Double Monarchies

A commentary on Paul Eisen's essay, 'My Life as a Holocaust Denier'
by Francis Clark-Lowes, 16th June 2008

The way in which we order the world around us, its past, its present and our expectations about its future, is very precious to us. It forms our identity. Whether or not we view the picture we see as our own creation or that of others around us, we typically hang on to it as if we had proved its validity. Open-minded though we may think ourselves to be, we prefer the order of our present position to the potential chaos involved in switching to another.

Let us face full square the reason for this conservatism, this refusal to admit that we may not know 'the truth' about the world around us. We are vulnerable human beings, and most of the time we cannot bear to face our own vulnerability. Or to put it more bluntly still, we do not want to confront the reality that life has no discoverable meaning, that we have absolute freedom of choice within the range of the possible, that everyone acts in what s/he sees as his/her own self-interest and we cannot predict with certainty what they will do, that we are on our own inside our own heads, that we can only control our own lives to a limited extent, and that we will die and cease to exist, and do not know when this will happen.

That is why we want pictures which at least smooth the edges of these raw realities. These pictures within our heads can most easily be discerned by looking as what people say. There they appear as stories, whether these are straightforward narratives, or narratives which can be shown to underlie what is being said. Religions are the most obvious example of comforting stories. For example, they may say: 'God created the world and will ensure that you will be alright as long as you believe in him and follow his laws.' Actually, in my opinion religions always, in addition, contain within them what could be called deeper philosophical truths (some would call them spiritual), that is recognition of the kind of realities mentioned above, which we so want to deny. But their immediate appeal is in the comfortable story. The deeper truths are for the doubters.

Non-religious ideologies, such as Marxism, fascism, materialism, humanism, nationalism and liberalism also offer comforting order in the face of disturbing chaos. All of these stories are the creations of human beings, but they never come out of nowhere. They are always the product of individual thinkers modifying their existing stories (that is stories created by others before them) because in some way or other they found them inadequate. It has often been pointed out, for example, that Karl Marx's philosophy is inexplicable without relating it to the Judeo-Christian background[1] from which he came. That is what his moral fervour derived from. But why did Marx, a person of undoubted intellectual ability, never manage to tear himself free from the Judeo-Christian narrative of his upbringing? To understand this,

[1] I was tempted to write just Jewish here, but the commentary on Marx always seems to include the Christian element in his background, an element which exists in all Jews who have grown up in majority Christian communities. Since Christianity and Judaism are inextricably intertwined, sharing a large amount of scripture, it is difficult to separate out Jewish and Christian influences in non-religious Jews.

we need to think about parenthood (a subject on which Paul will have much to say in this book.)

The idea of parenthood is a very deeply ingrained one. It must have an instinctual basis, for as children our survival depends on the mutual recognition of parent and child – whether or not the 'parent' and 'child' are biologically so. The important thing is that the child believes the parent to be 'good' and therefore reliable. The extent to which experience bears this out has a lot to do with how the child develops. Sigmund Freud talked about the 'family romance' which 'good' parents succeeded in creating. It was, to a degree, a fiction, but believing in it, the child was able to grow to adulthood without encountering crippling anxiety.

As a counsellor I regularly saw people who discovered at some point in their lives – whether as a child or a teenager or an adult, or even in some cases, as an old person, that their parents were not who they had thought they were. For example, they had been adopted early in life or they discovered that one of their parents had had another sexual partner whose child they now believe they must be. It was rare for such people not to be disturbed by this kind of revelation, and many wanted to do something to reconnect with the 'missing' parent. It was as if they had wrongly plotted their position on a map, and now wanted to correct it.

Or there is another kind of unwelcome discovery about our parentage which most of us make to some degree or other. We find that our parents are not super-human. Most of us can live with this, so long as we can keep alive the idea that they are intrinsically good. But what do you do if you discover that they did things, or are still are doing things, which are shocking, such as sexual abuse or murder. Then we may have to change our whole concept of who we are.

