

**Reaction and the
Avant-Garde:
The Revolt Against
Liberal Democracy in
Early Twentieth-Century
Britain**

TOM VILLIS

I. B. Tauris

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INTRODUCTION

In the early years of the twentieth century, all over Europe, there were reactions against liberal-parliamentarism in politics and materialism in philosophy. Britain has been seen as largely immune to these attacks. Those thinkers who made them have been characterized as politically irrelevant or isolated in a discrete realm of literary culture. This book challenges this interpretation. It examines an anti-liberal cultural community in Britain associated with two Edwardian periodicals. The first of these, the *New Age*, 'an independent socialist review of politics, literature and art', was edited by Alfred Orage from 1908–1922. The second, the *Eye-Witness*, was edited by Hilaire Belloc from 1911–12 and then, as the *New Witness*, by Cecil Chesterton from 1912–16. These two papers are evidence of the periodical and political networks used by writers such as Alfred Orage, Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis, J.M. Kennedy, Hilaire Belloc, Cecil Chesterton, G.K. Chesterton, Ramiro de Maeztu and others. The thought of this community was not monolithic or even consistent. Yet a study of this network of thinkers uncovers a political debating ground which crosses the divisions between left and right, reactionary and progressive, and conservative and revolutionary. Much of the thought is reactionary and avant-garde at the same time. Many of the ideas can be placed within a tradition of British radicalism, but they also absorbed and reflected the thinking of radical right movements elsewhere in Europe and anticipated future forms of political organization. Before introducing these periodicals and their writers, however, it is necessary to precisely define the historiographical context in which to place such a study.

I

In most European countries the dimensions of this anti-democratic, anti-positivist revolt have been fixed by the search for the intellectual origins of fascism.¹ For Germany, Mosse and others have demonstrated the varieties of *völkisch* nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.² These were fed by frustration about the unfulfilled promises and expectations generated by nationalism, kept alive by the need for stability in the wake of unification and allowed to develop in the absence of a strong liberal tradition. Stern has dissected the ideology of three of the most virulent exponents of what he calls 'cultural despair'.³ Not only did Germany develop a more extreme kind of this ideology, but was able to institutionalize it gradually through the number of teachers at all levels of the educational system who accepted its tenets.⁴

In Italy, too, particular native movements have been seen as the *fin de siècle* precursors of fascist ideology. Pareto, Michels and Mosca's sociological theories have been seen as providing useful rationales for justifying fascism.⁵ Futurism's glorification of speed and violence provided a fascist 'aesthetic'.⁶ Corradini's nationalism combined anti-parliamentarism with social Darwinism.⁷ Sternhell and others have also pointed to the fusion between Sorelian syndicalist ideas and nationalism, where nation could easily be substituted for class as the motivating myth behind political action. Bobbio's work on Italian political culture further specifies the variety of critiques of parliamentary government and/or democracy, which grew out of and nourished each other before the First World War.⁸

Perhaps the most controversial theory about the ideological origins of fascism, however, has been developed by Zeev Sternhell with regard to France, and applied to the whole of Europe.⁹ Some of its fame is due to the bitterness it has aroused by claiming that France has a tradition of fascist thought which is equally as powerful as the more famous tradition of liberty and the rights of man emanating from the French Revolution. According to Sternhell, the country which produced the most advanced liberal democratic system also produced its antithesis. The *revanchist* nationalism in the wake of the Franco-Prussian war fused with a kind of socialism in an attempt to motivate the mass of French people. This synthesis was first in evidence in the Boulanger Affair through the campaigns and statements of men such as Déroulède and Barrès. After this, the Dreyfus Affair and its ramifications produced a coherent and virulent attack against the principles of the revolution and the doctrine of the rights of man, as well as intellectualizing and further politicizing anti-Semitism. Charles Maurras became the most eloquent theorist of this new right. The theories of George Sorel have also been considered as

anticipatory and contributory to the theories of fascism. His revision of Marxism put a premium on violence, on anthropological pessimism, on the importance of free market economics and the necessity for a motivating myth behind political action.¹⁰ This motivating myth was originally the class struggle and the general strike, but both he and his disciples increasingly saw nationalism as equally powerful.

Sternhell has extended his theories to apply to the whole of Europe. Paris was the spiritual capital of a European-wide 'cultural rebellion.' These theories have been fruitful and distorting in equal measure. On the one hand they have uncovered a general trend of universal importance. Roger Griffin claims that: 'Though the rampant eclecticism of fascism makes generalisations about its specific ideological contents hazardous, the general tenor of all its permutations places it in the tradition of the late-nineteenth-century revolt against liberalism and positivism'.¹¹ However, it is problematic to link such a trend necessarily with the origins of fascism. Theories of proto-fascism are often over-determined by later forms and therefore have a tendency to bring together consciously separate strands of thought, or else over-emphasize groups of minor significance which best illustrate the general theory. Thus in Sternhell's case his intellectual brackets for proto-fascism are either so small (nationalism + socialism) that they are only tangentially revealed in pamphlets or minor experiments such as the *Cercle Proudhon*, or so large (anti-parliamentarism), that they do not discriminate against other forms of rebellion or less coherent modes of protest.¹²

The use of fascism as a framing tool is doubly distorting when applied to a British context. Not only would such a study fall prey to the same logical errors of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, but the real 'fascist' parties in Britain never achieved power or widespread support. Nevertheless, the absence of this motivating concept — fascism — has meant an under-estimation of the similarities parts of British thought had with the European cultural rebellion that preceded it. This rebellion did not necessarily lead to fascism, especially in Britain. Nevertheless, it had similarities with movements in other European countries which have been characterized as fascism's progenitors. The framing concept, therefore, must be a cultural and political revolt which was happening while these people lived, not its theoretically presumed end point.

Previous attempts to delineate this revolt in Britain have been conceived from a purely political or a purely cultural standpoint. There have been numerous studies of the 'radical right' in Edwardian politics.¹³ Geoffrey Searle's radical-right brackets include the Halsbury Club, Willoughby de Broke, the members of the Reville circle, the group centred on Leopold

Maxse's *National Review*, and Lord Milner and friends. Such groups were not merely 'reactionary' in that they were characterized by an 'amalgam of reactionary and modernising attitudes'¹⁴ sometimes even extending to an admiration of syndicalist violence. Nevertheless, such groups are still defined in relation to the traditional Conservative party, despite their distaste for its paltry modern incarnation. Ewen Green, in his influential study of the Conservative party, believes that the influence of this radical right has been overestimated.¹⁵ Maxse was at his most popular at his most conservative, and isolated at his most radical. Green's argument is persuasive in terms of high politics. What both Searle and Green miss, however, is the influence of such ideas in other areas. The 'radical right' delineation loses the essential fluidity of many of the ideas of the time, and misses their influence in the cultural sphere, or amongst those nominally 'Liberal' or socialist. Searle tacitly admits this when he studies attitudes to a concrete thing — corruption — where his radical right is joined by other groups.¹⁶

Dan Stone has recently challenged this notion of the marginality of proto-fascistic thought in Britain by looking at the *potentiality* of fascist ideas. Stone sees the ideas of Anthony Ludovici, Oscar Levy and the British admirers of Nietzsche as representative of 'streams or tendencies in the history of ideas that, when combined, could have helped produce a fully fledged native fascism.'¹⁷ Stone's account is caught in the magnetic field of fascism as an explanatory concept. His exposition of Ludovici and Levy is brilliant in its reconstruction of forgotten strands of thought. Yet its contextualization is troubling. Stone tries to recognise that these ideas were important in themselves, defining them as 'the extremes of Englishness'. Yet by emphasizing their contact with ideas and movements which are retrospectively identified as part of Nazi ideology — especially the exterminatory strand in eugenics — he paradoxically undervalues their place in wider and possibly more influential radical traditions. The present study of the network in which they worked — both were writers for the *New Age* — should therefore continue Stone's attempt to reassess their ideas, and also extend his call to place them in a cultural, political and theoretical context.¹⁸ The *form* and *place* of such ideas in Britain need to be reassessed.

II

Such a contextualization involves looking at a hitherto separate literary bibliography about the politics of modernism. The impetus behind these works is the 'paradox' of the reactionary or proto-fascistic views of some of the leading figures of British and Irish literature including T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, W.B. Yeats and Wyndham Lewis.¹⁹ The ideas of these writers

contain the 'political themes' which have been seen as the hallmarks of the pan-European revolt against liberal parliamentary democracy: a profound sense of cultural dislocation, a call for a new elite, anti-parliamentarianism, plans for the corporate organization of labour, racism, anti-Semitism and a revolt against social and literary decadence. Most of these studies have been hung on a biographical peg. The debates have been fierce, at their worst representing a court in which the prosecution is infused by the iconoclastic glee of uncovering the unsavoury past of a canonical writer, and the defence obsessed with the universality of literature and the 'standards of the time.' Part of this lies again in the magnetic field of fascism and a need to justify or explain an intellectual's attraction to it. Work on Eliot, Pound and Lewis has explored the connection between reactionary politics and modernist literature. Svarny, Asher and Ferrall have uncovered links with European reactionary thought and the cultural influence of Bergson, Sorel, Maurras and Nietzsche.²⁰ Nevertheless, most of these works are situated around one person, and it is not always clear the extent to which their thought is purely idiosyncratic, or a reflection of wider trends. There is a need to further identify the classical revival and the politics of early modernism with a political tradition that goes outside the bounds of literature and forms part of a wider stream of intellectual critiques of liberal parliamentary democracy in this period.

Works which have studied more than one character in an attempt to delineate the position of a group or tradition, still fail to sufficiently contextualize their place within a particular historical thought pattern or situation. This is largely because of their literary priorities. John Carey has made an attempt to relate literature to a general political field in *The Intellectuals and the Masses*.²¹ This throws up many interesting ideas not least of which that a class prejudice should be internalized and then reified in an artistic language (modernism) more or less consciously formulated as a protest against, as well as an analysis of, mass democracy. But the people are linked through a literary canon, not through social or political interaction. This is equally true of earlier books such as John Harrison's *The Reactionaries*²² and Bentley's *Cult of the Superman*²³, despite their insight and recognition of the need for care with the concept of fascism. Even a very recent work, Peppis's *Literature, politics and the English avant-garde*²⁴ shows the danger inherent in paradigmatic studies over historical ones, a problem especially apparent in the later chapters which turn out to be solely about Wyndham Lewis. The problem that the present work seeks to address, therefore, is to produce a study which is critically aware of the British and European political and cultural bibliography, but which is historically contextualized and rooted socially in a set of people rather than formulated through pre-existent or anachronistic political or literary categories.

III

This interaction between political and literary categories can be examined through a detailed study of periodical literature. Care must be taken not to see these writings as purely textual. These articles were written and consumed in a particular historical and political time. Rather than study individuals biographically, or construct a textual *Geistesgeschichte*, this book will construct a history of thought around a group of people writing in the same cultural community. Their politics are thus reflections of their own intellectual developments, the interaction with their peers, and the space in which and reasons for which they write. Such ideas are the product of the interaction of a number of communities: their immediate colleagues, other papers with similar audiences, their intellectual and spiritual mentors, and wider cultural and political consumers. Periodicals are sites where these interactions can be traced and reconstructed.

Part of the British manifestation of a pan-European revolt against liberal parliamentary democracy, therefore, can be reconstructed through the politics of two periodicals that were at the height of their influence in the years immediately preceding the Great War. The first of these was the *New Age*, edited by Alfred Orage from about 1907, which described itself as ‘an independent socialist review of politics, literature and art.’ The second was the *Eye-Witness* edited by Hilaire Belloc from 1911–12 and then (as the *New Witness*) by Cecil Chesterton from 1912–16. These two papers have very different retrospective reputations. The *New Age* is considered the incubator of literary modernism. It gave space to the early writings of Ezra Pound, T.E. Hulme, and Wyndham Lewis, and was a forum for new progressive artistic tendencies and ideas from ‘advanced’ thinkers in Britain and the Continent. Books such as Wallace Martin’s *The New Age under Orage* and, more recently, the website devoted to the journal run by Brown University’s Modernist Journals Project, emphasize this conception of the paper as a cultural organ, conceived in literary and artistic terms.²⁵ However, a fresh reading of the paper shows its focus to have been primarily political. This has not escaped the attentions of other scholars, but they consider it either as a footnote to an artistic vision, or as a more or less nuanced ‘socialism’. Many of their ideas, however, combined elements of the left and the new radical right. These pages are clearest expression in Britain of the kind of cultural rebellion, which in countries such as Italy, France, and Germany fed into fascism.

The *New Witness* is a source for a different but comparable set of radical right ideas. This journal has a very different reputation, suffering the curious fate of either uncritical praise amongst its few eccentric admirers or silence amongst the rest of the academic community.²⁶ The *New Witness* is as hard to

categorize as the *New Age*—a kind of organ to expose parliamentary corruption which espoused the sort of Catholic libertarian anarchism which later became inter-war Distributism. The two periodicals in many ways expressed separate criticisms, but they reached an important and little remarked upon similarity when they acted on real political problems. Their differences express the diversity of anti-liberal thought in Britain. Their similarities, however, show them to be the sites of an anti-liberal intellectual counter culture that took up the same political space.

The *New Age* was not a campaigning journal in the sense of the *Witness*. It attracted a diverse range of contributors and fostered debate between them. When it pushed particular issues, such as Guild Socialism or Social Credit, it left plenty of space to these movements' detractors. In art as in politics, the *New Age* gave voice to modernism and its critics. My claim about the *New Age* is not that it presented a unified political agenda, but that the nature of this publishing space makes it a compelling source for intellectual anti-liberal politics. The recasting of socialism in its pages went in many directions. The libertarian angles of these have been explored. What deserves to be re-emphasized, however, is the nature of some of these ideas in relation to the new European radical right. The arguments of J.M. Kennedy, Orage, Belloc, Chesterton, Hulme and De Maeztu were not always an editorial line but they took up more space than similar ideas from more liberal socialist thinkers such as S.G. Hobson and G.D.H. Cole. An examination of such ideas in tandem with those of the *Witness*, which exhibited a different but related mixture of left and right, reveals a hitherto underestimated cultural depth to anti-parliamentary thinking in Britain.

Such ideas need to be resurrected in all their complexity and ambiguity for a variety of reasons. One is a need to recover the *otherness* of the past, the way a group of political analysts reacted to events and interpreted them. Such ideas are part of a minority political identity that is easily brushed over in broad discussions of the liberalization of society or the evolution of the constitution. They are thus relevant in themselves and not merely as the context for imaginative literature. What is more, such ideas developed in dialogue with similar developments on the continent and show the similarities as well as the differences in the intellectual response to modernity in Britain.

IV

A.R. Orage was born in Dacre near Bradford in 1873. His father died when he was one, and he moved with his mother to Fenstanton near Huntingdon, where he spent his youth. He became an elementary school teacher in Leeds as a young man, where he was also instrumental in setting up the Leeds Arts Club. In 1907 he moved to London to edit the *New Age* with Holbrook

Jackson. Studies of Orage and the *New Age* were for a long time concerned primarily with the development of early modernism. Wallace Martin's study is useful in charting these new doctrines of dramatic and literary criticism, and he expertly shows how, 'the *New Age* provided a comprehensive record of the emergence of modern culture from its Victorian and Edwardian antecedents.'²⁷ But as Samuel Hynes points out in a review of Martin's book, 'the *New Age* was not primarily a literary paper and the centre of its importance cannot properly be reached through the conventional categories of modern literary criticism'.²⁸ Although the role of Orage's paper in modern culture is increasingly being recognized — although some believe it has not yet got the attention it deserves²⁹ — there is a need to recapture its political importance and trace the evolution of certain ideas about man and society which seem so incongruent in later literary figures. Contemporary interest in the journal is still largely based on its cultural impact. The Modernist Journal Project is providing a great service by providing online copies of the journal and making it 'accessible to a new generation of students of modern culture'.³⁰ However, the emphasis is almost entirely on Orage's editorial ability and his cultural criticism, in an understandable attempt to encourage people to read the journal. The enduring appeal and importance of the paper makes an in-depth discussion of aspects of its political ambiguity even more necessary.

This is not to say that Orage's political ideas have gone unexamined, but until very recently they have been seen in the context of British 'socialism'. Stanley Pierson characterizes him as an 'ethical socialist' because of his attempts to go beyond Fabian collectivism.³¹ Tom Steele has admitted that this 'aristocratic socialism' is 'rather more problematic'³² than Pierson has indicated and has provided a brilliant exposé of Orage's early political and cultural influence in the Leeds Art Club.³³ Political ideas in the *New Age* have also been touched upon in studies of the more well-known modernists who wrote for it, especially T.E. Hulme, Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound.

In the last few years, the purely literary approach to the *New Age* has been tempered further — most notably in articles by Ferrall and Fernihough.³⁴ Ferrall has updated his analysis in the introduction to a recent book.³⁵ Here he frames the intellectuals of the *New Age* as the formulators of a 'reactionary modernism' which was after the war reflected in Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Lawrence and Lewis. He also draws parallels with the *Cercle Proudhon* and the *Action Française*.³⁶ His analysis is substantially in accordance with the present one but with an important difference in emphasis — his priority is still towards literature rather than a reconstruction of a wider political tradition and culture of which literature was one expression. A recent book by Ann Ardis has tried to problematize

the characterization of the *New Age* as modernist by showing that the works of Lewis and Pound, although published, were also parodied and criticized in its pages.³⁷ The reason for this, according to Ardis, was that the paper's political commitment to guild socialism saw modernist literary specialization as part of bourgeois consumer culture.³⁸ Despite this insight, Ardis follows the characterization of Guild Socialism as a 'socialist' phenomenon and does not address other facets of the *New Age* political space. The present work argues that the contributions from the 'radical right' writers, and guild socialism itself, constituted a debating ground where the emerging politics of Lewis, Pound and Hulme could develop.

Similar questions have been addressed in two recent American theses. Justin Watson has identified a clash between what he describes as the proto-fascist and the radical humanist traits in modernism.³⁹ He uses Rebecca West's metaphors of 'closed fists' for the former and 'open hands' for the latter. In an argument reminiscent of *Dialectic of Enlightenment*,⁴⁰ the proto-fascist strand — exemplified by Hulme, Pound and Lewis — perceive reality as an often gendered choice between dipolar opposites; while the radical humanists, such as Joyce, appreciate the multifariousness of humanity. While convincing on an abstract level, the thesis falls victim to an over literary interpretation of proto-fascist ideas. The tyranny of classical reason that typifies Hulme, for example, is in some ways diametrically opposed to the romantic radicalism of Belloc and Chesterton. Yet the latter too, in its rejection of liberal paradigms, forms part of the matrix of British cultural rebellion. This turns out to be much broader when divorced from the specialized debate on modernism. As Herf has suggested, proto-fascism was as much the result of a rejection of reason as its over-zealous extension.⁴¹ A clearer, and for the present purposes more useful, split seems to be formed in relation to concrete political problems — in this case the acceptance or rejection of parliamentary liberal democracy. Reason could be invoked on both sides of this argument.

Lee Garver's thesis takes the heterogeneity of the *New Age* milieu as evidence of the heterogeneity of Edwardian *socialism*.⁴² He thus sees the development of the political ideas of Hulme, Pound and Lewis as coming out of left wing tradition, albeit a nuanced and contested one. Garver is surely right in emphasizing the anachronism of a sterile left / right debate enforced on an Edwardian context. Nevertheless, he still leaves unsolved the true valence of these ideas. Garver's agenda is twofold. On the one hand he makes a commendable effort to nuance the crude proto-fascist labelling of some of modernism's politics by careful contextualization, but on the other hand he attempts to reclaim certain of their themes in the light of post-cold war libertarian socialism. The affinities are striking, yet

he seems to go too far in rejecting the rightward drift of some of these libertarian ideas. After all, the 'socialist' context that Garver describes is the same one described by Sternhell and Gregor in their analysis of the origins of European fascism.⁴³ If there are good reason for not accepting these theses as regards the *New Age* context, Garver does not seem to touch upon them. This political ambiguity needs recentralizing.

My main focus, therefore, will be on the more obscure writers who contributed a good proportion of the *New Age* writing but who are difficult to subsume under the categories of 'socialism' or 'literature'. The main writer for the *New Age* who will be contextualized in this sense, apart from Orage, is his main contributor, J.M. Kennedy. I shall also explore the ideas of A.E. Randall, A.J. Penty, T.E. Hulme, Anthony Ludovici, Oscar Levy and Ramiro de Maeztu, all of whom made important contributions to the politics of the magazine at various points.

Little is known about the life of John McFarland Kennedy, possibly because, according to Beatrice Hastings, Orage burnt all his notes after his death in the War.⁴⁴ He was, however, one of the most prolific of the *New Age* writers, influential in propagating Nietzsche. He developed ideas of classicism in politics and literature contemporaneously with Hulme. According to Paul Selver he was 'plump and sprightly' and hailed from Ulster, although he had a slight American twang to his accent. Selver envied Kennedy's bachelor lifestyle and his flat in Hart Street in Bloomsbury near Chancery Lane, the British Museum and the Vienna Café.⁴⁵ A regular at the *Daily Telegraph* as well as the *New Age*, it was suggested that he might have been a government spy. This was probably an ill-founded rumour, but Selver did suggest that he 'was a bit of a mystery-monger, if not a downright mystery man.'⁴⁶

A.E. Randall is if anything an even more obscure figure than Kennedy. Paul Selver saw him as a self-taught writer (as evidenced by his 'Cockney mannerisms'). He had bulging eyes and talked with a feverish intensesness.⁴⁷ Mairet also recalled him in this way describing him as 'lean, hungry-looking and hollow-cheeked' with 'burning eyes' and a 'consumptive complexion'.⁴⁸ Selver guesses that Orage, Randall and Kennedy wrote at least half of all the *New Age* contributions in the years just before the war.⁴⁹ He later became a reviewer for *The Spectator*, and died towards the end of the 1920s.⁵⁰

Oscar Levy was a German Jew and the editor of the first complete edition of Nietzsche's *Collected Works* (1909–1913) in English. He abandoned his father's banking business in 1894 and moved to London where he practised as a physician. In the years before the First World War he wrote many articles for the *New Age* and ceaselessly propagated the Nietzschean cause.⁵¹ His fellow Nietzsche enthusiast, Anthony Mario Ludovici was born in 1882. He

was bought up in London and in 1906 he was a private secretary to the anti-Drefusard sculptor Auguste Rodin. His interest in Nietzsche was fostered by the following year, which he spent in Germany.⁵² In the years before the First World War he was a regular contributor to the *New Age* on matters relating to Nietzsche's political and artistic views.

Ramiro de Maeztu was the son of a Basque father and a mother of English origins. After a time in Cuba, he returned to Spain where he was influential in the 'Generation of '98', which looked for Spanish literary and cultural regeneration. From 1905 he was the London correspondent for a number of Spanish newspapers and he contributed regularly to the *New Age*, especially during the First World War. After the war he became an apologist for Primo de Rivera and a founding member of *Acción Española*. He was killed by the Republicans soon after the Spanish Civil War broke out.⁵³

Arthur Joseph Penty was born in York in 1875. He trained as an architect and his interest in medieval buildings fostered his interest in medieval social organization. As a young man he was influenced by Ruskin, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold and Edward Carpenter. In the late 1890s he joined the Fabians and became involved in the Leeds Art Club. He moved to London in 1902 and was a regular contributor to Orage's magazine in the years before the war. In the inter-war years he joined the Christian Socialist Crusader League and was increasingly attracted to the anti-modernism of the extreme right. He died in Middlesex in 1937.⁵⁴

T.E. Hulme, initially famous because of his influence on T.S. Eliot, is now recognized as an important figure in the origins of literary modernism. He was born in 1883 and spent his childhood in Gratton Hall, Staffordshire. He was educated at Newcastle High School, and, later, at St. John's College Cambridge where he read maths as an exhibition scholar. Having been sent down from Cambridge for bad behaviour, Hulme made a reputation for himself in London as a philosopher and man of letters. His 'salons' in Frith Street have a near mythical status in the history of modernism. Indeed, T.E. Hulme exerted a mystical aura over the intellectual community of pre-1914 London which seems completely out of proportion to his literary output. He published very little in his lifetime; his main book, *Speculations*, was collected from his notes and published in 1936. He was an interpreter of language and ideas, the typical 'intellectual' (Hulme would blanch at the term) which was so rare in England. He was a literary critic, a poet, a philosopher, an art critic, a critic of ideas, and a critic of critics. Yet he was not merely an interpreter of the general themes of the time, he also had a knack for picking up on the ideas of the future. It is for this reason that he has been so studied by students of early literary modernism. He is

equally useful as a barometer of the European revolt against positivism and the extent to which this could apply in an English context. He is the equivalent — both reactionary and avant-garde — of many of the figures on the European radical right.

The relationship of many of Hulme's ideas with fascism is an idea which has not escaped scholars, especially those writing immediately after the Second World War. Michael Roberts accentuates the incompleteness of Hulme's thought. He also posits a type of Christianity as a later conclusion to Hulme's thought which might have kept him out of the orbit of fascism.⁵⁵ This is cogently argued, but one cannot help but sense a bit of wishful thinking, as well as a working through of the dilemma for Robert's own sake. A.R. Jones accepts Hulme would have opted for fascism in a world pushed to extremes because of his respect for the 'long note of the bugle'⁵⁶, but claims the whole question is an 'anachronism'.⁵⁷ A. Quinton goes further than this in his conclusion: "To call Hulme a fascist is not so much, as Mr. Jones contends, an anachronism as a conditional prophesy whose conditions were unfulfilled".⁵⁸ For A. MacIntyre the similarity goes without saying once fascism is divorced from Nazism.⁵⁹

Those writers treating Hulme mostly from the point of view of literary criticism tend to avoid the question altogether. They either take the text as somehow depoliticized or else squeeze out the value of the ideas without considering their political implications. There is little analysis of Hulme's relationship with fascist ideology short of an abstract labelling process. A more fruitful approach is to examine Hulme's position not in relation to fascism itself, but in relation to the cultural rebellion which preceded it. Sternhell recognizes Hulme as the closest figure in England to the ideological synthesis of proto-fascism which he detects in France and Italy.⁶⁰ There is a need to carry through this analysis by seeing exactly how Hulme presaged this synthesis and where the influence came from. Hulme digested and entered into dialogue with all the major reactionary ideological trends form over the channel. What is more, Hulme was a writer for the *New Age* and was in regular contact with Orage and his circle. By examining Hulme's ideas in this political context we can see many similarities with those of Orage and Kennedy. He thus becomes less mysteriously unique and more a part of British intellectual politics on the eve of the war.

V

The bibliography for the writers for the *Eye-Witness* is completely separate. They have been mentioned, and occasionally developed upon as examples of a literary 'radical right' and precursors of fascism.⁶¹ Apart from these few historical studies, their controversial reputation has not always led to

reasoned debate about their political significance. For some, Hilaire Belloc, the Chestertons and their circle are radical political theorists and masters of poetry and prose. For others they are useless anti-Semitic anachronisms, ‘full of sound and fury, signifying nothing’. Those opposed to their ideas tend to treat them to the ultimate ignominy — silence — and so the significant secondary works about them are produced by their admirers. The curious situation is one of a general academic feeling of dislike when they are mentioned in passing, yet an over-blown praise when they are treated at length.

Hilaire Belloc was born in 1870 in the suburb of La Celle Saint Cloud, a small town just outside Paris. His biographers have remarked how his birth in a thunderstorm gave him the nickname ‘old Thunder’ and symbolically mirrored his personality. As a young boy he moved to London and was educated at the Oratory School in Birmingham. After serving a year in the French navy he read history at Balliol College Oxford. He was known above by his contemporaries for his oratory in the Oxford Union, where he was president in his second year. On graduating from Oxford, his ambition to become a fellow was thwarted when he was rejected by All Souls. He spent the next few years making a name for himself as a writer and journalist. In 1906 he stood for parliament on the Liberal ticket and was elected MP for South Salford. Four years later, disillusioned with the party system, he did not seek re-election. He turned from politics to journalism and set up his own magazine in 1911.

Belloc has been considered from many angles: as a poet, a soldier, a controversialist, an essayist, a historian, a wit and a drinker to name but a few. As his friend Clerihew Bentley observed, ‘He seems to think nobody minds / His books being all of different kinds.’⁶² This book is unashamedly concerned only with his politics, and the way in which those ideas were expressed and received.

There are two major biographies of Belloc, one by Robert Speaight⁶³ and one by A.N. Wilson.⁶⁴ Both are interesting for facts about Belloc’s life, but are obviously forced into a personal stance towards Belloc as a man so are less useful as analyses of his political significance. A more recent biography by Joseph Pearce is useful in recentralizing Belloc’s Catholicism.⁶⁵ J.P. Corrin’s book is an important study of the political and social elements in the thought of Belloc and Chesterton. Corrin admits that the activities of the *New Witness* were sometimes less than laudable and that the literary partnership of Belloc and Cecil Chesterton ‘resulted in some rather rancorous journalism.’⁶⁶ Corrin’s main focus is on post-war Distributism, and he does admit that many of Belloc’s associates did become fascist sympathizers in the late thirties. He is at pains to stress, however, that the thought of both Belloc and Chesterton

was antithetical to fascism. What is more, he claims that it has nothing to do with the 'cultural elitism' of people like Yeats and Pound.⁶⁷ This is convincingly argued, and he makes much of Belloc's rhetorical anti-elitism and his love of the common man in the tradition of Cobbett. However, the sources for Belloc's eccentric politics and modernist cultural elitism were not as separate as has been often assumed. This can be reconstructed through debates in the *New Age* and *New Witness* circle where these ideas were sometimes in congruence and sometimes in conflict but never wholly separate. Respect for the common man does not preclude a type of authoritarian elitism.⁶⁸

J.P. McCarthy's study of Belloc's politics concentrates on the pre-war period and is a clear exposition of his ideas.⁶⁹ It is not hagiographical but there are signs of sympathy with Belloc's ideas. His anti-Semitism is not excused, but many caveats and explanations are offered. McCarthy takes Belloc's official denial of overt anti-Semitism in front of the law courts, for example, at face value, but ignores many comments inclining to the opposite opinion in his letters and articles.⁷⁰ It is telling also, that McCarthy's publisher, the Liberty Press, Indianapolis, tends towards contemporary expositions of similar or more extreme political philosophies.⁷¹ Feske's study of Belloc is free of such contemporary political insinuations, but limits itself to Belloc's view of history and his campaign against the anti-Catholic Whig hegemony.⁷²

Cecil Chesterton was the younger and less well known of the Chesterton brothers. Born in Kensington in 1879, he was educated in London at St. Paul's and the Slade. On leaving the Slade, he started a career in journalism, contributing to a wide variety of publications. He joined the Fabian Society in 1901 and was a member of the central committee from 1904 until he left the group in 1907. From 1907–1911 he wrote many articles for the *New Age*. In 1911 he became Belloc's assistant editor on the *Eye-Witness*, before taking over the editorship himself in 1912. He died of nephritis in the military hospital at Wimereux near Boulogne on 6 December 1918.

