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INTERLIB

Journal of the Liberal International British Group



**The Democratic Alliance - Cleaning up the corruption in
South Africa... and the litter on their streets.**

Cameroon Refugees Egypt

Myanmar Catalunya

LI Executive Johannesburg

EVENTS

20th November LIBG Forum *Threats to Democracy & Security in Eastern Europe*. NLC 6.30-9.00pm
1st-3rd December ALDE Party Congress. Amsterdam.
7th December Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine AGM. House of Lords, courtesy of Baroness Meral Ece-Hussein at 5pm.
5th February 2018 Liberal Democrat History Group AGM
9th-11th March 2018 Liberal Democrat Conference, Southport

For bookings & other information please contact the Treasurer below.

NLC= National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2HE
Underground: Embankment

Liberal International (British Group)
Treasurer: Wendy Kyrle-Pope, 1 Brook Gardens,
Barnes, London SW13 0LY
email w.kyrle@virgin.net

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*Comments and articles can be sent to
Lockhart & Hastings, 29 St Helen's Crescent,
Hastings TN34 2EN, email
lockharthastings@btconnect.com*

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Photographs: Phil Bennion, Neville Preedy, Merlene Emerson.	



LIBG FORUM



November 20th, at 18.30 to 21.00

Hans van Baalen MEP,

ALDE Party President, Liberal International President of Honour

**'Threats to Democracy and Security in
Moldova'**

Dr Carol Weaver,

Liberal International (BG) and academic author

**'Threats to Democracy and Security in
Ukraine'**

Cristina Gherasimov,

Academy Fellow, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House

**'How Can the EU Sustain Reform in
Moldova and Ukraine?'**

Chair:

Dr Phil Bennion,

Chair of Liberal International (BG) and former MEP.

**NATIONAL LIBERAL CLUB,
Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HE**

The northern countries of the European Neighbourhood i.e. Moldova, Ukraine (and Belarus) have all had more than their fair share of turmoil recently. Threats from increased corruption, from poor rule of law, from Russian interference, from the emigration of young talent and, often, from ineffective European Union support have all played their part in the lack of stability. Yet each country is at a different stage in its post-Soviet development. This event will focus on how serious the threats are and on what can be achieved in the region by the EU. It takes place four days before the next Eastern Partnership summit in Brussels.

IS CAMEROON HEADING FOR QUEBEC OR RWANDA?

Rebecca Tinsley

The distinguished genocide scholar Gregory Stanton has identified eight stages which a society goes through before genocide begins. Unfortunately, the central African nation of Cameroon is well on the way to meeting Stanton's criteria. Equally regrettable is the international community's reluctance to pressure the Cameroon authorities to prevent a slide into ethnic cleansing.

Cameroon's crisis is rooted in the increasing marginalisation of the Anglophone minority (20% of the population). In addition, the high centralised government denies English-speaking regions (the south west and north west) any degree of autonomy. Anglophone frustration exploded a year ago when lawyers went on strike, protesting that new laws were not translated from French into English; courts in Anglophone areas were forced to conduct their business in French; and they had Francophone judges who could not or would not speak English foisted upon them.

The lawyers were soon joined by teachers and others from civil society, all of whom feel aggrieved at being ignored for decades. Anglophone activists have urged schools and shops to join regular strikes called Ghost Towns, and in some places children haven't been to school for more than a year. There are suggestions that some Anglophone citizens feel intimidated into cooperating with the Ghost Town protests by the more militant Anglophone activists who are pushing for secession.

The government reacted by suspending the internet in the Anglophone areas for three months, preventing civil society from organising. At the end of September, the Francophone authorities ordered a disproportionate military crackdown, a curfew, the arrest of journalists and opposition figures, and the reported torture of dozens of activists. According to the International Crisis Group, 30 people were killed. There were credible reports of soldiers shooting civilians from helicopters, and spraying tear gas at people emerging from Sunday mass.

The government's actions have fuelled calls for secession. At a recent All Party Parliamentary Group meeting at Westminster, the Diaspora in attendance were split between moderates who want a federal solution, and the growing number of secessionists. President Biya, who has been in power since 1982, is said to be in denial about Anglophone grievances. However, until there is a unified and coherent Anglophone position, it is feared he will divide and rule.

Representing the more moderate Anglophone voices are the Roman Catholic bishops of Bamenda, who have called on the government to engage in genuine dialogue and to investigate attacks on civilians. The bishops warn that a volatile situation may deteriorate further. Observers believe the church is well-placed to host any dialogue which would need to include grassroots representatives for it to be perceived as legitimate.

The Anglophone movement's more extreme fringe allows the government to characterise the uprising as terrorism. In October 2017, Anatole Fabien Nkou, Cameroon's permanent representative to the UN in Geneva, told the UN's human rights committee that demonstrations in the English-speaking north-west and south-west regions "could not be called peaceful". "Initially, the Government had thought that the demonstrations had been organised by trade unions, namely lawyers, and had responded in good faith. However, the strike had turned into a political campaign; it had been joined by the teachers' trade union and artisanal firearms had been fired. An armed uprising would counter the constitutional order of the country, stressed the delegation.....in February 2017, the security forces had found hidden arms. The crisis had turned violent with rebels attacking local security officers, state institutions and symbols, and calling for the secession of the English-speaking regions."

Some Background on Cameroon

Before independence in 1961, Cameroon was administered by the British and the French in two distinct regions, with different government systems, language and customs. After a contested referendum, the English-speaking regions in the north west and south west were united with French-speaking areas (80% of the population). A federal constitution guaranteed each group a degree of self-determination. However, the federal model ended in 1972 and power has been increasingly centralised, giving Francophone politicians the upper hand. Over the years, the Anglophone population (five million people) has felt increasingly side lined and economically marginalised. There are approximately 19 million French speakers, and their representatives hold most positions in government and the armed forces. For instance, only one out of 36 ministers with portfolio is an English speaker.

The Reaction of the International Community

Cameroon is perceived as an oasis of calm in an ocean of instability in the region (to quote the UN High Commission for Refugees). Moreover, Cameroon's armed forces are fighting the West's war against militant Islamism. Its soldiers are engaged in battle against Boko Haram in the Far North, where 2,000 Cameroon civilians and soldiers have been killed. The country also hosts 348,000 refugees fleeing sectarian conflict in the neighbouring Central African Republic. Consequently, the international community is reluctant to criticise Biya's government.

In May, the then-Africa minister, Tobias Elwood, said that the UK stood by the disputed referendum that took place at independence. Following the violence in October, Lord Ahmad, for the British government, expressed concern, "urging restraint, and calling on all parties to reject violence and enter into dialogue to find urgent solutions to Anglophone grievances."

The French Foreign Ministry issued a similarly bland plea for all concerned to resist violence. Unfortunately, for the Anglophone population, such moral equivalence ignores both the disproportionate force used by the Cameroon government, and it assumes both sides (armed forces against unarmed civilians) are equally to blame. Cameroon watchers suggest the regime is more sensitive to foreign pressure than internal protests. Yet, the international community avoids criticising Cameroon while its soldiers are fighting Boko Haram, a situation which also applies in Chad, Nigeria, Kenya and Uganda.