But it is not only in childhood that we look for good parents, nor indeed that we may be disappointed in those we choose. We typically continue to engage in this game throughout our lives, the parents being teachers, bosses, political leaders, even, alas, partners. And our wish to see these people as 'good' may well blind us to the reality that they do not always act in our interests. It is only if we are forced to acknowledge their imperfections that we reluctantly change our opinions.

Beyond 'individual parents' there are also 'cultural' parents', and this is where we start to talk about group loyalty. Adherence to a group is immensely comforting, even though there may be no identifiable individual leader of the group (because, for example, the leadership keeps changing, or simply because there is no identifiable structure). If, for example, I look at my own British loyalty (and it is there, however much I sometimes wish to deny it) I can see that my Britishness gives me a feeling similar to the sense of being parented.

It was this comfortable sense of belonging which was so assaulted when I first began to discover the story of the Palestinians. I remember Said Hamdan, my Palestinian colleague in Jeddah around 1980, contradicting me over and over again as I struggled to maintain my view of what it meant to be British. I tried in vain to maintain that the British government had no doubt acted in what they thought were the best interests of all concerned when they agreed to allow the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. I hated him for questioning the essential goodness of my parents! And

while I mean ‘my parents’ in the symbolic sense, it was also true in the literal sense, for my beloved parents were also loyal British citizens and they also would have hated Said’s remarks. He was suggesting that they, and I, were at best deluded, are worst dishonest.

To return to Karl Marx, his dilemma, I guess, was that he wanted to keep in tact the moral structure of Judo-Christendom, but at the same time his reason refused to allow him to accept its theological superstructure. The result of this Hegelian dialectical struggle was communism (or at least Marxism).

Let us summarise where we have come so far. Our view of the world is a crucial part of our identity. This view is largely inherited from the society around us, and in particular from the ‘parental’ figures we adopt or the ‘cultures’ we adhere to. When these ‘parents’ reveal themselves to be less than perfect we either ignore the evidence, or we are forced to find a new equilibrium, usually by the creation of a new ‘good parent’.

Paul is a Jew. He is not religious, he is married to a non-Jew, his children are therefore non-Jews, he supports the Palestinians in their struggle against Jewish oppression, he is the UK director of Deir Yassin Remembered, an organisation whose aim is to highlight that oppression, he denies ‘the Holocaust’, he refuses to make a clear distinction between Zionism and Jewishness, and he uses the term ‘Jewish power’ which is anathema to the great majority of Jews. And yet he is a Jew. What can this possibly mean? Other Jews who have only half the dissident views that he has deny that they are Jews. One could say that they are free to choose which culture they identify with, whether it is Christianity or Britishness or liberalism or humanism or world citizenship or a combination of some or all of these and others. But when you have read this book it will, I believe, be quite clear to you why this option is not open to Paul. For Jewishness is his ‘parent’. That is a psychological reality which no amount of dissidence will remove.

The best thing to do if you want to remain comfortably within your own chosen ‘home’ is to take a relaxed view of the contradictions within it. There is within Judaism – and let us face it, without Judaism, Jewishness would not exist – a strong tradition of intellectual enquiry. It is perfectly possible to follow such a tradition without endangering the rabbinical tradition from which it derives. So, for example, Rabbi Caesar Seligmann of Frankfurt, whose autobiography I translated some years ago, had an extraordinarily wide range of intellectual interests and was enormously widely read, yet this appears in no way to have undermined his religious beliefs in the way one might have expected.

On the other hand, Rabbi Seligmann’s son, Erwin, whose memoir I have also translated, found that his religious upbringing was inconsistent with the secular beliefs in the world around him. His solution was to become a Zionist. This way he maintained his Jewish identity in tact, but more or less ignored the moral contradictions of his new secular faith. He was critical of Israel’s policies, for example, but he never questioned the grandeur and rightness of the Zionist project. That Erwin Seligmann could so easily abandon his religious faith was due to fact that most Jews were no longer religious at the time he grew up (he was born in 1893). It

did not, therefore, seem to be a prerequisite for remaining a Jew, and anyway, Herzl's Zionism had offered another way.