There is very little writing on Cecil Chesterton. The one full-length work which does exist is by an old Distributist, Brocard Sewell, and while providing a useful overview of his life it is overly favourable. The conclusion speaks for itself, 'He was contentious, certainly, and could be tiresome and irritating, that is clear; but equally clearly, he was basically a humble man, and a real democrat.'⁷³ His views, however, were very important to the circle — he was deputy editor of both the *New Age* and the *Eye-Witness* and sole editor of the *New Witness*. The reconstruction of his politics and influence is long overdue.

G.K. Chesterton took over the editorship of the *New Witness* on his brother's death in 1918. His reputation intersects with that of Belloc, partly because of Shaw's famous characterization of the 'Chesterbelloc', but

also because of their personal friendship and involvement in many of the same causes. He, therefore, and his supporters, suffer from a similar but related *reputation angst*. Most works on Chesterton's politics have understandably concentrated on his post-war Distributist phase. Some writers, however, have seen the 1910–14 period as the seeding ground for this ideology. Writers have had the same trouble as they have with Belloc in characterizing his thought in the British political tradition. Perhaps the most convincing characterization is Margaret Canovan's borrowing of the term 'populist', which helps reconcile his radical 'democracy' and conservative social values.⁷⁴ Anti-Semitism, too, has led all his biographers into contortions of defence. It is true that in the end he was one of the fiercest denouncers of Hitler's anti-Jewish policy, but it is also the case that in the period just before the First World War he was heavily influenced by the views of both Belloc and his brother. The archivist at the Wiener library in London has summed up his reputation generously, and is thus eagerly quoted by all his supporters, 'He was a man who played along, and for that he must pay a price; he has, and has the public reputation of anti-Semitism. He was not an enemy, and when the real testing time came along he showed what side he was on.'⁷⁵ G.K. Chesterton was not necessarily the most extreme purveyor of the type of political philosophies that were being explored in these reviews, but his ideas crossed in and out of the more extreme pronouncements of his contemporaries.

VI

The writings of the *Eye-Witness* and the *New Age* have mostly been seen as entirely separate. This is understandable from a literary perspective. Belloc's romantic lyricism seems at a completely opposite pole from the avant-garde modernism of Wyndham Lewis, or the harsh neo-classicism of Hulme. Some writers have nevertheless drawn links between their ideas. Coates claims a link between Orage, G.K. Chesterton and T.E. Hulme in that they all ridiculed the prevailing notions of progress and stressed the importance of man's limitation in relation to political theory.⁷⁶ Coates's main aim, however, is to rescue Chesterton from quaintness by showing that it was only a difference of temper and style which has meant his contribution to this debate has been undervalued in favour of more 'modern' figures such as Hulme, Lewis and T.S. Eliot. This rescue operation leaves him at pains to stress, at least in the case of Orage and Chesterton, that 'both men, although keen to establish the grounds of authority in morals, philosophy and politics, were cautious in adopting overtly authoritarian nostrums.'⁷⁷ Tom Gibbons has also pointed out that a linking of literary decadence with social decadence provides a thread running through 'such otherwise disparate writers' as

Hulme, Kennedy, Wells, Orage, Cecil Chesterton, Wyndham Lewis and T.S. Eliot.⁷⁸ Other writers have looked at the similarity between Pound's Social Credit and Chesterton's Distributism in the thirties.⁷⁹ All these theories are interesting, but problematic in that they hypothesize ideological similarity without social contextualization. From the latter perspective it might seem ridiculous to draw links between Pound or Hulme and Belloc or Chesterton; especially given Pound's later analysis of the pre-war intellectual scene:

You ought also to remember who were still alive in those years, and on whom young eyes were bent. The respectable and the middle generation, illustrious punks and messers, fakes like Shaw, stew like Wells, nickel cash-register Bennett. All degrading the values. Chesterton meaning also slosh at least then and to me. Belloc pathetic in that he had *meant* to do the fine thing and been jockeyed into serving, at least to some extent, ... a pewked society.⁸⁰

The general view about their unfavourable opinion of each other thus seems backed up by their own admission. Nevertheless, Pound criticizes Belloc not for his views, but for the fact that he compromised them. It is their mutual enemies, Shaw, Wells and Bennett, who are unambiguously slated. Moreover, the space that their cultural politics occupied in a wider context makes the links seem stronger. There were cross-overs between the magazines, the *Eye-Witness* was in many ways an off-shoot of the *New Age* and many commentators then and now have remarked on their 'similarity of mission'.⁸¹ Of course, in one view this could simply back up the heterodoxy of the paper, the looseness of the editorial policy and reinforce sociological points about the fluidity of bohemian politics.⁸² Yet when both social interactions can be proved and the views on concrete political problems were the same, the rigid separation of these groups seems over-played. They can be better described as arguing within a space that shared many similarities and itself represented a shift from other liberal political traditions. To describe their ideas as both 'reactionary' and 'avant-garde', therefore, is to use labels they might have rejected but helps define their place in a wider political context. Many on the *New Age* would have blanched at the term 'reactionary', many on the *Witness* at 'avant-garde', but the term represents the connections between the two. Richard Kostelanetz's definition of the avant-garde in art as combining 'aesthetic innovation and initial unacceptability'⁸³ applies much more to certain figures in the *New Age* than to any in the *Witness*. Nevertheless, their thought is both a dynamic product of modernity and a political reaction using past forms. I hope I can be forgiven for using a term which often is given a theoretical exactness⁸⁴ in an illustration of this duality.

The following chapters are organized thematically in order to allow these similarities and differences to be set together rather than explained separately. In the second chapter, 'The revolt of the masses', I consider the reactions of these intellectuals to the industrial unrest and outline their schemes of the future organization of labour, including the 'Guild System' and aristocratic socialism. The third chapter, 'The forging of an anti-parliamentary tradition' examines the development of anti-parliamentary ideas amongst the *New Age* and *New Witness* circle. This will include an analysis of the *Party System* thesis and a comparison of this with the anti-democratic ideas of the Anglo-Nietzscheans. It will then go on to examine the aims and methods of the 'League for Clean Government'. Chapter three, 'The Nation' will attempt to analyse their ideas of nationalism and the part in which their ideas of nationhood and belonging affected their political choices, especially at the outbreak of the war. There will follow a chapter on 'Anti-Semitism and race' which will outline and compare both the virulent anti-Semitism of the *New Witness* at the time of the Marconi Scandal and after, and the eugenic and racial argument of some of the contributors to the *New Age*. The fifth chapter, 'Sterile virgins on the drab rampage' will consider the image and role of women, especially in the reactions to the suffragette campaign. First of all, however, there is a need to examine the social and economic context of the magazines, their editorial methods, the social interactions of the writers, and the nature of their supporters.

1. READERS, WRITERS AND INTELLECTUAL NETWORKS

The *New Age* and the *New Witness* occupied a distinct place in the field of British newspaper publishing. The number of ‘weeklies’ mushroomed in the late nineteenth century, their readership bolstered by the products of the 1870 Education Act. In form and tone they lay between the heavyweight literary monthlies such as *Nineteenth Century* and *Contemporary Review*, and the mass circulation dailies such as *The Times* and *The Daily News*. Politically, they occupied a fluid bohemian hinterland, bordered by the anarchist *Daily Herald*, the collectivist *New Statesman* and the radical conservative *National Review*.¹ Lucy Delap has described their ‘periodical community’ as that of the ‘radical weekly’ and has expounded the connections between personnel and publishers.² The *Freewoman* and the *Eye-Witness* shared the same publisher, and there were crossovers of contributors and readership — despite their differences — between these two papers and the *New Age*, and other minor weeklies such as *The Commentator*. Delap’s concept of a ‘periodical community’ goes some way towards accounting for the seeming eclecticism of the writing in the papers. They were, in a sense, deliberately free arenas. Nevertheless, the participants shared common values and presuppositions and were extremely self-reflexive. Shaw, writing later, complained of the ‘splenetic quarrelsomeness and cliquishness’³ that governed relations between the various writers, and fragments of this atmosphere illuminate some of the otherwise obscure political arguments.

I

Freedom and truth supposedly infused the *New Age* and *Eye-Witness* policies. Belloc wanted a journal that was outside of the mechanisms and intrigues of the party system, and that could not be bought off or influenced. He told the Commons in his final speech as MP that ‘even the most modest

pen in the humblest newspaper is as good as a vote in what has ceased to be a free deliberative assembly.²⁴ This freedom was considered central from its inception. Belloc described the genesis of the paper in a letter to E.S.P. Haynes, claiming, 'there is a need for telling the truth, and quite possibly a market for it.'²⁵ When Orage acquired the failing *New Age* in 1907 it too was to be an organ independent of all party doctrine, 'an independent socialist review of literature politics and art' in which socialism itself was to be challenged and recast. Truth and freedom were far too abstract to provide a coherent policy in themselves, however. The story of the papers is a progressive narrowing of their political discourse. This is not to say the contributors did not disagree — internal debate was one of the fêted accomplishments of both magazines — but they both argued within similar traditions. As the *New Witness*, especially, gradually isolated itself from the political mainstream, it fell into the trap of only courting the extremes and thus became as doctrinally fixed as the party press. This could have been exacerbated by a British political culture where the main themes of discontent were reified in parliament, and the effective political space outside it was limited. By becoming foci for *anti-parliamentary* criticism, the *New Age* and the *Witness* gained their own coherence.

Their self-conception as a free area of debate was highlighted by their refusal to rely on advertising for their funding. The ministers involved with the Marconi Scandal misinterpreted the readership and influence of the *New Witness* based on its adverts.⁶ Orage remarked sarcastically, 'Since THE NEW AGE contains even fewer advertisements than the 'New Witness', we may conclude that our comments on the Government's proposals will be without influence.'⁷ When Cecil Chesterton started bringing in adverts to ease the *New Witness* finances, Belloc was perturbed. On seeing adverts for Ware Kent Coal in 1913 he commented that, 'The moment people mix up an attack on corruption with financial objects they suspect that attack and cease to think it sincere.'⁸

The choice not to rely on adverts led to the need for private financial backing. The *New Age* received its initial funding from Lewis Wallace (a Theosophical banker) and George Bernard Shaw.⁹ There is no evidence that either of them consciously tried to influence policy, indeed the claim seems ridiculous considering *The New Age's* attacks on Fabianism. Yet in a sense they were funding integrity, and Shaw was enough of a believer in the necessity of debate that the functioning of the periodical community would be helped and refreshed by an acerbic outsider. The backers did not influence policy directly, but stood as a point of referral. The same could be said of the initial backer of the *Eye-Witness*, Charles Granville. Again, it is hard to imagine Belloc taking orders from anyone. Yet the political motivation behind the backer's decision is suggested by his own

poems and plays; he choice was a political act, not a whimsical desire to support a literary review. His *God's abyss and woman* (London 1908) contains the idea of distribution of property and land, sympathetic no doubt to Belloc's own embryonic Distributism. Granville's little-known play from 1910, *The race spirit*, combines a vague socialism with a desire to get rid of parliamentary government. Once the scene is set as a simple allegory on the state of Britain, an off-stage 'race spirit' speaks of its wish for a king to take over from the unpopular parliament. The politicians are criticized as 'faithless parasites...' enslaved to the party system.¹⁰ When the king eventually takes over with his team of benevolent experts, the 'race spirit' is satisfied and speaks of a new order which will be more effective, more organic and more humane:

These are indeed most grateful sounds and sights!
 A King and a people one, the race shall march
 From victory unto victory till what time
 Those lengths are scaled whose plane is fitly named
 'Humane.'¹¹

The backer surely saw such ill-described political ideas as finding the possibility of expression in an independent political review edited by Hilaire Belloc. Granville also set up a publishing house, *Stephen Swift*, which was registered as a company on 30 June, 1911 and liquidated in 1912.¹² This published political books of the same ilk, many of the more famous ones by contributors either to the *New Age* or the *New Witness*. Indeed, when Granville did a runner with the money,¹³ Belloc rued the fact that thereby an opportunity had narrowed for his set to get their ideas published.¹⁴

Orage's impartial editorial technique has been described at length elsewhere.¹⁵ What is interesting, however, is that, increasingly, he saw the *New Age* not merely as a free arena, but as a free arena in which a new political and artistic view could be forged. J.M. Kennedy smarted at the implication from one correspondent that the *New Age* was without principle. He criticized the correspondent for merely misunderstanding the real one: 'When Mr. Radford complains that there is 'neither purpose not principle' in the *New Age* at the present time, he means, of course, that there is no idealistic purpose and no sentimental principle.'¹⁶ Orage was not entirely sure what this principle was, but it was *new* and it involved the recasting and reformation of socialism. Orage was not always sure that his readers understood either, but he was nevertheless convinced that they were imbibing subconsciously:

But now that we have been some months engaged, we dare venture to say, in reconstructing both the theory and practice of Socialism as they have never been reconstructed before, our readers are either silent or, like Mr. Graham Wallas, they absorb our ideas without mentioning their source.¹⁷

II

What was this new socialism? On the one hand, it aimed to be a sophisticated and intelligent antidote to the materialism elsewhere on the market. When David Lowe asked Orage what kind of contribution he wanted, Orage replied, 'page-long essays of an exquisite, intelligent, humane + post-socialistic, free-from-drivel-propagandist character.'¹⁸ This socialism was also part of a common European attempt to dissociate socialism from its liberal and democratic overtones, make it national, and free it from its collective and materialistic bias. Such a view would encompass politics and literature:

It will be found, if we all live long enough, that every part of THE NEW AGE hangs together; and that the literature we despise is associated with the economics we hate as the literature we love is associated with the form of society we would assist in creating.¹⁹

Yet associated with this constructive project was a concern with fixed values. Orage in 1914 was talking of the importance of '...individual immortality; individual responsibility within a world of fixed relations; and universal justice.'²⁰ A similar mixture of Nietzschean socialism and classical conservatism characterized much of the *New Age* position. This had to be tempered by nationalism and the very English concept of 'brilliant common sense' which in 1914 Orage claimed 'we of THE NEW AGE have taken as our watchword.'²¹ Nevertheless, Orage did explicitly connect his mission with those thinkers on the continent who were engaged in the same process of reconstruction. Kennedy too, in his book on Tory Democracy, urged conservatives to familiarize themselves with the kinds of continental philosophers that the *New Age* were introducing to the British public.²² The greatest of these was Nietzsche, whom Orage had discovered in 1903, and who greatly influenced his thought, as that of J.M. Kennedy, Oscar Levy and Anthony Ludovici, who all either wrote books on the German philosopher or were involved in translating him into English.²³ This was reflected in the conception of the paper itself as a place of political and intellectual 'becoming'. Nietzsche was not the only European philosopher discussed in the *New Age*. The first translation of Max Stirner's *The ego and its own* was noted in 1907.²⁴ Proudhon, too, was

seen as a kindred spirit, ‘...Proudhon had much the same standards of literary values as prevail on these pages.’²⁵ European movements saw reflections of themselves in the *New Age*, just as the paper framed itself within continental ideas. G. Depoulain, a supporter and member of *Action Française* had been involved in a long argument in correspondence with Mr. Boyd of the *New Age*. His final letter, however, described his surprise on finding, apart from Mr. Boyd, elements which fitted his viewpoint. He found himself moving from an outsider in a broad-minded socialist review to a kindred political spirit:

Before ending this letter, allow me to thank you for the hospitality which you so kindly gave me in your review, and as I did not only peruse Mr. Boyd’s article and letters, but also found sounder criticism in your columns, I promise you that henceforth I will be one of your most constant readers.²⁶

The influence of the *Action Française* on Hulme and Kennedy happened in this fertile cultural soil.²⁷

The *New Age* also acted as a conduit for the influence of Bergson in Britain, mainly through the efforts of T.E. Hulme. Bergsonian influence in Britain was not confined to the intellectual avant-garde. Between 1909 and 1911, over two hundred articles on Bergson were written.²⁸ Not only were his ideas discussed in specialized philosophical journals such as the *Monist*, *Science* and the *Philosophical Review*, but also in more mainstream publications such as *Athenaeum*, *Saturday Review* and *Nation*.²⁹ Bergson visited Britain in 1911, received an honorary degree from Oxford, and lectured at Birmingham and University College London. T.E. Hulme was one of the major British interpreters of the French philosopher. He contributed numerous articles to the *New Age* on Bergson, gave a series of lectures in 1911, and translated *An introduction to metaphysics* in 1913.³⁰ Hulme was led to Bergson for a variety of reasons. Bergson, like Hulme, was a mathematician by training. Bergson seemed a revelation because he combined the prioritizing of ‘instinct’ with rigorous philosophical method, but without yoking it to materialist positivism. Hulme praised Bergson for awaking him from the ‘nightmare of determinism’.³¹ Bergson established a ‘well-defined boundary between physical and psychological processes, usually intermingled in practice, and therefore confused in principle.’³² For Hulme, this was entirely compatible with a reactionary Burkean tradition that disliked mechanistic explanations. Jennings has claimed that it was not necessarily Bergson of the ‘*élan vital*’ so popular

with the Parisian and later British bourgeoisie that attracted Hulme, but *'le critique acéré de la pensée conceptuelle et du rationalisme'*.³³

It is also possible that Bergson's yoking of opposites was attractive to a personality that also swayed between instinct and reason. Alongside his metropolitan sophistication, Hulme displayed a muscular toughness that extended to literary and even physical violence. According to Halszaka Barthy, 'he had a passion for knuckledusters and Gaudier Brzeska made him one if not two carved out of solid brass.'³⁴ He once complained to be so angered by an opponent that his 'annoyance' demanded 'physical expression'.³⁵ Bergson seemed to be the key to the unity or interface between the instinctual and the intellectual. Bergson was, in Hulme's own words, 'a nucleus round which an over saturated solution of a certain kind of enthusiasm can crystallise.'³⁶

Bergson's thought was additionally attractive in that it was so repulsive to the empiricism, rationalism and positivism of such establishment liberal philosophers as G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell.³⁷ In a metaphor that lays bare the usually implicit assumption of cultural politics, Hulme saw ideas as dividing lines as well as abstractions:

It seems as if ideas were only valuable in so far as they distinguish one from the people we dislike. The motive behind all writing and all invention of ideas would seem merely to be that of drawing a complicated line which shall definitely mark one off from the type of people one can't stand. The separation seems to be the important thing; the ideas are only a means to that end. They serve as an elaborate kind of fence.³⁸

Initially Bergson was helpful in putting up a fence against positivism. However, the increased popularity of Bergson among the liberal bourgeoisie was part of the reason for rejecting his ideas in 1911. This rejection was philosophically based to an extent. Bergson seemed increasingly to collapse fundamental distinctions between the vital and the absolute. This reflected in some ways the drift away from Bergson on the part of Catholic French intellectuals such as Maritain and Péguy. Bergson was initially attractive in that he recentralized the 'instinct' (which could be understood or reworked as the 'spiritual') over secular materialism. His thought was ultimately false, however, because he secularized the divine. It was thus anathema to Thomist orthodoxy, which itself relied on reason if not materialism. The initial attractiveness of such a heresy made Bergson especially mendacious in the Church's eyes, and he was put on the Index in 1914. Hulme also began to see 'spilt religion' in some of

Bergson's reasoning. Nevertheless, the focus of his rejection came from the appropriation of Bergsonian ideas by factions he instinctively disliked. Part of it stemmed from Hulme's elitism — Bergson's increased popularity and social cachet meant that he was no longer an original talisman in Hulme's circle. One of Pound's letters later complained that 'H's slopping around with Bergson a BORE.³⁹ Hulme was especially angered by the linking of Bergson with democracy. 'Bergson no more stands for Democracy than he stands for paper bag cookery'⁴⁰ he fumed. And the people who confirmed him in this dislike were those with whom he instinctively felt to be on his side of the 'fence': Pierre Laserre and the *Action Française*. He met Pierre Laserre in 1911 on the way back from the Bologna Philosophical Congress, and recorded his meeting in the *New Age*. Hulme accepted Laserre's labelling of Bergson as a 'romantic' thinker. He was a danger to French intellectual discipline. Laws should be gathered from history and life, 'the elementary knowledge that any man might have of human nature and the exigencies of life in society.'⁴¹ What is interesting is that the other criticisms of Bergson are explicitly tied to a political line. The problem of the reality of time was linked to the nature of democracy. Hulme paraphrased Laserre's criticism and the Bergsonian retort:

If we point out that history does not show any prosperous, strong and conquering nation which was at the same time a democracy, they retort, history would not be history if it were not change itself and perpetual novelty.⁴²

Hulme's compromise was that 'time is real for the individual, but not for the nation.'⁴³ By extension, the individual could be free but the race must remain static, fixed and bound in universal laws. This could be construed as individual libertarianism coupled with political discipline. Hulme rejected Bergson explicitly because he was associated with the wrong kind of political faction, yet he kept those of his ideas that could be easily harnessed to a reactionary ideology. Bergson himself was beyond right and left and many scholars have shown how his ideas could be harnessed by both sides. Even on the left, his 'life-affirming organicism could combine anti-capitalist ideologies, sometimes unwittingly, with the politics of reaction' as Mark Antliff has shown.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the perception was that his ideas belonged more strongly with the romantic left, and Hulme eventually followed this polarization. This perception, and rejection, mirrored the French right, and was later taken up by Eliot and Babbit, despite their initial interest in Bergson. The nature of Hulme's attraction to and repulsion from Bergson in the *New Age*, therefore, was representative of reactionary right-wing cultural politics elsewhere.

Other new thinkers were associated with the *New Age* task. Orage recognized another like mind in Irving Babbitt. Babbitt was a Harvard philosopher, who was an avid reader of Charles Maurras and an important early influence on T.S. Eliot. In an example of how intellectual fusion and influence took place in the periodical community, Orage asked his readers for help: ‘Who is Mr. Irving Babbitt? I have not met his name before, but reading between the lines of his new book: ‘The Masters of Modern French Criticism’ (Constable), he is both somebody and (what, perhaps, is the same thing) a reader of THE NEW AGE.’ He then quoted him as summing up the *New Age* aim to be constant without being rigid: “‘What is needed now” he says, “is a critic who, without being at all rigid or reactionary, can yet carry into his work the sense of standards that are set above individual caprice.” Precisely what we aim at, with so much unavoidable offence in the endeavour.⁴⁵ Babbitt, professor of French and comparative literature at Harvard, was, like Maurras, an advocate of strict classicism in politics and literature and scornful of the ‘romanticism’ of democracy.⁴⁶

Orage similarly introduced Croce, whom he feted as the most important philosopher for his politics since Nietzsche:

Have any of my readers heard of Croce — Benedetto Croce? If so, they have done me and THE NEW AGE an injustice in not communicating the fact; for Croce is, if I am not mistaken, the philosopher of THE NEW AGE.⁴⁷

Croce at this time, of course, was not the heroic anti-fascist resistor, but the anti-positivist intellectual, scornful of democracy and the liberal parliamentary system.⁴⁸ Orage would have been drawn to his theory of art as intuition — backing up his crusade against realism in literature — and, most of all, his scorn for materialism and empirical generalizations. Croce was especially attractive in this regard, as he still held firm to the rigour of logical thinking as regarded pure concepts, even as he rejected reasoning based solely on observed facts.⁴⁹ What better arsenal to back up his attack on the British empirical tradition and the dry tracts of the Fabians?

All these thinkers framed and infused the politics of many who wrote for the *New Age* politics and showed that their ‘socialism’ was developing in a direction similar to much thought on the continent; away from its materialist and positivist roots and into a dangerous flux which could find rest in many movements depending on the political situation. For the *Witness*, however, this anti-liberal revolt had other precursors. While one matrix of influence is the continental right, the other is the British tradition

of romantic radicalism. This tradition — loosely defined — had its origins in a popular left-wing opposition to the excesses of Jacobinism. William Cobbett and Burdett espoused radical reform coupled with romantic, medieval economic principles and nativism. Writers have seen it extending through Walter Scott and Carlyle to Ruskin and Morris at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵⁰ Morris, certainly, was a seminal influence on many of the writers for the *New Age* and the *New Witness*. When Belloc was a young man, he had asked Wilfrid Scawen Blunt to introduce him to William Morris, saying that, 'he is a man for whom I have always had the greatest reverence in his writing, & whose work once all but converted me to approach the Great Beast of Socialism. I should much like to know him.'⁵¹ Belloc also admitted Morris's influence years later, according to Blunt's diaries.⁵² Nevertheless, Belloc did not refer to Morris much in the columns of the *Witness*, probably because his legacy was contested, and in the belief that the constant insistence on discipleship would weaken the perceived originality of his political contributions. Orage, too, had been introduced to the writings of Morris as a young boy. His Sunday school teacher, a non-conformist squire from Fenstanton called Howard Coote, had allowed Orage to use his private library. In Orage's case, however, surviving testimonies about his early influences mention Morris's influence on his style rather than his politics. Orage read Morris alongside, 'those nineteenth-century idealists who then ruled the world' — Ruskin, Carlyle and Matthew Arnold — who were his 'initiators into the splendours of language'.⁵³ William Cobbett was a hero to both Belloc and Chesterton. They both admired his populism, his hostility to finance capital, his hatred of oligarchic government and suspicion of progress. In an essay in *The Liberal tradition*, written when Belloc was a young man, he paid obligatory lip service to Fox, Cobden and Bright, but claimed his real inspiration to be William Cobbett.⁵⁴ He shared with Cobbett the idea of the 'community' of old England being undermined by a powerful plutocracy, a process that had begun during the Protestant Reformation.⁵⁵ Belloc emphasized the need for a 'yeoman class' to give the nation strength and permanence.⁵⁶ G.K. Chesterton, too, wrote a book on Cobbett in the inter-war years. In his autobiography he claimed Belloc to be a modern incarnation of the early nineteenth-century radical: 'he looked exactly like what all English farmers ought to look like; and was, as it were, a better portrait of Cobbett than Cobbett was.'⁵⁷

The ambivalence of this stream of thought has excited much comment. Marx and Engels described what they called 'feudal socialism':

Half lamentation, half lampoon; half echo of the past, half menace of the future; at times, by its bitter, witty and incisive criticism, striking the bourgeoisie to the very heart's core, but always ludicrous in its effect, through total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history...⁵⁸

More recently, Peter Spence has outlined the troubled legacy of romantic thought, concluding that 'Cobbett and Burdett's movement bears a striking resemblance to aspects of twentieth-century fascism.'⁵⁹ One could equally trace, however, its effect on libertarian left wingers, such as E.P. Thompson. This dichotomy was there in the Edwardian context too, and illustrates the dangers inherent in a loss of mooring. In the context of an attack on liberalism, collectivism and parliamentary democracy, such a tradition could act in harmony with new radical right thought from the continent.

III

The *Eye-Witness* similarly developed from a free arena of discussion to a tight oppositional journal. Indeed, at the paper's inception Belloc saw the need for a strong and clear policy, and confided to E.S.P. Haynes: 'I think you are right about the lack of a constructive policy in the *Eye-Witness*, but it is extremely difficult to introduce'.⁶⁰ By the end of the year, however, its particular notion of non-socialist anti-parliamentarism was clearly expressed:

As for instance: we have opposed in the sphere of philosophy, the common Atheism of our time, and we have opposed in a very different sphere the old-fashioned middle-class collectivist solution of the economic welter to which some solution must be found.⁶¹

The difficulty of 'freedom' was that it opened up the paper to extremes and became a platform for those who were (perhaps rightly) denied one elsewhere. This is exemplified by Frank Hugh O'Donnell whose anti-Semitic letter was refused publication by *The Times*. Frank Hugh O'Donnell (1848–1916) had been elected in 1874 as a Home Ruler for Galway City. He claimed in his *History of the Irish parliamentary party* (2 vols., New York, 1910) to be the originator of Parnell and Biggar's obstruction tactics. He dropped out of Irish public life in 1885 and became known as 'Crank Hugh O'Donnell.' W.B. Yeats described O'Donnell as a 'mad rogue' and as 'half-genius, half sewer-rat', recalling that a he could turn from a distinguished-looking man into a 'half-drunken County Councillor shaking his fist in an opponent's face.'⁶² After wanderings in Eastern Europe, he

resurfaced in 1911 as a violently polemical anti-Semite, denied print in any of the mainstream press. Yet he appealed to the *Eye-Witness* for a platform: 'Honestly I think you ought to let the matter be known to your readers, as your 'Eye' claims to see things as they are.'⁶³ This appeal was accepted when Belloc was still editor.

Despite this development of an embryonic philosophy, the most famous, and popular, part of *The Witness* was its exposure of corruption. It is this which was emphasized in the appeal for shareholders.⁶⁴ It is perhaps reasonable to assume, therefore, that the shareholders for the *New Witness* were at least attracted to this side of its policies. Indeed, it is likely that they were in sympathy with the rest of its ideas as well, if only because investment in such a venture brought no real possibility of financial gain. Haynes, for example, a major backer of *The Witness*, complained about the unprofessional attitude of the paper not solely because of its financial repercussions, 'All this annoys me the more deeply because I feel so strongly that the paper should be an effective instrument in the Cause which we both have at heart.'⁶⁵ A brief study of shareholders for both reviews, therefore, should bring us to tentative conclusions about the nature of their supporters and core readership.

IV

While crude generalizations about class and politics never tell the whole story, the differences between the backers of the two papers says something about their two support groups. The *New Age* backers seem to be primarily from the middle and especially lower middle class groups — the classic third estate market for the intellectual periodical in this period. Their political engagement must have been particularly pronounced, given their probable lack of serious financial means. Out of 287 share issues, there are ten 'schoolmasters', 13 'civil servants', 25 'clerks' and only two 'gentlemen'.⁶⁶ Contrast this with the list of the *New Witness* list which reads almost like a list of the alienated elite. There are nine 'priests' and 15 'gentlemen' on the list, but only three schoolmasters and three clerks. The army also provided much of the *Witness* support: one colonel, one captain, a lieutenant colonel, one General and two majors.⁶⁷ There is also a Cambridge lecturer on the lists plus members of the literary and cultural establishment, including Arthur Ransome and Thomas Beecham. The common ground between both periodicals is the absence of the 'normal' backer from the professions or industry. Both groups therefore represent a kind of alienated third estate — one the non-party-affiliated establishment, the other the lower middle class. These facts were not without relevance for their politics. For example, they may explain the lack of

reception of Nietzsche in the *New Witness*, as gentlemen had no need to construct themselves as supermen.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, both groups were alienated from what they saw as the establishment and brought parallel critiques.

What is more, they both considered themselves to be 'intellectual' groups. Within the context of British literary history such a term is problematic to say the least. A literary intelligentsia is difficult enough to identify in Britain when it is done retrospectively, through comparison between the literature itself. It is much more difficult still to identify a self-defining group. The writers for the *New Age* and the *New Witness*, however, were exceptions to this rule in practical terms, even if they would have resisted self-definition as 'intellectuals' on the European model.

