

Ethical Record

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THE FIRST BREAK WITH RELIGION



Emir on the Aegean coast. Statue of Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey and his mother.

This occurred in the 6th century BCE - in Asia with Confucius: “The heavens are still, no sound – where then shall god be found?”; in India with the Buddha: “No one saves us but ourselves. Work out your own salvation”; on the Aegean coast with Thales of Miletus: “Everything comes from water” is not from Aphrodite, and Pythagoras of Samos: “Everything is based on number.”

In BBC Radio 3’s two-part Sunday feature ‘Faith without God’ (6.45 9 & 16 Feb), Michael Goldfarb asks why these rationalist ideas occurred at exactly the same time – could they have been spread along the trade routes? On 16 Feb, he will ask why religions won out.

In 1924, Atatürk abolished the Caliphate which had existed for 600 hundred years and established Turkey as a secular state. Today, enlightened Turks struggle to keep it that way.

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CHES AND GAHLA JOINTLY PRESENT
TWO PLAYS FOR DARWIN DAY
Written by Terry Sanderson

DARWIN'S BULLDOG BITES SOAPY SAM

The debate at the British Association for the
Advancement of Science at Oxford,
20 June 1860, between TH Huxley ("Darwin's Bulldog") and the Bishop of
Oxford ("Soapy Sam") in the light of *The Origin of Species*.

MRS DARWIN ENTERTAINS

On the eve of the debate, a reporter from *The Times* interviews Mrs Darwin
and is anxious to know what her views are about religion and the theories of
her husband WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 7.30 BROCKWAY ROOM,
CONWAY HALL

Admission Free but seating limited

CONWAY HALL ETHICAL SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 251396

Founded in 1793, the Society is a progressive movement whose aims are:

the study and dissemination of ethical principles based on humanism and freethought
the cultivation of a rational and humane way of life, and
the advancement of research and education in relevant fields.

We invite to membership those who reject supernatural creeds and are in
sympathy with our aims. At Conway Hall the programme includes Sunday lectures,
discussions, evening courses and the Conway Hall Sunday Concerts of chamber
music. The Society maintains a Humanist Library and Archives. The Society's
journal, *Ethical Record*, is issued monthly. Memorial meetings may be arranged.

The annual subscription is £35 (£25 if a full-time student, unwaged or over 65)

A SECULAR SOCIETY?

Keith Porteous Wood

Executive Director of the National Secular Society

Lecture to the Ethical Society, 15th December 2013

I lead campaigning at the NSS and I want to reflect on Britain's secular paradox. At the same time as being one of the least religious countries in the world, we are one of the most religiously diverse. The Westminster Parliament is the only one to give bishops the right to sit, and – perhaps as a direct result – England and Wales are the only countries in which a daily act of worship, normally Christian, is mandatory in every school, even community schools.

The secular deficit has unfortunately grown since 1996 when I took up the post. Church attendance has plummeted and their congregations are becoming a year older with every two year that passes. But over that time, religious influence hasn't dwindled, it has markedly increased. I think the largest single factor was the series of religious prime ministers, starting with Margaret Thatcher, with Tony Blair probably the most religious and John Major the least. The growth of Muslims in the population seems to have made politicians much keener to do as their leaders demand. But I'm not convinced that the Muslim population is anything like as monolithic as politicians think, and I believe that they don't automatically do what their community leaders say.

A Lack of Secularism in Education

This is the place where its absence is most noticeable to the average citizen. That is why the NSS focuses on education. But, unfortunately, education is becoming more and more religious, despite the almost abandonment of Christianity by young people and their parents. Shockingly, the Church of England is getting ever closer to taking over the functions of local education authorities as their schools are converted into academies. And they are being allowed to become more involved with community schools too, with potentially disturbing long-term effects. The NSS can give a long list of its educational campaigns and achievements.

The big lie about church schools, many of which perform well (but others don't), is that this is down to their Christian ethos. In fact, it is about selection and class; their ability to cherry pick and exclude children. University studies have shown that Church of England schools' pupils are of children from more affluent families than that of the area around the school. Another lie is that religious schools improve community cohesion; what could better aid cohesion than children from all backgrounds growing up together in the same school? A University of the South Bank study confirmed this obvious truth.

I consider that I have the best job in the country; it certainly keeps me busy. On the week before this talk I had spoken to two ministers. One was Norman Baker on a freedom of expression problem with a new Bill; the meeting had been jointly with the Christian Institute, with whom the NSS cooperates on freedom of expression issues. Another such cooperation had been on the "feel free to insult me" which had been historically successful in changing the law on insults, as it was in the face of opposition from both Government and Labour

frontbenches. In 2006, the NSS and Christian Institute had worked together to have freedom of expression safeguards inserted into the Racial and Religious Hatred Act, and no one thought they had a chance. But they won, albeit by a margin of one vote.

Another success for 2013 was the outlawing of caste discrimination, despite opposition by the Government. Britain has become the first country after India to have such laws, although the detail has yet to be implemented. My starting point in fighting for the law against caste discrimination, of which there is increasing evidence in the UK, was a meeting in this very room, the Brockway Room in Conway Hall.

It was the first ever international meeting on caste discrimination, convened by the International Humanist and Ethical Union. The outcome was the unanimous adoption of the “Conway Hall Declaration”, on caste discrimination drawn up by Roy Brown. I had invited a couple of NSS honorary associates to speak there, one of whom, Lord Avebury, played a major role in the Parliamentary victory.

The other minister I had met was Baroness Warsi at the Foreign Office. I wanted to make sure that she had seen a survey just produced by the International Humanist and Ethical Union laying bare the dreadful victimisation and discrimination against nonbelievers worldwide.

This has been a Fascinating Year

This is set out in the NSS’s annual report at:

www.secularism.org.uk

One of the most exciting campaigns has been at the United Nations in Geneva concerning child abuse perpetrated by Catholic clerics. The NSS submitted evidence about this to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as a result of which it was invited, with a few representatives of organisations representing those abused, to give oral testimony at a private meeting with the Committee. I am not of course arguing that the Catholic Church has a monopoly of such abuse, but the Church in its alter ego as the Holy See has observer status at the United Nations and is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Given the scale of the abuse, and the contribution to it by the hierarchy in moving offenders to pastures new and protecting them from prosecution, it seemed perfectly reasonable to make sure that the Committee was appropriately informed.