Paul has chosen a different and very much more uncomfortable route. He has not taken a relaxed view of the contradictions within his culture. He does not deny his Jewishness, which would have been a way out, but rejects its central contemporary belief system, the double-monarchy, as it were, of Zionism and 'the Holocaust'. His moral fervour, which he has no doubt is Jewish, led him to realise that Zionism was inconsistent with justice for the Palestinians. It made him angry to realise that this truth had been covered up by his fellow Jews, and he was determined to make them, and the world, face the truth. Hence his taking on the post of UK director of Deir Yassin Remembered.

But like me, Paul became increasingly dissatisfied with the conventional Palestine solidarity movement. Like me he asked himself whether there was any likelihood that it would succeed, and answered in the negative. Like me, he saw that Jewishness and Zionism could not be separated. Like me, he saw that Jewish narratives which were inimical to justice for the Palestinians, had been uncritically incorporated into Western thinking. Like me he saw that 'the Holocaust' was a distorted construct which was being used very effectively to crush any discussion of Jewishness, the role of Jews in the West and particularly the existence of the state of Israel. Like me he realised that the 'Holocaust Industry' was designed to keep alive a particular way of seeing 'anti-Semitism' which meant that anything the Jewish elite did not want discussed became 'anti-Semitic'. Like me, he detested the dishonest philosemitic culture which these Jewish narratives demanded.

But *unlike* me, Paul went two steps further. The first was to describe what was happening as the abuse of 'Jewish power'. At gut level, I knew perfectly well that this was the case, though the extent of this power is only now becoming clear to me. But I was terrified of saying so. Gradually Paul has helped me to break down that internalised taboo. I realised that Jewish power fitted perfectly well with my own concept of power as being a commodity which exists when a sufficient number of people believe it exists. A teacher's power in the classroom, for example, comes from the pupils believing that s/he has it, otherwise they become unruly and the teacher is powerless.

The cleverness of Jewish power is, however, that a kind of contrary principle applies. People know it is there, they acknowledge its existence by their actions, but because no one is allowed to *say* that it exists, it has free rein. We are aware that there are red lines set by Jews which we must not cross, and in this we are recognising Jewish power. I myself know that what I am writing now crosses numerous red lines, and that I will be heavily rebuked for it. That will again be Jewish power at work.

What I might never have considered, however, had it not been for Paul, is the possibility that 'the Holocaust', as we are supposed to believe it, did not happen. For a long time I only half-heartedly followed up the sources Paul gave me. Perhaps the opposition to his ideas had tipped him just a little over the edge. His defence of Ernst Zündel, while justified, seemed out of place, a diversion. But once forbidden connections have been mdke they work away in you, especially if you respect their author, until they find a resolution. Gradually I came to understand what Paul had

come to see; that the oppression of the Palestinians was not a million miles away from the oppression of Zündel, and more widely of the Germans.

I want to bring in a personal note here. Between 1975 and 1977 I walked from Watford to Cairo (bar a few kilometres here and there), and in the summer of 1976 I arrived in Vienna where I planned to spend a couple of months. I found work in a publishing company which just happened to be next door to the house in the Berggasse in which Sigmund Freud had lived. It was here that I met my Viennese wife to whom I was married for twenty-five years. Both my parents-in-law had experienced the extraordinary events of the Nazi period, my mother-in-law as an employee in an Arbeitslager for Slavs, my father-in-law in the German army. On the wall hung a picture of him in army uniform. What would have made most non-Germans shrink back in horror became was stripped of its sensationalism. I discovered that my father-in-law had fought on the German side only a few miles away from my father as the British retreated to Dunkirk.

My wife-to-be accompanied me on foot as far at Voivodina in Yugoslavia, and then returned to Vienna promising to rejoin me in Israel when I got there. I think it surprised both of us that this actually happened. I collected Angie from the Ben Gurion Airport, and we spent three months working at Givat Brenner Kibbutz. I was already aware of the difficulties which the Palestinians faced, but I had 'not made up my mind', and wanted to experience the other side. Moreover, it was a much easier and more comfortable option than finding a way to live in, say, Damascus, as I had considered. But here I saw with what suspicion a German speaking 'goy' was regarded in Israel. Many kibbutzniks whose mother tongue was German refused to talk to her, and she took to saying defiantly: 'I was born in 1955. I had nothing to do with what happened before I was born.'

Actually, I'm not so sure that one can so easily shrug off the actions of one's forebears, but I also think that regarding Germans as if they were some kind of super-monsters is not just absurd, but also a very convenient way of covering up the sins of the people making such a judgement. Expecting Germans, in the wider sense, to be eternally remorseful, in way we have never expected the British, Americans, Australians, Canadians, New Zealanders and so on to be for their crimes against humanity, is unfair and self-serving. Sadly the Germans have to a large extent accepted the role allotted to them. Zündel is one who did not, and he paid the price.

But just a little more on this personal diversion before I return to the main argument of this essay. Many years later, around the time my marriage broke up, I spent many months in Vienna, living at the top of Berggasse 19, researching the early years of the psychoanalytical movement, that it from around 1902 to 1912, and in particular the contribution of Wilhelm Stekel. Those were nearly the last years of the double monarchy, and it was impossible not to feel their almost palpable presence as I poured through endless old documents and books. Everything had 'K u. k' written on it – 'Kaiserliche und königliche' (Imperial and Royal, referring to the Austrian empire and the Hungarian kingdom). My mother-in-law remembered seeing the funeral cortege of Kaiser Franz Josef in 1916; two years later it was all over, and the Austrians faced a huge identity crisis.

It was to solve a similar identity crisis that, just over 20 years earlier, Theodor Herzl wrote his 'Der Judenstaat' (The Jewish State) while living only a little way further down the Berggasse. You will not be surprised to hear that a photograph of the Berggasse hangs in our living room. If you look carefully you can see flags with swastikas on them hanging from the roof. But let us now return to Paul's Holocaust denial.

After reading parts of Joel Hayward's thesis, I at last began to understand the mechanics of how such a story as 'the Holocaust' could have been constructed without really hard evidence to back it up. The impossible began to seem credible. If it is true, and I am very much inclined to think that it may be, it amounts to the assertion that our whole post-Second War culture has allowed itself to be manipulated into believing a story which controls much of what happens in the wider world, and a good deal of what happens at home, particularly in academia. Even psychological theories are based upon events which may not have taken place in the way that has been supposed. It does not seem too far fetched, then, to speak of Jewish-Western culture as another form of double monarchy.[2]

Even if I am still unsure, I too am a Holocaust denier. For Jewish power determines who will be called a Holocaust denier, and it will certainly put my ruminations in this career-destroying category. In any event, of one thing I *am* sure. If a narrative is written by a group of people who have a particular project, if that project is successful and has the resources to propagate this narrative widely, and if any criticism of that narrative can be crushed, the narrative itself will at best be greatly distorted, at worst a fabric of lies. That project is not just Israel, but the privileging of Jews above all other groups.

Paul says that this attempt by Jews to become and remain omnipotent is a unique and intrinsic phenomenon. I do not think I can follow him there. While history is filled with unique events, its patterns repeat. So, for example, the way in which British people felt about their own power during the time of the British Empire had much of the same arrogance about it. In Sri Lanka, as I once saw, Buddhist priests wield very considerable power, presumably through their control of certain narratives in that country. What I think *is* peculiar about this example is the extraordinary degree to which it is supported by carefully constructed narratives such as those on 'anti-Semitism', 'the Holocaust', 'the contribution of Jews to Western civilisation', 'the eternal victim', 'the unblemished history of the Jews'. As Theodor Herzl so well understood, the first of these would provide Jews with great power; he saw it as the engine of Zionism. Indeed, the whole superstructure of Jewish Power rests on it ability to accuse those who challenge it of anti-Semitism and to make this a badge of crippling dishonour.

[2] Yuri Slezkine's *The Jewish Century* deals, I believe, with this phenomenon, but I haven't yet read the book and so cannot comment further.