The denial of the existence of British intellectuals is a facet of the myth of British exceptionalism, which merges into fact as stories which nations tell themselves turn into models for behaviour. Both Heyck and Collini point out that the mistrust the British have for intellectuals lies in part in the characterization of the British people as non-intellectual.⁶⁹ This nourished itself from a comparison with other countries, such as France. In popular stereotype the French were sly, devious and pretentious wine drinkers while the British were stoical, practical, common-sensical beer suppers. On a political level this distinction seemed to be confirmed in the French Revolution and its aftermath. The France of reason and philosophy, which led to excess and bloodshed, opposed the England of custom and experience, which led to balance and happiness. This anti-intellectualism was intellectualized in Burke, and carried down in popular culture and public debate. Collini has pointed out how, '...its repetition has helped to create a consciousness which has itself been one of the main means of making what it describes appear true.'⁷⁰ The comparison with France or other countries can be subtler than this repetition, however.⁷¹ Most writers have not argued that Britain does not have intellectuals, but rather that these have been closely allied with the social ruling elite. This makes characterization of them as a separate *class* difficult and questions the oppositional alienated nature of intellectual politics which has infused the French use of the term since the Dreyfus Affair. The classic statement of this position is made by Shils: 'Outside the China of the Mandarins, no great society has ever had a body of intellectuals so integrated with, and so congenial to, its ruling class, and so combining civility and refinement.'⁷² Shils's article was written in the 1950s and has a shade of post-war triumphalism about it. Britain's victory could be attributed to its reluctance to accept the ideological extremism of the thirties in favour of a bumbling liberal constitutionalism. But the same thing is claimed by socialist theorists, albeit with less satisfaction. Gramsci himself stated that in England, 'The

new social group that has come into existence of modern industrialism has grown remarkably on the economic-corporate level, but in the intellectual-political field it gropes its way in the dark.⁷³

This Whiggish conception of British intellectuals is backed up by the Marxist 'révolution manqué' perspective of British history.⁷⁴ Britain did not have a left-wing intelligentsia sufficiently alienated from parliamentary procedure to produce a theory of revolution in the same way as in Russia, France and Italy. Some writers have hypothesized that this is why certain aspects of modernism also passed Britain by.⁷⁵ And, from a different perspective again, it is further highlighted by the 'common sense' Labour politicians who revel in the same consensus politics. 'Because we grew up in a democratic Labour Movement which was rooted in British life,' wrote R.H.S. Crossman, 'we never became the cosmopolitans and anarchists he describes.'⁷⁶

Shils sees the intellectual critiques of the thirties as approaching the 'alienation' which distinguishes continental intellectuals. But he considers this a 'digression from the main course of the British intellectual class in its relation with British institutions.'⁷⁷ Is it possible to push this digression back to before the war, in common with the search for the intellectual origins of the inter-war crisis in the pre-war revolt against positivism? In that sense Shils's article could be representative of an outlook as peculiar to the nineteen-fifties as the idea of the politically engaged intellectual might be peculiar to the nineteen-thirties. Shils considers the pre-war period briefly, but he rejects it for reasons which are not entirely satisfactory:

Neither socialism nor the aesthetic revolt of the turn of the century ever bred a doctrine or practice of complete alienation. (...) The British intellectuals might have appeared dull to the continental firebrands and gypsies but they were dutiful and loyal.⁷⁸

Is 'complete alienation' the only criterion for an intellectual 'firebrand'? Surely many figures were socially incorporated but intellectually and politically alienated. The fire smouldered if it did not flare up. And many would have rejected the characterization 'dutiful and loyal' as much as 'intellectual'. If the dominant feature of British society is the incorporation of intellectuals into the life of the state, the early twentieth century is one of the periods where this characterization does not tell the whole story.

More to the point, the writers for the *New Age* and the *New Witness* do not fit this general 'assimilated intelligentsia' mould. They were too alienated from the centres of power to construct themselves as 'public moralists'.⁷⁹ Their status as intellectuals was backed up by their self-definition and by an

unconscious acceptance on the part of contemporary or later commentators. In the correspondence columns there is constant reference to the 'educated stratum' or the 'men of intellect' who read the paper and whose duty it was to discuss such ideas. Such ideas existed alongside the inherited cultural need to depreciate an 'intelligentsia' as foreign. So 'intellectual' might have relevance as a sociological term: denial of its applicability in reference to self could be simply the repetition of an expected cultural reference point, or a means of dissociating oneself from the pitfalls of the 'wrong kind' of intellectualism such as pretension, aloofness and arrogance.

Similarly, those commentators analysing their activities at a later date all seem to have unconsciously accepted the fact that they were intellectuals of a sort. With regards to the *Eye-Witness*, the rather glib statement that 'the paper was influential; it was read and studied in the right places'⁸⁰ does not mean much but does suggest that a certain kind of intellectual or social elite were interested in it. And every critic's obligation to list the 'impressive list of contributors' somehow suggests a grouping which was intellectually coherent (this is usually used as a shock tactic either to show the incongruence between its 'extreme' politics and 'famous' writers, or its 'famous' writers and relative obscurity). The list includes: 'Maurice Baring, Hubert Bland, Frances and G.K. Chesterton, Patrice Colum, F.Y. Eccles, E.S.P. Haynes, Desmond McCarthy, Father Vincent McNabb, Louis J. McQuillard, E. Nesbit, T. Michael Pope, Arthur Ransome, J.C. Squire, G.S. Street, W.R. Titterton, Katherine Tynan, H.G. Wells, Hilaire Belloc.'⁸¹ Even the advert in the T.L.S for the paper claimed that it would include contributions from 'the finest intellects of the day'⁸² — obviously a selling point and a major attraction.

The writers for both papers seem to form some kind of intellectual unit simply by their close personal ties. The friendship of Belloc with the Chesterton brothers is well documented.⁸³ G.K. Chesterton refers to the 'New Witnesses', suggesting some kind of social kinship.⁸⁴ Cecil's office was always full. Orage's personal editorial style has a legendary reputation. Paul Selver remembered the informal editorial meetings that turned into café crawls, taking in the Holborn Empire and the Café Royal.⁸⁵ In the early years these meetings were attended by Clifford Sharp, Cecil Chesterton, S.G. Hobson, M.D. Eder, J.M. Kennedy, Beatrice Hastings, and later these were joined or replaced by F.S. Flint, J.C. Squire, Katherine Mansfield, Ezra Pound, Ramiro de Maeztu, Stephen Reynolds and Ashley Dukes. Other haunts were Kardorsh Café on Fleet Street and T.E. Hulme's 'salon' at 67 Frith Street. These papers, therefore, acted as centres of two separate cultural communities of writers and intellectuals.

V

The circulation figures of either paper are difficult to establish. Certainly, neither was as financially successful as *The Spectator*, the biggest selling weekly and the only one to make a profit, the circulation of which declined from 22,000 in 1903 to 13,500 in 1922.⁸⁶ Martin estimates the *New Age's* circulation at a fifteen year average of 3000 a week.⁸⁷ Orage's paper was more successful than this initially, but its circulation suffered somewhat in competition with the *Eye-Witness* in 1911.⁸⁸ The *New Witness's* circulation was similar. Cecil Chesterton in his appeal for share holders in 1912 estimated it as 7000 a week.⁸⁹ This was obviously an exaggeration, albeit one backed up by the printer, but it could not have been less than half of this.⁹⁰ As for those who read the papers, the only clue, given the small circulation and lack of adverts, was that it must have been exactly the sort of people who wrote for them. Chesterton said this explicitly, "The people who write THE NEW WITNESS read THE NEW WITNESS. It is a situation almost without parallel in journalism."⁹¹ This is certainly borne out by the shareholders lists. At the time of the Marconi scandal the government saw the *Eye-Witness* as unrepresentative of the British public. Mr. Samuel called it a 'contemptible little rag' with a 'very small circulation'.⁹² Asquith acidly remarked, 'I suspect the *Eye-Witness* has a very meagre circulation. I notice only one page of advertisements and that occupied by books of Belloc's publishers. Prosecution would secure it notoriety, which might yield subscribers.'⁹³ At the same time, however, *The Spectator* analysed its readership rather differently:

The notion that such accusations as those made in the *Eye-Witness* against the Cabinet ministers can be passed over as unworthy of notice is quite untenable. The paper in question is very ably written and is read by people in whose mind it is most undesirable that untrue suspicions should grow-up.⁹⁴

Naturally, the advert in *The Circulation Manager* also emphasized its circulation to be among the 'thinking classes'.⁹⁵ There also seems to be some kind of consensus that the readers of the *New Age* were somehow 'influential'. This surely is part truth and part wishful thinking, as in this oft quoted analysis by Cumberland. The *New Age* was read by:

Men and women who count — people who welcome democracy and original thought, who hold important positions in the civic, social, political and artistic worlds, and who eagerly disseminate the seeds of thought they pick up in the *New Age*. Tens of thousands of people

have been influenced by this paper who have never even heard its name. It does not educate the masses directly, it reaches them through the medium of its few but extremely able readers.⁹⁶

Ada Chesterton, also a highly unreliable witness, testified to ‘important personages’ coming into the office to get hold of a copy of the *New Witness*.⁹⁷ She also claimed senior figures in the press would take it in order to keep up with breaking scandals, “I hate you,” said the Editor in chief of the *Daily Sketch*, genially waving the *New Witness* at me, ‘but I’ve damn well got to read you. You always have the dope.’⁹⁸ More convincingly, however, given both the status and extremity of both reviews, was that young people were a significant part of the readership. One correspondent to the *Eye-Witness* thought ‘it is largely in such a paper as THE EYE-WITNESS that the younger generation have a chance of making their opinions heard.’⁹⁹ Similarly, a correspondent to the *New Age* spoke of its influence on Oxford students, claiming that a new magazine entitled ‘The Oxford Syndicalist’ acknowledged its debt to the *New Age* both directly and indirectly.¹⁰⁰ Belloc too was a name to conjure with in Balliol. Haynes told him in a letter, ‘I have been reading some of the Prize papers in my new Political Science Prize at Balliol, and I am glad to find that you are quoted in all modern matters as a “Political Philosopher”’.¹⁰¹

VI

In Orage’s paper, the self-defining elitism of the writers involved went beyond a mere sociological category. Orage was infused not only with the need to get beyond Fabianism, but also with a Nietzschean desire to create an elite capable of such a task. When he moved from London to Leeds to take up the editorship he wrote, ‘Give me, in fact, a roving commission among the intelligent aristocracy and I’ll undertake to make a nucleus of Samurai, for London, by God, is not a wilderness of asses like Leeds!’¹⁰² This developed into a widening dichotomy between mystic nobility and practical companionship. He tried, for example, to get beyond the Nietzschean idea of the superman by tying it to the old idea of a noble artist who attracted admiration through beauty. Such ideas of self-defined nobility shone though his political thinking.¹⁰³ Nor can they be defined merely as the restatement of traditional Christian medieval aristocracy, they were mixed in with an egoistic Stirnian strain which stressed individualism: ‘The transition from hero-worship to god-worship was a tremendous ordeal for the race. Still greater will be the ordeal of changing from the worship of God to the worship of one’s own soul.’¹⁰⁴

This mysticism was combined with practical tips for the intellectual. An advert offers ‘non-flesh luncheons’ for ‘brainy men’. Another article outlines the diet for maximum cerebral effectiveness, ‘Here is the writer’s meal time table: cup of tea at 7am., light lunch at 11am., and dinner at 6pm.’¹⁰⁵ Orage flattered his writers with their abilities and emphasized their shared purpose, in the same language which veered between the mystical (‘temple’) and the common sense (‘brick’), ‘...I’ve no doubt we shall win through. Allan is a brick, so is Wallace, so are you. That’s three bricks. Our temple will be built one day.’¹⁰⁶ This image also has obvious biblical connotations. There was also a sense of trade alliance which was linked to their development of guild ideas of labour organization. They described themselves as ‘non-manual workers and professional idea mongers’.¹⁰⁷

For some writers in the *New Age*, they were not intellectual enough, however. J.M. Kennedy, comparing the situation as ever to foreign models, quoted Ramiro de Maeztu as an admonishment to the *New Age* readers. Interestingly, the passage underlines the extent to which Kennedy accepted self-definition as a certain kind of intellectual:

‘In Spain the Intellectuals have one grave defect. Do you know what it is? That they are not intellectual at all. They will be the cause of the revolution; not, however, as the result of what they have done, but of what they have left undone.’

* * *

I have translated this fairly literally. Please read between the lines, and ask yourself whether the remark applies to any other country.¹⁰⁸

This passage, written in 1910, also underlined the increasing distance that the paper was travelling from the ‘socialism’ which was advertised on the front page. One correspondent complained that he had stopped taking the *New Age* for this very reason, ‘If your subscribers are increasing in number I take it the individuals must be changing or they must be ceasing to be socialist...’¹⁰⁹ Indeed, by 1914, even the word ‘advanced’ was rejected because of its association with ‘progressive’ liberal thought. One correspondent wrote, ‘And, lest we forget, the other lady’s paper, the ‘Egoist’, prints a letter in which you are ranked with it as ‘advanced’. Are you so far behind as that?’¹¹⁰ This is also an excellent example of the functioning of a periodical community: anxiousness to associate on the part of the less successful (*The Egoist*) and irritation at the challenging of one’s individuality on the part of the more established (the *New Age*). This is not to suggest that by rejecting the epithet of ‘advanced’ the *New Age* saw itself as ‘traditional’ or ‘reactionary’, but rather it emphasized how much it saw itself as the purveyor of a new political

philosophy which would combine fixed values with intellectual dynamism. Thus the new art of the English avant-garde, *Blast*, was rejected for its 'excessive and barbaric ornamentation, violent obscurity, degraded imagery; but unmixed with any idea,'¹¹¹ yet another illustration of how the *New Age* aimed at its own particular social and artistic formula rather than fetishizing anything new. The appearance of *Blast* signalled the need for the *New Age* to be more definite about its own intellectual renaissance. It merely illustrated the decline in the 'spiritual character' of English intellectuals:

To what we must look for a renaissance I have often tried to say in these Notes; but I can see now, from the appearance of 'Blast' and for the number and quality of its probable victims, that THE NEW AGE must be more definite than ever in the future.¹¹²

The irritation with the pretentious posturing of the clichéd artist had been indicated earlier. In a private letter to David Lowe in 1912, Orage had tried to indicate how much he understood 'the artistic temperament' but how he believed it should be channelled and controlled. The self-conscious poseur was the opposite of Orage's literary Samurai:

After all, you + I + several others known to us have felt strangers in the world; we also have felt immortal longings; but we have, without too much fuss + without, I hope, conflation [?], swallowed our self importance + done the best we could under the circumstances. The Davidsons, Middletons, Stantins [?] etc. who go down with shrieks I understand + sympathise with; but I do not admire them. They are objects of pity mingled with a little sweet contempt.¹¹³

In the *Eye-Witness*, the desire not to be considered part of the 'intelligentsia' was much stronger. Indeed, an early use of the word 'intelligentsia' occurs in the *Eye-Witness* in an article by Maurice Baring. And it is instructive that it was introduced only to be shot down, 'In fact, it would be shorter and simpler to say that the tenets of this kind of *Intelligentsia* are the tenets which the majority of mankind have found good since the beginning of the world turned upside down.'¹¹⁴ Baring, however, saw a need for a different kind of intelligentsia. His criticisms almost strengthen the argument for seeing the writers of the periodical as a kind of [anti-]intelligentsia: 'In Russia, and I believe in England also, the present generation are protesting against the hall-marks, the shibboleths, the *clichés* of the ancient *Intelligentsia*.'¹¹⁵ The new generation would not lack ideas; they would merely not be slaves to shibboleths and clichés.

For all their differences, therefore, both the *Eye-Witness* and the *New Age* considered themselves as intellectual groups with similar purposes. G.K. Chesterton recognized his affinity with Orage in an obituary notice and in his vague paradoxical way tried to express the political battle in which they were both engaged. Orage had been ‘emancipated from emancipation’. He was doing something, it is not explained exactly what, which was ‘the first fruits of a new kind of freedom.’¹¹⁶ In other words he reflected a search for a new way which was not Liberal, Tory or Socialist. He noted Orage’s opposition to female suffrage and state education and contrasts this ‘spirit’ with that of the Fabians. Echoing Turgenev, but with a different family metaphor, he explained the intellectual battle against a previous generation of sentimental state socialists and liberals: ‘Those of us who dared deny any of these denials instantly felt frozen by the stare of a whole earlier generation of respectable revolutionary uncles.’¹¹⁷

The suggestion is that the revolt against liberalism was equally a revolt against democratic socialism. Little wonder, then, that this artistic rebellion contained many incongruous elements which later found crude representation in the culture of fascism. And he outlined that this battle was a self-consciously political one at the time. Again he poured scorn on ‘literary intellectuals’, seeing both himself and Orage as something more. Talking of the Café Royal gatherings, he claimed that nobody thought of them as ‘a literary clique’.¹¹⁸

VII

Nevertheless, it did not always suit the *New Witness* group to be alienated. In another sense they could be trumpeted as part of the established literary community (if not the modern literary canon). They could be celebrated as ‘men of letters’ rather than ‘intellectuals’. This part of their appeal was naturally highlighted in Cecil Chesterton’s defence at the Marconi trial where he was tried for criminal libel:

(...) if any man acquainted with letters were to make out a list of, say, the twenty best known literary men in England to-day, I will undertake to find twelve of them among the contributors to my paper. Therefore, it is perfectly absurd to say that of a paper for which people like Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, Mr. H.G. Wells, Mr. Bernard Shaw, and Mr. Hilaire Belloc have written. It is perfectly absurd to represent that paper, as Mr. Muir has tried to do, as a sort of gutter rag trying to get into notoriety by throwing dirt.¹¹⁹

An increasing split can be discerned, however, between the ‘celebrity’ writers and the staff writers, who built up sense of political community. G.K. Chesterton emphasized this when he called Ada Jones (later Mrs Cecil Chesterton) ‘the most *intransigente* of the New Witnesses’.¹²⁰ This split increased after Belloc left the editorship, and affected him in his relationship with the review from then on. His decision to give up the review was based mainly on overwork; he had too many other commitments. In a letter to Nancy Astor he complained that, ‘Six months of hard work pulling the devil by the tail have furrowed my features and broken the elasticity of my mind.’¹²¹ He nevertheless made it clear that he would still write for the paper, and that he was still personally connected to it. However, he also expressed reservations about the direction it was taking.¹²² Haynes complained to Belloc about the new ‘Jones gang’ (Cecil Chesterton’s future wife and her brothers) who were taking over the paper and suppressing free speech, especially the views of those who disagreed with the paper’s anti-Semitism.¹²³ Part of this could be due to a genuine distaste at the increasing extremeness of the paper’s politics. Certainly the writings of O’Donnell revolted Belloc. Nevertheless, it was he who had first printed him. Belloc feared the language of the *New Witness* was undermining his stance of reason and rationality. It was not so much that the views were wrong, but they were expressed in a way which would make them less convincing. Even Belloc at his most vitriolic had an appreciation of the political culture in which he was writing.

Belloc nonetheless saw himself as still involved with *The Witness*. He persuaded Haynes not to break with the paper because ‘it does give an opportunity for saying things when one wants to say them, that is why I should be very sorry to see independent views like yours lost to it.’¹²⁴ What is more, he still saw it as broadly concurrent with his own views: ‘As you say, I am no longer directly connected with the paper and I do not do very much for it, but I am fond of Cecil Chesterton, who I also think is a good and forcible exponent of many views that are important in my opinion, so I shall always try and back him in his effort.’¹²⁵

Belloc’s tentative distancing from some of the more extreme pronouncements of the *New Witness* are a good illustration of the functioning of the broader publishing field and intellectual community.¹²⁶ He was very much aware of the power of his name, and did not want it associated explicitly with the *New Witness* after he had given up the editorship:

I have found by experience that after one’s name has become what may be called a newspaper asset (which with writers happens between 30 and 40 lasting until sixty, if they live) the moment one allows it to

be used without authority it is simply used wholesale and therefore one has a fiendish row whenever it happens to stop it altogether.¹²⁷

He did not want the personal responsibility and ramification of what might appear within the journal. He outlined this in a letter to Haynes:

The letter you sent to 'The Throne' is much what I wanted; so long as it is clear that I am in no way responsible for the Eye-Witness well and good. A lot of things have appeared in it which I would never have passed, since I gave it up. Of course Cecil Chesterton, who has edited it for the last four or five months shares most of my ideas, but not all of them. But that is a very different thing from editorial responsibility.¹²⁸

Indeed, the subtleties of the matter were understood by Haynes who helped untangle Belloc from allegations in *The Throne and County* that he was responsible for the Marconi revelations in the *New Witness*. Haynes manages both to keep Belloc's reputation as a crusader for truth and keep him out of trouble, 'I have carefully avoided any direct reference to the Marconi shares as I did not want them to think that you had really written the articles but were apprehensive about being referred to in connection with them.'¹²⁹

Belloc's realization of the importance of other networks, even in the 'party press' was underlined by his wish on the publication of *The servile state* for 'the papers to boom this book.'¹³⁰ Also, he was sensitive to the reputation even of those who disagreed with him. He tried, for example, to ease tension with Beatrice Webb for being misrepresented in the *Eye-Witness*, even after he had relinquished editorial control.¹³¹ Similarly, the 'rules of the game' entailed a polite notice of the *New Statesman* for all that it was diametrically opposed to all the *Witness* stood for.¹³²

The *New Age* stood in the same ambivalent relationship to the Fabians. The paper had personal and financial links with the society (Shaw had put up money to start it), yet increasingly disliked its ideas. Perhaps this is evidence that the Fabians stood at the centre of the intellectual community of the time, so it was only natural that ideas should be orientated in reference to them. It did not, as yet, affect the social relationship: indeed, part of the publicity for the *New Age* was fuelled by public debates with those of opposing views (the most important and celebrated of which were those between Belloc, G.K. Chesterton and Shaw).¹³³ The *New Age* also stood in self-conscious relationship to the rest of the periodical community and fed off other readers and ideas. As Orage said:

If a magazine is to be of any value it must keep in touch with the magazines of its day, testing itself by them, comparing notes with them, picking up hints from them, and generally profiting from the experience of magazines in circumstances like its own.¹³⁴

This relationship did not stop disagreements between magazines as they each carved out their own ground and readership.

As well as functioning as the free arenas of debate considered at their conception, both reviews became the forges of a new political tradition. This was manifested differently in each review and reached a slightly different audience. Yet the similarities were equally important. Both reviews nurtured an anti-parliamentary critique which looked for an alternative to capitalism and state socialism. They appealed to a similarly alienated portion of society. This parallel had a social as well as an ideological relationship that functioned within a periodical community or 'set' and developed into the realms of political affiliation. This critique stayed in the cultural intellectual sphere of the independent weekly review, touching high politics only peripherally. Nonetheless, this space is an important source for understudied and underestimated intellectual challenges to British political traditions. Nowhere was this truer than in their reactions to the great wave of strikes that racked Britain in the early twentieth century.

2. ELITISM AND THE REVOLT OF THE MASSES¹

I

The years just before the Great War in Britain saw an unprecedented wave of labour disputes. The number of strikes, which had oscillated around 480 per year for the period 1907–10, rose to 873 in 1911, 834 in 1912, 1459 in 1913 and 972 in 1914 (a figure which might have been much higher were it not for the outbreak of war in August).² Britain was racked by the dockers', seamen's and railwaymen's strikes of 1911, the miners' strike of 1912, the West Midlands Engineering and Metalworkers' strike of 1913 and the 1913 Dublin Lock Out. For the intellectuals writing for the *New Age* and the *New Witness* these events inspired numerous theories on the organization of labour, the spirit of the workman and the aesthetic transformation of the universe. Their responses illustrate the problems in coming to terms with modern industrial society and the rise of mass democracy. The scale of the unrest seemed to give it a new momentum. As Graham Wallas had written in 1908, 'Political emotions are sometimes pathologically intensified when experienced simultaneously by large numbers of human beings in physical association (...).'³ The energy of the strikes sometimes appeared a new and powerful thing that could be harnessed for other ends. This confused reaction had many links with the cultural and political rebellion that was to feed into fascism in continental Europe. As the *Eye-Witness* prophesied with uncharacteristic self-awareness: 'Those who perceive the whole truth are maddened to desperate remedies.'⁴

There is little doubt that both the *New Witness* and the *New Age* were in favour of the labour unrest and in sympathy with the strikers. Belloc admitted in a 1911 letter to his friend E.S.P. Haynes that 'my sympathies in the present struggle are very strongly with the men.'⁵ The strikes seemed to be a healthy revolt against the parliamentary system he so despised. His paper used the unrest as a way of discrediting the parliamentary Labour party

which seemed so divorced from the action. The strikes showed how much the workers mistrusted the people who claimed to represent them in 'the sham battle at Westminster'⁶. The rhetoric verged on the revolutionary: 'The time for political action may come' claimed the *Eye-Witness*, 'But it will be when the workers, thoroughly organized industrially, look up and see the political machine for what it is, and set out not to co-operate with it, but to smash it.'⁷ For J.M. Kennedy, writing in the *New Age*, the industrial unrest also showed the disparity between the vigour of the present struggle and the apathy of labour representation in parliament.⁸

According to modern historiography this conception was misguided.⁹ Dangerfield's apocalyptic picture has long been succeeded.¹⁰ Pelling claims that the role of syndicalism has been exaggerated and that the majority of the strikes 'had no ulterior purpose beyond that of securing better industrial conditions from their employers.'¹¹ What is more, the working class did not necessarily despair of the Labour party and the unrest 'owed little to feelings of disappointment with parliamentary institutions or existing political parties.'¹² The unrest did not show a proto-revolutionary potential or lead to a drift away from parliamentary politics, but rather used new tactics as a way of achieving their parliamentary, gradualist and non-revolutionary aims.¹³ So the views of these writers were, of course, filtered through their own prejudices and political assumptions. Yet the fact that the unrest was perceived as such shows a psychological crisis that was out of proportion to events.

More even than the revolt against the party system, the unrest was seen as a revolt against the tyranny and servility inherent in both New Liberalism and collectivism. Belloc saw the strikes as a revolt against the encroaching 'servile state' that sought to enslave the worker. This view was outlined in his famous 1912 book of the same name.¹⁴ It claimed that the effect of theories of collectivism on capitalism produced a third thing, the 'servile state', in which one part of the population would be free and the other enslaved. This servility was inherent in capitalism but compounded by compulsory improvements and state intervention. This tendency, therefore, was evident not only in the reforms of the Liberal government such as the Insurance Bill, but also in the collectivist dreams of the Fabians and Socialists. The labour unrest was represented as an awakening to this truth, hence the men's refusal to accept any delegate or conciliation committee set up in an attempt to subdue them.¹⁵ G.K. Chesterton outlined the same ideas at a debate in London. The railway strike was, 'a revolt against Socialism (laughter); that is, against the theory of the State.'¹⁶ Kennedy also emphasized the anti-Socialist nature of the strikes, noting with relish

how the 1911 disturbances showed 'the Labour members were entirely out of touch with the labour movement throughout the country...'¹⁷

The *New Age* interpretation of the motivations of the strikes as a revolt against the encroaching power of the servile state was remarkably similar. In this, both papers were equally removed from the mainstream socialist analysis. The *New Age* writers attacked the National Insurance Bill with equal venom. Orage praised the *Eye-Witness* for treating the problem with 'commendable perspicuity'.¹⁸ It was seen as a patronizing and dangerous attempt to control and set aside the working classes so as to shore up the inequalities of the present system. As the war approached the reforms were continually linked with Prussianism, in reference to the Bismarkian edifice that supposedly inspired them. In 1917, the *New Witness* saw Prussian social reform as the corollary of Prussian militarism.¹⁹ Orage, too, greeted the resignation of Masterman with delight in 1915 because of his role in creating the Insurance Act. He had 'befouled with the stiff, exotic notions of Prussia the fine spirit of the English working classes'.²⁰ In 1911, the Insurance Act it was seen by Orage in apocalyptic terms as the final catalyst that might catapult the worker into revolution. This revolution, however, was gendered and ordered with the same constellation of values that accompanied the classical revival in literature:

The National Insurance Bill, if it is the greatest step yet taken towards the Servile State, will also be, we venture to predict, the last. Whether by experience of the Act in operation, or in horror at the disintegrating servility its existence recognises and stereotypes, men's minds will certainly be led to stem the tide now running towards slavery, and the reverse the stream into the saner and manlier direction of the national organisation of labour.²¹

The first signs of a discord enter in here between the libertarian motives of the writers and the reactionary values which underpinned their alternatives.

'An open letter to a Workingman' which appeared in August 1911 effectively illustrates the distance between the writers and their subjects, and the libertarianism with which these subjects were credited. The readers were reassured that the *New Age* was not imbued with any false sentimentalism towards the creature under examination, 'Sir you have many faults. You are coarse, you are stupid, you are foul-mouthed; but you are not a fool.'²² The writer continued:

Sir, you do not want to be given things free of charge. You do not want your children fed by the community. You do not want children educated without cost to you. You do not want them medically inspected, or yourself doctored, or your wife midwived without charge. You want Higher Wages.²³

This is a clear denunciation of state intervention in the realm of welfare. But the last part of the letter shows a degree of insight which complicates the position: ‘...you do not object if *all* children, rich and poor, are so treated, but you do not want to be put apart, labelled and ticketed and called “the lower classes”.’²⁴ By being aware of the patronizing nature of some of the legislation’s intention yet almost deliberately unaware of its own condescension this article illustrates the dilemma of much of the *New Age’s* political position. In one sense this seemed to edge towards social revolution, but on another level it merely illustrated a vague vision of holistic completeness. Classlessness in this sense can look to the future or to the past. In 1913 Orage announced with near Leninist fervour, ‘We repeat that Social Reform is everywhere a failure judged by the single test of its effect on the proletariat. We repeat that Social Reform is everywhere the real enemy of Social Revolution.’²⁵ Yet earlier he had criticized even the intrinsic value of things which the Revolution might be aimed at achieving. Criticism of the government’s education policy was aimed at the very idea of educating the herd rather than its practical ineffectiveness: ‘All we have done in education is to spread out, very thin, over many the culture that before was concentrated in a few. Everybody now has a scraping of culture, but there is no cultured class.’²⁶

This anti-collectivism and anti-reformism gradually cut all moorings with the Fabian Society which initially had provided its funding and readership. The *New Statesman* was described in no uncertain terms as ‘a chronicle of advancing tyranny and servility’.²⁷ This no doubt reflected the desire of the *New Age* to carve out a distinctive place for itself in the publishing field by denigrating a potential rival, but it also reflected a real and increasing ideological distance. A radical Tory such as J.M. Kennedy had always been overt in his attacks:

...the society has always attracted to its ranks those who well deserve the name of cranks and intellectual snobs and spiritual materialists on the make. Far from having aided the development of English thought within the last twenty years, the Fabians have, all unconsciously, no doubt, greatly retarded it.²⁸

Indeed, much of the rhetoric of the *New Age* borrowed from the language of social revolutionary thought. Its conclusions were a kind of bastardization of the Marxist legacy. In this it stands as a British example of the European crisis and rethinking of Marxism of which fascism was, according to Sternhell, an eventual result.²⁹ In seemingly orthodox fashion, Orage constantly emphasized the primacy of economics:

The central argument of all this body of doctrine is plainly this: that economic methods are essential to the achievement of economic emancipation: that political methods are not only useless but actually harmful, because all political action follows and does not precede economic action; that economic power is the substance and political power its shadow or reflection.³⁰

Following from this the comment that, ‘Democracy, with four-fifths of its members servile and passive, is a grotesque thing,’ resembled the classic Marxist criticism of bourgeois democracy. More than any doctrinal classification, however, this merely illustrates the eclecticism of the politics of the *New Age* circle. In this case it could represent another welcome weapon in the backlash against *parliamentary* politics rather than a serious claim for the absolute primacy of economics. Consistent with their social role as intellectuals they soon started emphasizing the greater importance of psychological factors in any case.³¹ Kennedy emphasized this: ‘While I naturally agree with the statement that economic power precedes political power, I must, for the sake of clearness, insist upon the fact that intellectual power precedes both.’³² This merged well with their elitism and self-defined role of both class apart and natural articulators of the proletarian viewpoint. It also further emphasized their place in the anti-materialist and anti-rationalist revision of Marxism. Orage expressed this nicely: ‘THE NEW AGE is a better representative of the working classes than the whole Labour Party put together. People who doubt it prefer arithmetic to facts.’³³

While this can be characterized in retrospect as part of the European-wide revision of Marxism, it was interpreted at the time as part of the revolt against *collectivism*. This provided one of the major points of contact between those, on the *New Age* who considered themselves socialists, and those who had left the language of socialism behind them. In a review of Orage’s *An alphabet of economics* in 1917, G.K. Chesterton believed that the ‘surprising success of the revolt against the old type of Collectivism, for which the author [Orage] is so largely responsible, will assuredly appear as one of the landmarks of twentieth century thought.’³⁴ What is more, this revolt’s explicitly anti-materialist bias became even more strident as time went on.