An outcome of the evidence given was a very harsh list of questions asked of the Holy See about child abuse. It was asked “in the light of the recognition by the Holy See of sexual violence against children committed by members of the clergy, brothers and nuns in numerous countries around the world, and given the scale of the abuses”, to provide “detailed information on all cases of child sexual abuse committed by members of the clergy, brothers and nuns or brought to the attention of the Holy See” [on a number of aspects]. This is the first such challenge at the UN of the Holy See over child abuse.

Coincidentally, another campaign involves the Catholic Church in Scotland. One of its adoption agencies called St Margaret’s refuses to include in the pool

of prospective adoptive parents those who are not Catholic and married. Such exclusions are unlawful, particularly of homosexuals, as is manifestly clear from the law, which English adoption agencies have spent a fortune trying to circumvent, and failing. As far as I am aware, St Margaret's is the last such agency in Britain to discriminate in this way. The issue is less about discrimination than doing what is best for these children, and the larger the potential pool of adoptive parents, the better. The NSS had complained to the Scottish charity regulator which had ruled that St Margaret's was acting unlawfully, both on equality grounds and as a charity because it was not acting in children's best interests. I was disappointed that the Scottish Education Secretary had publicly expressed disappointment at the charity regulator's decision, and I had expressed this at a rather frosty meeting with the Secretary at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. The case is now being considered by the charity appeal body, and I'm confident that the charity regulators' decision against St Margaret's will be upheld.*

Victory at the European Court

The campaign about which I am most delighted was a victory at the European Court of Human Rights concerning four evangelical Christian employees who claimed that their freedom of religion had been violated. The NSS had been the only organisation to submit to the court in Strasbourg that there had been no violation in any of the four cases. The three most important cases were won: a registrar refusing to carry out civil sex partnerships, a counsellor for Relate who was not prepared to provide sex counselling for same-sex couples, and a nurse who insisted in wearing a crucifix on a necklace which her employers considered to be a health and safety risk. The other 'crucifix' case, in reality about jewellery at work, was not won, but was far less important. If the other cases had been accepted by the Strasbourg court it would have irreparably damaged European equality legislation, which is rightly the envy of the world. I would encourage you to join the NSS and help support such work.

***Stop press.** Unfortunately, the regulators' decision was not upheld. [Ed.]

THE RIGHT NOT TO PRAY

Babu Gogineni

(skillguru@gmail.com)

Sanjay Salve, an Atheist teacher in Maharashtra, recently 'won' the right not to pray in school – a right that he always had, but now asserted and 'clarified' by the High Court in Mumbai. Salve works in a school named after one of India's great social reformers, but the story shows what tensions may still lie underneath the good intentions with which the school was founded.

Meanwhile, look at the Government and aided schools in India which have Saraswati idols – the Goddess of Education! And poojas are performed to that Hindu deity – in a secular state, in a secular school with children from all religions! Who will stop this illegality that is perpetrated nationwide?

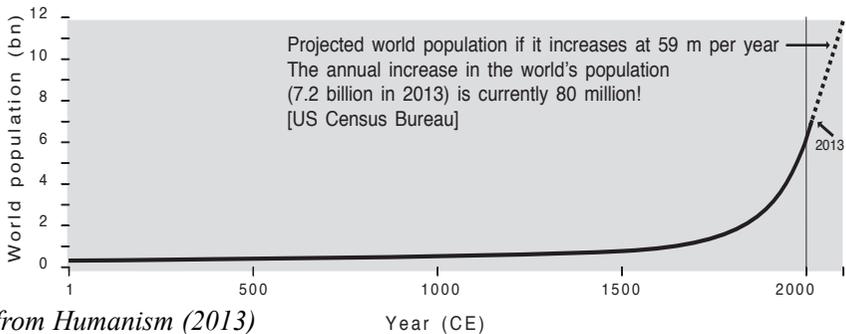
DOES POPULATION MATTER?

Lecture to the Ethical Society, 19 January, 2014

John Collier & Nina Clarke (Population Matters)

The world's population went through the seven billion mark in October 2011 but very few people really took notice. This is surprising because about 200 years ago there were only one billion people on our planet. This enormous increase represents a huge shock to the fragile environment of our lovely planet. There will be many more people before there are fewer. The UN's latest projections are that by 2050 there could be 9.6 billion of us and perhaps 10.9 billion by 2100. Why don't we take notice?

The population 'explosion'



Perhaps it's because we just take it for granted that nothing can be done and in any case the numbers are so big that it's hard to envisage what they really mean?. So, put another way, we may be adding another Germany to the world's population every year. But growth is not evenly spread across the planet. Africa is the main contributor with the UN predicting an increase in the continent's population from under one billion now to 2.4 billion in 2050 and perhaps 4.2 billion by 2100. In the developed world some countries have static or even declining populations, but the USA for example is predicted by the UN to add another 142 million to its population by the end of the century and each one of those will be a very high consumer of the world's resources.

Here in the UK the population is growing faster now than it has done for a generation. In the year to 30 June 2012 we added 419,000 to our numbers which now total some 64 million people. Some of this increase (165,000) comes from net migration but the larger part (254,000) is the excess of births over deaths. The popular focus of the media on the negative aspects of 'immigration' is, in our view, rather misplaced. So we ask again – why don't we all take more notice?

One reason could be that any intervention in population growth raises some difficult ethical questions: Do people have a right to have children? How many children? Do those who campaign for a sustainable population have a right to oppose some cultural and religious beliefs? We at Population Matters believe in freedom of choice for all, but an informed choice.

The Eventual Balance

One optimistic reason is that recent history shows that as standards of living rise the death rate falls first, then couples have fewer children and eventually the birth rate gets into balance with the death rate. The UN predicts that we will reach this point in about 2030 and the birth rate will then drop further to about 2.0 children per woman (global replacement level is 2.1). So it's going to come right in the end, these optimists say. But according to the WWF the current population of the Earth already exceeds its bio-capacity by 50%. We are already consuming a planet-and-a-half of resources and if everyone lived like we do in the UK we would need three Earths to support our current lifestyles and as much as five Earths if we were to live like the Americans do.

There is also significant poverty in much of the world (nearly 900 million people are said to be undernourished) and health is often poor (the UN estimates that as many as one billion people live in slums). Through foreign aid and charity work we struggle to lift these people out of such poverty, but the impact of any progress made is lessened and often wiped out by ever more people.

Our increasing numbers also adversely affect our natural environment by threatening or compromising wildlife and driving the demand for more out of our finite planet.