Hopefully, Cameroon will choose the path that eventually leads to a Quebec-like situation, where the minority creates its own unique system and society within a federal structure. The alternative is that the regime clings to its highly centralised power structure, refusing to discuss a federal solution for fear of provoking wider unrest. If so, the calls for secession will become increasingly violent. In the worst scenario, the government will use propaganda to manipulate the majority into rising up and killing the minority, as happened in Rwanda. It is time for the international community to recognise this danger and to engage.

Rebecca Tinsley is Director of Waging Peace.



LI EXECUTIVE JOHANNESBURG REPORTS

LI Exec in Johannesburg and the Declaration on Good Governance

The Democratic Alliance has set its reputation on good governance as a benchmark and the brand on which it promotes itself to the electorate. Having won control or joint control of the largest cities in last year's local elections and with the possibility that the ANC could lose its overall majority in 2019, it was no surprise that Good Governance was chosen as the theme for the executive meeting.

The meetings were opened by the impressive and inspiring leader of the DA Mmusi Maimone. He is a young man with an optimistic vision with the ability to convey it at the podium.

The opening panel saw a discussion on good governance and sustainability. Deputy President Hakima el Haite strongly supported the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a tool for delivering sustainability through good governance. Kirsten Lundgren pointed out that they were also valuable for the developed world as Sweden builds its government programme around the SDGs and also has a transparent system free of corruption.

In South Africa Cape Town has used feed in tariffs for its programme of solar panels on houses, somewhat similar to the scheme in the UK. Their new programme is the Green Development Fund, which due to their reputation for freedom from corruption has been massively oversubscribed. However, the real challenge is full price externalisation for energy as green technology becomes price competitive.

Our delegate Joyce Onstad asked the panel which was more important; strong institutions or good governance. The answer was both. In most of Africa the need for improved institutions was clear, but in South Africa governance is the problem. Institutions themselves are robust.

In the administrative session I had to speak in opposition to a couple of amendments to resolutions. We were keen to keep in the clause on "belligerent language" in the resolution on "The need to counter rising military tensions" We felt that the language used by Trump and Kim Jong Un were a major factor in the rising tensions and that the clause should be kept. The second instance was in the resolution on "Freedom of Belief" where D66 wished to add the examples Blasphemy laws and those against apostasy to the general call for freedom of religion under the law. Abir al Salani and I both opposed the amendment mainly for its selectivity on only using examples where the "offenders" are Muslim states. This would not only open us up to accusations of being anti Muslim but also make it difficult to work with political parties in some of the more challenging parts of the world for liberals. Strident adherence to first world western standards may score points for rectitude, but is not always helpful in spreading the liberal message. Happily, we were fully successful in all of the votes on amendments.

The urgency resolution condemning the imprisonment of Kem Sokha in Cambodia was passed unanimously but our resolution on Myanmar met a few difficulties. The original had been drafted as a full resolution but was unable to meet the deadline, so we had forgotten the reduced word limit. I had to cut it from 500 to 200 words in short time. Then some delegations wanted additional text. The revamped effort with help from Centerpartiet's Kersten Lundgren and Human Rights Chair Markus Loning received full approval in the Saturday session.

The Johannesburg declaration on Good Governance appeared as a completely new text too and we amended it in situ then adopted it to conclude the meeting.

Our walking tour of Johannesburg city centre allowed DA MP Darren Bergman to illustrate their programme to rehabilitate the city centre. The area gradually became so lawless that companies began decamping to a new business district in Sandton in the 1990s. Buildings

were occupied by squatters and drug dealers took over the streets. It became the world's most dangerous city. Reclaiming it was the DA undertaking when they were elected to run the local government last year. We bumped into one of their local councillors leading a litter pick. They are tracking down the owners of disused zombie buildings with a view to refurbishing them for housing. The improvements are already starting to show.



Hakainde Hichilema receiving the African Freedom Prize.

Our first night dinner was at a venue in Soweto where Hakainde Hichilema was given the African Freedom Prize. Stevens Mokgalapa, African Liberal Network President had flown to Lusaka to intervene when the liberal opposition leader was jailed by the regime. Mmusi Maimone had followed up but was refused entry at the airport. However, Mr Hichilema was then released and was here to accept the prize. He said that he had learned a few things from his experience. That everyone in prison was not a criminal and that conditions in prison were inhuman. Prison reform would become part of his programme for government. We were entertained by the Soweto Gospel Choir who were not only superb but great fun too.

On the Sunday the DA put on a series of best practice seminars for political campaigning. I attended the one on the air war, whereas my colleague Joyce attended one on party organisation. She was inspired by their drive and focus, telling me that their professional

campaign teams designed messaging and campaigning right down to ward level. Alongside their direct action I saw on the walking tour and the clear relish that all of their young politicians have for getting things done the weekend was an invigorating experience.

Phil Bennion.

LI Human Rights Committee meets the South Africa Human Rights Commission

On Monday morning following our LI Executive meeting in Johannesburg a delegation met with SA Human Rights Commission chair Bongani Majola and commissioner Mohamed Ameerma at their HQ in the Parktown area. We were given a rundown on the make-up and status of the Commission ahead of a general discussion.

There is an explicit provision in South Africa's constitution for the Commission as the body which deals with the human rights provisions of the constitution. It has the power to make recommendations to government and a mandate on developing a culture of human rights. It

reports on the state of human rights in the country and its compliance with international standards.

It also has powers of investigation either in response to complaints or under its own initiative. It can subpoena any one to answer questions including government ministers and even the President. Other government organisations have an obligation to assist the Commission under the Constitution.

The Commissioners can be nominated or apply following an advert placed by parliament. Parliament then selects the successful applicants from a shortlist. The President is then obliged to install them. Terms are 7 years renewable once. There are 6 full time and 2 part time Commissioners.

The major problems they encounter are reluctance of government to implement their recommendations and budgetary constraints. In particular they try to avoid litigation as it is expensive.

Their new initiative is embedding human rights into the education programme. Awareness of human rights issues has fallen amongst younger citizens who did not go through the struggle against apartheid. They are working with the education department on a 9 year curriculum for the schools including court visits and other external programmes.



LIHRC chair Markus Loning presenting the chair of S.A. Human Rights Commission Bongani Majola with our new booklet on Freedom of Belief.

Another recent challenge is in the field of human rights in business. An example is a case they took forward on behalf of 250000 farm workers who were in debt to micro-lenders charging excessive interest. This is an issue affecting 40% of the population and resulted in legislation for an interest rate cap at 25%. They have also been involved in repercussions of the Bell-Pottinger case.

We had a lively discussion comparing problems in our various countries with the Swedish model probably closest to that of South Africa. We also discussed the challenges of the current global political climate. In the era of Trump, Brexit and of course Zuma, governments and leaders are tending to assume that they can ride roughshod over human and democratic rights with impunity. A particular example was raised by Frank van Dalen who was concerned that South Africa was stepping back from its traditional role as human rights champion across the African continent. This was taken on board by the chair, but we all took the view that we should not neglect our roles in doing the same with our own governments. In the UK for instance, ethical foreign policy seems to be a thing of the past. Markus Loning explained how he had been training German diplomats in techniques of raising human rights issues abroad without a diplomatic stand-off. It was a positive learning experience for all and well worth the visit in its own right.

The Fate of the Rohingya People from Rakhine State, Myanmar.