During the war, Cecil Chesterton saw Distributism as the way forward for those ‘who do *not* believe in the Materialist Conception of History, who think that the history of a nation depends on its mentality.’³⁵

Almost from its inception, the *New Age* was convinced that the revolution would have to affect the soul as well as the body. In one of his many attempts at fusing his socialism with his reading of Nietzsche, Orage stated that the new life vision would emerge from the ‘common life of the people’.³⁶ He therefore believed that he was caught up in one of the significant intellectual developments of his time, which he described as ‘the recognition that current morality is bankrupt, stagnant, and the greatest force that chokes all progress.’³⁷ The *New Age’s* socialism was not merely economic, therefore, but a project which linked every aspect of life. Tied securely to this was their intellectual and artistic project for a new age of genius. The energy from the labour struggle would feed this wider endeavour and eventually take precedence over it. ‘In thus marshalling the Labour forces for the greatest industrial struggle the world has ever seen,’ they claimed ‘we shall also be marshalling all the forces that make for spiritual and intellectual regeneration.’³⁸

This new morality was distinguished by anti-sentimentalism and a conviction that only a chosen few could articulate its tenets before their realization in society as a whole. This harsh anti-sentimentalism denigrated hypocrisy, but also denied genuine motives to those of different persuasions:

(...) I absolutely deny that, concerning the things about which people are typically sentimental, there are more than a score or so moved in any age. The rest are simply emotional toadies and snobs-cowards, if you like — who are afraid to confess that they have no feelings in regard to matters about which somebody has told them they ought to feel. These are the sentimentalists and a numerous poor crew they are.³⁹

It was ‘sentimental’ to reject the new set of manly virtues which the *New Age* writers were gradually providing in their political and literary polemics. Not surprisingly, therefore, Orage thought it was ‘always the sentimentalist who depreciates violent expressions’.⁴⁰ By claiming most of the other revolutionary movements as phoney, the writers managed simultaneously to elevate their position and subtly denigrate those aspects of standard social revolution which were not to their liking: ‘just as true lovers are few and imitations are many, so the mass of people who call themselves Socialists, Imperialists and Humanitarians are simply frauds trading in on

emotional credit.²⁴¹ Nevertheless, Orage does show a certain amount of insight in speculating why his type of intellectual often shied away from a conscious political stance. 'At present,' he claimed, 'people who really feel are constantly being misled, if not into illusions, then into cynicism.'²⁴² This also however, could describe a trajectory, which could apply to Hulme, Eliot and Pound, where disgust with both liberal and socialist politics could lead to a reactionary position in the belief that it was more honest. Orage himself rapidly approached this position, using a lack of hypocrisy and sentimentalism as a virtue in itself. He came up with a 'formula' to describe sentimentalists:

...the instinctive assumption that in all cases of dispute between any two parties, one being strong and the other weak, the weak party is right and the strong wrong. Applying this to each of the examples you mentioned and to others, you will see that the formula works. In every instance of sentimentalism you will find that the case is prejudiced against the strong. Might is wrong!⁴³

Such a position, however, could easily lead to always having the 'will' to take a controversially anti-sentimental stand, and all manner of things could be justified in this way. It also seems that the analysis of the labour unrest in the *New Witness* and the *New Age* projected them as being not merely against a corrupt system but against a corrupt *tendency*. Once these two things were established, it could lead to the crediting of prejudice with libertarian motives. This was especially true of anti-Semitism, which in the *Eye-Witness* was almost seen as a healthy outpouring of distaste for cosmopolitan finance, and its violent expression a new form of political participation. Belloc's comments on the anti-Semitic disturbances in South Wales⁴⁴ make especially chilling reading in this respect: 'The Anti-Jewish riots in Wales are a significant accompaniment of the stir of a real movement in the democracy of England we have seen of late.'⁴⁵ Belloc stopped short of calling the violence healthy, but he accepted that it was born of a genuine grievance. Moreover, he accepted that this genuine grievance was attracted to the right target — 'a certain kind of Jew' — who represented the shady world of cosmopolitan finance and the direction of the modern world. He admitted that 'to pelt and hustle Jews is no remedy', but worse was the liberal consensus which pretended 'the Jewish Question' was not an issue, 'but still less is it a remedy — nay it is an aggravation — to try to ignore the misunderstanding or plaster it over with vague platitudes.'⁴⁶ Nor was this opinion an isolated and eccentric reaction to a particular set of circumstances. The same reasoning governed the *New Witness* interpretation of anti-alien rioting in the First World War. While it was admitted that the rioting was against innocent aliens, who were unjust

targets, the paper was keen to admit that ‘mob rule’ could be an ‘expression of popular will’ and a ‘real weapon of democracy’. The real problem was that this mob’s energy was directed against the wrong end: it should have been aimed at the ‘wealthy and powerful German Jews.’⁴⁷ Pacifists, too, would be subject to the cleansing power of mob justice.⁴⁸

G. K. Chesterton also treated prejudice on the part of the native, if not as an absolute good, as something that was infinitely preferable to alien rule. This is a good example of what Owen Dudley Edwards has called his ‘tribalism’.⁴⁹ Answering the objection that the peasant in his ideal society would be mistrustful of foreigners he wrote:

And it *is* better that the rude natives should be sullen towards a stranger rather than that a smooth stranger should come at last to deceive and dominate all the rude natives from a throne of gold. Which I hear has sometimes happened at the Post Office.⁵⁰

This, of course, was a coded reference to the Jewish postmaster general, Herbert Samuel, who was embroiled in the Marconi scandal.⁵¹

The *New Age* also printed articles that could be construed as overtly anti-Semitic, if primarily by Cecil Chesterton, the later editor of the *New Witness*. In one 1911 article he saw the die-hard Tory backwoodsman as better than the real enemies of society, even tacitly respecting the healthy motivation behind his oppression, ‘You might oppress the poor as a violent act of self-defence, but you would not, like the politicians, the Jews, and the philanthropists, make the oppression of the poor a mere hobby.’⁵² Elsewhere, the *New Age* did not really bring anti-Semitism into the discussions of the labour movement to the same degree. It could be that, given the overlap of readership, some of the extreme attacks on plutocracy and profiteers could have been read as coded attacks on the Jews, but this was occasionally overtly denied. Nevertheless the violence of the language — ‘kill profiteering’⁵³ and ‘Your enemies are the vulgar rich of today, the miserly, insolent and murderous plutocracy. Attack then, this plutocracy!’⁵⁴ — expressed a similar and deliberate intensity of feeling.

Behind this praise of liberty was the realization that struggle brought people together in a common spirit and reinforced their sense of belonging and participation. This was a less academic expression of Sorel’s motivating myth of revolutionary violence manifested in the General Strike. The *New Age* circle was drawn to this French thinker a few years later through the translation of T.E. Hulme.⁵⁵ Sorel would immediately have tickled the readers in his analysis of English labour: he wrote of Sidney Webb that ‘he has a mind of the narrowest description, which could only impress

people unaccustomed to reflection'.⁵⁶ Hulme was immediately attracted to Sorel because the French theorist challenged the necessary connection between democracy and the working class movement. Sorel even claimed that: 'the existence of democracy is incompatible with the progress of socialism.'⁵⁷ Hulme, however, in a footnote points out that he used the word democracy 'to indicate the views of the people who are most fond of so describing themselves' not 'to implicate the true doctrine that all men are equal.'⁵⁸ This footnote indicates the disturbing nature of Sorel's thought. Hulme tries to remember that he believes that men are equal, but the logic of his position leads him to a different conclusion. It could also be the case that this footnote was included to neutralize potential criticism from the socialist readership of the *New Age*. For Hulme, Sorel's combination of revolutionary and reactionary doctrines is disconcerting for progressives and consequently enormously attractive. Particularly confusing for the progressives was the anti-rationalist and anti-relativist nature of Sorel, the fact that he valued the mystery of religion, hated progress, and used 'a concept like *honour* with no sense of its unreality.'⁵⁹ Sorel helped confirm the validity of the tensions in Hulme's own thought between the instinct for revolt and the desire for order.

Sorel also leads Hulme to restate his famous distinction between romantic and classical ideals that he inherited from Laserre. For the romantic word view, man is by nature good. From this springs the individualism, progress and liberal democracy. The opposing ideology was described as 'classical', 'pessimistic', or (by its opponents) as 'reactionary': 'It springs from the exactly opposite conception of man: the conviction that a man is by nature bad or limited, and can consequently only accomplish anything of value by disciplines, ethical, heroic or political. In other words, it believes in Original Sin.' For Hulme, this is 'the most fundamental division that can possibly be made in the region of thinking about society.'⁶⁰ More than anything else, it helps define the space in which Hulme was writing: a paper which was labelled 'socialist' yet mixed the reactionary and the avant-garde in a manner that mirrored the crisis of liberalism elsewhere in Europe. Sorel's disillusionment came from the aftermath of the Dreyfus case, but Hulme was keen to point out the relevance of the broader themes to the British context.⁶¹ Just as this disillusionment brought right and left together in the pages of the *New Age* and *New Witness*, so in France it provided the key to the sympathy between Sorel and the *Action Française*. The only difference between the latter two was that Sorel 'expects a return to the classical spirit through working-class violence',⁶² a sentiment that was mirrored in the reactions to the labour unrest in the *New Age*.

Orage also talked of a general strike as '... the sole weapon, after opinion has failed, that democracy can employ against a modern and machine

equipped oligarchy.⁶³ He also underlined, in a quasi-mystical way, that it took 'spirit' to use this weapon. Images of violence and blood abounded in both reviews. G.K. Chesterton claimed to prefer 'even what is bloody to what is bloodless.'⁶⁴ Orage emphasized that, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is taken and held by violence only.' For Cecil Chesterton this helped tie his socialism with his love of chivalry:

(...) the democracy which will achieve its deliverance will not be a democracy which shrinks timorously from the sight of blood or the flash of a drawn blade, but a democracy alert, vigorous, tenacious of its own rights, bearing not the sword in vain.⁶⁵

The 'fighting spirit' of the men was constantly praised, and constantly linked to war. Cecil Chesterton gave this racial connotations, 'If it is to be won, it will have to be won by the working class possessed of the greatest qualities which a race can possess, unrelenting energy, determination to win, the courage to defend their rights and the strength to fight for them.'⁶⁶ And, like Sorel, this praise of heroism within a strike later transposed into glorification of militarism and war. Belloc also presented this position, at least rhetorically: 'A great strike, or better still, a war, might so dislocate the oppressive power as to prevent it from recapturing its old instruments and even short of that some salutary shock might awaken or dislocate the little well-to-do cliques.'⁶⁷

In a mock Nietzschean aphorism on guild socialism the *New Age* writers showed how much this spirit was behind their conception of labour organization. And, even more telling, it unconvincingly tried to tie together both 'spirit' and organization. The only way for the worker to express his will was in violence or obedience:

Loyalty in the Labour movement: The proletariat [sic] army must be disciplined both to give and receive orders. There must be, in fact, military loyalty. But the first condition of military loyalty *during action* is that the officers must inspire confidence. Motto for the rank and file: Shoot or obey your officers.⁶⁸

It was this praise of heroism and military virtues which in private led a figure such as Belloc to come close to the elitism which in public he rhetorically rejected with the idea of the 'common man'. The people were in need of a common idea or 'motivating myth' (religion was his first choice) which only the middle class could provide them with:

But as Orage very well said in the *New Age* the other day, nothing can possibly help the working man except the intelligence of the middle classes. When he is cut off from religion his stupidity is intolerable. I count active Atheism as a religion, but the mass of the proletariat have nothing half so tonic to the intellect to inspire them.⁶⁹

For Orage, this elitism as a method of inspiring labour took on an imagined future where freedom led to subordination to the perfect state just as it had been represented by revolt in the imperfect. He quoted Nietzsche on the role of labour:

Concerning the future of workmen — workmen should learn to regard their duties as *soldiers* do. They receive emoluments, incomes, but they do not get wages! There is no relationship between *work done* and money received; the individual should, *according to his kind*, be so placed as to *perform* the *highest* task that is compatible with his powers.⁷⁰

Guild Socialism, at least in its rhetorical expression, would come close to embodying this idea. An army and a guild were similar because there is ‘a common end, subordination by merit, and the task is national.’⁷¹ The war, when it came, was seen to confirm this move towards guild consciousness. As Ramiro de Maeztu observed:

The war is awakening, in millions of brains, nervous cells which had long been asleep. Men are learning in the Army, for example, that the greatest efforts and sacrifices of which we are capable are not called forth by love of money, but by the spirit of honour and by the Guild spirit. Every army is a guild in which, in the hour of danger, the whole nation incorporates itself.⁷²

The worker needed a new form of incorporation into national life above the merely economic. Both religion and nationalism were ways of achieving this. There was a further suggestion in the *New Age*, however, that this incorporation should be aesthetic as well as political. Orage, indeed, remarked that he could not regard even life’s ‘most tragical and serious features as anything more than aesthetic phenomena.’⁷³ Social revolution, therefore, depended on an aesthetic transformation of the world. In its utopian formulation such an idea had a real subversive potential — work itself had to become a thing of pleasure. For Orage, ‘To labour with delight is no labour; and that is the only sort of labour that Socialists will tolerate.’⁷⁴ What is more, the ugliness of industrial London was not only a manifestation of the capitalist’s plan to

hammer the poor, it also hung heavy on the minds of artists and prevented them from producing original work.⁷⁵ The revolt of the workers properly conceived was thus a transmutation of all values and a realization of the circle's aesthetic desires. Cecil Chesterton also echoed the need for an aesthetic component to the act of revolution. He called for a revolt that had to be infused with 'laughter'.⁷⁶

Yet still the circle was by this very aestheticism unable to transcend the elitism that dogged its every endeavour. It was of course essential that the intellectual should not be fenced in.⁷⁷ Writing was not only inconsistent with capitalism and the money system; it was also by its nature only comprehensible by the intellectual priesthood worthy of appreciating it: 'Saving for the classics, popular literature is a contradiction in terms. Every writer earning a thousand a year is a charlatan. The value of the art is inversely as the sum paid for it. That is axiomatic.'⁷⁸ Writers who pandered to the public or reflected the commonplace ugliness of life were treated with disgust. One correspondent outlined the 'popular writer's' tools:

the straw, anything that came into their heads — conversation wafted from the street, the commonplace opinions of the man in the street, oddments collected in the parlour just off the street, where their public, the man's wife, fingers the finished output.⁷⁹

The image of the wife 'fingering' the output suggests a barely concealed disgust for the lower class and women, the rising tides of the world's new readership. This distaste for mass society co-existed with ideas of commoditization which were not necessarily elitist but which reinforced the idea of cultural decline. In a series entitled 'Guilders of the Chains', I. Brown analysed how various aspects of mass society kept wage slaves in a position of ignorant but comfortable slavery. Chaplain and the movie theatres entertained them and made them forget their woes⁸⁰; the cheap novels of Charles Garvice pumped them with romanticism and sentimentalism⁸¹; the new theatrical revue of Albert de Courville flattered their prejudices⁸²; the frivolous articles of the 'Sunday Illustrateds' kept them away from serious news.⁸³

The duty of the intellectual, therefore, was to lead, not through political bullying but by an internal light that revealed an inner 'beauty' which the herd could not but respond to:

... Nietzsche's view of nobility is of that which commands to service by the use of force; Christ's nobility is of something that attracts to service by the manifestation of beauty. The former is the view of

the ordinary man of action; the latter is the view of the artist, and as such to my mind infinitely higher.⁸⁴

In this way, despite Orage's supposedly cooling attitude towards Nietzsche after 1911, his 'aristocratic socialism' still attempted to put his maxims into practice. As one reviewer had said of Orage's *Consciousness: Animal, Human and Superman* in 1907: 'England has been trembling on the verge of the Socialism that levels down for half a century; and the shade of Nietzsche, more powerful in death than in life, overshadows the great reforming movement and informs it with the aristocratic spirit.'⁸⁵ Even the more extreme Nietzschean contributor, Oscar Levy, claimed that Nietzsche was no brute. A brave man, he claimed, 'is by necessity always a tender man.' Nevertheless, Levy still divorced this conception from Christianity, likening it to the Japanese idea of the 'tenderness of a warrior.'⁸⁶

It took a certain amount of heroism, control and leadership on the part of the intellectual to achieve this 'aestheticization of politics.'⁸⁷ Nevertheless, despite this similarity with Benjamin's definition of the cultural impetus behind fascist propaganda, the forms that this took can also be linked to wider trends in British society. Orage did invoke a new form of aristocracy, but not, he insisted, one which enforced its will through physical force. Rather, it was one which ruled through force of character and inspiration of devotion. Such mechanisms have been uncovered in studies of imperial dominance where force of character could subdue 'lesser breeds without the law.' Kathryn Tidrick has shown how imperial administrators used 'force of character' rather than naked violence to justify their rule (although the threat of the latter often lay behind the easy power of the former).⁸⁸ Reflections of this wider trend shone through Orage's ideal aristocracy within Britain:

(...) the new aristocracy would refuse to accept anything but willing service. There would be tolerated no forced labour on *their* farms; no slaves, no malcontents, no fear-driven wage-seekers; it should be love or nothing.⁸⁹

For Orage, this was a forward looking vision, but the striking thing is how much this was mirrored in both the radical Tory right *and* the Fabians. Lord Willoughby de Broke claimed that 'National Toryism aims at the establishment of an aristocracy, not of birth, or of brains, but of instinct and character'.⁹⁰ Orage would have agreed, if with reservations about the lack of brains. Even H.G. Wells shared the same desire; in his articles in *The Daily Mail* about the labour unrest he called on the middle class to be

‘wise, capable, and heroic — beyond any aristocratic precedent.’⁹¹ Orage’s call for elitism to control and lead the revolt of the masses was in this sense beyond party affiliation and was merely the open expression of a widely held desire.

There is a duality that must be borne in mind, therefore, in the attitudes to the labour unrest. On the one hand a desire for the workers to be ethically bonded and incorporated in a way above the merely economic, as they were in a mythical past, but on the other that they should somehow be united and homogeneous (hence the undercurrent of anti-Semitism and nationalism). This either entailed the rule of an elite, or a unifying idea or — and this is where some of the ideas were heading — the rule of an elite to enforce a unifying idea.⁹²

It is easy to see how such a political idea was nurtured alongside the more familiar tale of the classical revival in literature that was taking shape in the same pages. Hulme was formulating his definition of human character as ‘a thing fixed and limited’ based on the doctrine of original sin, an idea which was also mooted and debated by fellow *New Age* correspondent, J.M. Kennedy. Orage managed to combine this conservative vision with this earlier engagement with Nietzsche. His initial quasi-socialist reading had emphasized the emancipatory sense of becoming. By 1911, however, Orage insisted that, ‘The modern mind, being shameless, hates to think of itself as defined,’ and came out unequivocally for man as a ‘fixed species and therefore incapable of indefinite progress’.⁹³ True progress meant working within a system and accepting limitations. This seemed to oscillate in Orage between libertarian and tyrannical ramifications. In one sense it was posited as a possible criticism of over zealous Nietzscheanism, as propagated by the more extreme *New Age* Nietzscheans, Oscar Levy and Anthony Ludovici:⁹⁴ ‘all this talk and aspiration after supermanhood proceeds from the original error of misconceiving man’s nature and refusing to admit its limitations.’⁹⁵ Orage did not reject his earlier enthusiasm for Nietzsche altogether, however, but emphasized the personal liberation that his philosophy could provide: ‘To cease straining to become what they are not, yes; but there remains the struggle to become what they are.’⁹⁶ This is usually characterized as the progressive side of Nietzscheanism with its ramifications for various revolutionary personal / political polemics and liberated self-discovery. However, because the nature of the individual was fixed, the call for liberation could be re-written as a call to accept one’s preordained position in a hierarchical system. If you were true to your own nature then the harmonious result would be true liberation: ‘There is nothing heroic in disobeying oneself. On the other hand, obedience to one’s own nature is

freedom.⁹⁷ Once again this reveals the elitism at the base of this position. It also reaffirmed the writers and readers of the *New Age* in their privileged position as artists and intellectuals whose role set them apart from the observed mass they sought to liberate.

All these ideas were avowedly anti-State and put a premium on personal liberty. But they all came up against the same dilemma. How to arrive at old moral standards without a new elitism to enforce it? When the labour unrest was directed at a servile and patronizing liberal state those moral standards seemed to arise from the men themselves in healthy and violent revolt. The writers' vision of future labour organization, however, looked for an ordered system of workers, controlled by an ordered system of values and imbued with a definite standard of faith. In this their individuality would not be smothered but fulfilled.

II

It remains to be seen how these more general attitudes about the labour unrest were reflected and developed in Guild Socialism, the *New Age's* theoretical solution to labour organization that was developed at this time.⁹⁸ There were two broad strands of guild socialism that developed out of the *New Age*. On the one hand there was the libertarian 'left-wing' conception of G.D.H. Cole that emphasized worker control and democracy. On the other hand, there was the hierarchical conception of A.E. Randall, A.J. Penty, J.M. Kennedy and R. De Maeztu. Both groups shared a common antipathy to capitalism. As always, Orage acted a kind of mediator between these two groups, his economic ideas drawing him to the former, his aestheticism and classicism dragging him to the latter. Most studies have concentrated on the left-wing strand, stressing the libertarian ideas of G.D.H. Cole. By concentrating on the second aspect it is possible to reconstruct the heterogeneity of ideas about labour organization in the 'advanced' socialist press and illustrate its similarities and differences with the Distributist ideas being developed in the *Witness*.

Guild Socialism as an idea sprang from two almost incompatible impulses that mirror the dualism in the rest of the *New Age's* political thought. One came from the observation of the labour unrest and the syndicalism which was seen to drive it. Orage welcomed syndicalism as a 'desperate remedy' not so much in its material outcome but in its moral and spiritual effects, especially in the 'willingness to stake everything' in the fight for the 'conscious possession of power.'⁹⁹ In 1912, Orage saw the 'spontaneous, unorganised and irresponsible' character of strike activity evidence that it was 'morally rather than rationally inspired.'¹⁰⁰ This was the same violent libertarian impulse which praised the conscious and revolutionary seizing of control.

However, this was allied with a rediscovery of the ordered harmony in the mythical medieval past. The rediscovery of past forms of organization was a European wide phenomenon. Russian Slavophiles praised the *mir*, a peasant moot, and German professors resurrected the idea of the *Mark*, an Aryan village community. The *New Age* praised the Russian *mir* and *artel* as equivalents of the guild.¹⁰¹ Indeed, guilds had become somewhat of a cult in much of late nineteenth century Europe.¹⁰² The immediate influence on Orage was *New Age* contributor A.J. Penty, originally an architect and author of *The restoration of the gild system* [sic].¹⁰³ Heavily influenced by the ideas of Arnold, Carlyle, Ruskin and Edward Carpenter, Penty looked to restore human relationships to the workplace and a human scale to industry. This was to be achieved through a restoration of the medieval gild¹⁰⁴ system of small independent workshops. The emphasis was overtly anti-modern. Penty affirmed that ‘The Socialist just as much as the Medievalist must aim at setting the clock back the moment he embarks upon reform.’¹⁰⁵ What is more, Penty insisted that the spiritual rootlessness of modern life could be addressed by returning to a guild system directly inspired by medieval Europe.¹⁰⁶ His guilds were to be a bulwark for maintaining human liberty against the encroaching control of the state. His system differed from industrial syndicalism in its emphasis on small-scale production and on the value system which held it together. Much emphasis was given to the ‘spiritual life’ of the nation and a ‘purified legislation’ which would better mediate between society and state. More ominously, he talked at one point of the problems involved with the ‘complete subjection of all producers to the demoralising tyranny of an uninstructed majority.’¹⁰⁷ For Belloc, too, the unrest heralded a return to the old order. He saw the trade unions as a step towards the ‘co-operative villages of Christendom’. The essential ingredient of nationalism is there, however to provide the mystic unity which will prevent it turning into anarchy. Race or instinct was used here as a quasi-metaphysical concept — which goes to explain how hierarchy could be used to enforce it should it prove unworkable. The guilds were a ‘clear policy sprung from the very roots of our ancient racial instincts.’ He saw the Trade Unions as the beginning of these instincts’ modern expression.¹⁰⁸

Orage was slightly more circumspect about the direct transposition of past forms onto modern industrial conditions. He stated that it was important not to ‘idealise the condition of the feudal period’. Nevertheless, he had the moral conviction that this holistic society had much to recommend it over industrial Britain.¹⁰⁹ The medievalist model was rejected even further by S.G. Hobson, the author of many of the articles on Guild Socialism. Indeed, he was angry that Orage dragged Penty into the introduction to *National guilds*.¹¹⁰ Rowland Kenney also testified that most in the *New Age* group did not share

Penty's total antipathy to modern machinery.¹¹¹ Pound, for example, in this period shared neither an enthusiasm for medievalism nor the more modern forms of guild socialism.¹¹² Still, some writers have hypothesized that these influences eased his post-war conversion to Social Credit.¹¹³ Nevertheless, all writers shared an antipathy to capitalism, parliamentarism and materialist state socialism. Above all, the *moral* dimension was still paramount, whether this was phrased as a return to past certainties or not.

Throughout 1911, these ideas remained unfused, and the main thrust of the polemical articles was to expose the faults of the government rather than to articulate an alternative. The 'national organisation of labour' was mentioned but it was not expanded upon. Both the problem and the solution were outlined in rather broad strokes. Orage's editorial from August 1911 was typical:

Over and over again we have defined the three alternatives open to our governing classes: to plunge the nation into slavery by means of charitable legislation of the Lloyd George type; to face a series of strikes, ending in a general strike and revolution; to organise labour so as to eliminate the bulk of private profits and to raise wages.¹¹⁴

Raising wages was first seen as the best solution in that it would keep the worker independent and counteract the dehumanizing and patronizing Liberal state legislation. However, Marxist type ideas on the commodification of labour were merged with the idea that the wage system destroys the soul of the labourer. It bound him to his capitalist masters and corrupted his morals. Soon the paper was stringent in the criticism of the entire wage system: 'Destroy the wage system' wrote Orage in 1912 'and a complete transvaluation of every industrial factor follows as an inevitable consequence.'¹¹⁵ Wages were defined as 'the price paid for labour as a commodity in the competitive wage market' and the wage earner could not be an active citizen in a system which exploited him.¹¹⁶ And, in remarkably Sorelian terms, Orage emphasized the importance of faith and heroism far above any practical matter:

It is for the wage-earner to proclaim the larger truth that his labour is his life, that his life is a sacred thing and not a commodity; that his life must not be subject to any kind of prior claim. By that act of faith the wage system is abolished and the worker stands on the threshold of emancipation.¹¹⁷

From its origins, therefore, guild socialism was a totalizing idea, which sought not only the overhaul of the industrial system but a radical change in consciousness. Indeed, for the *New Age's* idiosyncratic blend of aestheticism and Nietzscheanism, it was the change in consciousness which was the most important goal. The paper again and again emphasized this process of 'becoming':

The world for the Socialist is an everlasting business, a perpetual process of generation and regeneration, a continual mounting of life up the ladder of becoming. Hence it follows that the Socialist has illimitable vistas for the future of man... It he is satisfied for the moment with demanding the political and economic rights of man, it is only a step forward towards other and more lofty demands.¹¹⁸

In this way they believed to have transcended and purified every category, to such an extent that this will to go 'beyond' was used as an immediate validator. Orage and his circle were aware of the possible negative associations with the word 'guild' for example, but believed they had developed beyond them:

Our readers, in fact, have crossed the Red Sea of Materialism and the Jordan of Atheism. We can therefore safely employ the old traditional terms with a purified meaning. 'Guild' we can say without arousing the evil associations of the word, and likewise 'God' and the 'soul' are open for us to employ without superstition.¹¹⁹

At times, however, they were sincerely aware of the difficulties inherent in their task. Orage was adamant that, '...the guild must be the object of emancipation and continuing liberty and not a new tyranny supplanting the old.'¹²⁰ Immediately, however, before the guild system was even articulated, problems arose. Their attempt to put economic problems over political, for example, sometimes shaded into a dislike of the political per se. 'We don't want democratic government,' they claimed somewhat disingenuously, 'but democratic industry.'¹²¹ Maurice Reckitt in an article reprinted from the *Church Socialist* emphasized the progressive nature of such an agenda:

The trade unionist must first throw off 'La Belle Dame sans Merci' of politics, and with the resources and energies thus saved set himself down to the task of so perfecting his organisation that by creating a

monopoly of labour power he forces the capitalist to concede to him not a mere increase in wages, but an instalment of control.¹²²

Indeed, the whole aim was aptly summed up by Reckitt in a quote from the old utopian nationalist himself, Giuseppe Mazzini: 'We want to balance the operations of liberty and association in a noble harmony.'¹²³ The difficulty of this task became increasingly more apparent as Guild Socialist ideas developed.