- Half of the world's mammals are in decline and more than one third face extinction (according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) and bio-diversity has fallen by 40% in the last 25 years.
- Water shortages affect one in three people on nearly every continent and nearly 900 million people lack access to proper drinking water.
- Food is short with nearly one billion people being undernourished at present but the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation is predicting that demand for food will rise by 70% by 2050.
- Land is often overused and depleted and deforestation continues raising flood risk significantly in some parts of the world.
- Minerals and fossil fuels are increasingly hard to find leading to exploration in increasingly remote and often ecologically fragile parts of the world such as the Arctic.

These issues and concerns are often well recognised but seldom is the impact of ever more people mentioned when actions to mitigate them are being considered. Many NGOs and many individuals see a reduction in consumption and technological advances as the answer. Indeed these would help, though such aims are hard to achieve. Consumption in China is going up rapidly as the economy develops. The fundamental need, though, is to reach a level of population that is sustainable.

Unplanned Pregnancies

The most obvious answer is to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies. Something like 40% of all pregnancies worldwide are said to be unintended with

the figure being a high as 47% in the developing world. So there appears to be an astonishing unmet need for contraception. Only 0.4% of the EU budget, for example, is for family planning.

Governments around the world are not rising to this challenge with, in some cases, overseas aid budgets for family planning being actively reduced. To some extent the gaps are being filled by entrepreneurs such as Bill Gates of Microsoft who focuses much of his charitable giving on family planning. On one estimate providing family planning access for 200 million women costs 'only' £3.6 billion a year.

Has Business a Role to Play?

In our view major transnational corporations should add population concerns to their plans for achieving "sustainability" and as a contribution to their much vaunted corporate social responsibility activities. Pragmatically one significant way of doing this is to actively promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. And another is to encourage the employment of older people. As people live longer the number of older people relative to younger ones increases. This can be seen as a burden on society but handled properly, as they are finding in Japan, as a force for good.

It is also argued by some business leaders and senior politicians that a growing number of younger people is needed to fuel economic growth. Inevitably this will fuel further population growth and makes us question if economic growth can ever be genuinely sustainable? For all these reasons we believe that population really does matter and want to ensure that something is done locally, nationally and internationally.

We are both active supporters of Population Matters which is a fast growing charity focused on these issues with some 3,500 members and 6,000 supporters as well as some very distinguished patrons. Population Matters wants to ensure that population is always included in debates on environmental, resource, economic and social issues. In partnership with other similar organisations around the world it also wants to promote a global consensus that population stabilisation will

- reduce environmental damage,
- help us achieve a genuinely sustainable way of living and
- help maintain if not actively enhance the quality of life for our generation and those that come after us.

Perhaps the best way to end is to quote one of our famous patrons – Sir David Attenborough: *"All environmental problems become harder – and ultimately impossible – to solve with ever more people."*

The views expressed in this Journal are not necessarily those of the Society.

ESSAY — THE BREAK

Tom Rubens

It was in the 18th century that the first overt break with adherence to the ontology of Christianity was made by a number of Western philosophers. The rupture took the general form of anti-metaphysical and anti-theological thinking, and occurred mainly in France (though with the notable exception of Tom Paine in Britain). This break was, in fact, relatively recent, given that Christian ontology had been accepted, indeed often promulgated, by Western thinkers from as far back as the days of such men as Origen in the 2nd—3rd centuries CE. For most of that huge period of time in Western Europe, adherence had been in the form of Catholicism, and then, with the Reformation, in the additional form of Protestantism. ¹ In this perspective, the 18th century is, so to speak, the day before yesterday.

Nevertheless, recent though the break was, it marked a turning point in Western thought as important as any that has ever transpired. Some would regard it as actually the most important. It was a crucial part of the long process, one begun in the Renaissance but gathering major impetus from the 17th century onwards, by which an empirical, experience-based, investigative and experimental approach to understanding reality gradually superseded approaches of other kinds. In turn, this process involved another: the transition, on the part of many thinkers, from a super-naturalistic and theistic view of reality to a naturalistic and either agnostic or atheistic one.

The empirical and naturalistic perspectives are precisely the ones which have slowly become predominant in advanced Western thought over the last 4 centuries, and especially since the 18th. This preponderance is unprecedented in Western history, absent not only from (obviously) the centuries of Christian doctrinal supremacy but also from the pre-Christian era of Graeco-Roman culture, where pagan theism (in the form of polytheism), and therefore superstition and non-empirical viewpoints, played a leading role. For some equivalent to the spirit of advanced Western thinking since the 17th century, we have to go back to the pre-Socratic philosophers in the early period of ancient Greek thought: these were a significant minority who displayed a remarkably open-minded empiricism in the face of the theistic and non-empirical outlook of most of their contemporaries.

The Growth of Philosophical Materialism

Let us look now in some detail at intellectual developments in the 18th century, in France, and at their sequels in the 19th century. A key movement in French thought at this time was the growth of philosophical materialism: the view that physical matter is either the only reality, or is the only part of reality which causes other things to exist or happen. This position clearly clashes with Christian theology, or at least its mainstream, which sees deity as (of course) not only a reality but also as a *non-material* one which created all material things. ²

The leading materialists in France were Diderot, D'Holbach, La Mettrie and Helvetius. Diderot's materialism entailed a molecular view of matter and an

early theory of biological evolution. D'Holbach, in line with evolutionary thinking, argued that there was physical continuity between man and sub-human animals — and, indeed, with the whole of the natural world. He added that mental activity was explicable in terms of the organisation and activity of matter. La Mettrie held the view that matter was not inert but perpetually in motion; hence there was no need for the religious postulate of a divine prime mover. Helvetius regarded sensation as the basis of cognition, with sensation having a material basis.

The above arguments for materialism were to have extensive repercussions on subsequent Western thought in the 19th century. The successors to the aforementioned French philosophers include Buchner, Marx and Engels. Marx in particular was especially influenced by La Mettrie's view of matter as dynamic rather than static. These three men were all atheists.

However, other ontological positions also developed in the 19th century, ones which equally challenged the Christian position. To these we now turn. One of the first relevant figures of major status was Schopenhauer. He postulated, as the fundamental reality, an entity called 'will': something as remote from the Christian concept of deity as can be imagined. At the same time, he argued, 'will', unlike the 'matter' of the materialists, could not be scientifically categorised, and so could not be an object of scientific study: it was, not physical but *metaphysical*.³ Finally, Schopenhauer's antagonism to Christian theism was part of his aversion to theism of any kind. He was unreservedly atheistic.

There is some parallel between Schopenhauer's perspective and that of a later 19th century thinker: Spencer. Even though Spencer deployed the word 'energy' to identify what he saw as the cause and source of all things encountered in experience — “an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed”⁴ — reference was still, as with Schopenhauer, to a non-theistic category as the fundamental reality. Hence it meant the discarding of Christian theology. However, in contrast to Schopenhauer, it led Spencer to agnosticism, not atheism.

The Universe “A Monster of Energy”

Spencer's term 'energy' finds echoes even further on in the 19th century, in the declaration of Nietzsche that the universe was “a monster of energy, without beginning, without end.”^{a 5} Once more, the distance from Christian theology is obvious, though Nietzsche did not join Spencer in the agnostic camp but Schopenhauer in the atheist one.

More could be said about the 19th century — for example, about the atheism of Bentham and Comte and the agnosticism of J. S. Mill and T.H. Huxley, plus the influence of Schopenhauer's atheism on Nietzsche, von Hartmann and Vaihinger—but perhaps enough has been specified to indicate that, by the end of the 1800s, most of the significant thinking taking place in Western Europe was a continuation and consolidation of the break with Christian ontology which had first become public in the 1700s. This extension and reinforcement took Western philosophy to a position which has since maintained itself with full philosophical integrity. Briefly as regards the 20th century: Russell, Santayana,

Sartre, Dewey, Heidegger and Ayer are some examples of leading minds which have flourished within an atheistic or agnostic framework. The mental atmosphere in which freethinkers in the West now live (and in North America as well as Europe) is one that was slowly formed in the 18th and 19th centuries.

One of the results of this formation is that, now, anyone in the West who advances Christian ontological and theological claims can expect, in response, a demand to vindicate those claims in the most rigorous manner possible — by reference to the current state of scientific knowledge and to the tenets of logic. By contrast, for most of the West's past from the early CE centuries onward, this was not the case. Indeed, it only became the case, approximately, from the later part of the 19th century, with the gradually cumulative effect of the intellectual developments we have been examining. That it is what now obtains is something for which the freethinker should be thankful; and something which s/he should continually strive to preserve.

Lastly, sensitivity toward and compassion for our fellow human beings does not require support from the ontology of Christianity — or, for that matter, from any religious ontology. The atheist and the agnostic can make as extensive a contribution to mankind's well-being as can anyone else. Such contribution is by no means the preserve of the Christian, or of religious believers in general.

Notes:

1 Of course, if by 'Western' we mean the whole of Europe, then brief reference must be made to the Christian Orthodox Church which was prevalent in Eastern Europe; but only to note that no comparable break with Christian ontology by philosophers took place in Eastern Europe in the 18th century, or for a long time afterward. Fundamentalist Catholics and Protestants still subscribe to the ontology in question.

2 A distinction between mainstream and non-mainstream theology needs to be made because there has been at least one thinker who affirmed the existence of the Christian deity but who was, at the same time, a materialist: Hobbes, in the 17th century. He argued that God, like everything else that existed, "is corporeal, that is to say, body." (*Leviathan*, chapter 46) But in saying this, Hobbes was extremely unorthodox. The same point applies to any Christians who profess the closely-related doctrine of pantheism: the view that deity is the same as the entirety of the physical world.

3 Given Schopenhauer's own words on the subject, this must be taken as his position on 'will', despite the argument (q.v.) which attempts to equate his 'will' with the energy of modern physics.

4 Spencer's 'energy' cannot be identified with the 'matter' of 19th century philosophers. The same point applies to what will be said about Nietzsche in the next paragraph.

5 This postulate, like Spencer's, has links with the view held by a number of 20th century physicists that energy is the fundamental reality.

a In *The Will to Power*, tr. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, and ed. Kaufmann: New York, Vintage Books, 1968 (1967), p. 550. (The text was first published in 1906.)

BOOK REVIEW — **INFIDEL (2007)** by **Ayaan Hirsi Ali**
Review by Paul Rhodes

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a Somali woman who turned her back on Islam and fled to Holland. She recounts her life as a little girl moving from Yemen, to Kuwait / Saudi / Somalia / Kenya and eventually fleeing to Holland via Germany. She tells in detail the consequences of being raised under Islam and the status and terrible, by Western standards and values, trials and tribulations for Muslim women. Her eventual campaign, having achieved freedom and independence, was for the rights of Muslim women, to protect them from persecution, to obtain an amnesty for all illegal immigrants in Holland and in the bigger picture to draw the attention of western politicians to what being a Muslim is all about.

My first experiences of Arab / Muslim culture were projects in Cairo starting in 1967 just after the 6 day war. I was young and naive and simply got on with doing my job, fixing problems and experiencing tourist Cairo I was briefly arrested by army people in Cairo on suspicion of being an Israeli spy (I was rigging VHF radio antenna downtown). My knowledge of Islam was superficial and I had no interest in learning more, the job was demanding enough. No more work in the Mid East until 1976 and the serious ongoing work started in 1978. Iran (pre the revolution), Saudi, Lebanon, all of the Gulf States. In Saudi as there were no cinemas, no theatres, no bars etc. and working, for the most part on my own, I read much of The Koran / Quran.

The Faith is Not Negotiable

Of course I quickly understood the status of women and how the Koran, Suras and Hadith explain in great detail how Muslims must lead their lives. The Trilogy stipulates every aspect of Muslim life including how Muslim men will, not may, treat their women. To be a true believer in ‘the one true faith’ one must obey all instructions given in The Koran, Suras and Hadith. This is not negotiable; these are the words of Allah, the one true God and his messenger Mohammed. From 1982 I also worked in India and Pakistan and saw how Islam and Hinduism were practiced. My work took me into every area of public and private life.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali lived the life that the vast majority of Muslim girls live in any Islamic country. At one point in Nairobi she joined the Muslim Brotherhood and became devout. Had she remained on that course and completed the marriage arranged for her by her father her life would have been very different from the life she describes in this book. In fact she did go through some kind of ceremony but in the absence of her father or brother or any male guardian. She had been increasingly questioning aspects of Islamic teachings; however in Islam one does not question the word of God. She also resented the demeaning status or women but at least her father agreed to her having an education. She, like all young Muslim women had to suffer genital mutilation. She tells her story honestly and comprehensively. Of course all the way along this journey of discovery and questioning she was condemned. She was also very seriously assaulted by a Mullah and nearly died. Her marriage to a Somali Canadian was agreed and all the terms arranged. She was to travel to Toronto via Germany. Throughout, she was controlled and chaperoned by members of her family or

tribe. Her behaviour and actions at all times must be agreed to by her father or members of her family. Shame and honour are essential elements of life under Islam (also Hinduism and I'm sure many other traditions and faiths) and to disobey orders will bring shame on the family and, by association, the wider family and the tribe.

Ayaan Fled

Ayaan Hirsi Ali did disobey her father and fled from her uncle's (?) house in Germany to Holland where she sought and obtained asylum. In taking this brave decision she defied her father and lost her family and tribe. As she continued to challenge Islam she also put her life in danger and I assume that her life is still in danger. Incredible though it may seem, she became a Dutch MP. Obviously she was a very strong-minded woman.

Working as a part time translator for the police, immigration officials and the Dutch Courts, she met many women and young girls who had been raped and beaten. She concentrated her political work on trying to create legislation to protect the lives and welfare of female Muslim immigrants and to obtain an amnesty for all illegal immigrants. Technically she herself was an illegal immigrant as she had lied on her application forms. She of course became the target of offended Muslims. Her collaborator in the short film *Submission*, Theo van Gogh, was assassinated in a very brutal way. All done in the name of Allah and all in accordance with Koranic instruction. She found great naiveté about Islam amongst all Dutch MPs and the majority refused to believe her stories of how Muslim women were being used and abused. These MPs had no experience of Islam and were too lazy to do the tedious research to discover the truth.

Ayaan was determined and battled on, eventually winning majority support. Many MPs were converted following the brutal murder of van Gogh. She found that the Dutch police and immigration officials kept no record of honour killings. She did manage to have a survey completed in three police areas; the numbers were very alarming. Only the naive would be surprised. Dutch MPs and administrators, just like their counterparts in the UK or here in Canada, were and are ignorant of the laws of Islam and the practices conducted within those closed societies. "Islam is just another religion and it's only a few extremists that conduct acts of terror." Even when Muslims demonstrated on the streets of London with banners saying "Decapitate the Infidel, Death to the Unbelievers" no action was taken. Western governments provide financial support to Islamic organisations. In Holland and Britain the governments have financed Muslim schools. One in my UK home town was closed recently as all its teaching and practices were "in accordance with Islam".

Islam Incompatible with Western Values

Ayaan Hirsi Ali did concentrate of course on her own battles and she related in great detail her own traumas and those of other women, particularly those fleeing the civil war in Somalia (around 1992/3). She also explained why Islam is totally incompatible with Western values, traditions and laws. This was covered only briefly. She made mention of the decapitations, amputations and stonings that take place on a regular basis in Saudi, Iran, Pakistan and elsewhere. I have seen public hangings in other Muslim countries. The West never talks

about the violation of human rights in these countries and yet is quick to do so in other countries. The truth is a problem. What to do after the horse has bolted? The UK and France are good examples of where, as the Muslim population increases so do their demands for the formal introduction of Sharia Law (already practiced anyway!) and other concessions to their faith, Muslim schools for example. Marriages are arranged and honour killings do take place. Hopefully genital mutilation does not!

One of Ayaan's teachers in Nairobi, Sister Aziza, explained to her students "How decadent the West is, how corrupt, licentious, idolatrous, money-grubbing, soulless".

Islamic apologists for the accusations made by Ayaan always carefully select examples from the first part of the Koran, the Mecca Koran, which is more liberal and inclusive than the following part, the Medina Koran. However the Koran, Sura / Tawhid are NOT negotiable, they are the word of Allah, the one true God. Mohammed is the perfect pattern for life.

64% of The Koran is devoted to Kaffirs (the unbelievers). Kaffirs may be deceived, plotted against, hated, enslaved, mocked and tortured. Muslims must not befriend a Kaffir (13 verses devoted to this). Only 2.6 % of the texts devoted to Kaffirs is positive. Of all of the texts devoted to Jihad, 98% is devoted to the Greater Jihad, that of the Sword. The Koran represents only 14% of all Islamic sacred texts, the Sura and Hadith 86%

There are many pages and words in the Trilogy devoted to women. 5.3% give them high status, 23% equal status and 71% a low status.

A Reformation Is Necessary

Ayaan Hirsi Ali devoted her adult life to persuade Muslims that a reformation was / is necessary, that the treatment of women was archaic and cruel and for Western Governments to wake up to the dangers that massive levels of immigration of Muslims, who could never accept the western way of life and values, would create. Most religions and faiths provide a set of beliefs and values for their own adherents to follow, they do not see all others as Jahil / Kaffirs or doing the Devil's work. Various Muslim sects have created a more tolerant set of rules, Ismailis and Suffis being two examples. All have failed as one must accept the Trilogy in total. None of it is negotiable.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali's book was deeply moving. A very brave woman who fought and paid a high price for women's rights in Islam and for a new and more moderate attitude to be taken by those who control Islamic practices. Perhaps, in time, there will be a reformation in Islam but it is very difficult indeed to see how this can be achieved. The Koran / Sura and Hadith are inviolate. They are the words of God. They are the instructions from Mohammed (PBUH) as how one MUST live one's life to be a true believer and enter the Kingdom of God.

Infidel should be compulsory reading for ALL western politicians and decision makers.

WOODEN HORSE OF TROY FOUND

Jennifer R. Jeynes

We all know the story of the Wooden Horse. In Asia Minor the Ancient Greeks were besieging the citadel of Troy but the Trojans were not at all willing to capitulate. Clearly they did not appreciate the *nous* of their opponents; they did like presents however. Which Greek exactly had the very, very good idea to send a gift of a soldier-filled Horse to the Trojans is not clear. I was fortunate enough to see for myself recently that, rather surprisingly, said Horse is still there! Don't just take my word for it, there I am in the picture, peering out.



The vast trench Heinrich Schliemann dug through the hill of Troy, destroying everything in the way, in his search for gold.

Vergil accounts for why the Trojans ever after were apprehensive about receiving any more Greek presents, *timeo Danaos et dona ferentes. (I fear the Greeks even when bearing gifts)*



VIEWPOINTS

Is Meritocracy Inhumane?

Tom Rubens writes “If it is agreed that the best kind of society is the genuinely meritocratic one...” (*ER* January 2014) In fact I do not agree. The word ‘meritocracy’ was coined by Michael Young in his 1958 book *The Rise of the Meritocracy*. This was a satire on the view that people who contribute more to society should be better rewarded. The pernicious result, as Young suggested, would be the justification of inequality of outcome.

The more humane approach, as expressed for example by Blanqui, is of course “From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs”. It is also the more rational for two simple reasons.

Firstly, since none of us earns our native endowments, whether of intelligence, talent, capacity for hard work, or anything else, to reward us for manifesting our possession of these gifts is morally questionable. It could be excused on consequentialist grounds: that people would only be motivated to contribute more if they were rewarded more. Is this somewhat jaundiced view of human nature what advocates of meritocracy really believe?

Secondly, and even worse, a genuine meritocracy, since it would reward the lucky and punish the unlucky, would always be plagued by resentment, and would therefore be politically unstable.

Peter Wilkinson – Southwark

A Defence of ‘Weak’ Atheism

Sue Mayer (Viewpoints, *ER* Jan 2014) uses the terms ‘weak’ and ‘passive’ in a manner that tries to portray my type of (non-believing) atheist (or agnostic, if you prefer – I couldn’t care less) as weak and passive – and therefore deplorable -- rather than as a mere convenient label for distinguishing two fundamentally different approaches to atheism, as set out in *ER* Nov 2013.

In contrast, she portrays her ‘strong’ or ‘positive’ atheism as making it necessary to challenge and oppose religious notions of the existence of a god. Fair enough – if that’s how she feels – but she goes too far in asserting that ‘weak’ atheists “are those who may well [?] not believe in god, but are unwilling to criticise or oppose the malign effects of religion and defend their practices and teaching, other than the most extreme, inexcusable examples”.

As a weak atheist:

- (i) I do not believe that god exists;
- (ii) I *am* willing, in principle, to criticise and oppose the malign effects of religion;
- (iii) I *do not defend* the practices and teaching of religious devotees.

As to (i); my lack of belief in this regard is why I am a ‘weak’ atheist, rather than someone who positively *believes* that god does *not* exist. The latter position is of course one of ‘belief’ – hence the facile argument that (strong) atheism is just another belief system. Ms Mayer’s position seems to go beyond that, however,

in requiring a *positive assertion* that god does not exist. The distinction is perhaps subtle, but (as with her tendentious use of ‘weak’ and ‘passive’) gives rise to the accusation she complains of, that strong atheists are aggressive and extreme – ironic, in view of the fact that this is how she is painting the religious.

I adhere to the principles of science and probability, and I am not aware of any objective and testable evidence for the existence of god, or any necessity for its existence. The fact that very large numbers of people do believe in the existence of a god is not evidence for its existence, any more than in the past it was evidence that the world was flat. So I am with Dawkins in *believing* – on the basis of that lack of evidence and the lack of necessity – that god *probably* does not exist. But as with the black swan, I cannot logically rule out the possibility.

As to (ii); one should of course criticise and oppose malign effects of anything. The effects described by Ms Mayer are well-known, and scarcely contentious; but criticism and opposition has somehow to get past the strong human instinct to *believe what one prefers to be true*, and to overcome the special pleading of religious adherents for their particular brand of faith that allows them to ignore any rational argument, and to permit, and indeed blindly and viciously enforce, those malign effects.

As to (iii); people can believe what they like, so long as it does not harm others. That is not a *defence* of their beliefs – merely a statement of the freethinking principle on which the Ethical Society is based.

Ian Armitage – London

Against ‘Muscular’ Atheists

The rather intemperate letter from Sue Mayer (Viewpoints, *ER* Jan p.9) is almost a parody of the *Life of Brian* and reminiscent of the type of letter which appears with depressing regularity in the pages of *Ethical Record* and the *New Humanist*. Her attacks on the shortcomings of contemporary society: patriarchy, inequality etc are all rather implausibly laid at the door of organised religion. It is presumably addressed to those of us atheists who are not atheist enough but need some re-education from Ms Mayer.

Most people in Britain have no formal belief in religion and/or do not practice it. But that has not produced more equality or altruism and mutual well-being as Mayer suggests -- quite the reverse. There is increasing inequality in the neoliberal superficial coca-cola world now dominated by Google, Amazon, Facebook, ebay etc.

Is atheism a belief in itself or a belief for some other purpose? Mayer does protest too much methinks. Apparently it is not enough to be an atheist but one is expected to support a whole litany of social or other issues to be properly atheist. For the record I am not an atheist because I believe in a ‘better society’, whatever that means, but because I am an atheist. But being an atheist does not mean that I subscribe to any other position, like equality. I am not waiting for a humanist utopia of the type promised by Mayer when religions have disappeared and the world is wholly committed to humanism.

Some atheists, but not me, will only be happy when every religious building has disappeared or been destroyed -- presumably after an atheist godmother has waved a magic wand. Muscular atheists have a profile which is humourless, uninspiring, unsmiling and puritanical and dominated by those with an obsessive hatred for religion. Perhaps those more 'muscular and robust atheists' should create a monastic retreat called Atheist Towers where atheist pilgrims could take a rest *en route* to the atheist Nirvana without patriarchy, oppression etc.

Angela Pinter

Memory Wars

Mo Costandi gives a very misleading account of the so-called 'memory wars'. America in the 90s was gripped by a number of entirely fictitious syndromes, alleged disorders supported by an unholy coalition of vested interests, opportunists and sloganeers which included fundamentalists. This manufactured Salem-like hysteria included the social work, legal and medical professions. *The Myth of Repressed Memory* by Loftus and Ketcham contained compelling, indeed overwhelming, evidence of the falsity of the claims made.

Most of the cases were brought against well-off individuals where there was a temptation of monetary reward and or in the aftermath of business rivalries, personal vendettas and attempts at blackmail and sometimes because of breakdown within family relationships. Elaine Showalter in her *Hystories* (1997) discussed six alleged beliefs: Dissociative Personality Disorder, Satanic Ritual Abuse [SRA], Alien Abduction, Recovered Memory and, more controversially, Gulf War Syndrome and ME. She described these as pre-millennial anxieties.

I discussed this with Elaine Showalter briefly and she agreed that a number of additional books could be written about similar beliefs. For instance, a large number of confessions are made each year to police stations, about crimes which have not been committed, by attention seekers. As Showalter points out, allegations of SRA first emerged after the legalisation of abortion in Western countries

Allegations of recovered memory arose on the basis of fabricated evidence; almost all the convictions were overturned on appeal. In Britain most of the cases collapsed or were halted. (It is worth noting that unsubstantiated and false internet-based allegations were made against a leading philosopher who has spoken at Conway Hall. Although the charges were dismissed, nothing happened to the two anonymous accusers who had made similar previous accusations elsewhere. Nothing will be gained by naming him.)

False beliefs, including allegations of recovered memory and the memory wars, arose at the conjuncture of several factors: the rise of the internet, then in its infancy, which rapidly urban myths, *soit-disant* 'feminist' critiques of psychology, disputes within the psychoanalytic community (too complex to be summarised here) which led to legal action, the phenomenon of self-similarity and new myths rapidly filling the vacuum created by the decline of formal religion, the increasing use of hypnosis, a very confused agenda of what was called anti-psychiatry and a number of invented anxieties.

In the aftermath of the contrived and constructed myth of widespread child sexual abuse a number of propositions were unchallenged while families were torn apart. Myths created a trail of continuing tragedies affecting several generations. Much of this hysteria was in *Courage to Heal* by Davis and Bass which stated “If you think it happened it probably did.”

This would not be acceptable in any other category of alleged crime and creates a situation with far reaching consequences, where the accusation, or hearsay, is the whole of the ‘evidence’. Additionally it was claimed that denial of the accusation was itself ‘proof of guilt’. These memories were not recovered but implanted and are now known as false memories. Dissociative amnesia is not a disorder which is generally recognised. Most of these alleged ‘memories’ included satanic ritual abuse, alien abduction and a number of other fantasies, which do not contain a shred of evidence, were taken seriously by gullible onlookers and professionals for apparently ideological reasons but espoused by hysterical snivellers. Embarrassingly for the believers it has also led to a ‘retracted memory’ movement whereby accusers publicly acknowledge that their claims were false.

Thankfully the high tide of such fantasies has receded and such allegations would be taken less seriously now. The real fallout was that the ‘professionals’ who indulged in these lurid fantasies escaped unharmed without loss of jobs or pension rights but whole families and lives were wrecked because of the vanity and self-interest of such ‘professionals’. Some victims of this process are taking legal action against professionals and others. We must wish them every success.

Mazin Zeki – London

Israel and Palestine

It is pleasing to find that the question of Israel and Palestine was the focus of the first page editorial of the January 2014 issue of *ER* (‘Now can we have a Palestinian state?’). It is an issue that should be of keen interest to secularists. In the brief history provided, however, no mention is made of the fact that the Palestinians bitterly opposed Zionists’ design for a Jewish state on their land, going back to the publication of *The Jewish State* in 1896 by one of the founders of Zionism, Theodore Herzl. The Balfour Declaration was rejected on the grounds that an imperial power has no right to promise the land of one people to another; and the same reasoning also applies to the UN resolution of 1947 to partition Palestine. The injustice done to and dispossession of the Palestinians is the root of the conflict. This was highlighted in 1938, ten years before the creation of Israel, by Christian Arab George Antonius in his book *The Arab Awakening*:

The treatment meted out to Jews in Germany and other European countries is a disgrace to its authors and to modern civilisation; but posterity will not exonerate any country that fails to bear its proper share of the sacrifices needed to alleviate Jewish suffering and distress. To place the brunt of the burden upon Arab Palestine is a miserable evasion of the duty that lies upon the whole civilised world. It is also morally outrageous. No code of morals can justify the persecution of one people in an attempt to relieve the persecution of another.

None other than Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, understood this clearly. In a famous remark he made to the Zionist leader Nahum Goldmann, a few years after the creation of Israel, he stated with great candour:

Why should the Arabs make peace? If I was an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural: we have taken their country. Sure, God promised it to us, but what does that matter to them? Our God is not theirs. We come from Israel, it's true, but two thousand years ago, and what is that to them? There has been antisemitism, the Nazis, Hitler, Auschwitz, but was that their fault? They only see one thing: we have come here and stolen their country. Why should they accept that? They may perhaps forget in one or two generations' time, but for the moment there is no chance. So it's simple: we have to stay strong and maintain a powerful army. Our whole policy is there. Otherwise the Arabs will wipe us out.

Ben-Gurion provides the nub of the problem and, after three and four generations, Arabs and Palestinians have still not forgotten. Moreover, the prospect of a two-state solution is pretty much over: Bantustan-type statelets in Gaza and the West Bank will not lead to a sustained peace; moreover there is little chance that the half a million Jewish settlers in the West Bank will be removed. Apart from the issue of justice, what is important for secularists here is to remember that for Zionists, as Ben-Gurion (an atheist) made clear, 'the Bible is our mandate', that is, God promised the 'holy land' to the Jews. The Islamists of Hamas are playing the same game by their belief that the whole of historic Palestine is an Islamic *waqf*, or endowment. The only just solution is blindingly obvious: a secular state where all are equal under the law, something considered fundamental to a democratic polity in Europe. Now can we have such a state in Israel-Palestine?

Rumy Hasan – Brighton

(The arguments here are developed in my new book *Dangerous Liaisons: The Clash between Israel and Zionism* {reviewed in the *ER* December 2013 p 21 by Mazin Zeki [Ed] })

Beyond Equality of Opportunity

A major source of the inequality of outcomes which would persist even if we all started off with equal ability and educational qualifications (*ER* Jan 2014 p10) is our market-oriented and patriarchal society. Hence bankers, who at best keep the financial system ticking over and at worst wreck the economy, are paid many multiples more than a nurse, teacher, cook or care assistant.

It's no coincidence that these latter occupations are mainly staffed by women while bankers are mainly men. Despite the historic struggle for equal pay by Ford Dagenham's women machinists in 1968, followed by equalities legislation of the 1970s, trade union negotiators still had to educate themselves about equal rights for women and then mount protracted legal fights to establish 'equal pay for work of equal value' in separate cases; for example comparing a cook and a house painter. The Equalities Act of 2010 built on this, requiring that men and women employed in the same company, doing work rated as 'equivalent' in terms of skills and demands, should receive equal pay. Local councils have

dragged their feet in granting equal pay for women and men among manual workers. It is as if the patriarchal assumption that men need higher pay ‘to support their family’ – even though many women raise a family on their own – still influences those who set pay and grading scales and determine what is ‘equivalent work’; so progress is glacial.

If we are interested in social justice, however, equal pay for women is not enough. A more radical interpretation of ‘equal pay for work of equal value’ is to base wages on the value of a person’s work to society, irrespective of skills or qualifications. This would break the long-established divide between manual and non-manual jobs and open the path towards equal incomes. Isn’t a bricklayer’s or care assistant’s work as valuable to society as that of a graphic designer or insurance broker? Isn’t a farmer’s work more beneficial to us all than that of an engineer or executive in the arms industry? ‘Merit’, as conventionally understood, may be essential in ensuring doctors, pilots and teachers are competent in their specialism but it is a poor excuse for unequal pay.

And what of the volunteers who do so much to run civic society? Or those who are paid little or nothing because they must raise children or look after frail older people? Don’t they deserve and need a decent income? A Citizen’s Income, payable unconditionally to all legally resident for a number of years, would be a start, followed by compression of hourly wages and an end to unwarranted assumptions that pay must reflect conventionally-defined ‘merit’ or notional scarcity; if bankers want to leave UK, we could help them pack!

Social justice requires a more ambitious concept than equality of opportunity.

Jay Ginn – Coulsdon

Diversity on the BBC; Ingersollian Jokes

1. I recently wrote to the BBC, as I also did last year, regarding the regular New Year message given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I said that I had no quibble with the archbishop giving such an address, providing there was a parallel message given by a well-known rationalist/humanist for all those millions of viewers who base their beliefs on reason. (I suggested a number of names, some of whom were well-known broadcasters, who, I felt, could do this admirably).

It occurred to me that that the greater the number who approach the BBC on this matter, the better the chance of achieving this aim, and hoped that as many of your readers as possible would contact them (BBC Audience Services, PO Box 1922, Darlington, DL3 0UR).

2. Reading Charles Rudd’s review of the new book on Robert Ingersoll (*The Great Agnostic* by Susan Jacoby, *ER* Jan 14 p.7) reminded me of when I researched him some time ago. I discovered that he commonly had two lines of attack when speaking to audiences, the first, the theological bases for Christian belief, the second, supposed facts in the Old Testament, e.g. the size of the ark needed to accommodate all known species and posing questions such as ‘How did Noah deal with lions and polar bears at the same time’ and ‘How did snails that originated 12,000 miles away get home after the flood?’

Such points may seem somewhat quirky today, but we have to remember that preachers of the period then referred to the bible as being totally true, word for word.

John Severs – Durham City

Looking to the Future of the Society

The 1st February this year is the 190th anniversary of the opening of the South Place Chapel. In 1924, the hundredth anniversary was celebrated with a concert which included the first appeal for funds to build what was to become Conway Hall.

From the late 1950s the scope of the SPES activities was gradually reduced until ten years ago all that was organised in house were the Sunday lectures and publishing *Ethical Record*. Since that time things have begun to change: the organisation of the Sunday Concerts has been taken back in house, the library is now electronically catalogued, the music library catalogue is now on line, our archives are now catalogued and conserved in an environmentally controlled room, we have a commercial sound and lighting system in the main hall, there is a splendid new website where up-to-date information about our events can be viewed along with some of our archive material.

We still have much work to do on the building to bring it up to 21st century standards. We need to address the future direction of the Society by increasing its profile and expanding on the number and size of the events we produce. We need to attract a wider audience than we have at present, while still remaining true to our ethical values. This may, in some cases mean changing the format of how we do things but just as in 1824 there was a new chapel and in 1924 there was the vision for a new building, in 2014 we need to look to the future and not rest on our laurels.

Giles Enders – Stoke Newington

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SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Jennifer R. Jaynes

Pope Francis has had a generally positive press so far in his incumbency. He has a seemingly engaging personality, knows when to smile and has rejected some of the lavish trappings that go with the job. Even his talk about a life of poverty (*viz* his namesake) does not sound ridiculously hypocritical. Some lapsed Catholics – but definitely not this one – have even been attracted back into the fold.

However in December last, Vatican officials were questioned by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as to why it would not open its files on priests known to be child abusers. Now the Committee's report has been published and the UN watchdog has thoroughly denounced the 'Holy' See for adopting policies which allowed priests to molest thousands of children sexually. It criticised particularly what can be termed the 'geographical dispersion of offenders policy' when erring clerics are merely moved to another parish, unpunished.

The report also criticised RC attitudes towards contraception, homosexuality and abortion. In the litany of scandals it concludes there was a systematic cover-up by the Vatican and the good name of the church was always put before the needs of children. It adopted policies and practices more concerned with the protection of perpetrators and failed many children in its care. The appalling Magdalene Laundries in Ireland, depositories for slave labour of unmarried and therefore sinful mothers, were particularly highlighted.

The Vatican is of course a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and immediately moved into damage limitation mode. It regrets the UN attempt to interfere with church teaching and says it is distorted and ideologically slanted.

Suffered the little children indeed.

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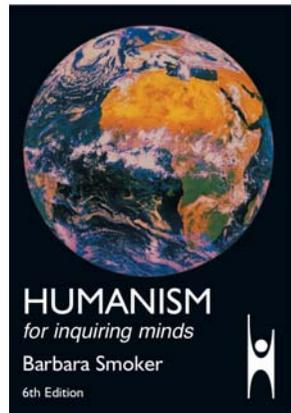
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- Sunday 2 1100 **FREELOADERS ON THE LAND**
Christopher Snowden, Director of Lifestyle Economics at the Institute of Economic Affairs
- Sunday 9 1100 **SECULARISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A REVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**
Mazin Zeki
- Sunday 16 1100 **KANT AND OBJECTIVE MORALITY**
Ralph Walker, Emeritus Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford
- Sunday 23 1100 **A HUMANIST PERSPECTIVE ON PRIVACY & FREEDOM**
Frank Furedi Emeritus professor of sociology, University of Kent

MARCH

- Sunday 2 1100 **'THE IDEA OF ISRAEL'**
Ilan Pappé on his new book
- Sunday 9 1100 **EMANCIPATION**
Michael Goldfarb, author of *Emancipation: How Liberating Europe's Jews from the Ghetto Led to Revolution and Renaissance*
- Saturday 15 1000 – 1700 **CENTRAL LONDON HUMANISTS, CHES & NSS**
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Paul Braterman, Hon Senior Research Fellow, Glasgow University
- Monday 17 1930 **GIVING OFFENCE: IN WORDS AND PICTURES**
Martin Rowson, cartoonist (postponed from 5 March)
- Sunday 23 1100 **GODLESS AND BROKE: Making secular groups less middle class**
Alex Gabriel, author of the blog *Godlessness in Theory*

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