LIBG's urgency resolution was adopted nem con by LI Exec in Johannesburg. Text was changed to meet the rules (our original was too long) and satisfy a couple of delegations.

The Fate of the Rohingya People from Rakhine State, Myanmar

Submitted by Liberal International British Group

The Executive Committee Meeting convened in Johannesburg on 27-9th October 2017

Notes that:

The Rohingya were one of the ethnic-religious groups in Myanmar not given official status as an ethnic entity and as a result not issued with identity documents,

Since the reforms of 2011 the ethnic conflict with the Rohingya, fuelled by religious and ethnic leaders, has been escalated by the Myanmar military. Constitutionally the military are not under the control of the government.

In 2017 over 500,000 Rohingya have been displaced internally or to refugee camps in Bangladesh

Allegations of crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing have been raised by the UN Secretary General and others

The cooperation and support given by Bangladesh are welcomed but do not lessen the need for proper provision by the Myanmar authorities.

Believes that:

The Rohingya have full rights to citizenship in Myanmar.

Calls for:

An immediate end to the violence and forced displacement.

The Myanmar Government to fulfil its obligations under international law to protect all individuals on its soil.

The return of Rohingya refugees and IDPs in a safe and dignified manner, the reconstruction of villages and restitution of land.

The Myanmar Government and military to allow humanitarian aid and international observers access to the conflict areas.

All necessary legal measures in Myanmar to enshrine equality for all ethnic and religious groups and full freedom of movement within Myanmar.



Aung San Suu Kyi's response to the Rohingya refugee crisis was disappointing and is something we need to know more about. Peter Brookes' take on it appeared in The Times on 14th September and the original cartoon is available at Chris Beetles Gallery for £1,450.00 (see reviews on page 28) unless it has already been snapped up! ...

From Counterfeit to Counter Feet

Neville Preedy

A bag manufacturer from Syria and a Registered Trade Mark Attorney from England would appear to have no connection whatsoever, but the effects of circumstances encountered by the two revealed very similar beliefs and aims.

Ali is indeed a bag manufacturer, but though he owned a factory and employed forty-two people in Damascus it was destroyed in the civil war. Worse still, he was deemed to be a threat to the government, arrested by the secret police and imprisoned together with his brother. Neither he nor his brother had an interest in politics so why he was deemed a threat is impossible to say.

Francis is a Registered Trade Mark Attorney. The father of three, Francis went through a difficult time in his marriage and was even arrested for allegedly mistreating his children. Although those claims were subsequently retracted and no action commenced, when the marriage broke down he encountered further accusations and served with a Police Information Notice. No orders were issued but he still didn't manage to see his children for more than two years.

Ali was able to get out of prison and escape to Lebanon where, after four years, he was lucky enough to be approached by the UN with the offer, together with his wife and children, of starting a new life as a refugee in the United Kingdom.

Francis managed to see his children but realized that, having not seen them for such a long time, they did not know each other. Undue stress meant he was having a difficult time at work and consequently resulted in his entering into an agreement to cease employment. That his boys had just finished their GCSEs meant they were not attending school and that he was then able to make up for some of the lost time.

When Ali arrived from Syria at the age of 40 with no English but with skills he was keen to share, he had expected this would be straightforward. A welfare state which allows for accommodation and necessary outgoings is better than in Syria. However, a system of regular meetings at the Job Centre to unearth jobs which could be carried out together with obtaining confirmation that jobs had been applied for during the week is contrary to assisting someone trying to start a business from nothing.

In the same way, when Francis began to look for employment he realized that, at the age of 52, fully qualified and with considerable experience, this would not be as easy as he had assumed.

When the two met they discovered both had suffered tough times and recognized needs of others, both wanted to start a business to share their skills and donate to causes which really need help. Both were made aware of the New Enterprise Allowance for startups but not only did this result in lower payments than Job Seekers Allowance, but also, in order to get

started, the loans such as those necessary for the import of sufficient volumes of raw materials for manufacture is unrealistic.



For Ali there is the additional fact that some banks don't allow those from Syria to open accounts, others don't allow for accounts to be opened when the party concerned has not lived in the UK for three years, and others don't recognize addresses for which no post code exists. Assistance from nationals from the United Kingdom is therefore extremely important.

What the two also discovered is that whilst Ali had previously produced some high-quality Burberry, Givenchy and Polo bags, in fact any bags which a prospective client had requested, as a Trade Mark Attorney Francis had been one of those trying to catch him doing so!

For Ali to have been in possession of his own widely known brand in war torn Syria would have been impossible. Now that he is based in the UK, given the right opportunities the possibility of an Internationally recognizable brand is no longer non-existent. Francis has considerable experience in creating brands, the importance of their protection, the enforcement of those rights and the manner of their use. The two saw the connection and with the trade mark Counter Feet a recognizable, memorable mark like nothing else which appears in the market place, choice of the colour British Racing Green for the inner lining to emphasize the importance of the re-introduction of manufacture to England, they sought and obtained loans to rent a small unit in an industrial estate as well as the two machines and the materials to begin manufacturing bags.

Though times have proved difficult and shall continue to do so, the two are determined for the previous manufacturer of quality counterfeit goods in Syria to be the manufacturer of quality Counter Feet goods in England, and ultimately for those goods to be exported and acknowledged as a famous English brand.

Neville Preedy

For more information in relation to the story of Ali Al Kasih see

<http://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/surrey-news/damascus-woking-syrian-refugee-finds-11679302>

LIBG Executive 2017-18

The following have been elected following the AGM on 6 September 2017:

Chair: Phil Bennion

Treasurer: Wendy Kyrle-Pope

Minutes secretary: Mark Smulian

Membership secretary: John Innes

Baroness Lindsay Northover has kindly accepted the offer to serve as LIBG President.

Statement on the political situation in Catalonia

The Bureau's statement of 28th September is anachronistic as Spain prefers to go back to the days of Franco, but remains a point of reference.

“The Bureau of Liberal International is very concerned with the situation in Spain in relation to Catalonia. It acknowledges –in sociological terms- the existence of different worldviews in Catalonia and the rest of Spain. These diverging views of the same reality produce diametrically opposed analyses of the situation, causes and possible solutions and spell trouble for the future.

A large majority of Catalans desire according to opinion polls to hold a referendum on their future, whether they agree or not on independence from Spain. The current legality in Spain is not conducive to such a vote. Liberal International early on, at its congresses in Rotterdam and Mexico, recognized this problem and advocated political negotiations to find a solution. These never took place.

Liberal International does not wish to enter the debate on independence or to assign blame for the current situation but it notes with regret that the present difficulties were foreseen and that no political dialogue has occurred. The current criminalization of political officials happening in Catalonia though is unhelpful and reprehensible. Some of the more than 700 Catalan mayors asked by the justice system to appear in front of a judge under penalty of imprisonment have appealed to us: many are from our sister political organization in Catalonia active in LI for decades. We offer them our steadfast support. But we also urge the Catalan authorities to seek a concerted way of constitutional evolution with the rest of Spain. And we urge the authorities at the state level in Spain to be responsive to the reality of current disaffection from a large number of Catalans.

Similar desires of a large number of people to vote on their future –even when they have turned out to be less than the majority and have produced negative outcomes for independence- have been accommodated in the past decades in Canada and the United Kingdom. Examples abound as well in Europe of constitutional evolution and difficult political negotiations that make living together in federal settings possible in the long run, such as in Belgium or Switzerland. The present conflict in Catalonia requires mutual respect from all parties concerned particularly of each other's worldviews and the will to sit together in a concerted and timely way to find a politically negotiated solution. Criminalizing political actors will only accentuate the present chasm and needs to be avoided. Although a political solution should have been tackled much before the current events had taken place, in our opinion there is still time to craft political agreements that will allow to resolve this crisis. Liberal International is ready and willing to provide assistance and mediation, if required, to all parties concerned”.

Withdrawing Egyptian Nationality: Will it Eliminate Terrorism? Mohammed Nossier

Will the draft legislation concerning the withdrawal of Egyptian nationality from citizens accused of terrorism help Egypt to strengthen its identity and wipe out terrorism? I strongly doubt it. Besides, I am not certain whether this piece of legislation is constitutional. The Egyptian State has been adopting polarizing notions whereby it defines its supporters as ‘true Egyptians’ and accords lower statuses to all remaining citizens; it labels its opponents as ‘the evil people’ and is currently attempting to withdraw Egyptian nationality from suspected terrorists. In parallel with these developments, terrorism is on the rise in Egypt.

“They are not Egyptians” is how the Egyptian State defines ‘Political Islamists’ in Egypt, who a few years ago won almost three-quarters of the seats in the Egyptian Parliament, as well as the Presidency. Those who claim that Political Islamists are no longer popular in Egypt are hiding their heads in the sand. Furthermore, exercising excessive aggressiveness towards people who are mentally disturbed pushes them into a position where they have nothing to lose and, inevitably, to target the Egyptian state as their principal enemy. Political Islamists are, sadly, part of the Egyptian constituency – a reprehensible part that we must reform, not alienate.

Political Islamists constitute a complicated challenge that we are, unfortunately, not on the right track to tackle. Political Islamists draw strength from being vulnerable; thus, the more the Egyptian State applies a repressive policy towards them, the more united they become and the more they are prone to exact revenge by committing terrorist attacks, all the while presenting their actions under the label of Islam (that they certainly misinterpret). Political Islamists work on radicalising Egypt – and the Egyptian State is simply, and probably unintentionally, advancing their mission, giving rise to more extremism and terrorism.

The Egyptian State often adopts impractical and shortsighted means to resolve its challenges, tending to cut out everyone who doesn’t agree with its policies. We will not solve problems that originate in Egypt by attempting to export our challenges to other nations or to blame them for our faults. We can’t only work on digesting the ‘good apples’ and disposing of the ‘bad’ ones, especially when we are planting unhealthy seeds that will certainly yield rotten crops, which could end up occupying most of the dining table.

Egypt is going through the fundamental dilemma of defending its identity, backing all political forces that don’t support the ruling regime into a corner in the process. The prospect of losing their Egyptian nationality is not threatening to people who are committed to murdering innocent citizens and who know full well that they will be prosecuted eventually. Regrettably, Political Islamists believe that they owe allegiance to a ‘Muslim nation’ that they are fighting to establish, not to our country; thus, the card that we are proposing to threaten them with is of absolutely no consequence to them.

Nationality should not be subject to either incentives or penalties! It is the only privilege that citizens are granted at birth, and it should not be used as a tool to strengthen national identity. We need to expend more effort on defining the core values of Islam (peace, tolerance and forgiveness), and to be more tolerant in dealing with these misguided citizens in order to turn them into peaceful citizens once again. That said, any citizen convicted of a crime must be penalized – without being stripped of his nationality.

Egypt needs to apply a clear policy of punishing all citizens who engage in illegal activities, from simple misdemeanours to terrorism (by far the most grievous crime that can be committed); proportional punishment is therefore imperative. We must reconcile potential suspects and misguided citizens to the concept of true citizenship and the obligations attached to it. The withdrawal of nationality, on the contrary, is paramount to sending a message that anyone who commits, or is suspected of committing, a crime no longer belongs to our nation; it would simply serve to enhance terrorism.

Mohammed Nosseir is an Egyptian Liberal politician working on reforming Egypt on true liberal values, proper application of democracy and free market economy.

Discussing the European Refugee 'Crisis' and the UK's Responsibilities.

Bradley Hillier-Smith

Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary had a very well attended fringe meeting in Bournemouth on this important issue – helped and sustained by the great Dorset High Tea, kindly provided by Liberal Democrat Voice.

There are over 65 million forcibly displaced persons worldwide, 22 million of whom are refugees who have left their country of origin. Over half of refugees are children. Nearly 90% of refugees currently reside in states bordering conflict zones in the global south. A relatively minimal amount have sought and been granted safety in western European states. This insightful and fascinating fringe event explored and analysed the European response to refugee flows and the UK's involvement in that response and their policies towards refugees.

Professor Brad Blitz, Professor of International Politics at Middlesex university, opened the discussion with the serious concern that there is very little critical evaluation or accountability of the EU and UK policies towards refugees. Aid and humanitarian policies are not currently based on enough evidence of effectiveness, and decision-making is poorly informed. Numerous reports have condemned French and in particular UK policies as failing to protect refugee children, failing to protect the human rights of refugees and migrants, and the failure of EU's policy of containment.

Professor Blitz emphasized a note of caution in using the term European refugee 'crisis' as it fails to acknowledge that crossings of the Mediterranean and informal settlements have been occurring for over a decade, and the term can invite a reactionary ill-informed response rather than a well-considered and sustainable legal and political framework through which to aid and settle refugees.

A reactionary response aptly describes the majority of EU states' policies towards the influx of refugees and migrants from 2015-2016 (Germany being a notable exception). European states responded with border enforcement, increased passport control between Schengen area countries, and the construction of fences (notable examples being the 180km fences on the Hungarian border as well as like blockades at Idomeni and Calais). These measures reflect an 'inhospitality towards migrants', leave thousands of refugees and migrants stranded on borders. They also have a knock on effect on Lebanon and Jordan who have similarly reinforced border controls in relation to Syrians.

Professor Blitz drew attention to the controversial EU-Turkey 'statement' which, though not an official legally binding agreement, sees the forced relocation of refugees and migrants arriving in Europe to Turkey in return for billions of Euros. This deal has displaced thousands to Turkey which is becoming increasingly authoritarian, has a questionable human rights record, has limited ability to adequately support and protect basic human needs of refugees and provides severely limited access to the labour market which can result in destitution.

Professor Blitz suggested that the EU has 'not been an exercise in refugee protection but an exercise in border management'. There has been a failure of responsibility sharing as states push refugees from one state to another and policies have closed off opportunities for refugee protection. EU states have responded not on the basis of a humanitarian duty but on the basis of border security. Professor Blitz emphasized the need to decouple humanitarian policy from security policy, to design UK humanitarian policy on the basis of evidence, and to continue to advocate for safe and legal routes and humanitarian visas for refugees as an alternative to dangerous sea and border crossings. You can see the slides of Professor Blitz's presentation at <http://www.libdemvoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Blitz-Lib-Dem-presentation.pdf>

Dr Ruvi Ziegler Associate Professor in International Refugee Law at the University of Reading then spoke about the framework of the EU asylum policies and the (non-constructive) role of the UK. Dr Ziegler highlighted that EU states can return refugees and migrants back to the first EU state of entry, normally Greece or Italy, pursuant to the Dublin regulation. This is clearly not an equitable system of responsibility-sharing and places significant pressure on the asylum systems of those countries. EU states differ in their acceptance of the need for a truly common European asylum system. Some states, such as the Visegrad group (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) opposed the temporary relocation scheme agreed by a qualified majority vote in the EU Council. There are also differences between EU states asylum and integration models. The German model of immediate access to integration facilities, language tuition, a right to work after six months, and support networks is successful and should provide an example of how EU states can effectively manage and support refugees. This is contrasted with the UK system which detain more migrants than any other EU state has minimal language or community support and refuse access to work for 12 months for asylum seekers or until their claim is granted.

Dr. Ziegler expressed fear and concern that the UK is not playing its role in the European asylum system or providing solutions and is increasingly excluded from summits. It is also concerning that Theresa May has shown little interest in being included and taking on responsibilities and in fact shows signs of wanting to restrict obligations to refugees. The

lack of political will from the UK to provide a more engaged and humanitarian response to refugees must be addressed. Dr. Ziegler therefore argued that the UK's involvement in the EU response has been inadequate and that the EU response itself has been inconsistent and not-satisfactorily sharing the responsibility to settle and integrate refugees.

The fringe event concluded with the High Commissioner of Bangladesh to the UK giving an update on the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees who have crossed from Myanmar to Bangladesh in the past few weeks. There are serious concerns about the ability to meet their basic humanitarian needs of food, water and shelter.

The central message from the fringe event then seemed to be that as we are currently witnessing the largest number of refugees ever recorded globally, responding to refugee flows will be a prominent challenge for the foreseeable future which requires durable solutions. It is essential to design sustainable political policies and legal frameworks to be able to respond in a way that protects the rights and wellbeing of refugees and reach fair responsibility-sharing agreements between states. It is clear that the EU-wide and UK policy has failed in this respect, is ineffective, costly and has not been based on evidence or humanitarian ideals. The discussion has revealed that there are feasible and more humane alternatives to our current response. Therefore, in imposing the current system we avoidably deny the opportunities for refugees, who have legitimate claims, to reach and enjoy safety. It is clear then that European states, individually and collectively, can and ought to do more to aid and settle refugees. Professor Blitz suggests that we ought to continue to advance the moral argument for reform towards policies that protect the well-being and dignity of refugees and keep up public pressure on politicians who, as polls have shown, are less sympathetic towards refugees than the general public. Mobilization of this public support for a more humane and evidence-based refugee policy is necessary to bring about change.

Bradley Hillier-Smith

Bradley is an active member of the Lib Dems as a council member for both the SLF and LD4SOS, standing for local elections in 2014 and 2016 and as borough organizer for Camden in 2016. He also has a leading role in the Lib Dem campaign to raise donations for refugees and lobbying the government to settle more refugees. He is currently studying for his PhD in moral and political philosophy specializing in the philosophy of migration, borders and refugees

This article first appeared on Lib Dem Voice, Friday 29th September 2017 - 8:45 am



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China and the UK – Future Prospects

Jonathan Fryer

Liam Fox and other Brexiteers in the UK's current Conservative government are fond of saying that when we are "free" from the European Union, we will be able to enter into a great new dawn of trading partnerships with other big players around the world, not least China. Actually, it was David Cameron and the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, who really championed the idea of a bright future hand-in-hand with the People's Republic, though they never imagined that would be something totally separate from EU-



China trading relations.

Theresa May, interestingly, has been a little more cautious in her embrace of President Xi Jinping, who has been expertly consolidating his authority at the Chinese People's Congress this week. But despite the bluff reassurances of Liam Fox, David Davis and Boris Johnson, forging an advantageous new trading relationship with China is unlikely to be straightforward, for a number of reasons.

First, until Britain formally leaves the EU - in principle on 29 March 2019 - it cannot make any bilateral arrangement with Beijing. Moreover, there are not sufficiently qualified negotiators in Whitehall to handle such a sensitive matter (as the EU has dealt with our trade negotiations for the past four decades) and little Britain, with 60 million inhabitants, is going to be at a distinct disadvantage in talking tough with the colossus of China, unlike the 500-million strong EU, which is still the largest trading bloc in the world. Bilateral trade is already skewed in China's favour, and is likely to be more so in future, not less.

Other factors make prospects mixed. China under Mr Xi is becoming more assertive in global affairs, having largely sat on the sidelines for many years, even within the UN Security Council. Many people in China believe the time has now come for China to reassert its pre-eminence in the world, as was the case prior to 1500 and the rise of European Empires. The four hundred years of European dominance, followed by a century of American hegemony, may in future be seen as a blip in comparison to China's long supremacy.

Then there is the issue of Donald Trump, who is repositioning the United States to be more isolationist (and certainly more self-centred), ratcheting up conflicts with countries such as Iran and North Korea in a way that risks souring US-China relations. Yet Theresa May aspires to be Mr Trump's greatest ally, despite disagreeing with him over the Iran nuclear deal. This could prove awkward. In the meantime, the British government has downgraded human rights as a priority in its foreign policy, which is sweet music to Xi Jinping's ears - though Britain must be careful to ensure that as a future relationship evolves it does not end up dancing to Beijing's tune.

Jonathan Fryer

jonathanfryer.wordpress.com This is a summary of remarks made by Jonathan as the guest speaker in London's Chinatown at the AGM of Chinese Liberal Democrats on 22nd October 2017



Beyond Brexit - UK China Trade



The topic of the Chinese Lib Dems' first joint forum with Liberal Democrats in Business on 29 September was chosen in part to emphasize that trade between UK and China will grow regardless of whether Brexit does in fact happen.

This was clearly illustrated by various power point slides presented by our first guest speaker, Dr Yeow Poon, President of the England China Business Forum showing how starting from a fairly low base, trade and investments between our two countries have been rising year on year.

Then moving from the macro picture to more specific sectors, Professor Alan Barrell Chairman of Cambridge Worldwide Associates shared his vast business experience working with both startups and mature companies in bio-engineering, medical and other high tech industries in China and the UK. His clear message was that there were lots of opportunities out there for British companies and that we do have a great brand and reputation, thanks in part to our top universities.

BBD a big data fintech company was not only the sponsor of our refreshments at the National Liberal Club that evening, but had also sent along Reijo Pold, their Business Development Director to tell us about their OBOR (One Belt One Road) index and their new Tech Accelerator. So, all young tech entrepreneurs who are dreaming of being bought out, BBD may be the white knight that you have been looking for!

But what about the risks of investing in China you may ask? Won't they just steal our Intellectual Property and then manufacture our products at half the price? To respond to those qualms, we had Serena Tierney, IP lawyer and former PPC to advise on how British companies can register and protect their IP. China is a member of the WTO (even before the US joined) and there are laws and procedures that have been formulated to protect foreign businesses.

Paul Lucraft, Chair of LDiB and moderator of the forum managed to stimulate our mixed and very engaged audience into fairly lively discussions, while our speakers ably batted all questions from the floor.

Thanks to LDiB and everyone for coming to our joint event, and hopefully only the first of more to come.

Merlene Emerson

Scottish Branch AGM

Paul Edie has been elected chair of the Scottish branch of LIBG at their AGM in Edinburgh on 23rd September. Paul is a long-standing member of LI in Scotland. He stood down as an Edinburgh City councillor earlier this year, having occupied a senior post during the period of Liberal Democrat administration of the council. Karen Freel and John Barnett remain secretary and treasurer.

Willis Pickard remains a member of the committee having decided that nine or ten years' chairmanship was enough.

International Abstracts

Brexit

For years the EU bent over backwards to please Britain. Now you ask for 'flexibility'?
Guy Verhofstadt. Daily Telegraph 1st September 2017.

Iran

The Economist 16th September 2017
Shia Crescent Rising pp16-17
Briefing – Iran and the world pp 19-22

Generally critical of Trump's stance on Obama's nuclear deal with Iran, with analysis of the changing position as the conflict with Islamic State draws to a close in its current form.

This issue of The Economist, which coincided with the Liberal Democrat conference, also paints a rather pessimistic view of their options, Bagehot – The Hollow Centre, p.30.

Myanmar

Myanmar's Rakhine state – A hiding to nothing. The Economist 16th September 2017

Qatar

Qatar's Opposition, No place to go. The Economist 16th September 2017
Strapline Efforts to end the Saudi-Qatari row are getting nowhere

Liberator 386

Dominated by Brexit and Vince Cable, the conference Liberator has one international article, *The Ghosts who teach Africa's children*, by Rebecca Tinsley, on foreign aid perpetuating inadequate education systems in sub-Saharan Africa. That said, there are articles by Norman Lamb MP and former MPs John Pugh and Sarah Olney, latterly on the short-comings of progressive alliance strategies. Most intriguing of all is a piece in Radical Bulletin on the short-comings of the relationship between the Liberal Democrat's Federal Board and their Federal International Relations Committee, which has led to Mark Valladares' resignation as secretary of the FIRC. More on this, by Mark Valladares, can be found on LibDem Voice for the 18th September 2017.

Journal of Liberal History Issue 96 Autumn 2017

Michael Steed raises the question of whether *La République En Marche!* is the dawn of a new Liberalism in France, charting the stormy waters from the Third Republic onwards. Analyses of the 2017 General Election, Liberal Democrat leadership and Liberal Democrat membership 1999-2015, shoulder alongside Vince Cable's choice of Roy Jenkins as a political hero, and Chris Wrigley writes on the old sinner, David Lloyd George and his nonconformity. There is also an obituary of Sandy Waugh, who was a member of the Scottish Group.

reviews

Churchill & Orwell the fight for freedom, by Thomas E. Ricks.

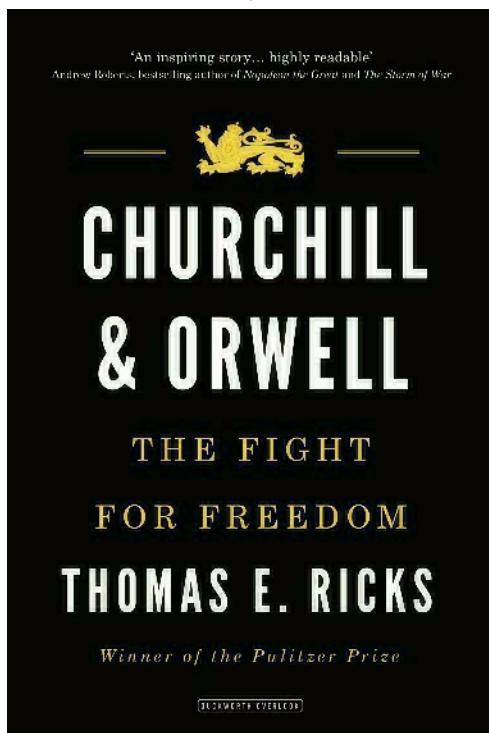
Duckworth 2017 £25.00

book isbn 9780715652374

eBook isbn: 9780715652381

Contemporaries apart, the link between Churchill and Orwell is primarily Winston (Smith). Orwell had come to admire Churchill in the course of the war, and so named his hero of 1984. Linking the two men has happened before – Simon Schama television series *A History of Britain* comes to mind. Ricks admires both men, but his biography is nonetheless, warts and all.

The common ground between both men is their stands against tyranny. Churchill, obviously as war leader – his story is well known. Orwell's less so, as the great heretic – in exposing the short-comings of Soviet Communism he had trouble with his publishers and there are



those on the Socialist left who still have doubts about him. Marxist 'apologist' Eric Hobsbawm cites Kingsley Martin, then editor of *The New Stateman & Nation*, that he would not publish Orwell's articles on POUM because they might undermine support for the Spanish Republican cause. The basic criticism of Socialism is that it is essentially conservative – once change has been achieved, society has reached its goal and we can live harmoniously as a flock of sheep (leaving the commissars to do all the unpleasant thinking for us, of course). I was somewhat intrigued to find Orwell crop up with Camus and Sartre in Edward Fawcett's *Liberalism, the life of an idea* (*interLib* 2016-07), where he credits them with opening up the space where one could be left wing and anti-communist – something largely missing from the 1930s & 40s, if not later.

Then there is the common ground of their both being writers. Ricks' dismissal of most of Orwell's earlier novels is a relief, having struggled with several of them in the wake of reading *Animal Farm* at school. I was later disappointed not to find *Homage to Catalonia* on the reading list for a course of Socialism & War. Kingsley Martin's view above would be mirrored in his difficulty in getting both books published. Perhaps the only time Churchill ever thought of Orwell was in finding the 1984 remarkable when he read it. Churchill is famously quoted as saying that history would be kind to him *for I intend to write it*; the extent that he did is discussed here. Both authors finally honed their skills. Ricks too has the honed skills you'd expect of a Pulitzer Prize winner, which answers the question, why would I read another book on Churchill/Orwell? Well the answer is that it is extremely well written and once started will be difficult to put down.

There is one paradox that isn't covered in the book – Churchill's appearance in Athens in



Chartwell, Churchill's home.

1944, and British involvement in the civil war that followed the liberation of Greece, primarily by its own hands, is not amongst his most glorious moments. On the one hand, the hagiography would say Churchill saved Greece from Communism, it sounds attractive; on the other, the post-war history of Greece is hardly illustrious. Did Orwell have anything to say on these specific events?

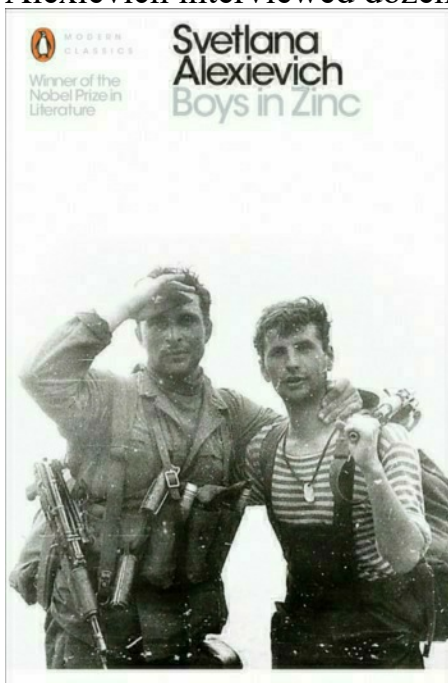
Some minor errors - Thomas Magnay was elected to Gateshead in 1931 as a Liberal National, not as a Liberal; by the time of the Munich debate, the Liberal Nationals were barely distinguishable from their Conservative allies and were generally appeasers. Only one of their MPs would re-join the Liberal party. Sir Herbert Samuel, a Liberal and Jewish, is something of a paradox in his support for appeasement, though this seems to be directed at the removal of German war guilt and the restoration of colonies. However, by 1938 the Liberal party would be led by Archie Sinclair, who was close to Churchill, having served with him in the First World War, and encouraged him in his opposition to Hitler.

Stewart Rayment

**Boys in Zinc, by Svetlana Alexievich
Penguin 2017 £9.99 isbn 978024126411**

Svetlana Alexievich is a Belorussian journalist whose life-long mission has been to tell the truth about war, and the human condition. Her book about the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, "Boys in Zinc," has just been published in English for the first time, a welcome development for those of us who were unaware of her work before she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2015.

Alexievich interviewed dozens of soldiers who served between 1979 and 1989, when the Soviet Union withdrew, defeated. She catalogued the horrors they endured at the hands of Afghans who did not want their fraternal, socialist "help." The soldiers, most of whom were barely out of their teens, were told they would be welcomed. Their bewilderment and fear soon turned to brutality: whole villages laid to waste, civilians massacred, and homes looted. Their stories echo those of Americans in Vietnam and South Africans serving in Angola or Mozambique during the Cold War. Drug abuse, boredom, loneliness, and terror punctuate each beautifully written paragraph.



Alexievich interviewed medics who worked around the clock in unspeakable conditions to save the lives of Afghan civilians, only to be spat at by their patients. If a little girl accepted candies from a Russian soldier, the Afghan

mujahadeen amputated her hands as a warning to others not to fraternize with the occupying army.

Equally alarming was Soviet officialdom's disregard for soldiers' health or safety. They were transported in planes flown by drunken pilots; the hospitals were short of medicine and equipment; and soldiers were given tins of food that had expired twenty-five years before. Officers sold their underlings' clothes and weapons to the enemy, stripped the possessions off dead soldiers, and turned a blind eye to bullying and theft within battalions.

Wounded soldiers returned home to families who believed the Soviet propaganda about military success and friendly Afghans. Traumatized and neglected, the soldiers met indifference or contempt from those who had avoided service.

Most disturbing and painful are Alexievich's interviews with the mothers of soldiers who never came home. Their agony was made worse by the brutality of their treatment by officialdom. Remains were sealed in zinc coffins and dumped in the courtyards of parents' apartment blocks or behind sheds at airports. Once it was clear there would be no victory in Afghanistan, the fallen became an embarrassment, rather than heroes.

Alexievich believed she had a duty to recount the mothers' tender memories of their sons as affectionate and gentle little boys; the terror of watching bookish or musical souls taken away to defend their "Homeland," and the emptiness of life once they are told their sons have been killed. However, by the 1990s the same forces now running Russia fomented a backlash against Alexievich's truth-telling. The final quarter of the book details the legal proceedings against her, instigated because she challenged the popular notion that Russia is still all-powerful and that its recent history is glorious. The persecution of Alexievich reveals the mindset of those in the Kremlin, and their millions of supporters who prefer lies rather than facts. We must hope the international fame brought by the Nobel award will protect Alexievich from the fate awaiting too many other brave journalists, trying to work in modern Russia.

Rebecca Tinsley

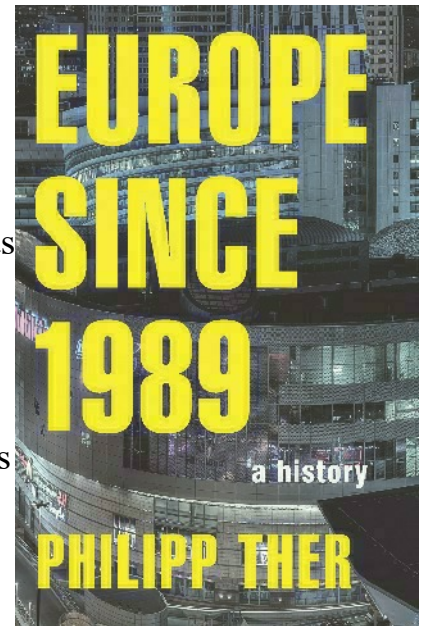
**Europe Since 1989, a history, by Philipp Ther.
Princeton 2016 isbn 9780691167374**

One of the great strengths of this book is that its author has a close personal relationship with the events that he chronicles. In this, history is not centrally 'great' men and women, but the masses who experience the consequences. Typically, 'Europe' is not as widely covered as the name suggests, focussing primarily of eastern Europe – as acceded to the EU, and Ukraine and Russia, which didn't, and their interplay with Germany and the EU. Ther is German, and from his youth, travelled and made friends in eastern Europe.

Much of his analysis is economic history; he is critical of neoliberalism (who isn't? economic ideas have their time, and those of neoliberalism have passed). He says that there is an illusion of prosperity in post-Communist Europe, that whilst the same goods may be available as in the west, fewer can afford them. A fifth of the post-Communist population is richer, but two-fifths are poorer. Ther would attribute the rise of populists, Orbán in Hungary

for example, to the bubble that burst. I would add that Orbán's convergence of Left-Right ideologies in the Hungarian context is not new – one might recall the Magyar Nemzeti Szocialista Párt, better known as the Scythe Cross, and Nyilaskeresztes Párt – Hungarista Mozgalom, the Arrow Cross Party, of Ferenc Szálasi. Despite their anti-Communist rhetoric, the militia of the Arrow Cross was so heavily infiltrated by the Communist underground, as to be unreliable in the siege of Budapest in 1944-45. The convergence of left and right in populism is dangerous.

The 2008 Crash has resonated across the continent since; at the time, I said it was a ten-year haul, at least, whatever lies politicians and the media chose to spin. Although xenophobia was not new, it heightened as immigration was a response to the recession. Ther does not say (if it is known) what the percentage of the 200,000 leaving Latvia, or the 300,000 leaving Lithuania were Russian? Russian imperialism becomes more of a factor with the accession of Putin – his claim to be protector of Russians everywhere (recalling that Russian populations were seeded in countries formerly occupied within the Soviet Union alongside expulsions of the indigenous peoples, the Crimea Tartars for



example). A Russian associate in Latvia chooses to trade from that country because it is both his home and perceptibly freer, but retains loyalties to Russia and its former Communism. I don't know how typical this is, but is certainly a problem for the Baltic states with their predatory neighbour.

After the opening up Russia's oil and gas reserves to western investment, Putin has brought them back under state control. Intimidation was a common method with both investors and oligarchs. Doing business in Russia requires access at a personal level with policy makers. The system breeds corruption and exacerbates the rich-poor divide, kept in check by populism and high spending on social policies. The occupation of parts of Ukraine has brought sanctions from the west alongside falls in oil prices, challenging for such policies. But Ukraine runs deep in the Russian political psyche; where does it stand with the west?

Southern Europe is less familiar to Ther, but perhaps bore the worst impact of the 2008 Crash and subsequent Euro Crisis. Inequities in tax systems or outright tax avoidance by the wealthy added to the problems. Ther argues that the statistics for living standards in Greece and Italy show that *the neoliberal order weakens the very social resources that it depends on. Lower incomes, rising unemployment, and reduced social benefits inhibit the mobility and flexibility of people in Southern Europe... The situation calls for a reform package extending beyond the ten points of the Washington Consensus or the current IMF programs.* Just as Mario Monti in Italy found limitations to what neoliberalism and deregulation could achieve, Ther predicts that the methods of the EU and IMF in Greece will fail, basing this on German experience post reunification. There is discussion of Germany's Hartz IV social policies in this context. But, the warning – *populists... can only be debunked if the dialectic between technocracy and populism is broken. The traditional parties must recast the term "reform" in a positive light and use it to develop visions for the future. But the future lies... with the younger generation and its prospects. And these were far more promising after*

1989 than now. Sooner or later, Ther predicts, *the social hardship in Southern Europe will impact on the wealthier EU countries.*

Are the wealthier European countries and their traditional political parties getting their act together and developing policies towards meeting these challenges or are they just muddling along? Clegg's Garden Lecture (*interLib 2017-05*) showed some grasp of the problems, but not solutions. Guy Verhofstadt (*interLib 2017-02*) was perhaps clearer on those in the EU's structures but I don't sense the transformation into social policy being clearly thought out. Meanwhile, Philippe Ther gives us a concise assessment of the issues that have brought us to where we are across most of Europe for the last thirty-odd years, which must be a good start for thinking about the problems.

Stewart Rayment

Protest Camps in International Context: Spaces, Infrastructures & Media of Resistance, edited by Gavin Brown, Anne Feigenbaum, Fabian Frenzel and Patrice McCurdy. Policy Press, University of Bristol, 2017 £60.00 isbn 9781447329411

Was it an uprising or a protest camp? I am only concerned with the section of the book on Gezi Park, since I was there.

Many things could be said about Gezi Park protest and many things already been said. First of all, to relate the whole uprising to a protest camp even downsizing as a 'protest camp' is not a correct definition of things. First of all, park itself was not an important aspect in the daily life of Istanbul inhabitants. Few tea houses, few benches and some rather comical green grass area was left from the early years. in the last 30 or 40 years park and its surroundings had been slowly eaten away by constructions. Obviously, it was one the most valuable piece of land existed in Istanbul.



The famous barracks which had been demolished early in the years of republic was core of a Islamic riots (1909) which ended by an army came all the way from Thessaloniki. One of the most important result of these riots was the sultan Abdulhamit lost his throne. So, for the Islamist this has been a great pain since 1909 till today.

Prime minister Tayyip Erdogan (he was a prime minister that time) was obviously seeking a political revenge but mean time he also planning to give way to a large construction in and around of Gezi Park. Two weeks before the protest started, he was making one his usual speeches in the parliament: he claimed that opera house would be demolished also there would a large shopping centre to be built plus the long-gone barracks would be rebuilt in connection with the shopping centre. It was a clear indication and clear intent of attack to the symbols of republic plus turning this ideological move into a very lucrative business too. There were rumours that Gezi Park and close perimeters already sold to an east Asian investor.

The definitions and explanations about Gezi Park uprising seems to drawn in millions of citations. Taksim Square always belonged to the left of politics in Turkey. In fact, I have lived in Istanbul more than half a century and I have never seen either Islamist or right-wing parties having any demos around Taksim Square.

Gezi Park protests were a political uprising of mainly young urban secular and leftists. Although in the beginning one of the prominent member of Kurdish opposition party member bravely against police later Kurdish Party leader described the Gezi Park events as a “possible coup d’état attempt against Tayyip Erdogan”

I totally agree that there was no leadership so it was inevitable the protest died down after a while but it showed to the young generations “the soul of resistance” still exists and still the biggest nightmare of Islamists.

Yilmaz

**Decolonization, by Jan C. Jansen & Jürgen Osterhammel.
Princeton University Press, 2017 £22.95 isbn**

The road to independence for former European and Japanese colonies was one of the most striking features of the second half of the 20th Century, yet the process of decolonization has received scant academic analysis. A lacuna in the market has thus been filled by Jan C. Jansen and Jürgen Osterhammel’s *Decolonization: A Short History*. The two German authors provide a beautifully crafted account of historical developments and social changes, while also identifying the seeds of decolonization in events and personalities between the two world wars. Colonialism had outlived its function, even from the subjective and exploitative point of view of the colonial powers, but it was the passionate defence of the rights of colonised peoples by both political and intellectual leaders in Africa and Asia that helped tip the balance in favour of greater justice and and the acceptance of self-determination as a fundamental human right. Of course, the resultant new nations did



not all progress smoothly once they had their independence, but a degree of dignity and self-worth had been reclaimed for their peoples. Jansen and Osterhammel's great strength is to provide not only a credible and useful analytical framework for considering decolonization critically but also to do so within a fluent historical narrative. This means that their book, elegantly translated by Jeremiah Riemer, will be of great interest to both scholars and the interested general reader alike.

Jonathan Fryer

**Goya – The Disasters of War.
Chester Beatty Library.**

Francisco Goya's Disasters is one of the most poignant arguments yet produced against war. Against the background of the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, Goya spares neither side in exposing their cruelty. Two Hundred years on, Dublin's Chester Beatty Library still thinks the work – some 40 etchings, should carry a 'health' warning. Goya, along with many other Spanish Liberales, was forced to flee Spain for Bordeaux in the repressions that followed Ferdinand VII's restoration and the work would not be published until 40 years after his death. With events in Catalunya has much changed?

A fine excuse, if one is needed, to visit Dublin before we're dragged out of the EU. The exhibition is at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin Castle, Dublin 2, until the 21st January 2018.



Francisco Goya (1746-1828) With or Without Reason (*Con razon ó sin ella*) - The Disasters of War (*Los Desastres de la Guerra*) 1810-20, published 1892 (2nd edition), Madrid. This image © Trustees of the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. CBL Wep 1764.

**Interesting Times, by Peter Brookes.
The Robson Press 2017 £20.00**

Two years ago (interLib 2015-07) Peter Brookes was mourning the passing of Cameron & Clegg, Miliband & Balls; who would have believed that a cartoonist's salvation would come in the form of the fright wigs of Boris and Trump? Dark days, hence the old Confucian

INTERESTING  TIMES

Peter Brookes



A new collection from the award-winning Times cartoonist

curse; but they have produced some magnificent cartoons. One of Brookes' strengths is in his recycling the great cartoons of the past –greet's Corbyn in the form of David Low's legendary riposte to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact – *Rendevous*; Trump meeting Putin over the corpse of Syria is even more powerful. Will any of Brookes' cartoons join this canon? I increasingly think they may and 'Yonder Star Over Aleppo' could be the candidate. If Gove and Johnson are remembered by history, it could be their danse macabre. The EU's failings over Syria? There

has been some powerful work. Giles is long past, if you're looking for a book of cartoons for Christmas, this is the one – despite the tragic content, prepare to wet yourself laughing.



The original cartoons can be bought from Chris Beetles Gallery incidentally, mostly for the same £1,450.00 of 2015. George Osborne has reputedly snapped up many of those featuring himself. The exhibition that accompanied the book is over, but it is worth checking it out at <http://www.chrisbeetles.com/exhibitions/interesting-times-peter-brookes.html> for all the great cartoons that didn't make it into the book. *Peter Brookes' images courtesy of Chris Beetles Gallery.*

Stewart Rayment