The main themes were developed in a series of articles signed by 'National Guildsmen', but later attributed to S.G. Hobson.¹²⁴ Guild Socialism emerged as a system whereby the workers, organized by trade or craft, managed industry themselves, arbitrated by the state to a collective end. Profit and wages would be eliminated. While the primary impulse in its creation was moral and aesthetic, as previously outlined, much of its expression was couched in the language of economic science. Hobson insisted on the distinction between 'wages', which treated labour as a commodity, and 'pay', which treated it as a service. Orage coherently outlined the problem: 'Without the national organisation of labour — by which we mean the organisation of production without profit — it is, and forever will be, impossible under normal circumstances to raise wages without destroying the advantage by raising prices.'¹²⁵ There was also an attempt to clearly distinguish its working from capitalism. The distinction was most succinctly outlined in an article of 1912 entitled, 'Guild Socialism — A Working Model':

The fundamental distinction between guild control and private capitalism is that, whereas the latter merely buys labour power as a commodity, and at a price (known as wages) which will yield the maximum rent and interest, the guilds co-operatively apply the human energy of their members, render themselves and their members independent of capitalist charges, and distribute the proceeds of their members labour amongst their members without regard to rent or interest.¹²⁶

Such sweeping statements beg many questions, not least of which the relationship between guilds and the means by which co-operation is achieved. These questions did indeed preoccupy much of the later theoretical writings of Hobson and Cole. The essential thing about Guild Socialism for many writers in the *New Age*, however, was not its practical exposition but what it revealed about their aesthetic political vision and ideals.

In 1912, the writers of the *New Age* started referring to the 'National Guild System' rather than guild socialism. This was somewhat controversial. S.G. Hobson complained that Orage had changed the titles of his proofs and that 'subsequently, two groups sprang up, one insisting on Guild Socialism, the other on National Guilds.'¹²⁷ The gradual acceptance of the latter term in the *New Age*, however, was symptomatic of how important nationalism became to their conception. The First World War naturally added to further analysis of the 'National' part of their title, even for more conventionally socialist writers. I. Brown thought the war was comforting in that it had shown, 'the extraordinary vitality which still lies in Nationalism.'¹²⁸

National pride even extended to Orage's later account of the system's origins. He was adamant that guild socialism was a '...genuine Anglo-Saxon invention, as native to our genius as our soil.'¹²⁹ Furthermore, in 1920 he was still at pains to stress the native roots of the movement, affirming that "'The Fathers that Begat Us'" were not French Syndicalists, but English Socialists.'¹³⁰ Given the already mentioned willingness for the *New Age* writers to discuss and translate European philosophy, it seems the need to emphasize the English roots sprang more wounded national pride than thorough self-analysis. Nor, even if we take it at face value, does it invalidate all attempts at European comparison. Rather than Guild Socialism being a direct copy of syndicalism, it suggests that it is a particularly British manifestation of the same European-wide intellectual revolt. Maurice Reckitt emphasized this very point in his autobiography. He saw syndicalism as 'plainly an importation'.¹³¹ But he admitted that 'the anti-collectivist and anti-political trend found its true tongue here in quite other quarters', namely in Belloc, and in *The New Age*.¹³² Cole, too, for all he examined French syndicalism was overly careful not to admit its influence. He admitted it was necessary to understand the French movement 'in a spirit as little insular as possible'.¹³³ But his main insistence was that real ideas should be home grown. On the general strike he wrote that 'its importation into England is a mistaken policy. We want more revolutionary feeling in this country; but we must make our own revolutionary concepts, and not import the less successful of French ideas.'¹³⁴ Above all this shows an anxiety to be original and emphasizes the all-pervading nature of nationalism. Cole even suggested, by citing the example of the stupidity of copying 'M. Sorel's opinions out of one book into another',¹³⁵ that 'the greatest service that can be done us by the intelligent study of foreign labour movements is to save us at least from becoming cosmopolitans.'¹³⁶ These are surprising opinions, perhaps, for a book which devotes 204 pages out of 425 to a study of foreign labour movements. The emotional anxiety to emphasize

Britishness should not prevent an appreciation of the influence of foreign ideas.

In the *New Witness* and its sphere of influence the same anxiety can be detected. The writers of *The Real Democracy*, who dedicated the book to Belloc, framed their most impassioned pleas in regard to English patriotism. The 'real England' was 'hidden away', the 'soul of the nation' was 'still alive'; their proto-Distributist ideas were 'embodying institutions and ideas which once flourished on this soil'.¹³⁷ Yet in a review of this book in the *New Witness*, Chesterton found himself defending their European outlook:

When those in sympathy with the views of this book or with the views of this paper use Continental nations as a parallel or comparison they are erroneously supposed to be using them as a perfect pattern. (...) But this is to miss the whole point. The rights we wish to restore to the English would, if restored, be used in as separate and national a style as they are used in the several nations that still possess them. Until England is European, she cannot even be English.¹³⁸

English patriotism could be reawakened by learning from European roots. That part of this movement's discourse was nourished by a network of European thinkers does not therefore make it a slavish copy, nor does the fact that the movements had 'native' origins make them necessarily unique.

In some cases the nationalism beneath the guild solution sounds like a slightly dressed up variation of anti-modern high Toryism. The industrial system not only degraded the worker but decreased 'military ardour, patriotism, and the other national virtues'.¹³⁹ Even economic reform was directed at a national end. The guild '...must confine itself to the material purposes of life in the sure and certain hope that, if they [sic.] build up a healthy economic community, a healthy national life will develop'.¹⁴⁰ The article insisted that it was 'supremely important that the change into Guild administration must be backed by a convinced national consciousness that we march into a new and infinitely more noble era'.¹⁴¹ This shows at least a rhetorical palingenesis that is directed towards national rather than social revolution. Most of all, the new society would contain the spiritual dimension which capitalist society lacked. Taylor posited that Orage had an unresolved tension between his quests for personal spiritual liberation and national order.¹⁴² In his more fanciful passages, Orage saw the fusion of these two desires in a holistic and harmonious society:

If, as a community, we can construct a new national energy, we may be sure that the same energy will carry us into the realms of the spirit not yet explored. For we call into activity a slumbering population of infinite possibilities. The thousand spiritual and intellectual problems that will face us in the future may confidently be left to a body politic no longer dominated or biased by economic pressure of a sectional character, We shall at least have provided an area where great men can work; the rest we leave to Fate.¹⁴³

Almost as soon as this utopia was expressed, however, unrecognized cracks began to appear. Is there really a society in which absolute liberty and uniform order can be achieved? The final sentence about 'great men' provides one of the answers. Orage never admitted it, but it becomes increasingly obvious that it is the great men who would enjoy the spiritual liberation and the mass of the population who would endure the national organization. It is not for workers, for example to strike for their sectional interests: 'When is resistance anarchism and when is it patriotism? Resistance to laws formally enacted is anarchism only when the resistance is on private and individualistic grounds, or on grounds that affect only a section of the community.'¹⁴⁴ Is this an intellectual justification for the banning of the right to strike once the national community is satisfied?

In some ways the *New Age* writers dodged such difficult questions. There was never any talk of force in the future society. Instead the moral and spiritual justifications would be enough to leave people with no choice but to serve:

The nation that forces service is unworthy of service; only the nation that commands service by the excellence of her institutions, the manifest justice of her public ways, and the beauty and purity of her life, deserves the sacrifices that men are willing to make.¹⁴⁵

This led easily to a type of elitism with a neo-feudal, benevolent leader caste charged with the task of realising the dream. And because the task springs from and appeals to literary and aesthetic desire, all the liberal capitalist bourgeois ethics of success did not apply. 'Guild-Socialists should be warned that there is no 'career' in the usual sense open to them or their work,' admonished Orage. 'Success in it will not lead to public office, or even to public prominence. There may be thanks, but there will be no rewards.'¹⁴⁶ In discussing the problem of bureaucracy, however, the writers once again march into utopianism where the system would be the master and the capacity for individual abuse impossible:

The Civil Service of the future, the descendant of the bureaucracy of to-day, will become the servant (having ceased to be the master when the wage system was abolished) of an enlightened political system from which the Guilds will have removed all financial burdens.¹⁴⁷

Outside of their rhetorical imaginings, however, the problems in serving such a system and balancing the operations of liberty and harmony became apparent in their changing analysis of the strikes in the immediate present. Once they had developed their own system, no longer did any manifestation of revolt invite praise. In May 1914 Orage stated that 'We both believe and hope that the Railwaymen may be well beaten if they should strike next November.'¹⁴⁸ All should strike for one common purpose — the abolition of the wage system and the advance of the National Guilds. Any other course was narrow individualism:

We know with as much certainty as anything can be known that while the wage system remains, the wages of one section of the proletariat can be raised only at the expense of another section; and this being the fact, the duty is laid upon every Union of strikers only to abolish the wage-system.¹⁴⁹

The rhetorical anti-Statism also gave way to a vision of a future society in which the right state would play its part. The guilds would be, in fact, like European corporatism, part of the governing body of the nation. 'The guild, organised to protect labour from both public and private capitalism, is the true equipoise to the State — State and Guild respectively, supplying those anabolic and katabolic impulses and tendencies that go to vitalise the national organism.'¹⁵⁰ In the eventuality of a conflict of interest, however, there was no doubt where the final power will lie: 'We remain socialists because we believe that in the final analysis the State, as representing the community at large, must be the final arbiter.'¹⁵¹ In the end it is hard to see the vision as anything else but a way of bolstering their type of elitism and fostering (by whatever means) a uniform national consciousness. It was a profoundly reactionary vision which was clouded even in their own minds by the revolutionary language of rebirth and spiritual emancipation.

III

The role of the state was a highly contentious issue elsewhere in Edwardian political thought.¹⁵² On the one hand there was the idealist tradition represented by Bernard Bosanquet, which saw the state as a spiritual unity

and the connection between a moral community and public power. On the other hand, Herbert Spencer put forward a view of extreme individualism and a non-interventionist state in the tradition of old Liberalism. Hugh Cecil presented a paternalist Tory state with limited intervention to aid the poor. Arguably most influential, however, were the theories of Leonard Hobhouse and John Hobson; the theoretical underpinnings of New Liberalism. For Hobhouse, the state was an ethical whole where society and human fellowship were bound together by a web of obligation. Hobson believed the state should take a more active role in restraining powers and aiding social cohesion. To the left of them was Ramsay MacDonald, for whom the state was a political democracy embodying the general will. Through incremental, state-led reform, society would inevitably arrive at social equality. This was backed up by the Fabian view of gradualism and technocratic state-led reforms. On the right, the discourse of social imperialism and state-led reforms in the tradition of Joe Chamberlain still held sway and the need for state-led national efficiency after the Boer War found acceptance in all parts of the political spectrum.¹⁵³ In one sense the argument had been won by 1906. The reforms of the Liberal government had made the increased role of the state an inevitability and political argument revolved around the internal dimensions of this state, the extent of its role, and the place of non-state entities. On the intellectual edges, however, the state itself was still highly contested. In the same period, Maitland was trying to demonstrate the historical pedigree of associationism, Figgis was highlighting the independence of the Church, and Laski was developing his theories of pluralism.¹⁵⁴

The view of the writers for the *New Age* and the *New Witness*, too, strained against this increasingly accepted view of the state. Their ideas had internal differences, but also shared a general doctrinal similarity. Belloc clarified his views in a book first serialized in the *New Age* entitled *The servile state*.¹⁵⁵ Its place of publication immediately shows it to be part of the nexus of ideas which fertilized guild socialism. Belloc's book was an attack on capitalism and collectivism that blended individualism and organicist nationalism. He claimed to have uncovered a process whereby the action of collectivism on capitalism was producing a third thing intended by neither, the servile state. For all that the collectivist wanted confiscation, his deeds were canalized into tinkering with the existing capitalist system. This led to a situation where one part of the society would be free, and the other 'constrained by positive law to work for the advantage of the other.'¹⁵⁶ In this sense, the reforms of New Liberalism, especially the Insurance Act, were particularly mendacious in that they were compulsory and confirmed the proletarian status of the employee. Belloc claimed that he intended no

value judgement in his analysis, in his usual stance of logical, reasoned observer. It was clear, however, that he saw it as a bad thing. The hinted alternative was a state of small property owners, proud of their rights and indebted to no-one.

Belloc's individuals were no mere atoms, however. This is where the difficulty of his thesis comes. If community was not to be enforced from the state, cohesion needed to come from somewhere else. Belloc believed it to be present *within* the people. Thus the phrasing of some of the sections of *The servile state* are not merely tonal anomalies which can be brushed over to get to a hard economic theory, but an essential part of his argument. Belloc tried to awaken continuity with free Europeans, living and dead, 'those men from whom we are descended and whose blood runs with little admixture in our veins...'.¹⁵⁷ The Reformation and the industrial revolution had not quite killed this in the national spirit, and in this lay Belloc's hope: 'There is a complex knot of forces underlying any nation once Christian; a smouldering of the old fires.'¹⁵⁸ Other countries provided the best model of this, especially France and Ireland, resonant in Belloc mind as the two halves of his family. These countries had resisted the servile state and 'held fast in tradition and saved the continuity of morals.'¹⁵⁹ On the one hand this refers to the economic fact that both countries contained a significant number of small freeholders, France ever since the Revolution and Ireland since the Unionist reform of land tenancy culminating in 1903. The underlying implication, however, seems to be that organic mystical continuities (race, religion and tradition) would provide the real cohesion that the state could not enforce. Even with regard to the examples of France and Ireland this organicism could be deeply exclusionary. He was not talking about the secular France that was not merely a state imposition, nor of Protestant Ireland, but of a homogeneous and Catholic peasantry.

There are hints in Belloc's book that his ideal society might contain a strong political role for the state, if not an economic role. A section on the history of the Reformation is revealing. He wondered what might have happened if the monarch had kept the land confiscated from the monasteries rather than selling it off to landlords: 'He would presumably have used it, as a strong central government always does, for the weakening of the wealthier classes, and to the indirect advantage of the mass of the people.'¹⁶⁰ This section foreshadows Belloc's polemical histories of the inter-war years that sought to refute the Whig interpretation of the Reformation and the Glorious revolution, in the tradition of Cobbett and Ruskin.¹⁶¹ Cobbett had famously denounced the 'land grab' of the Reformation, and the 'plunder of the church' was also emphasized by

Disraeli in *Sybil* and *Conningsby*.¹⁶² The Catholic historian John Lingard also expressed the same view in his ten-volume *History of England*; it is little surprise that Belloc was engaged to write the eleventh in the series.¹⁶³ Paradoxically then, the supposed ultra-liberal who resents the imposition of the state on the individual also accepts a strong central authority in order to enforce this liberty. Indeed, it is almost as if we learn very little about Belloc's real view of the state from the book which most seeks to explain it. In one sense, Belloc's own metaphor suffices: just as the collectivist was being 'canalized' into accepting servility in his action upon capitalism, so Belloc's libertarian thought was being canalized towards a greater leviathan than the one he sought to attack.

Belloc's theories were increasingly used to defend the institution of private property against any kind of collective management, and the principle of restoring a society of small property holders became known as Distributism. Despite its similarities with the principles behind guild socialism, Orage was disparaging of its future: 'Apart from its name, which is a powerful argument against it, we have already left it dead on the field of discussion many new ages ago.'¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, there were clear intersections with the guild socialist view of the state. Both were certainly led by a real desire to uphold the freedom of the individual against the capitalist state. Orage's inspiration was somewhat different from Belloc's. Belloc's thesis was a combination of old radical Liberalism and Catholicism. The example of the 1891 papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, although not explicitly referred to, was surely part of his mental background. Wilson, too, has pointed to the early influences of Cardinal Manning.¹⁶⁵ Orage, on the other hand, arrived at 'statelessness' through Nietzsche, Stirner, and a disillusionment with the lack of spiritual energy behind the state-led schemes of the Fabians. Nietzsche's idea of individual spiritual emancipation seemed to lead Orage to an instinctive dislike of herd-led, patronizing, New-Liberal schemes. Stirner had also written about the importance of the labour unrest for showing the state to be obsolete.¹⁶⁶

Orage's version of guild socialism did not do away with the state completely, however, it merely envisaged it as loosening its grip in the economic sphere. Orage provides far more detail than Belloc on this point. The State would have ultimate ownership of 'land, houses and machinery'. It would have co-management rights in the industrial sector and manage areas not directly concerned with wealth production and distribution. This roughly meant 'Law', 'Medicine', 'the Army, Navy and Police', 'Foreign relations', 'Education' and 'Central and Local Governments'.¹⁶⁷ The idea was that once the state had been liberated from the corruption of

economics and class, it would be able to deal with more important objects, such as the ‘cultural development of the community’.¹⁶⁸

The Catholicism of the *New Witness* circle also provided a sticking point with the advocates of the guilds. According to the *New Age*, their theories did not go down well with mainstream Catholic opinion. A speaker at a Catholic Congress in Cardiff in 1914 mentioned Guild Socialism alongside Syndicalism and Collectivism and claimed Catholicism was in ‘total and unqualified opposition’ to all of them.¹⁶⁹ However, the similarities between their two conceptions were also unwittingly brought up in another article. The *New Age* criticized the *Witness*’s faulty reasoning in extending its condemnation of the politicians of the day to politicians in general: ‘if the “New Witness” is attempting such a process the sooner it comes out in its true colours as a Catholic Anarchist organ the better.’¹⁷⁰ However, the writer also spotted that for the Witnesses the Catholic state could do no wrong. He thus hypothesizes that if Spain or Austria were to become advocates of the guild system Cecil Chesterton would become their most enthusiastic supporter.¹⁷¹ For both visions, clearly, the tension between individual freedom and societal discipline remained.

The guild socialist vision as it developed in the *New Age* had some influence on the more well-known vision of G.D.H. Cole, who also believed that social reform would produce happy wage slaves and impair real democracy. He regularly acknowledged that influence of the *New Age*: ‘I was a regular reader of *The New Age* from 1906 onwards, and followed with keen interest the successive development of the Guild Idea.’¹⁷² He also mentioned Belloc in *The world of labour* and quoted him in an address to the Oxford Fabians in spring 1912.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, both the *Witness* and the *New Age* were too extreme for him. Indeed, his thought represents one of the non-extremist directions of this network of ideas. He mentions how his ideas were fertilized by the same anti-materialist critique; he specifically mentions Belloc, Nietzsche, Bergson and Sorel.¹⁷⁴ This ‘intellectual unrest’ had been helpful in clarifying his ideas and rejecting the dry materialism of collectivism. He also underlined his ‘ethical’¹⁷⁵ reformulation of the problem of the control of industry in opposition to the Fabians.¹⁷⁶ But he rejected the anti-parliamentary bias of Belloc and Cecil Chesterton. In his future society, he saw that parliament would have to ‘intervene more and more, and to take over control from the capitalist, while on their side the workers were assuming control.’¹⁷⁷ In the 1910–14 labour unrest he saw ‘nothing like the great and conscious revolt against politics that the syndicalist and the *New Witness* would have us believe in.’¹⁷⁸ He rejected the *New Age*’s privileging of theory over practical politics and its medievalism, and he identified and disapproved of the authoritarian bent of its politics:

The weakness of *The New Age* is that its theoretical reconstruction is imperfectly accompanied by suggestions for the actual transition. It is always a little scornful of the present and more than a little scornful of democracy; it does little to teach us how to build the New Jerusalem of which it has seized the general idea.¹⁷⁹

Indeed, as G.D.H. Cole gradually became the 'leader' of Guild Socialist ideas, the more the tensions became more apparent between his vision and that of the less democratic *New Age* writers. A. E. Randall admitted by 1915 that he had been 'excommunicated' from Guild Socialism by Cole. Nevertheless, he continued to emphasize the dangers of Cole's viewpoint, and that of I. Brown, another libertarian guild socialist. For Randall, 'The disgregation [sic.] of atoms is the Nietzschean definition of decadence; and the excessive individualism of Mr. Brown would soon bring the Guild to ruin.'¹⁸⁰ Whereas Cole emphasized the importance of elections to guild positions, Randall talked of 'an aristocracy of the Guilds' where leadership would be recruited by hereditary, co-option and even state appointment. Like every other body, the Guild would 'compel the subordination of the subordinates' and no 'poppy cock' about industrial democracy could disguise this fact.¹⁸¹

Nevertheless, Cole praised the intellectual fervour and excitement that the *New Age* provided as well as emphasizing its narrow, elitist readership.¹⁸² Cole is therefore an example of the non-committed reader of the *New Age* who, enjoying its freedom and excitement, took the ideas in his own directions. With his tongue only half in his cheek, he even berated the labour leaders for rejecting the paper claiming 'the average man must learn to tolerate the eccentricities of genius.'¹⁸³

The links between *The servile state* and guild socialism are further illustrated by Maurice Reckitt. Reckitt's church socialism developed in tandem with Orage and had some influence, it has been claimed, on the political and social views of T.S. Eliot.¹⁸⁴ If this is true, then the context in which Reckitt's views developed show how Eliot was able to combine the identities of European modernist (or proto-fascist), and Anglican moralist. The ambivalence was already present in the origins of Reckitt's theories. Reckitt testified to the extraordinary effect of Belloc's book: 'I cannot overestimate the impact of this book upon my mind, and in this I was but symptomatic of thousands of others who had passed through the same stages as I had.'¹⁸⁵ What is more, Reckitt saw Belloc's thesis as 'congruous ... with what I was imbibing from a different source' namely Orage and Hobson in the *New Age*.¹⁸⁶ He explained in his autobiography how these

theorists were instrumental in killing 'progressivism ... even though it would not lie down, a full four years before August 1914.'¹⁸⁷ Reckitt was also influenced by *The party system* and the anti-parliamentary bias of Guild Socialism, 'I had the gravest suspicions of the validity of the usefulness of a parliamentary career ever since reading the book in which Belloc and Cecil Chesterton attacked the party system in 1911, and the fact that the whole emphasis of the guild movement was an anti-parliamentary one had constituted no small part of its attraction for me.'¹⁸⁸ For Reckitt, as for many of his contemporaries, the Distributist and *New Age* critiques of progressivism complemented each other.

Just as Guild Socialist influence went left to Cole, it went right to J.E.F. Mann, N.J. Sievers, and R.W.T. Cox in *The real democracy*. They dedicated the book to Belloc, but also mentioned Orage and spoke approvingly of guild socialism.¹⁸⁹ In common with all versions of Guild Socialism, they emphasized the danger of 'gilded slavery' brought about by New Liberal reforms.¹⁹⁰ However, they followed Belloc and Chesterton specifically in their fetishism of small property owners.¹⁹¹ The book did not have much influence and the authors themselves admitted their reforms were difficult to implement.¹⁹² It is an example of the heterodoxy of anti-progressivism, and the centrality of the *New Age* and the *New Witness* to this network. Marc Stears treats both Belloc and ideas such as those in *The real democracy* as marginal aberrations from a left wing (but heterogeneous) norm. In this context, however, it seems to be more evidence of the extent to which Belloc's views too were definitive of the centre of anti-progressive influence that transcended left and right. Stears makes a useful split between the liberal individualist Guild Socialism of Cole and the more organicist vision of De Maeztu and Orage. The labelling of the whole movement as left wing, however, leads Stears to unnecessarily exclude Belloc and his disciples from the second of his categories.¹⁹³

There were two forces militating against any of this circle accepting a more positive view of state intervention, even for their own ends. On the one hand, their primary example, the new Liberal government, seemed to be leading to a servile nightmare. But on the other hand, the Prussian 'organic' state was worse, an antipathy which was increased by the war. The bureaucratic power of such a state negated the great individual. Hulme detested the 'Prussian' type of state for this reason, even as he fêted authority and discipline in other areas. This was made manifest later in Ramiro de Maeztu's 1916 book, *Authority, liberty and function in the light of war*. De Maeztu was a Spanish journalist who was resident in London throughout the war years and was a regular contributor to the *New Age*. *Authority, liberty and function* was the result of numerous discussions with other *New Age* writers and was

written and published in English for a British audience. It is especially tempting to hypothesize the influence of Hulme, especially on De Maeztu's view of original sin. Hulme had also planned, as part of his series on 'Tory Philosophy', to write a section on 'Order, Authority and Liberty' — A discussion of the principles (as distinct from the opportunist dodges) which ought to govern the action of the State during strike disturbances, etc.¹⁹⁴

De Maeztu rejected both 'Prussian' authority and western liberalism.¹⁹⁵ But the alternative was equally organicist, a society organized by function, where the possibility for collective coercion was huge. This book, forged in the heat of war, opened up the contradictions within their thought. On the one hand, the dilemma between state and anarchy was rejected and a solution put forward which seemed 'liberal' in its widest sense: 'plurality and the balance of powers.'¹⁹⁶ Yet in asserting this plurality, de Maeztu rejected subjective rights and asserted only those which arose out of 'function' and would contribute to the common good. Individual expression, therefore, was not 'incompatible with all social discipline',¹⁹⁷ especially when this 'function' was the primary fact behind social organization. As de Maeztu rather chillingly wrote, 'Instruments are used when they are in good order, repaired when damaged, and thrown away when useless.'¹⁹⁸ 'Theological' virtues were needed to inspire heroic efforts. Spiritual ideas of 'Death and resurrection' were used to celebrate the death of the personality and the resurrection of the person as a functionary: 'What we lose as personalities, we reconquer, multiplied, as functionaries.'¹⁹⁹ Here was the fascist aesthetic expressed in 'English' terms; back in his native Spain de Maeztu was later drawn into the open arms of the Franco regime and became the lead writer for *Acción Española*.²⁰⁰

For the rest of the circle, however, this tension between authority and liberty was not resolved. In some ways, it seems that the power of the liberal state was the cause of this contortion. These intellectuals were put off making their statist and organicist ideas virulent and open, but instead were pushed into centralizing the individualist aesthetic. Perhaps the co-option of the powers of the state on the side of liberal ideology was what saved Britain from the more authoritarian impact of these ideas. Certainly in countries where the state was less successful at social intervention (Italy) or associated with authoritarianism rather than liberalism (Germany) there was far more space to develop ideas that combined cultural rebellion with statism.

Nevertheless, it is precisely the blinding strength of the centrality of liberal individualism in British culture that has led people to underestimate the extent to which anti-liberal ideas could inform critiques of New Liberalism and collectivism. Guild Socialism and Distributism claimed to re-centralize the individual against the power of the state. Yet they also wanted to provide

a sense of togetherness and community that had been lost in the process of modernization. This spiritual, religious or national harmony could be resurrected by revolt against the existing system, and then retained through political or religious authority in the future. It is in this tension, as much as in the more clearly reactionary calls for the people to be kept in their place, that a revolt against the principles of liberal democracy in early twentieth-century Britain can be found.

3. THE FORGING OF AN ANTI-PARLIAMENTARY TRADITION

I

European society in the twentieth century inherited three great problems from the nineteenth. The first of these problems concerned the results of the industrial revolution and the development of capitalism: 'the social question'. Secondly, there was the problem of representation, democracy and government thrown up by the French Revolution: 'the representative question'. The third problem was how to deal with the expectations and desires fostered by nationalism: 'the national question'. Socialism and liberal parliamentary democracy, two of the influential political systems of the nineteenth century, evolved as ways of solving these questions. So too did fascism, the original ideology of the twentieth century. In each country the dimensions of fascism's success was governed by the effectiveness with which existing governments dealt with these problems. It has sometimes been assumed that Britain only faced the first of these questions in an acute form. Nationalism was unstable at the periphery. The Irish question in the years before the First World War certainly had the potential to upset politics in Westminster, and even briefly threatened civil war. It only really troubled questions about English or British identity, however, on the extreme wing of the Unionist Party. English/British identity itself — so the argument goes — was based on constitutional and liberal formulations and did not really have enough space to lurch into conceptions of blood and race. Most of all, the parliamentary system has been seen as broadly consensual, avoiding strong intellectual or political challenges from the extremes. Such an analysis might be broadly true, but it is not the whole story. Britain did reflect, albeit in a minor or partial form, the challenges to parliamentary government and democracy that motivated thinkers and movements in other European countries.

Existing parties, of course, were faced with these questions and dealt with them in different ways. The Liberals, victorious in 1906, approached the social question with social legislation, the national question with Home Rule, and the constitutional question with reform. For some of the Unionists, initially it seemed that Imperial preference and tariff reform were possible ways of linking and defusing the national and social questions. Home Rule was rejected, and constitutional tinkering disapproved of, even though they eventually had to succumb to the reform of the House of Lords. The Labour party accepted the parliamentary system and directed its intentions primarily towards the social question, but was very much in the tail wind of the Liberals in these years. All of these parties were federations of views and encompassed critics of their central positions (the die-hard Tories, the old Liberals, the Marxist socialists), but they did not become viable alternatives. Willoughby de Broke and Amery never left the Unionists, and the Marxist SDF never gained significant support.¹

Such an interpretation, however, underemphasizes cultural expressions of resistance to the parliamentary system. The attacks on parliamentary democracy in the *New Age* and the *New Witness* seem to resist incorporation into a neat historical tradition. In one view, Belloc and Cecil Chesterton's book, *The party system*,² and their articles in their weekly paper belong to a liberal tradition of individual freedom and fear of the tyranny of the party caucus.³ They seem to express an old liberal fear more or less consciously articulated since the development of the Birmingham party caucus in the 1880s. W.H. Greenleaf conceives of them as 'liberal', but also — in his major theoretical split — in the 'libertarian' rather than 'centralist' half of the British political tradition.⁴ There was something in the hysteria and style of their attack, however, which belonged to the new tradition of anti-parliamentary thought elsewhere in Europe. Nor is this comparison merely fanciful. Belloc was an admirer of the French royalist Charles Maurras and an avid reader of *L'Action Française*.⁵ Their writings slipped between common-sense expositions of widely accepted problems and extreme denunciations of a broadly consensual system. This was mirrored by Belloc's self-view which oscillated between a detached 'man of letters' and a revolutionary combatant in the political battle. The similarities and cross-overs with the policy and writers in the *New Age* help shed light on this problem while further complicating the view of this periodical as purely 'progressive' or 'socialist'. Attacks on the party system were as extreme in this paper as the other, and the non-Marxist but non-democratic socialism which emerged formed part of the same tradition. As the 'entirely tactless Nietzschean Jew', Oscar Levy, said of the *New Age*, proving that an (admittedly extreme) contemporary could hint at the nature of its political direction:

It was, on the whole, not a Socialist but a reactionary paper (which is the same). So reactionary, that most of its contributors were Medievalists — or of that Christian Secularisti [sic.], such as Shaw. (...) They lived in the past, to which they were frightened back by threatening chaos. They wished to put the clock back, as Chesterton once said, but they had not the Chesterton courage to confess it.⁶

The more overtly political vision of the *New Witness* can shed light on the aesthetic formulations of the *New Age* and show up a tradition of anti-parliamentarism and anti-democracy which infused British cultural life, and formed a tradition and a precedent for the political choices of the nineteen-thirties.

II

The attack on the party system was part of the *Eye-Witness's* *raison d'être*. One major backer of the paper claimed in evidence before a Parliamentary Select Committee that the general purpose of the paper was 'an attack on the Party System of Government.'⁷ The *New Age*, also, although initially on the side of the emerging Labour party, had by 1910 conceived of itself as something outside of party politics. This was partly a reflection of the demand to provide a moral and aesthetic counterpart to Fabianism, but also of a desire to overcome the parliamentary system as it stood.⁸ Orage wrote that 'nearly everybody nowadays has his suspicions of the futility of parliamentary and pseudo-representative institutions.'⁹ The *Eye-Witness* continued the arguments put forward in a book entitled *The party system*, which Belloc prepared with Cecil Chesterton in 1911.¹⁰ Part of its motivation came from Belloc's own experience as a Liberal MP where he was constantly frustrated by the effectiveness of the party machine in constraining his votes and opinions. Yet *The party system* was intended not as a measured academic work but as a political tract. Belloc described the completion of the book, and its purpose, in a letter to E.S.P. Haynes: 'It has all the faults of haste but I think it will stir people up. The outside public has no conception of the rotten futility of the House of Commons, still less of the cause thereof.'¹¹

The hasty argument was an exposure of the mechanisms of Westminster which delayed administration and prevented the 'will of the people' from being embodied in law. In this sense it pitted a direct Rousseauist democracy against the stultifying mechanisms of parliamentarianism. It railed against inter-party conferences where important questions were agreed upon behind closed doors, like the then recent conference which settled the question of the reform of the House of Lords. Parliamentary battle was seen as a sham

show put on to mislead the people while real power was manipulated behind the scenes. The family connections of many of the MPs were exposed to show the closed and oligarchic nature of the system. There was a detailed exposure of all the mechanisms for delaying legislation and blocking bills to show that laws ‘honestly desired’ by ‘the people’ were tied up in procedure. The despotism of the party caucus was further exposed by its manipulation and control of party funds and election expenses. A whole world of financial corruption was invoked. The argument was riddled with biological metaphors about disease, decay, and the ‘putrefaction’ of the body. This view of the House was, of-course, rejected by politicians. MacDonald, in debate with Belloc, insisted that, ‘The picture he has given of the House of Commons is absolutely inaccurate and altogether a caricature.’¹² *The party system* came on the wave of other disaffected criticisms of parliament including Victor Grayson’s *The problem of parliament: a criticism and a remedy* (London, 1909) and, from the syndicalist left, Ben Tillet’s *Is the parliamentary party a failure?*¹³ In 1911, a cross-political group called the Independent Political Association also lobbied to reform the party system.¹⁴

The party system stimulated discussion across a broad spectrum of political opinion. A letter from Haynes shows that he talked about the book over dinner with the Webbs.¹⁵ *The Star* said that it ‘says in plain English what everybody in touch with reality thinks.’¹⁶ It even elicited comment in a House of Commons debate. Lord Hugh Cecil mentioned that, ‘The very striking book called ‘The Party System’ confirmed some great truths.’¹⁷ Even A. J. Balfour acknowledged its existence, ‘I read the first two pages of it and it is that which has given me an appetite for reading the remainder’¹⁸ (although it is doubtful whether he ever did). Orage, of course, flagged it in the editorial comments of the *New Age* and gave much space to its discussion.¹⁹ It was praised by Harold Cox in *The Saturday Review* and by Lord Robert Cecil in *The Morning Post* and reviewed favourably in *The English Review*, *Academy* and *The Spectator*.²⁰ The *TLS*, however, expressed the nub of the matter, and reflected how the book was received in most quarters: ‘The authors put their case with wit and power and, on the whole, with fairness, but it is hard to see exactly what they want.’²¹ It was this confusion which pushed them into extremism. Their negative thesis gained interest and publicity but their failure to find a practical answer pushed them to more extreme claims. The last sentence of the book set the tone for their later attacks:

The degraded parliament may ultimately be replaced by some other organ; but no such organ appears to be forming, and until we get our first glimpse of it we are in for one of those evil spaces, subject

to foreign insult and domestic misfortune, which invariably attach to nations when, for a period, they lose grip over their own destinies.²²

Overthrowing the present system was seen as a moral necessity as much as a practical hope.

The party system remained the key text for the *Eye-Witness* and then the *New Witness* right up to the outbreak of war in 1914. An advert in 1913 specifically recommended reading *The party system* for the “‘New Witness’ Policy”.²³ The attack on the party system remained the base of the paper’s policy on which more extreme criticisms were built. When the book first appeared it was heartily recommended by Orage in the editorial pages of the *New Age*.²⁴ He later bestowed on the book the ultimate Oragean trinity of praise, calling it ‘moral, manly and English’.²⁵ Even such a figure as George Lansbury could find himself in such agreement with the attack on the party system that he was prepared to openly endorse the *New Witness* and wrote a letter of support on the date of its floatation on the stock market:

DEAR CHESTERTON — Best of good luck to you in your effort to make the *New Witness* secure. We want it more every day to smite those in high places and to show up the hideous humbug of the Party System. I don’t agree with lots you say, but I do agree that we need today fearless, outspoken critics of present methods of government and administration.²⁶

Almost indistinguishable from this particular attack on the party system, however, was an increasingly violent attack on parliament itself. The reviewer for the *New Age* wrote that, ‘The authors of this book have left us stranded with their theory that the Party System is dead, and that politics is a dirty game.’²⁷ Week after week, the paper printed insults initially supposedly to illustrate the ineffectiveness of the House of Commons, but increasingly to revel in it. When George Kemp retired and remarked upon his unhappy experience in the House of Commons it was seen as an ‘admirable landmark in the crumbling process which has been so rapidly going on in regard to the reputation of our political system during the last year or so.’²⁸ There was constant talk of its ‘rapid degradation’.²⁹ Even when it did something of which the *New Witness* approved, such as defeat the conciliation Bill, such action was ‘a welcome event, but it is not one calculated to raise the reputation of the House of Commons from the abyss of contempt into which it has sunk.’³⁰ Such forebodings were hammered home with scarcely concealed *Schadenfreude*: ‘If the disaster comes before

public life is purified from within, that disaster will certainly blow the whole system sky-high. It could not even survive one moderately unsuccessful war, not even one moderately successful piece of rioting.³³¹ Indeed, in all matters of 'vital domestic interests (...) the House of Commons might as well not exist.'³³²

To begin with, plans to reform parliament were vague and supposedly self-evident. In the first ever issue of the *Eye-Witness*, Belloc stated rather glibly, 'The alternative to having cancer is not having cancer. The alternative to the party system is a free parliament.'³³³ Very soon, however, and based on the strictures and abuses laid down in *The party system*, a coherent and achievable list of points was drawn up:

(1) To allow a direct vote of the people on every considerable change in the law.

(2) To enable a reasonable number of citizens to initiate such changes and insist on their being submitted to such a direct popular vote.

(3) To insist on the responsibility of Ministers to the House of Commons; and especially to create machinery for the punishment of individual Ministers.

(4) To insist on the publication of the accounts of the Party Organisations, with the names (if possible, the *real* names) of all who subscribe to them or are paid out of them.

(5) To send to prison rich men who give or take bribes, especially when these men are politicians and responsible for the conduct of national affairs.³⁴

However, as the attacks on the party system began to slip more and more into dislike of parliamentarism per se, the practical reforms faded into the background. They were listed, but not really developed upon. In 1912, the same things were suggested, but were prefaced by the admission that there were 'many people who despair of ever restoring Parliament to its ancient honour'.³⁵ It is almost as if lip service was being paid to parliamentarism but with the added awareness that the majority of their readership might have turned completely against it. By 1913, therefore, a disillusioned Belloc was forced once again into a vague support of the paper's policy without really believing that these practical reforms would have any effect: 'I confess that I have not the least idea myself from what direction the change can come: but it is coming and that rapidly. When it comes your paper will deserve the chief place in the gratitude of those who will have benefited by your foresight and courage.'³⁶ The inference

here was that the paper itself was the policy. A.N. Wilson suggests that this was a groundbreaking idea; that in giving up parliament for journalism Belloc was symbolizing the move in power towards the press as independent opinion-forming organs.³⁷ Whether the larger point is true or not, the journalists themselves self-consciously took on this role. Exposure became the key concept, for the readers as well as the writers.³⁸ Those who took the paper were actively encouraged to become political actors rather than merely cultural consumers. ‘Tell those whom you meet the few elementary truths that you know:’ advised the editor, ‘that legislative power is being sold by the politicians; that paid seats in the Ministry are sold; that Bills are brought in and forced through Parliament at the dictation of rich men who pay for them like so much butter.’³⁹ The *New Age* also extolled its readers in the same apostolic language, ‘...if your spirit is such that it will not endure even the sight of enslavement — come on our side! If you want an open Parliament — come on our side! If you will the integrity of the Empire — come to your place!’⁴⁰

III

There was a related and more sinister aspect to such expositions, however. As the arguments against the party system slipped into a dislike of parliament per se, anti-Semitism, always latent, burst forth in an increasingly ‘virile’ manner. It became, indeed, a necessary and important part of their political argument. Jewish cosmopolitan financiers were seen to have a hold over the politicians: ‘There must be no more sacrificing of our subjects to groups of alien financiers who happen (through secret subscriptions or otherwise) to have a pull on the little group of politicians that governs us.’⁴¹ Indeed, in this respect, anti-Semitism became a kind of conceptual key to unlock the corruption of parliament. While in parliament, Belloc had alienated many of his fellow MPs by referring to the House of Lords as a ‘committee of the modern Anglo-Jewish plutocracy under which we live.’⁴² The paper wrote of the rich paymasters of politicians’ and the ‘Judean combine’. Even the liberal desire not to mention ‘the Jewish problem’ was perverted and seen as a sign of real Jewish influence. The ‘Jewish question’ was ignored because, ‘... it is as much as the politician’s salary is worth to breathe the word ‘Jew’...’⁴³ The accusation moved from the invocation of the great Jewish banking names, — ‘Samuel and Isaacs, Rothschild and Sassoon, Abrahams and Schuster.’⁴⁴ — to an insinuation of clanism and combination, sometimes expressed in ‘comic’ verse, such as:

Samuel had a little clan
That lay extremely low;

But everywhere that Samuel went
That clan was sure to go.⁴⁵

These shady figures were seen to have power over the Press, not only in Britain but in the whole world. Cecil Chesterton mentioned the ‘Controllers of Foreign Intelligence — those cosmopolitan financiers who censor the world’s news — ...’⁴⁶ and at one point went as far as to say that ‘It must be remembered that practically all the news-agencies are Jewish and nearly all the newspapers are in one way or another subject to Jewish pressure.’⁴⁷ This was then used by F.H. O’Donnell as a justification for scepticism on the reporting on the Beilis blood libel trial in Kiev.⁴⁸ This denigration of the Jews as imperialist financiers in the ‘socialism of fools tradition’ and as anti-national cosmopolites could have a dual attraction, reflecting the left/right ambivalence of the rest of the periodical’s politics.

Brian Cheyette has suggested that many of these political attitudes to the Jews had been earlier expressed in Belloc’s fiction.⁴⁹ In *Emmanuel Burden, Mr Clutterbuck’s Election, A Change in the Cabinet* and *Pongo and the Bull*⁵⁰ the character of Barnett, who later became the Duke of Battersea (having initially changed his name and ingratiated himself with the political establishment) is the fictional embodiment of everything Belloc saw in a Jewish financier. He is involved in pressure groups to raise prices and exploit colonies; he is behind the manipulation of the press and the funding of party politicians. What is more, his physical description is either cruelly comic or sinisterly haunting. His first description talks of ‘a nose of that full pendulous type which is invariably associated with organizing ability and staying power.’⁵¹ Later, however, when his authority is questioned the description is terrifying, exploiting the cultural fear of the mystic, despotic and evil east: ‘There was a full three minutes of silence, during which Mr. Barnett’s face looked like the face of one of those old and monstrous things, enormous, dug from Assyrian sands...’⁵² Images from this fictional portrait were reflected in supposed political satire in the pages of the *Eye-Witness*. Take this anonymous spoof on Keats’s ‘La Belle Dame Sans Merci’ entitled, ‘Rhymes for the Times’, — ‘Le Bon Juif Sans Merci’:

I met a gentleman last night;
His eyes were closed when he smiled,
His nose was big, his face was dark,
His voice was mild.
(...)
He found me what I needed most.
Not honey wild or manna Jew

But a most handsome cheque against
My I.O.U.⁵³

Equally telling in Belloc's novels is his portrait of the extreme anti-Semite, William Bailey, who has 'gone mad on the Hebrew race'. His views were deliberately extreme.⁵⁴ Belloc was possibly thus employing a subtle authorial stance whereby he puts in exaggerated distortions to distance himself from extreme anti-Semitism and make his real views seem tenable. It also might put off criticism and make the overly extreme views (especially when compared with Barnett's *real* insidiousness) seem misguided and harmless rather than wrong.

These literary constructs provided a template into which real facts could be forced. Thus the Marconi scandal immediately seemed to be a natural response to real Jewish influence and a necessary policy of exposure.⁵⁵ On March 7 1912, the Postmaster General, Herbert Samuel, gave a contract to the Marconi company which allowed the erection of six wireless stations for an imperial communications system. It was claimed that Herbert Samuel, the managing director, Godfrey Isaacs and the brother of the Attorney General, Sir Rufus Isaacs as well as senior members of parliament (including Lloyd George) made huge profits on shares resulting from the deal. Samuel and the Isaacs brothers were Jewish. For the *New Witness* circle the whole scandal seemed to embody the plutocratic power of a group of oligarchic politicians and their (Jewish) financiers who were using their power for their own gain and to the detriment of the 'people' and the 'country'. In this, their presupposed ideas were enough to confirm the facts.⁵⁶ The exposition made use of the Jewish names and then numbered them — 'Isaacs No.1' and 'Isaacs No. 2' — thus objectifying them and emphasizing the clannish, conspiratorial nature of the proceedings.⁵⁷ This was taken as the beginning of a whole network of Jewish cosmopolitan influence. The article immediately broadened the picture, juxtaposing 'English' soil and politics with shady 'otherness'.⁵⁸

The effect of the Marconi scandal was compounded by the 'big silver scandal' that broke in late 1912. The Finance Committee for the Council of India needed to buy five million ounces of silver to mint more rupees for the Indian government. The normal practice was to tender the contract to two financial houses. However, in this case, to prevent a syndicate being formed to push up the price of silver, the contract was given, in secret, to the firm of Samuel Montagu and Co. who were asked to buy small amounts of silver over a protracted period so as not to arouse suspicion. Such secrecy was bound to be controversial. What really obsessed the *New Witness*, however, was the Jewish involvement. Once again the facts seemed to fit a

worldview of secret Jewish power. The under-secretary for India was Edwin Montagu, son of Lord Swaything, the senior partner in Samuel Montagu and Co. What is more, Sir Stuart Samuel, Liberal MP for Whitechapel also sat on the board of the bank. This seemed to contravene the 1782 Contractors Act, and he had to resign, only to be re-elected a few months later.⁵⁹ To Belloc, the Indian silver affair and the Marconi revelations were 'essentially cosmopolitan transactions in character' that were shaking 'the old apathy' to the Jewish question.⁶⁰

In both scandals, the *Witness* constantly emphasized the danger to the nation, and the reports played on the dual fear of invasion and anarchy. The Marconi scandal was symptomatic of national and societal decline. 'The Society that tolerated such conduct in its public men is not far from disaster and dissolution,'⁶¹ wrote Cecil Chesterton in July 1913. The next week he went even further: 'If our country permits the corruption to continue, it will decline. And the end of such decline is not only moral degradation but in almost all cases military defeat and national disaster.'⁶² The sense of national inadequacy was further emphasized in the much repeated claim that only in England would such crimes be tolerated.⁶³ Indeed, in one of his many comparisons with the healthy radical right-wing anti-parliamentarism of his French friends, he told W.S. Blunt that they were ahead of the English in this matter as well. The behaviour of the politicians over the Marconi scandal had had an 'ineradicable' effect on 'the people by whom I judge opinions in Paris' (no doubt the nationalist circle and the *Action Française*).⁶⁴

Orage's paper did not concern itself with the Marconi scandal to anything like the same degree. Indeed in 1914 the *New Age* published a pastiche satirizing Cecil Chesterton's continued obsession with the scandal. To begin with Orage rejected the validity of the *New Witness* campaign of public exposure. Orage wrote explicitly, 'there is little public value to be derived from the exposure of public corruption'.⁶⁵ The real problem was with a corrupt system which made such abuses possible. The injustice inherent in the State organization meant that soon 'only the scoundrels and men of low cunning will be left.'⁶⁶ The Marconi scandal, therefore, paled into insignificance beside the *New Age's* wider project.⁶⁷ As the scandal progressed, however, the invective against the individual politicians grew. Part of this stemmed from a sense of comradeship with the *New Witness*. The contempt with which the protagonists treated Cecil Chesterton's review meant that, 'the leading figures of the Marconi company are, without exception, vulgar and shameless Philistines.'⁶⁸ Orage took offence to the comments about its perceived lack of influence, naturally seeing the *New Age* potentially vulnerable to the same mistaken criticism.⁶⁹ Even when it began to emerge that many of the leading

figures were not guilty as charged the verdict of the *New Age* was still against them. The evidence 'acquits Sir Rufus Isaacs, in our opinion, of corruption, only, however, to convict him of having been a cunning fool.'⁷⁰ When it came to the real *bête noire*, Lloyd George, the judgement of the *New Age* was equally as virulent as anything in the *New Witness*:

That the public had been shocked in its national pride in the purity of its public men, had been as much wounded by a false mistress whom he had idolised, when the facts were admitted one by one; and more by any one of the facts than by all the malicious, calumnious and slanderous rumours put together — these things appear never to have entered into Mr. Lloyd George's consciousness, and now, we believe, never will.⁷¹

Much of the *New Witness* language on the scandal was expressed in the language of biology and decay. The Marconi scandal was 'the symptom of a disease which is showing itself in twenty other forms on the skin of modern England.'⁷² Elsewhere it was described as 'like the toothache or the smell of a decaying body.'⁷³ Again and again the biological metaphors of organisms, corruption and decay were used alongside those of dirt and cleanliness. The Marconi scandal was yet another manifestation of 'the dirty, dirty Party System at Westminster'.⁷⁴ The *New Witness* thus gave birth to 'The National League for Clean Government' as a remedy. The League was a metaphor made real:

I think that all this dirt wants a jolly good spring clean. You really want to do it wholesale. I think there is a machine called the Vacuum cleaner. I should like to apply the Vacuum cleaner to the brains of most of the ministers, and to the Party System.⁷⁵

IV

The National League for Clean Government was the political expression of many of the *New Witness* ideas and so embodied the same paradoxes.⁷⁶ On the one hand it purported to be a free, open pressure group with which any reasonable reformer would agree. But it was trapped in the same vitriolic mindset that dogged the rest of the paper's politics. The League grew out of the Marconi scandal and the misplaced but genuine enthusiasm at the success of their policy of exposure. Cecil Chesterton was prosecuted for libel for his allegations against Godfrey Isaacs. He was found guilty and fined a hundred pounds. The trial gained the paper national publicity, and *The party system* was reissued, perhaps with the increased audience

in mind.⁷⁷ The organization of a league was mooted and agreed upon in the course of four ‘conferences’ organized by the paper in June and July 1913.⁷⁸ An advert in the July 31 issue announced its presence: ‘The National League for Clean Government ... has now been constituted, and will shortly issue its statement of Principles and Objects.’⁷⁹

On October 9, its aims and manifestos were issued in the *New Witness*. In an effort to appeal to as many people as possible, even those with reservations about parts of the *New Witness* vision, Cecil Chesterton made it clear that it was ‘entirely independent of us and in no way under our control’, even though the paper would fully support its efforts in the ‘cleansing of British politics.’ The editor even had the good nature to open up membership to pacifists or supporters of the party system, provided they wanted it ‘purified’. The only necessary conviction was to be against the corruption which could ‘destroy our country’.⁸⁰ Ada Chesterton, in her biography of the Chesterton brothers, emphasized the heterogeneity of the people who were attracted to the League’s campaign:

Tories, Socialists, Atheists, Liberals, Catholics and Jews eagerly joined, rallying to Cecil’s leadership. He had the rare gift of finding alien opinions to his own, and was the link between Workmen, Intellectuals, Imperialists, Little Englanders, Pubcrawlers and even Teetotalers.⁸¹

The stated objects of the League drew on the minimum programme of *The party system* and a similar list of ‘democratic’ reforms:

OBJECTS OF THE LEAGUE.

1. The exposure, punishment, and prevention of corruption and jobbery in legislation and the public services.
2. The establishment of a Free Parliament emancipated from the domination of the caucus and the Party Funds.
3. The restoration to the House of Commons of its control over the executive and National Finance.⁸²

This minimum did not say very much, however. More important were the practical measures for the achievement of such objects. These were elaborated on in some detail. They suggested the banning of share speculating by a minister of the crown, if it conflicted with public duties. The complete terms and conditions of government contracts and any MP involved should be made a matter of public record in a House of Commons debate. The names and particulars of contributors to party funds should be published annually.

Honours and titles recommended by the Prime Minister should be announced to the House, the service that the beneficiaries had rendered to the country should be stipulated, and the whole list should be subject to 'free discussion'. It was suggested that the State should pay for election expenses as a possible remedy to such abuses. All of these objectives were to be furthered by public meetings and discussions, the formation of league branches, 'the encouragement of a free press, the distribution of literature, and by promoting the return of political candidates pledged to these objects.'⁸³ These proposals were followed by a list of people who expressed their 'entire sympathy':

Lord Auckland, Lord Ninian Crichton Stuart, the Bishop of Blackburn, Sir James Barr, MP, Sir Hiram Maxim, Mr Oliver Locker Lampson, MP, Mr F.W. Jowett, MP, Col. Alfred Mayhew, Lieut.-Col. Williams, Dr. Miller Maguire, LLP + Mr. Lyron Blease, LLD.⁸⁴

From the start, however, it was obvious that other intentions lay behind such problems. For one thing, the chairman was the *New Witness's* most notorious anti-Semite, Frank Hugh O'Donnell. In an article in the same issue as the announcement of the league he insisted that clean government was the key to all other political problems. And he made it perfectly clear what the most important of these problems was. Corruption favoured the Jew, and clean government would purge it. This was expressed in extreme, dehumanizing biological language:

No larva can thrive and multiply except in the soil on the sediment which is its suitable environment. It is European renegades who facilitate the slavedrivers from lower Asia.⁸⁵

In the same issue, Cecil Chesterton made a similar point, mixed up with his supposedly neutral appeal for people of all persuasions to join their cause. Clean Government was the first duty from which all else would follow. The 'alien money-lenders' in the Indian Silver Scandal, 'puritan fads' and 'plutocratic greed' were all 'gangrenes to be treated' in this manner.⁸⁶ Even though anti-Semitism was not explicit in the aims of the League, therefore, it lay just below the surface. Kenneth Lunn has demonstrated the extent to which anti-Semitism motivated the organization.⁸⁷ This was obvious to those who joined the League. It was surely no accident that the letter stating the aims in the very next issue lost the names of a few bishops and gained that of Britain's most notorious anti-Semite, Arnold White. Nor that the secretary for the Reading branch was Mr.

Cowley who had earlier written to the *New Age* complaining about the Jew as the origin of 'intellectual fluidity':

The origin of this disgusting phenomenon is hard to ascertain, but it has been found from time immemorial in the repulsive race of Jews, and has been the source alike of their facile half-successes and their ultimate impotence.⁸⁸

The members of an organization are not direct proof of its ideology; but individual reputation would surely be a factor in someone's decision to join. It was a noticeable part of the meeting for those who did go for other reasons. The cartoonist, David Lowe, attended one of the earlier meetings and recorded that, 'Nobody came down to cases and all the audience got was a vague anti-Semitism, which I found very irritating.'⁸⁹ It might have been, of course, that for others this anti-Semitism was an attraction, or at least not important enough to prevent agreement with the rest of the programme.

Nevertheless, it was very much in evidence in their first practical campaign, the Reading by-election occasioned by Isaacs' promotion to Lord Chief Justice. The main work of the league was in 'speaking' and 'distributing literature'. A committee room was opened under Mr Kehrkahn.⁹⁰ Most of the campaign consisted of taunts against Isaacs and heckling of his Liberal successor, Gooch. O'Donnell said of the league, 'At its nightly open-air meetings, which are larger and more enthusiastic than those of any of the candidates, it is found by practical experience that nothing is more favourably received than a taunt directed against Isaacs and his accomplices.'⁹¹ According to the as usual highly subjective estimate of the *New Witness*, these meetings were attended by an audience 'which must have numbered close on 2,000.'⁹² There was evidence of trouble at some of these meetings. O'Donnell notes that at the Reading Corn Exchange, some 'liberal rowdies' entered 'led by a sallow Jew boy'. This led him to the conclusion that 'even in its rowdyism our official Liberalism must take its orders from the Undesirable Alien.'⁹³

Despite its opposition to the Party System, and its desire to root out corruption in any form, the League found itself supporting the Unionist candidate against the Liberal in every election it attended. This was in some ways a tactical alliance against the government of the day, but also reflected the League's hostility to New Liberalism in other respects. Indeed, the popular perception of their role in the Reading by-election was anti-Liberal, if the evidence of *The Berkshire Chronicle* is anything to go by. In its 'electionettes', it quoted as a paradox the divorcing of G.K. Chesterton

from his earlier Liberal stance, 'In January 1910, Mr. G.K. Chesterton appeared on the Liberal platform for Mr. Philip Morrell at Caversham. Now he is actively backing up the Clean Government League. The poster winds up: 'Down with Liberal corruption'.⁹⁴ In the next focus of the League, the South Lanark by-election, victory was claimed in '...the acceptance by the Unionist candidate of practically the whole programme of the League. That is a landmark and will perhaps be looked back to as a landmark when the purification of our politics has begun.'⁹⁵ In one league meeting in Essex Hall, Rowland Hunt, a Unionist MP, called for honest people in parliament to 'stick up for their race and their Empire'.⁹⁶

The other two campaigns in which the League was involved were the by-elections in Bethnal Green and Ipswich, which both involved Masterman. Belloc had been a friend of Masterman when they were both reporters for *The Daily News*, but Masterman's ingratiation with the government, his marriage into the establishment⁹⁷ and his role in the Insurance Act, had severed all ties. Belloc had bitterly opposed him before, in the 1911 Bethnal Green election, using techniques which the League was to later emulate. Lucy Masterman recorded this in the biography of her husband:

The Suffragettes, Mr Belloc and the Social Democratic Federation, in queer combination, had a Committee room, which issued leaflets on prostitution and venereal disease, for which evils they appeared to regard the Liberal Candidate as personally responsible, and a complicated genealogical tree intended to show that I was related to Lord Rothschild, and that all politicians for a hundred years were related to each other and to Lord Rothschild.⁹⁸

Much of the campaign in 1914 similarly involved publicizing what they saw as the 'unpalatable truth' about Masterman's 'personal record'. The *New Witness* described him as 'a man who had sold his principles for a salary, who had betrayed every person who had voted for him and every conviction that he had held, and who should have been excluded not merely from Parliament, but from the society of decent, honourable men.'⁹⁹ The *East Anglian Daily Times* reported on Cecil Chesterton heckling Masterman in Ipswich, on May 23, 1914, outside the Orwell works. Chesterton 'loudly demanded that Mr. Masterman should be requested to deny the truth of some statement which few in the crowd had heard. Mr. Masterman contended himself by observing that the League should not be allowed to remain in Ipswich doing its dirty work.'¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, this did not turn out to be good publicity for the League. The paper reported that the only 'regrettable

circumstance' of the election was the 'personal vendetta carried on against Mr. Masterman.'¹⁰¹

This rather scathing comment on the League and the general paucity of reports on their activities suggests their influence was slight. With characteristic doublethink, the League blamed this on the Party System itself: 'The very existence of such movements as the Clean Government League, which attacks the existence of abuses of the Party System on both sides, is ignored by the Party Press.'¹⁰² Nevertheless, it was mentioned in *The Times*, and *The National Review*, admittedly politically sympathetic, positively assessed its results in Reading:

Because the people insisted on hearing about every aspect of Marconi, Unionist speakers responded to the demand and the spirited campaign of the 'League for Clean Government' under the auspices of the *New Witness* supplied a much felt want and was an important factor in producing results which astonished all conventional politicians on the declaration of the poll.¹⁰³

The League obviously gave itself credit for all the Unionist victories, but that claim is to be taken with a large pinch of salt. The tide was turning against the Liberals anyway, by-elections often go against the government and the Ulster problem weighed more heavily on people's minds than anything the Clean Government League did. The principal reaction of most of the electors was irritation, if the local press is to be believed. As the *Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury* reports, "From this deliverance much thanks!" Such was the sentiment of Ipswichians generally on the departure of the crowd of street orators who gathered in the borough during the last week.¹⁰⁴ They were seen mainly as 'outsiders' and 'invaders', London intellectuals with an axe to grind.

Nevertheless, the legacy of the League for Clean Government is more serious than this. It was the first attempt to put the fusion of ideas in the *New Witness* into effect. Despite its diffuse and rather staid aims, its personnel, methods and anti-Semitic propaganda anticipated some of the Fascist agitation of the thirties.

V

The *New Witness's* role in the Marconi scandal and its attempts to root out corruption in every other sphere, such as the sale of honours, meant that it had much in common with the Tory radical right. Papers such as Leopold Maxse's *National Review*, and H.A. Taffy Gwynne's *Morning Post* were playing up the scandal as much as the *Witness*, using it as a way to get at the liberal

plutocrats. Both Searle and Green have emphasized how this isolated them from the parliamentary Conservative party, albeit for slightly different reasons. Searle shows how these papers found a cross party anti-liberal audience, even producing tactical alliances with the anti-liberal sections of the Labour party.¹⁰⁵ Green, on the other hand, emphasizes Maxse's isolation from mainstream conservatism as further evidence of how the crisis of conservatism in Britain did not extend to producing a radical right as strong as the French *Action Française*.¹⁰⁶ What both underestimate, however, is how this radical right critique was paralleled in the cultural sphere, as demonstrated by the evidence of the *New Age*.

Any self-consciously 'anti' position is bound to be unstable, especially when involved with the vigour of exposing corruption and magnified by the fear of national and societal decline. Attached to the dislike of the party system were separate but related attitudes — anti-representative institutions, anti-parliamentary democracy or even anti-democracy. Such views were not necessarily expressed equally by all the writers associated with these papers at all times. Many would see it as incongruous, for example, to equate the pure Nietzschean aristocratism of Ludovici with the Catholic anarchism of Belloc, but their reception and place of expression makes a consideration of their ideas as a whole neither retrospective nor entirely misleading. There were, broadly, two factions of critics of parliamentary democracy in the *New Age*. Both intersected with each other, and with the ideas developed in the *New Witness*. On the one hand there were the 'moral' socialists, under Orage, who were looking for ways to separate socialism from materialism, statism and parliamentary democracy. On the other, there were the radical right 'Nietzscheans' represented by Ludovici, Levy and Kennedy. Between these were the early modernists, Hulme, Pound and Wyndham Lewis, whose political viewpoints drew on both these strands.

In the *New Age* the criticisms of parliament owed much to the classic socialist or Marxist criticism of bourgeois parliamentary democracy. According to this view, parliamentary democracy represented the interests of the ruling class and parliamentary representation was a way of pacifying the proletariat. This was also tied to their semi-syndicalist guild socialist position which stressed the ineffectiveness of normal political means for working class emancipation. Workers got nothing purely from 'parliamentary intervention'.¹⁰⁷ The *Eye-Witness* also wrote of the disappointment of the vote for achieving workers' ends in a manner which suggested an unconscious bourgeois-capitalist conspiracy. 'By the time the working classes (or a part of them) got the vote they found that it had become practically useless as an instrument for their emancipation,' said

an editorial of 1911. 'Before the gun was handed to the workman the bullet had been carefully extracted.'¹⁰⁸ For the *New Age* this was tied to their prioritizing of economic goals.¹⁰⁹ Parliament was thus a form of economic power, the formalization of the economic power of the capitalist bourgeoisie. In this respect the charge of anti-parliamentarism was accepted and linked to the mainstream socialist criticism.¹¹⁰ Sometimes, however, this shaded into both a dislike of the political, and a denial that those involved with it had a deep grasp of reality: 'In pursuing political power, ... both the women and the Labour party are pursuing shadows and symbols as if they were substances and realities. In short, they are untruthful in their hearts, and consequently blind in their minds.'¹¹¹ Political power, therefore, was a materialist sham.

For the radical right writers, the lost reality was as much located in a holistic past as a messianic future. Kennedy emphasized the fact that an old parliament, like the one described by Burke, would not have been democratically representative. 'It was Burke's aim' he said 'to show the electors that none of these elements and interests could be properly represented by servile delegates, but that members of Parliament were dangerous as well as useless if they did not typify the corporate body of the people.'¹¹² The correspondence pages of the *New Age* contained similar material. Grant Hervey linked the guild socialist idea with a reduction in individualist democracy.¹¹³ A. J. Penty also saw modern democracy as vastly inferior to a medieval society, 'Democracy aims at the abolition of all privilege, whereas the aim of the Middle Ages was to secure privileges for all.'¹¹⁴ Privilege in this context had a particular meaning: the recognition of difference enshrined in a political system, different rights for different groups depending on their 'function'.¹¹⁵

As these criticisms of modernity gained pace they become linked with a more general moral disease of society in which parliament (or even democracy) was the symptom (or even cause). 'And our modern Parliamentarians,' said J.M. Kennedy, 'though they have not for years represented the best elements in the English nation, must at least be admitted to have represented the worst.'¹¹⁶ For many writers for the *New Age*, especially Ludovici and Kennedy, Nietzsche provided many valuable insights into this problem. A letter from E. Wade Cook expressed the opinions of many *New Age* readers: 'Demos in his mad rush towards socialism and its attendant anarchism has left many valuable truths behind; and Nietzsche has reaffirmed them with unusual brilliancy and power, and this was necessary in the interests of well balanced and adequate thought.'¹¹⁷ This was constantly linked to wider events. The admittedly extreme Ludovici made a wild metaphor of the *Titanic* disaster which he saw as deeply symbolic of the scourge of modern democracy:

But what I would like to insist upon here, is the total lack of presbyopic vision (the ruler's vision) which led to the 'Titanic' disaster, and the number of modern valuations that approve of the whole policy which drove the 'Titanic' to its fate: the love of democratic speed to no great purpose, democratic hedonism, democratic haste and fluster to nowhere — to nothing without either goal or aim; democratic lack of a sense of responsibility, and, above all, the errors of a non-ruler and incompetent plutocracy which democracy raises to power.¹¹⁸

The rest of the *New Age* writers rarely rose to this level of intensity and were often in outright disagreement with Ludovici. Nevertheless, the artistic vision of some of the writers in the *New Age* was overtly connected to this political argument about democracy and the nature of the modern state. Sometimes this was seen in war-like metaphors. Ludovici saw a 'ray of hope' in the pictures of Van Gogh and Gauguin which he bizarrely considered vaguely representative of his ideal 'aristocratic' art: 'It was not a victory I saw. It was a sudden and very slight change in the fortunes of battle — a mere wave of enthusiasm and trust on the Cavalier side — a mere wave of depression and greater exhaustion among the Roundheads.'¹¹⁹ There is a connection here with the more 'gentle' arts and craft inspired artistic views of A.J. Penty. Seeing the only true art as coming out of the ordered, hierarchical and holistic society of the Middle Ages he considered democracy incompatible with artistic beauty.¹²⁰ Democracy was unable to exercise discrimination in the arts.¹²¹ Ludovici said exactly the same thing in a more overtly Nietzschean way in his criticism of Epstein and the Futurists (who, interestingly, he conflated together).¹²²

The linking of politics and art found its most celebrated expression in T.E. Hulme's definitions of romantic and classical. He was influenced by the thought of *L'Action Française* and the French right after meeting Pierre Laserre in April 1911.¹²³ Using Laserre and Maurras's definition he saw romanticism in literature as synonymous with liberalism and democracy in politics.¹²⁴ Classicism in literature, on the other hand was related to order, reason, hierarchy, community and tradition; the great tradition of Western Culture which had been handed down to Latin Europe, and France especially, via the Roman Catholic Church. The classic revival that Hulme presaged, however, was not merely reactionary but allowed for new hard geometrical art which was a symbol and a reflection of a new authority and austerity in politics. His admiration of Epstein and his arguments with Ludovici, therefore, showed him to be merely a more subtle exponent of a

similar philosophy.¹²⁵ They were arguing *within* a political tradition which the *New Age* had done much to establish. Ludovici would have agreed with his core belief: 'The state or nation can only be in a healthy condition when it submits itself to a kind of discipline. There must be a hierarchy, a subordination of parts, just as there must be in any organisation.'¹²⁶

The *New Witness* identified the same central problem in June, 1912: 'The great evil from which modern England is suffering — only the climax of course of a long process but still the evil of the moment — is the breakdown of authority.'¹²⁷ This breakdown had a political and a moral aspect, leaving a dangerous vacuum in both cases.¹²⁸ In the *New Age*, the recognition of such breakdown of authority led to the call for an elite to re-establish it. The first step towards such elitism was the recognition that 'caucus government' was not true representative government because it symbolized a mere arithmetical division.¹²⁹ The unspoken assumption was that there was a deeper, more mystical and truer way of representing — a belief which took its place squarely in the European-wide intellectual revolt against positivism. This was phrased in a way that sat uneasily between reason and mysticism:

If you maintain that two people who agree are more moral than one person who disagrees, the case can be argued; but if you insist that the two are moral *because* they have together more force than one, it is no longer a matter of reason but of arithmetic and *avoirdufois*.¹³⁰

These kinds of criticisms sat alongside numerous throw-away remarks about the difficulty or impossibility of getting large numbers of people to agree, as if this were a necessary part of the democratic process. Ezra Pound's articles on America contain numerous examples of this: '...my scheme which demands the agreement of an innumerable multitude of people before it can become effective is little likely to achieve itself.'¹³¹ This led Pound in 1913 to posit a very cynical view of democracy as a way of giving people the illusion of power and thus keeping them quiet:

(...) it keeps the populace in good temper, politically, if they think they have a share in the ordering of the nation. Suffrage is good for the national spirit, it produces political indifference.¹³²

For other writers on the *New Age* this extravagant disregard of the political opinions of the people was even more unashamed. This stemmed from an absolute denial of the principle of equality, perhaps in the paranoid assumption that it undermined their roles as intellectual seers. J.M. Kennedy

complained that, 'Modern democracy, in the very worst sense of the word, tells us: "We are all equal; we are all provided with approximately the same mental capacity; and it is not fair for one man to know more than another."'”¹³³ For Ludovici, the fact of shared humanity did not translate into shared political power, for in the realm of politics it was what set people apart which qualified them for decision making.¹³⁴ The only way in which such an ideal could be reified was in a hierarchal society where everybody knew their place. Ludovici went further than this, however, in wanting a society where the hierarchy was sanctioned by a cause, where people actively desired their 'place' rather than meekly accepted it.¹³⁵

Sometimes this criticism of democracy slid into unsophisticated insults of the mob who might govern in a system of universal suffrage. J.M. Kennedy showed with a little too much relish that he was not governed by a sentimental overestimation of the abilities of the common man, calling the electors of England, 'coarse, greedy, selfish, prejudiced, knavish, primitive.'¹³⁶ Orage at one point doubted whether the 'cinema-sodden mob' was capable of anti-parliamentarism, so imbued were they with carnal needs and mass culture. Only those few 'whose minds are above their eyes, and bellies' were capable of seeing it for what it was.¹³⁷ For Cecil Chesterton, on the other hand, the dislike of parliament had by 1914 become an incontrovertible fact. It is interesting to see the distance travelled from his 1911 book, *The party system*, which sought to expose an unknown and unexamined evil, to this statement which uncritically accepted its unpopularity and doubted its capacity for rejuvenation. A whole new generation had grown up without respecting parliament:

Not only the existing Parliament, but the very name and idea of Parliament may well become increasingly an object of mere contempt, as it already is in France. It is useless to deny that the effect of such a temper must be to make the re-creation of a free Parliament more difficult, for the energies and aspirations on which we should have to rely for that effort will be seeking an outlet in some other direction; perhaps, as Mr. Orage believes, in the direction of industrial organisation or perhaps in the direction of direct voting by national *plebiscite*.¹³⁸

In this passage, too, Cecil Chesterton hinted at the theoretical alternatives which he might have in mind, and consciously situated the British case in a European dimension. He also made plain his intellectual kinship with Orage of the *New Age*. Both the *New Age's* and the *New Witness's* theoretical alternatives to the party system and the liberal parliamentary democracy

constantly framed themselves as being the true radically democratic alternative. Orage made this clear in a call to the governing classes in a much earlier editorial of 1910: 'Either educate public opinion as you would a child destined to share your power and even now sharing it, or submit yourselves to the domination of a new barbarism. To return to class government is impossible. The future is for democracy as we have defined it, or for mob-rule.'¹³⁹ Yet democracy thus defined by both papers found itself compatible and nourished by the consciously anti-democratic thought just outlined. This seeming paradox must be examined. At some points these crossovers were vigorously denied. The best example of this is Belloc and Chesterton's constant denigration of the 'evil', hierarchical, anti-democratic and 'Prussian' doctrine of Nietzsche. Yet some readers even contemporaneously drew links between these seeming opposites. A letter from P.V. Cohn in the *New Age* in 1913 called for assimilation between Belloc's *servile state* and the Nietzschean vision. 'To the Nietzschean the book is one of consummate interest. For he sees a devout Christian dragged against his will, as by an irresistible magnet, to that tremendous intellectual force which we call Friedrich Nietzsche.' It would be a gross distortion, of course, to call Belloc's work Nietzschean, but to some it could be read in this way. Loftus continues, 'it is as though Nietzscheanism were permeating the air, uttering its message even to those who would fain be deaf. Here we have a Christian tacitly *admitting* that a select few are born to leadership, while the mass of mankind are born to slavery and ready to submit to slavery.'¹⁴⁰ Pierce Loftus's book, *The Conservative party and the future* had previously been given a favourable review in the *New Witness*. It was seen as superior to Kennedy's book on *Tory democracy*, which was considered less truly democratic than an old Tory squire: 'for clever as Mr. Kennedy's book was it was apparent to every intelligent reader that his "Tory Democracy" was not Democracy at all: his Nietzschean gospel was further removed from Democracy I will not say than the creed of a Tory squire, but than the much less democratic system of a "Tory" (or "Liberal") politician.'¹⁴¹

The left/right ambivalence which was captured in the *New Age*, therefore, between an aristocratic Nietzschean vision and a 'moral' Socialism, was expressed in the *New Witness* circle as a link between old radical democracy and traditional Toryism. Cecil Chesterton even at one point admitted that he would call himself a Tory Democrat if he could persuade himself that such a thing existed, and admitted that the national will was often better expressed through tradition than electoral processes. He went on to explain what 'real' Tory Democracy would entail:

It would be a good Tory Democratic reform to restore a peasantry to the English countryside. It would be a good Tory Democratic reform to recognise the Trade Unions as Guilds and give them legal privileges. But it would be a still better reform and one with still more consonant with democracy and tradition to sweep away all that mass of inquisitorial and oppressive legislation in which the poor find themselves enmeshed.¹⁴²

These kinds of comments made the alliance much more than the tactical joining of all opposition to the Liberal government. The 'Open letter to a Conservative' in the *Eye-Witness* was much more respectful than that to any of its other supposed enemies.¹⁴³ Belloc made it clear how much he admired those opponents of the party system from the radical Tory right.¹⁴⁴ Indeed, he saw Leopold Maxse, the editor of the *National Review*, as a man after his own heart. The *National Review* 'does not care a snap of its fingers for the politicians' and 'meets a want and is eagerly bought up and read precisely because it defends certain causes and ideas which run *across* the party system.'¹⁴⁵ In a 'letter to a backwoodsman' Cecil Chesterton further illustrated his fetishization of tradition and his belief that the old corrupt squirarchy could, with a bit of persuasion, embody the will of the people far better than modern politicians.¹⁴⁶

It is no surprise, therefore, that elements in both papers supported the House of Lords, both as a bulwark against the power of the ruling caucus and as the embodiment of the national tradition. According to J.M. Kennedy, the 'House of Lords is, as a Parliamentary Chamber, more in accordance with English traditions than the present House of Commons.'¹⁴⁷ The appeal to the past was also used in the *New Witness* where it was pointed out in 1914 that although the Lords was now full of corrupt plutocrats who had purchased their honours, there remained those 'more honourable kind' from 'purer times'.¹⁴⁸ When their power was curtailed in 1911, the *Eye-Witness* bemoaned both the fact and the method of the demise: 'It is not perishing by anything half so noble as violence. No popular hand is lifted against it, no national decision, whether of folly or of just enthusiasm threatens it. It is being drowned in mud.'¹⁴⁹ The *New Age* was equally against the way in which the Lords' Veto Bill was so easily passed by the Commons. Orage quoted Ostrogorski to this effect: 'King and Lords have gone down before the Caucus, as the House of Commons has gone down before them.'¹⁵⁰ What is more, there was the suggestion that the Lords embodied the general will far better than a corrupt representative institution; a view that was naturally shared by many Lords and members of the Unionist party. The *Eye-Witness* was sure that if the Lords threw out the

Veto Bill, 'they will be entitled to the gratitude not only of their order but of the English people.'¹⁵¹ Also, irrespective of whether or not it was a representative institution, if the Lords had blocked the National Insurance Bill, the people would have thanked them for it.¹⁵² This suggests a very particular conception of democracy which requires closer examination.

VI

Expressions of allegiance to 'democracy', or more often the 'people', abounded in both reviews, but it is sometimes hard to dissect exactly what they meant by these terms. At its most vague it was simply the 'voice of the people' defined mostly by its conspicuous absence from the present system.¹⁵³ The appeal straight to the people was the only way to gain the reforms that Westminster killed: 'If we can transfer the struggle from the caucus to the populace quite possibly we shall win.'¹⁵⁴ At times in the *Eye-Witness* this voice of the people was dealt with in an unproblematized way, almost overtly as what the writers themselves wanted and (more clearly) exactly the opposite of what the politicians were doing. 'The people know very well what they want,' claimed Belloc and Cecil Chesterton in *The party system*, 'and they want a very few and definite things; and it is precisely in those things, as they are wanted with each phase of the national life, that the politicians cheat and betray people.'¹⁵⁵ This type of rule by the people was the proposed alternative to a 'Government by doles and bribes, Government by a Cabinet selected by rich party caucuses' that resulted in 'the domination of the people by a ruling caste.'¹⁵⁶ This democracy meant not only practical but also spiritual salvation.¹⁵⁷

At times, Belloc and Chesterton attempted a more scientific definition. In *The party system*, democracy was defined as 'government by the general will'.¹⁵⁸ Pure democracy was only possible in very small communities, so in most states representative democracy was necessary. But the person should still represent in a meaningful sense; there should be absolute freedom for the constituents in their choice of representative, and candidates should be responsible to constituents and independent of the executive.¹⁵⁹ Elsewhere, however, the tension between pure and representative democracy was recognized and fretted over: 'What sane and experienced men really debate is not the right of a community in this matter, but the limits of its action. A Democrat believes the community can, even when it is large act with corporative initiative.'¹⁶⁰ At this point, Belloc recognized that Parliament deserved time to stand trial despite its rotten condition. He saw it as perhaps necessary to give democracy its practical realization and that, 'parliamentary institutions should be permitted a long trial before Democracy vomits them out. It is possible that they may be cleansed.'¹⁶¹ After three more years of his

own propaganda, however, he was less optimistic about the chances of Parliamentary government renewing itself. In 1913, Belloc asked in a public debate:

...how, when you are doing things for a large number of people, controlling things in the name of a large number of people almost in proportion to the size of the body, do you escape from control by that body? That is the whole trouble of Parliamentarianism in modern Europe. In Italy and in France — in Germany the Parliament is not worth speaking about — above all in England you have a parliament passing laws and bringing people almost to breaking point because it cannot be effectively controlled through the influence of very large numbers. Very large numbers have always ended, and must always end in despotic control.¹⁶²

The tension between representative and effective government was well underlined. The problem, however, was how to represent. Belloc slid close to the idea of individual liberty as an ideal, but with a controlling uniformity — tradition, nation, religion — which made that liberty consensual. He needed an organic community to make his personal liberty viable. This was his essential dilemma and the cause of many problems. Once liberal parliamentary democracy was rejected, a whole array of alternative ways of democratic representation seemed to present themselves.¹⁶³ Elected representatives had no ‘moral authority’ but certain alternatives did: ‘We know vaguely that there was no moral authority behind men who appoint themselves to administrative positions, in the sense in which there is moral authority, behind a whole populace in active expression, a national monarchy, or an hereditary aristocracy.’¹⁶⁴ By 1912, Cecil Chesterton’s definition of democracy had also moved well away from any necessary connection with parliamentarism: ‘Indeed I should be inclined for my own part to go further and to maintain that government by tradition, where that tradition is truly national, is the nearest approach to pure democracy that the imperfection of man allows.’¹⁶⁵ It becomes gradually comprehensible, therefore, how A.J. Penty in 1914 could call himself a ‘democrat’ while rejecting its liberal parliamentary associations: ‘I am a democrat in the sense that I want to see the communistic basis of society restored, but I realise only too painfully that the democracy will have radically to change its ideas on almost every issue before such a change is possible.’¹⁶⁶

This shift away from liberal parliamentary democracy also saw a subtle change in the emphasis of democracy’s base definition. The ‘General Will’ became the ‘National Will’: ‘We shall resist government by the caucus,

and demand government by the National Will.¹⁶⁷ Belloc slipped between similar concepts, even in the same sentence. At one point, he spoke of ‘public opinion, the general desire, the whole national habit of thought’.¹⁶⁸ The ‘nation’ supplanted the people as the base concept: ‘What has already been done is nothing to what must yet be accomplished if we are to substitute something like a genuine national sentiment for the welter of private professional aims and private plutocratic interests which we now call ‘politics.’¹⁶⁹ And the ideal MP, according to Kennedy would be the sort of person who organically represented this commonly understood whole: ‘The ideal MP was not to be a fanatic, a crank, or a faddist ...and above all not a caucus inspired sycophant, but an ordinary and level headed Englishman.’¹⁷⁰

The primary notion, therefore, was to include the mass in politics and to make them participate in a real sense. The search for a new and real form of political participation united both reviews. All this was done in the name of democracy. But it was the refusal to link this with an acceptance of pluralism which merged it with reactionary undertones. Underneath the notion of the ‘ordinary citizen’ was the notion of cultural unity against a modern machine which sought to rule over an atomistic world. The referendum was one suggested solution. In one sense this seems similar to the advocacy of the referendum by pro-labour radical unionists and ILP candidates since the 1890s. The Conservative party, too, had many supporters of the referendum. Hugh Cecil said in a parliamentary debate that he had ‘immensely more confidence in the judgement of the people than in the judgement of this House, governed as it is under the rigorous party systems under which we now dwell.’¹⁷¹ The *New Witness* was obviously an amplification of more widely held views in this sense. But the theoretical reasons and thinking behind it bear more similarities to the French Bonapartist tradition of the plebiscite which had been used recently by Napoleon III and was to later become a linchpin of De Gaulle’s Fifth Republic. Even under parliamentary government it was seen as a good check to prevent it from becoming too oligarchic.¹⁷² What is more, it seemed to confound the normally accepted party stereotypes: ‘If the central principle of “Liberalism” be democracy, and that of “Conservatism” opposition to democracy, why is it that most definitely democratic of proposals, the Referendum, was toyed with by the latter and denounced by the former?’¹⁷³ It seemed to merge the various forms of Tory Democracy outlined by J.M. Kennedy, P.C. Loftus, and Cecil Chesterton. The charge of elitism could be thrown back in the progressives’ faces.¹⁷⁴ This is yet another example of Hulme’s quest to dissociate democracy from its liberal parliamentary aspects in his articles on Tory Democracy.¹⁷⁵ The referendum was a practical way of achieving this. It was not the only conclusion of their

arguments, however. Cecil Chesterton realized that more was needed, that the 'impulse must come from the mass, not from the politicians or reformers or advanced persons, but from the ordinary citizen, the man in the street.'¹⁷⁶ This 'more' might include violence: 'Nothing but a new spirit of criticism, initiative, and if necessary violence in the people themselves, can make us a democracy.'¹⁷⁷ T.E. Hulme's ideas on participation and incorporation came to him on seeing marching soldiers outside the Bologna Philosophic Congress. Uniform, style and aesthetics could one day be ways of making people feel part of something. This could become more important than the actual mode of government. 'If anyone could invent a kind of democracy which includes, as an essential feature, the possession of large and sweeping brown cloaks,' he affirmed, 'then I will be a democrat.'¹⁷⁸

The national will could also be expressed through a leader figure or monarch. In 1914, Orage emphasized this in no uncertain term with regard to Lincoln, Cromwell and Napoleon:

From one point of view, of course, these men were autocrats; they did each what seemed right in his own eyes. But from another point of view — a truer point of view — each was for the time being and relatively to the circumstances, a genuine Democrat, since the will of each was found consenting with the will of all.¹⁷⁹

The *Eye-Witness* ostensibly rejected the Nietzschean and anti-democratic views which were expressed in the *New Age*. An article in the latter paper calling for a national leader relieved from the control of parliament provoked an editorial admonishment in the former: 'We need hardly say that from our point of view such a solution would be a disaster. It would permanently shift a majority of what once were free men to a minority.'¹⁸⁰ The *New Witness*, however, constantly advocated a true national and powerful monarch. The *New Age* thus called Belloc, 'the Bolingbroke of our day'. Orage continued, 'Bolingbroke, it is perhaps forgotten, was in favour of destroying the party system by reinforcing the powers of the Crown. And, sure enough, the 'New Witness' in a recent issue advocated the same course.'¹⁸¹ Indeed, in the very first issue of the *Eye-Witness* there was an open letter to the new king asking him to take an active role in politics: 'The great majority of his Majesty's subjects passively ignore the House of Lords and actively detest the House of Commons. But they are still genuinely attached to the crown.'¹⁸² A popular monarchy, it was said later, would be more democratic than a parliament.¹⁸³ Bolingbroke's ideas were, according to the *Eye-Witness*, more relevant in 1912 than ever:

‘The Parliament’ said Bolingbroke, ‘is the Parliament of a class. The King is the King of the whole people.’ Much has happened since Bolingbroke’s time. Parliament is hardly even the Parliament of a class today. It is the kept Parliament of a little co-opted group of professionals, behind whom are the much more powerful groups and Trusts of rich money-getters who hold the Parliamentary purse-strings.¹⁸⁴

Such ideas were not new to British politics. Bolingbroke’s, *The idea of a patriot king* was an obvious precursor, where the monarchy acted as a unifying force in a time of party strife. Bolingbroke defined the nation as, ‘a patriarchal family, where the head and all the members are united by one common spirit.’¹⁸⁵ Similarly, Disraeli had put forward in *Coningsby* a vision of a monarch communicating directly with the people, uninterrupted by the clatter of Lords and Commons. John Plunkett has recently emphasized that this communion also depended on the press as a means of communicating the national interest.¹⁸⁶ This view of the press as a fourth estate and protector of the people’s interests from the tyranny of oligarchic government might have appealed to Belloc and Chesterton. However, their inherited vocabulary of radicalism prevented them from idealizing a Tory hero, and their anti-Semitism prevented empathy with the ideas of an ‘oriental’. This debt to Disraeli was admitted by J.M. Kennedy, however, who saw him as the British equivalent of Bismarck. Nevertheless, these ideas as resurrected in the *New Age* and the *New Witness* gained a new tone in their emphasis on Nietzschean hierarchy in the former paper and attacks on capitalist plutocracy in the latter. Nor were these attitudes as idiosyncratic as they might seem when considered in a European context. Similar ideas were being put forward in Italy and Germany, most obviously in Missisoli’s *La monarchia socialista*, and neo-conservative Italian paternalists advocating a return to the 1848 *Statuto*. The same tradition was possibly reflected in the Kaiser’s claims to be ‘a socialist.’ Britain had similar ideas, but they found different contexts for political realization.

VII

The outbreak of the First World War had divergent effects on the anti-parliamentary views of the *New Age* and *New Witness* circles. For many on the *New Witness*, the conduct of the war confirmed their view of parliament as a corrupt and dying institution. For some of the more radical *New Age* writers, such as Romney and A.E. Randall, outspoken criticisms of democracy carried on into the war. For others on the *New Age*, however,

the nationalism of the moment actually led them to defend something that they had previously disliked.

Romney's 'Military Notes' railed against the weakness of the civilian government's pursuit of the war. He saw the working classes as 'hard-working', 'intelligent' and even 'brave', but thought that the experience of war had shown that there was not 'a working proportion of men with the independence of character and the initiative to rule.'¹⁸⁷ He also rehearsed a common criticism of democracy — that it was liable to choose the popular course over the right course: its 'rulers and its citizens alike, when confronted with a choice of roads, have ceased to inquire what is right, and spent their time in asking what is the will of the people.'¹⁸⁸ It is striking, however, how even this self-confessed no-nonsense soldier used the language of anti-materialism in his criticisms of democracy. The French Revolution was an 'appalling series of convulsions' because it got rid of awe and mystery, and replaced it with 'the same civil contract which is used in selling boots.'¹⁸⁹ The bonds which held people together had been replaced by a series of meaningless abstractions. Such opinions seem to mirror Nolte's view of proto-fascism as 'resistance to transcendence';¹⁹⁰ a revolt against the series of abstract rules — capitalism, civil society, the rule of law — that supposedly linked atomized individuals better than 'realities' such as nationhood or race. A.E. Randall's criticism of democracy was also imbued with this anti-materialist zeal. His starting point was Nietzschean aristocracy rather than military good sense. Nevertheless he came to similar conclusions: 'The fundamental defect of democracy is that it wants things, and not men. It wants justice, not judges; it wants pacifism, not peacemakers, or militarism but not soldiers; it wants beauty, but not artists; love, but not women.' Then, making himself abundantly clear, he finished his tirade: 'It is itself an abstraction, and lives only among abstractions.'¹⁹¹

Randall balanced this philosophical criticism of democracy with a demonstration that its practical application led to 'despotism'. Aristocracy represented government by the few and by the best; democracy led directly to despotism because it abolished the idea of 'conflicting aristocracies', where healthy competition and rivalry among the elite would prevent tyranny. Randall echoed Belloc and Chesterton by claiming that democracy was only a means by which a less admirable aristocracy gained power, an aristocracy of the professional politicians. Nevertheless, Randall was not a mere reactionary. Hereditary, although 'a reasonably sound theory', was not something to be relied on completely because 'atavism and decadence' could occur. He admitted that men are sometimes born out of their class, and the test of good government is the getting of the right men into the right places.' Randall's

elite would be a mixture of those who had inherited their position, those who had been elected and those who had been appointed by the state.¹⁹²

For Randall, therefore, the war confirmed that parliamentary democracy prevented rule by the best. Orage, however, increasingly felt that the parliamentary system symbolized the opposition to the Prussian dictatorial system. It was a sign of the weakness of British civilization that parliament had been suspended at the beginning of the war:

Because Prussia is making war upon us, is that any reason for emulating the example of her autocratic and dictatorial institutions? On the contrary, it should be our pride to maintain not only business as usual, but Parliament as usual, as an evidence to the world that we are confident of the issue.¹⁹³

Indeed, the progress of the war seemed to further convince Orage in this opinion. He criticized G.K. Chesterton for arguing that parliaments were dragging men away from real democracy. Orage felt that Chesterton judged the British Parliament as ‘rather worse than useless’, and that his French sympathies were ‘largely with the “Action française” group of intellectuals who also sneer at parliaments and believe firmly in the restoration of the monarchy.’¹⁹⁴ However, Orage saw a logical fallacy in Chesterton’s argument, that ‘the abuse of parliament does not mean that its proper constitutional use is necessarily bad.’¹⁹⁵ What Orage forgot in this argument, however, was the particular kind of democracy that Chesterton saw as an ideal: a democracy that could be better represented by a strong and popular leader than an oligarchic talking-shop. Orage himself had shown strong leanings in this direction, which makes his defence of parliament look more like national pride that convinced political support.

For Hulme, too, democracy had been a dirty word before 1914. Now, however, he was anxious to defend it. He tried to dissociate ‘real’ democracy from the pacifist, liberal democrats whom he despised. He rejected the pacifists’ monopoly of the democratic argument:

It is not Democracy against privilege, but rather,
One ideology + Democracy
against
Another ideology + Democracy.¹⁹⁶

This is not entirely consistent with his other statements as it appears to assume that the ‘democracy’ on both sides of the equation was equal. Elsewhere he is anxious to point out the *different* conceptions of democracy:

the pacifist one 'founded on sympathy' and 'the other founded on the conception of *Justice* leading to the assertion of equality'.¹⁹⁷ Hulme felt that he had to subscribe to the second view of democracy whatever his personal feelings, as it was 'an ethical conception'.¹⁹⁸ Such apparent confusion can be partly explained, as for Orage, in his forthright support for the war. Britain stood for 'democracy' (in a Sorelian 'mythic' sense if not in an absolute sense) so Hulme's patriotic instinct forced his intellect to justify it. In another way, however, the type of democracy he now found himself defending was the one which he had seen glimmers of in Sorel and Proudhon.¹⁹⁹ This type of democracy would 'probably surprise the pacifists as much as the war itself did'²⁰⁰ and, although, he never says it explicitly, is as opposed to liberal parliamentary democracy as his earlier purely reactionary pronouncements. Proudhon's 'community' was offered as an alternative to Rousseau's 'individual.' Although he does not develop his ideas, Hulme shows how a reactionary can become entranced by a communitarian democracy where people act together and are grouped by function rather than as individuals. In a sense war has confirmed the development of his earlier ideas without leading him to attack the principles of the country for which he was fighting.

Whereas the war seemed to persuade many in the *New Age* circle that parliament was a symbol of Britain, and therefore worth defending, for Belloc and many of the writers in the *New Witness*, the war merely confirmed their earlier anti-parliamentarism. To begin with, Belloc admitted that it was somewhat unpatriotic to be too vitriolic in attacks on the government in time of war: 'In time of war, and especially in the stress of a national war for life and death, existing authority should be dictatorial and the obedience given it should be blind and immediate.'²⁰¹ However, as the war progressed, he found it harder to hold his tongue. Although admitting that parliament was once a 'great and real organ of government', by 1915 *The New Witness* emphasized the fact that the war has tested parliament and shown that it has not existed to any effective purpose for the last thirty years.²⁰² Not only did the editors claim this as their own opinion, but they felt it was one that was represented in the country as a whole. The country had suffered more than it need to during the war because 'the form of Government in existence at its outbreak did not command the confidence and respect of the nation.'²⁰³ What is more, Belloc emphasized what he perceived as the generational aspect to the revolt against parliament, which, he hoped, would be confirmed by those young men who had gone off to war:

Can anyone conceive the men who were just leaving the University five or six years ago returning from the war and still taking the House of Commons seriously? I cannot conceive it. As undergraduates they would already have heard of its breakdown (...)²⁰⁴

Much of the continued criticism revolved around what the *New Witness* called, 'the great modern fact: the fact that parliamentarism is not democracy, but oligarchy'.²⁰⁵ From this perspective their criticism of parliament was not that it was an instrument of democracy, but that it was not democratic enough. The idea of the politicians heading a national government assumed that they represented anybody but themselves.²⁰⁶ Belloc, too, still claimed to distrust parliament from the point of view of the democrat rather than the reactionary. The French Revolution, argued Belloc, had intended to demonstrate that political authority derived from the community, that the community has rights, and that all men were equal. Parliament had been the least fitted of all institutions to carry out these ends.²⁰⁷ However, in an interesting twist, Belloc claimed that the oligarchy of modern parliament was *worse* than the oligarchy of an aristocracy because it was less likely to inspire respect. Oligarchy was defensible in a society which still held to aristocratic values, but in a society which detested even the idea of aristocracy, members of an oligarchy were 'no better than active and unpopular powers for evil.'²⁰⁸ The *real* democracy that Belloc paraded as an alternative to this oligarchy, therefore, was one that drew very heavily on the Rousseauist tradition of the General Will. And, in a situation as threatening as a war, a real democracy would entrust 'as democracies do, full power to their dictators.'²⁰⁹ In 1916, G.K. Chesterton mirrored Belloc by emphasizing the fact that only in a real democracy can you have real dictator who effectively embodies the will of the people.²¹⁰

As the war progressed, therefore, whereas Orage's nationalism led him into a pact with parliamentarism, Belloc and Chesterton's hatred of Westminster grew ever more virulent. At the beginning of the war Belloc was convinced that parliament was 'doomed'. He was however, keen to begin with to put off discussions of future forms of government until after the war, believing that 1914 was not the time 'to discuss what organ can or should replace it'.²¹¹ However, by 1916 Belloc was less coy about its possible replacement. Belloc's old hope of the restoration of a 'free parliament' was now seen as completely unrealistic. In 1916, he mused that possibly its power could be replaced by a combination of the army, the legal corporations and the civil service.²¹² This solution was left underdeveloped, however. By 1917, the idea of a free parliament did not even enter into

Belloc's discussion. Instead, Belloc began to emphasize the need for strong executive power. Increasingly it was the King himself whom Belloc saw as the key to the parliamentary impasse; a king who in the tradition of the great revolutionary dictator would interpret the people's will and act in accordance with it. And, according to Belloc, such an individual would not only be able to hold executive power, but also be called to account.²¹³ Such, a vision of course, does not necessarily hold dictatorial tendencies. The idea of a responsible but accountable executive also inspired the American constitution, as Belloc himself recognized. Nevertheless, as Belloc continued to advocate the return of a strong executive, his recognition that the executive power in itself should be curtailed increasingly played second fiddle to the idea that *any* strong executive was better than the parliamentary mess. What is more, this vision was the future of politics: 'We may be very certain that this form of government is coming elsewhere throughout Europe. It is inevitable.'²¹⁴

In the final months of the war, therefore, the *New Witness* saw the chief danger of the peace to be a restoration of the sham Parliamentary system, 'with its two paste-board wings fronting each other.'²¹⁵ What is more, according to the *Witness* interpretation, such a restoration would be an insult to those who had sacrificed their lives in the war:

(...) we suspect that the old circus with its procession of pantomime elephants will not be welcomed when it marches in the track of the armies and over the graves of the dead.²¹⁶

The response to the fascist revolution in Italy when it came, therefore, was not merely that it provided strong government in a troubled country, but that it was a movement which represented the future of Europe. This response on the part of the *New Witness* writers was entirely governed by their own sophisticated criticism of parliamentary democracy which by 1922 had been developed for ten years. The *New Witness* editorial after the March on Rome was in no sense ambiguous. The events in Italy had filled the writers with 'hope'. The fascist movement was praised for its nationalism, for the fact that it respected private property, and — in a projection of *New Witness* ideals on to foreign events — for its intention to 'make government clean'. It was not merely these admirable intentions that the editorial praised: it stated baldly that 'We admire its [the Fascist movement's] methods as much as its aims.' Voting, rather than a route to democracy, was, according to his article, a means by which the common man has been enslaved. By recognizing this fact, the Fascist movement had completed a 'popular revolution'. What is more, in a possibly unconscious violent metaphor, the 'sharp' action of the fascists had been necessary to destroy the modern illusion of counting votes.

Certain English newspapers were criticized for ‘quaintly’ asking if Mussolini had majority support, the choice of adjective showing how much the writer admired the dynamism and modernity of the new movement. The image of Mussolini’s ‘blackshirt’ triumphantly entering the chamber was balanced against the parliamentary intriguers packing their ‘carpet bags’ and fleeing. Mussolini, in the tradition of a popular dictator, represented the will of the people overcoming the dirt of parliamentary politics: ‘Henceforth Italian ministers (Mussolini among them) govern with a black shirt instead of a skeleton in their cupboard and the sword of a popular revolt hanging over their heads.’²¹⁷

In the same issue, Hilaire Belloc provided a considered analysis of the events in Italy. For him, the March on Rome was the most significant thing to happen in Europe since the Armistice. It was a warning to Parliaments all over Europe. The article emphasized the Italian ‘manhood’ had been particularly exasperated by the ‘parliamentarian filth’. In his immediate reaction to the events it can be seen that this movement seemed to be an antidote to everything he disliked. What is more, the reaction is seen to be an alliance of political acumen backed up by virile action — ‘brains and manhood’ in Belloc’s words:

At last the brains and manhood of the nation could stand it no longer, and all hat crowd which we of the later nineteenth century have known to nausea, the “advanced” journalist, the highbrow reformer, the Earnest woman, the millionaire socialist, the party fund banker, the inevitable Jewish cabinet minister, the pimp secretary, were swept away in the common rubbish heap. It was high time!²¹⁸

What is striking about this passage is that Belloc went beyond an appreciation of the fascist movement being a revolt against parliamentarism, to a realization — and approval — that it was a revolution aimed at social transformation. Not only parliament needed to be cleansed, but also the decadent types that came with it. Belloc ended his article by claiming that Italy’s example will surely be followed elsewhere in Europe. Parliaments no longer had any moral basis anywhere and would have to ‘yield to genuine popular vote and popular leadership. Italy has blown up one of those corrupt little groups. The rest will follow in due time.’ The effect on Europe was unambiguously ‘all to the good’. Three weeks later, a letter was published from ‘Pro Fascistis’ that claimed ‘Mr. Belloc’s admiration of the Fascist movement’ was ‘probably shared by many or most of your readers.’²¹⁹ For the *New Witness*’s cultural community, fascism initially seemed an answer to their prayers.

These magazines, therefore, provide a hitherto underestimated cultural depth to criticism of liberal parliamentary democracy in the years before the First World War. Anti-parliamentary thought went beyond the isolated and reactionary Tory right — the Halsbury Club, Maxse, Lord Willoughby de Broke — and the agitation of the syndicalists. It also extended to the idiosyncratic radicalism of the *New Witness* and the modernist intellectual criticism in the *New Age*. These papers, for all their differences, provided a spectrum of anti-parliamentary beliefs. The overlapping attitudes towards the party system and liberal parliamentary democracy — anti-party system, anti-parliament, anti-liberal democracy — in the *New Age* and the *New Witness* circles fed off each other and gradually became more extreme in the years just before the great war. The exposure of the evils of the party system by Cecil Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc seemed to inexorably lead them into more extreme denunciations. What is more, these attitudes were nourished by comparison and debate with the more hierarchical and obtuse anti-democratic thought in the *New Age*, and the ‘socialist’ contributors of various shades in both papers. Even when the opposition was framed in terms of democracy, it was a democracy shorn of liberalism which became entirely compatible with monarchical, hierarchical or charismatic leadership.

Underpinning their attitudes to liberal democracy was an organicist nationalism and a gendered and racially determined view of human nature. These facets of their thought must now be examined.

4. THE NATION

Criticisms of parliament and schemes for the organization of labour rested on a construction of nationalism. Nationalism is such a far reaching theme, almost the major theme of modern history,¹ that it is difficult to label it as a unique definitional feature of reactionary avant-gardism. There are many pitfalls in studying Edwardian nationalism, and one of the worst is to consider it as unitary phenomenon. Visions of national identity were not confined to hegemonic constructions of Unionist Imperialism or Liberal little-Englandism (or vice versa), although of course individual images could interface to a greater or lesser extent with these dominant themes. What has been missed in this period is the extent to which many nationalisms were in opposition to these dominant constructions. Any study of how nationalism works through individual writers needs to look at questions of self-definition, at how a particular person saw themselves in relation to the national community. Then there is the problem of the form which this nationalism took, the images which it used and the problems and solutions which it envisaged. Another question which constantly resurfaces is the relationship of one nationalism with another, the extent to which rival nationalisms could borrow from or influence each other. Foreign ideas and movements could be interpreted as abstract ideas, divorced from national context. They could be appreciated as interesting phenomena rooted and distinct to a particular culture. Or they could be taken as templates to be applied in another national situation. A further key question is the extent to which this vision of national identity articulated itself in relation to outsiders; something which became increasingly vital in the light of the First World War.

I

There is no doubt that both periodicals defined themselves as nationalist. Even the self-consciously *sui generis* *New Witness* posited 'national' as a

single word description of their politics: ‘To those who have not been familiar with what we have hitherto written it may be difficult to define that policy in a single word. But if we were challenged to do so, the word which we would select would be the word “National”.’²² The *New Age* did not go this far, but in one revealing editorial referred to the *New Age*, the *Eye-Witness* and the *Spectator* as ‘the three chief nationalist journals’.²³ The grouping together of these three papers further proves the political affinity between two of them, namely the *New Age* and the *New Witness*. It is likely that the *Spectator* was included only because it was the biggest selling weekly, and thus seemed to bolster the status of the other two. It might suggest some ideological affinity, or at least show that journals ostensibly of the left could court company with those of the right, but most contemporaries would surely have mentioned the *National Review* in this context.²⁴

Just as their papers were ‘national’, so the writers constructed themselves as ‘national intellectuals’ in opposition to the enlightened, cosmopolitan, anti-national sort. In a light-hearted open letter, the *Eye-Witness* even begged animals not to trust this breed of busybodies: ‘Do not trust the Modern Thinkers. Do not, I beg you, confide your interests to them. They are not really fond of you except in the abstract.’²⁵ Some of the impetus behind this was resolutely anti-modern. The primary reason for this opposition was perceived to be national, however. Cosmopolitan intellectuals belonged with international financiers as the destroyers of individual and national liberty. ‘Because we are National’ claimed Cecil Chesterton, ‘we oppose alike the international theorist and the cosmopolitan usurer. We oppose the Unnational Man, whether he comes in the name of Higher Finance or of Higher Thought.’²⁶ The word ‘cosmopolitan’ here draws on two inherited uses. On the one hand it is a coded reference to the Jews.²⁷ At the same time, it ties into Unionist rhetoric comparing English though with the internationalist and cosmopolitan ideas of the Liberals. Disraeli referred to this theme in his famous Crystal Palace speech of June 24, 1872 where he criticized Liberal ideas for being ‘continental’ and ‘cosmopolitan’.²⁸

A ‘national’ critique of a certain kind of intellectual also pervaded much of the writing in the *New Age*. Hulme openly criticized the intellectual for this reason:

There is one Truth, one Good. It is for this reason that the conception of nationality and everything connected with it appears so extraordinarily irrational to the intellectual. He simply cannot conceive that these are not one truth, but different truths which win or lose.²⁹

This seems, paradoxically, to be a criticism of what Benda was later to uphold as the ideal intellectual concerned with abstract truth.¹⁰ Hulme, it seems, was self-consciously on the side of those who prostituted themselves to the temporal realism of 'different truths'. Thus a 'modernist' Hulme clashes with a 'reactionary' one. Firstly, the concept of truth is disassembled into competing and irrational factions. Then, however, this modernist disassembly is used to back up a concept of competing nationalisms. Each nationalism is seen essentially as one of many competing truths held together in unity by tradition and discipline.

The need to create a new kind of intellectual to oppose the non-national idealist was explicit in the *New Age* group. J.M. Kennedy lamented the fact that the only real ideas came from the anti-national liberal left.¹¹ His articles on 'Tory Democracy', later published in book form, were an attempt to make good this lack.¹² The same spirit was behind Hulme's articles for *The Commentator* on 'A Tory Philosophy', which Helen Hayes considered, 'transcendentally characteristic of his sociological and moral stance.'¹³ They were an attempt to produce a philosophy of conservatism in England which had the novelty and intellectual conviction of *L'Action Française*. Hulme stated that political conviction was basically an emotional process¹⁴ but that a political view needed to be presented in way that is attractive to the young and dynamic elements within society. In England this dynamism was held by socialism, and the Fabian Society in particular. How was the young intellectual, 'to be seduced away from the arms of the Fabian Society?'¹⁵ With an envious eye on Paris he explained how, '*L'Action Française* has made it rather *bête démodée* to be a socialist. The really latest and advanced thing is to be a Neo-Royalist. They serve the victim with the right kind of sauce.'¹⁶ Mirroring the stresses and strains in *L'Action Française* between the dynamic young element and the old legitimist monarchists, Hulme felt alienated from the style of the British Tory party. He felt uncomfortable with expressions like 'rights of property' and 'king and country' even though, instinctively, he appreciated the feeling from which they spring.¹⁷ He made the call for a similar radical, dynamic right in Britain, with explicit reference to *L'Action Française*:

The most pressing need of Conservatism is a set of writers who will make our faith living by giving it a fresh expression. It seems to me that an excellent example of this process of restating an old dialect is to be found in the group of people in France who call themselves *L'Action Française*.¹⁸

L'Action Française were dynamic, chic, revolutionary but classical and anti-democratic; worthy, in other words, of a self-styled avant-garde intellectual like Hulme. They had seemingly made Conservatism new and stylish.

Alfred Orage also looked to a new intellectual elite for the greater glory of the nation, though he would never put them to the service of the Tory Party. 'The possession of wealth in the form of commodities does not make a nation great,' wrote Orage, 'but the possession of individuals, as many as possible, capable of entertaining or communicating great ideas.'¹⁹ This new, truly national elite would not be marked by abstract, impersonal and stultifying logic. Orage accepted that the new men of genius must rely on the old irrational concepts of instinct and feeling, and the nation must inspire these 'natural passions' that maintain 'natural ties'.²⁰ He called for 'an artist philosopher to make the psychic life an object of admiration, hope and love.'²¹ These 'national philosophers' were not necessarily in opposition to the people. Orage saw nationalism as the 'subliminal mind'²² of the people, which the artist philosopher could harness. This was a modern variant of the old mystical monarchical unity between the king, the land, and people. Yet it harnessed the modern language of crowd psychology developed by Le Bon in France and Trotter in England.²³ Tratner has shown how such ideas of the 'people' considered as a mass unconscious also mediated and backed up the elitism of later modernist writers. They tried to appeal to the national 'subconscious'.²⁴ In 1914, this could also be used as one justification for these artist philosophers to serve the nation in a physical sense.

The writers for the *New Age* and the *Witness*, therefore, saw themselves as a new national intelligentsia in opposition to the sham cosmopolitans. How was this nationalism constructed and used?

II

Their nationalism was not insular. It took upon itself to be aware of other nations and cultures and perhaps can best be described as 'cultured anti-cosmopolitanism'. This spirit pervaded *New Witness* articles on many issues. Maurice Baring chastised those Liberals who complained about Russia but ignored the problems in their own back yard.²⁵ Baring himself supposedly showed more empathy in his analysis of Russian affairs. G.K. Chesterton tied this to his general critique of New Liberalism in his review of Baring's book, *The mainsprings of Russia*, claiming that 'the most extraordinary phase of this Anti-Liberal Liberalism is the deliberate obscurantism about foreign nations: and it is with this that Mr. Baring has had to fight.'²⁶ G.K. Chesterton argued that the 'Cocoa Press',²⁷ wealthy financiers and Westminster colluded to present the public with a dark picture of foreign news to show Britain's own situation to be relatively privileged.²⁸

Avowals of socialism, therefore, were often accompanied by a rejection of its humanistic and cosmopolitan overtones. A.H. Lee in a letter to the *New Age* was nevertheless eager to dissociate such a conception from overtly racist or militarist theories. For Lee 'race-prejudice or racial superiority' were the 'counterfeits of nationalism'. Real nationalism dared to oppose the national polity, and was based on 'love', and not merely 'admiration'.²⁹ Lee's letter represented a widespread feeling on the left that the appeal to 'colourless humanity'³⁰ rather than national pride was a weakness that their enemies could successfully exploit. Cecil Chesterton, too, was as wary of race as his was convinced of the truth of nationality: 'Once you begin substituting a fancy thing like race for a solid thing like nationality there are no end to the insanities in which you may be landed.'³¹ Still, it was not an entirely insular national conception. Chesterton was eager to connect Britain's ancestry to the European Roman / Latin tradition, as were Kennedy, Hulme and later T.S. Eliot. This was the same 'classical' nationality emphasized by Maurras in France. Cecil Chesterton complained about those who tried to prove Anglo-Saxon ancestry rather than Roman, lampooning them as professors obsessed with 'the Cultus of the Barbarian'.³² Nevertheless, even the attachment to this tradition did not militate against the expression of national difference, but rather accentuated it. In the *New Witness*, the editorial reply to George Lansbury's comment about internationalism was instructive:

What he says about internationalism does not touch us. We have never pretended to be 'Internationalists' or even to understand what that vague word means. We hold that a man's first loyalty is due to the nation of which he is a member.³³

J.M. Kennedy (writing under the pseudonym S. Verdad) solved the same problem by making a difference between 'cosmopolitanism' and 'internationalism': 'Socialists are not cosmopolitans, they are internationalists; and you cannot be an internationalist unless you are first a nationalist.'³⁴ Presumably the former was rootless and the latter based on an appreciation of other cultures, but from the standpoint of a secure attachment to one. It seems to have little to do with 'internationalism' as a liberal idea of the brotherhood of nations. Cosmopolitanism was also uniformly associated with international capitalism and the faceless dislocation which it brought.³⁵ Some of these ideas on the danger of cosmopolitanism, therefore, fit in with the fear of capitalist globalization. International politics denied national interests and international capitalism destroyed individual cultures. This of course, motivated the left as well and the right on the *New Age*. I.J.C. Brown seemed to look forward with fear to

a world of international hotel chains: 'The idea of sameness everywhere is the modern rich man's ideal, and soon there will not be a spot in the world where there is not a hotel that gives you a hot bath and eggs for breakfast.'³⁶ What is more, he resisted the commercialization and gentrification of working class leisure represented by the spreading of the Lyons tea houses, the Starbucks of the early twentieth century.³⁷ Anti-globalization has a long pedigree.

Attacks on international capitalism from Frank Hugh O'Donnell did not rely on economic theory:

Today the shops of England are withering up into local suckers and tentacles of giant octopods; the loathsome polyps and puppy-squid of a cosmopolitan dead fish that sucks to itself the substance of all peoples, the lives and freedom of the free workers of vanishing civilization and patriotism.³⁸

And at their most extreme, such ideas contained the same elements of hero worship, purity, xenophobia, and race as the most extreme national movements on the continent, here expressed as the more abstract concepts of 'national character' or 'fire' which, when considered metaphysically, amount to the same thing. In an extraordinary passage on the death of Scott in his expedition to the arctic, there were even elements of rebirth through suffering; the same rhetoric that later infused fascism:

The news of the death of Captain Scott and his brave compatriots raises emotions which it is difficult to express in words if one would keep the high level of dignity which such an event demands. At a time when so many of the old traditions of England are tainted by alien evils, when one is tempted sometimes to despair of her redemption from the mass of corruption that seems to be stifling and poisoning her, one clings desperately to the belief that the great qualities of national character remain unhurt and eternal. It is such incidents as the adventure and death of Scott and his comrades that help us to keep that faith alive. The fact that these men were ready to face agony and death with light hearts for the sake of achieving something that could never be turned to any profit to themselves, even when secured, is the most striking proof that under all our mess of materialism and self-seeking the old fires are still burning. For if those fires go out, there is an end of us and all that we love and honour now and for ever.³⁹

On one level this seems an unambiguous and innocent hero-worship in the 'clean cut Englishman' tradition so common to the literary culture of the time, and antipathetic to fascism precisely because of the commitment to 'fair play', or in the *Witness* language, 'love' and 'honour'. However, considered with the politics we have been exploring, it is equally striking as a palingenetic nationalism where 'love' and 'honour' is denied the alien and even summoned in opposition to it.⁴⁰ It is an anti-modernist, nostalgic eulogy; but the addition of nationalism, a stifling and insidious enemy and the will to sacrifice lures it into a dangerous myth. The only thing missing is the will to turn this self-sacrifice towards the sacrifice of others. It is a moot point whether 'love' and 'honour' could prevent this or whether they could be made to serve it. Such a thing would depend on the extremity of the political crisis to come.

In the political crises that the *Witness* took its part in producing, such views smouldered but did not break forth. Nationalism governed the *New Witness's* analysis and exposure of the Marconi scandal.⁴¹ Here, England was shown up to the detriment of its neighbours, for 'in other countries people who act in this fashion are driven from public life.'⁴² The danger to the country was expressed in terms of moral and physical decline, and the ever present possibility of military defeat:

We have but to sit by and observe the issue, knowing, however, this further truth, that when nations allow their public life to fall below a certain level of vileness, the moral standard of the State and even its power to defend itself in arms are sacrificed certainly for a generation, and perhaps for ever.⁴³

Again and again the paper hammered home that the society which allowed such conduct in its government was not far from 'disaster and dissolution'⁴⁴ or even 'military defeat and national disaster.'⁴⁵ This eulogy to national pride and exposure to the terrifying possibility of national defeat was behind the recruiting campaign to the League for Clean Government. 'What has already been done' went one editorial 'is nothing to what must yet be accomplished if we are to substitute something like genuine national government for the welter of private professional aims and private plutocratic interests which we now call politics.'⁴⁶ The National League for Clean Government advertised to those who cared for 'national honour'. Each particular part of its programme was then framed in national terms:

It is to the inheritor of one of Murray's new plutocratic peerages that the infamous Meat Contract is granted. Two Samuels are on the Front

Bench. Our Indian Empire is caught in a net of usury. *It is of such things that great nations die.*

That is why every *patriotic* man must demand a public audit of the sources and expenditure of the Secret Party Funds.⁴⁷

The meat contract referred to the *New Witness* campaign against Borthwick's Meat, who, through alleged corruption, had sold diseased meat (infected with *Spitoptera Reticulata*) to the army.⁴⁸ Here the metaphor of disease was made real. The financier and the forces of corruption were feeding diseased flesh to the soldier, the defender of the nation. This is also a clear example of how the discourse of purity in nationalism could be linked to the purity of the body.⁴⁹ The perpetrator needed to be sought out otherwise, 'the nation loses power over its rulers and perishes.'⁵⁰

III

If the nation was in crisis, harmony had to be restored. This entailed a moral and a political regeneration. In both discipline had to be emphasized. G.K. Chesterton insisted on the danger of spiralling thought and complained about men 'who question their own first principles: and whose doubts go down to the abysses where the brain of man cannot build.'⁵¹ This was a cause as much as a symptom of national decline. The nation was tolerating the decline of common morals not in ignorance but in 'full view of the facts.'⁵² The moral aspect of the national crisis (not necessarily conceived in religious terms) united both reviews, and set them apart from their contemporaries. Belloc wrote in 1912 that, 'Mr. Orage is raising in the *New Age* a point which is of the first importance in the political crisis through which the country is passing, and it is a point which has not been made in any other quarter. It is that the basis of our present trouble is not a material but a moral basis.'⁵³ And the moral reaction had the potential to 'destroy every calculation you make, as surely as does physical force when that is disregarded.'⁵⁴ Authority was needed to harness society in its intellectual and political aspects: 'Without authority a society falls to pieces, and it is the failure of authority that has destroyed society in all ages.'⁵⁵

This failure of authority was manifested in a gradual coming apart of the old certainties. Holistic completeness was a dream, an increasingly atomistic *Gesellschaft* the reality: 'London today is growing more and more fragmentary. Society is split up into sections, meagre as the segment of cake at a tea shop, and almost as tasteless, the edge ready trimmed and pared to pattern, void of jovial vulgarity and healthy fun.'⁵⁶ The new whole was eccentrically viewed by J.M. Kennedy in pseudo-eastern terms, showing

how other systems could be pillaged and applied to one's own national view point:

We must postulate, then, that the permanence of a nation is on the way to being secured only when (1) as much harmony as possible exists among the different groups and units of which it is made up, and when (2) the 'Karma' arising from the resultant harmony is of such a kind that its 'Karmasraya' may be reckoned as 'good'.⁵⁷

For, Orage, too, the mysticism of the east could have been yet another holistic 'myth' to counter modern individualism. Before taking up the editorship of the *New Age*, he had been interested in Theosophy, and had through this had become acquainted with the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*.⁵⁸ After the war, this interest was continued and his politics were subsumed for a time in discipleship to the Russian mystic, Gurdjieff, introduced to Orage by P.D. Ouspensky.⁵⁹

Mostly, however, this whole was hoped to be reassembled by a restoration of old national customs and traditions. It was not surprising, therefore, that these London literary coteries should eulogize Britain's agriculture over its industry. The more abstract praise for rural life seemed to come from a rosy view of pre-enclosure agriculture rather than the increasingly mechanized modern version. For A.J. Penty, small was beautiful. Mechanization took away the romance of personal things.⁶⁰ Agriculture nevertheless acted as a patriotic signifier, whatever its real economic situation. For the *New Witness*, this discourse was closely connected to the need for self sufficiency in war time, and the corruption of Parliament. 'The British farmer is not rich enough to pay politicians to protect his interests,' the *Witness* wrote, 'the foreign importer is.'⁶¹ For J.M. Kennedy, rural England was also the home of true cultural values as opposed to modern decadence: 'Everything of cultural and spiritual value has sprung from a rural foundation; only the cities have given us the Post-Impressionists and the Cubists and the Hyde Park atheists.'⁶² This fetishization of the land linked virtually every writer for *The Witness* and infused their later formulations of inter-war Distributism. It also linked them to a strong tradition of rural idealization and romantic protest, echoing the writings of Cobbett, Ruskin and Morris. More generally, these writers here were articulating a strain of idealized rural patriotism that was common to many in Edwardian Britain.⁶³ Rural concerns were themselves amplified in the political mainstream in this period by Lloyd George's Land Movement.

Parallel with a support for an idealized rural England was the *New Witness's* stated aim to protect old national 'traditions, customs and pleasures'.⁶⁴ This extended especially to the sports columnist, 'Delf'. A boxing match was described as 'a contest which would have stirred the blood even of the most sentimental of teetotal vegetarians.'⁶⁵ Likewise, the university boat race was seen as a pure English festival, 'The boat race is the one great festival left to us which is absolutely English, absolutely un-Semitic, absolutely straight.'⁶⁶ In the decline of a state the real England was sidelined, and 'money-lenders', 'black-mailers' and 'eccentrics' gained power at the expense of 'priests, poets, soldiers, the mothers of many children, the lovers of one woman and saints.'⁶⁷ The fact that the paper's constant appeal to the common man was not as inclusive as it first appeared grated on its contemporary readers. A correspondent called 'G' asked, 'Sir, — Will you not, by the plentiful exercise of editorial power and (may I add) a little self-restraint, give us one number in which you do not insist that you alone are normal Englishmen, in which there shall be no word spoken of the honest common man?'⁶⁸ And a few months later a letter from Alan A'Dale complained about phrases in the *Eye-Witness* such as 'all sane men', 'every decent European' and 'by universal consent detestable'.⁶⁹ The 'common man' was therefore an ideal type, becoming the vessel into which truth could be poured.

For J. M. Kennedy of the *New Age* and most of the writers for the *Witness*, however, this rural populism could lead to a consciously anti-Imperial little Englander nationalism with its own eccentricities. One of these for J.M. Kennedy was the strange link between anti-imperial nationalism, old Toryism and Eastern religion:

The parish pump was with us before our empire and our colonies were dreamt of, and it will be with us after they have gone. For it is real, conservative, Tory and Catholic. 'In the beginning was the Real, in the beginning of the ages was the Real. The Real, O Nanak, is, and the Real also shall be.' Om!⁷⁰

Another, as suggested by the quotation above, was the championing of Catholicism. J.M. Kennedy and Orage were not as whole-hearted in this regard as Belloc and Chesterton, lacking the basis of true belief. Nevertheless, Kennedy in one article used the Catholic Church as a symbol of the old hierarchy, as opposed to Protestantism as the symbol of modern individualism. The 'Catholic spirit' favoured a 'real democracy' that existed only in conjunction with leadership and aristocracy, and opposed modern politicians and financiers.⁷¹ Catholicism also provided a structured alternative to democracy: '... we shall find that minorities and majorities, according to

our modern use of the words, did not exist at all. How could there be a majority and a minority within the fold of the universal Church?⁷²

Perhaps surprisingly, many of the other *New Age* Nietzscheans praised Catholicism for the same reasons. