely personal capacity of course, I want to offer up a couple of "warnings". I have been a member of the CIB for a long time and I attended the AGM in that capacity as well as to support David. However, it is only the second one that I have attended in many years. I stopped going because far too many of the other attendees were "odd". And I regret to say that many of them still are. On that showing, I would not want a random sample of CIB members to speak for me in any referendum concerning the EU.

The other warning concerns much of the subject of the talk given by one of David's follow speakers that day, Dr Richard North of the EU Referendum blog. I know that Dr North has recently become controversial amongst some Eurosepts because of his comments about UKIP. I have my own views. What I do not doubt is that he remains one of the outstanding researchers and writers in this and associated areas. One of the facts that he tirelessly points out are the limits of the independence of a UK outside of the EU. He does not support the EU, but points out that a great deal of the laws and regulations that govern us stem ultimately not from an EU level but from a global one. Unless one is proposing some sort of ghastly North Korean-style autarky, we need to realise that an economically and socially free world is rather more complicated than it might at first appear. What we should demand, however, is that politicians and the media are much more honest – or just informed in the first place – about this.

Next up is another of our late friend Richard Garner's small stock of unpublished material that I have been putting together in essay form. If anyone has a Ouija board handy, I have some questions about Richard's "referencing" of material that I'd like to put to him...

In all seriousness, it is a wonder that anyone was ever taken in by Marxism. Mind you, at least this sort of thing had a lingering attachment to Enlightenment values. I recently had a skim through some of the mystical "fascist" thinking emanating from Europe before the Second World War and much of this is plainly deranged. That said, some of the views of Marx's colleague Friedrich Engels on "national" issues are almost indistinguishable from those of Adolf Hitler!

And so lastly, and whilst not "leastly" certainly most unusually, to the essay by Rob Cowley. The "About the author" information at the end of the essay tells much. I should add that Rob and I were colleagues at "a well-known market research company" in the mid 1990s. Since Rob had been rather more diligent in his career path to that point, I was his underling. At the time, I was doing an MA in Applied Social & Market Research at the University of Westminster – the former Regent Street Polytechnic for older and more traditionally minded readers – where Rob now both studies and teaches. We recently re-established contact and when we overdosed on caffeine in Fitzrovia one fine August afternoon it was hard to imagine that it was 15 years since we had last met. (Oh... We actually had a real summer this year!)

Rob's article is not overtly political in the way that the other two are except in its implicit rejection of any sort of highly authoritarian system. Instead, it draws on his current work on the future of the urban world and is one of those "standing back and thinking about the bigger picture" essays of benefit to any thoughtful reader irrespective of their political views (with the caveat just noted). How do people and cities influence one another? The essay is actually written in a rather oneiric style, very different from the dry-as-dust numbers, tables, graphs and explanatory text that the two of us used to produce all of those years ago!

*Dr Nigel Gervas Meek*

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The SIF organises public meetings featuring speakers of note, holds occasional luncheons at the Houses of Parliament, publishes this journal to which contributions are welcome, and has its own website. The SIF also has two associated campaigns: Tell-IT, that seeks to make information on outcomes of drugs and medical treatments more widely known and available to doctors and patients alike, and Choice in Personal Safety (CIPS), that opposes seatbelt compulsion and similar measures.

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**Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics*, 1851**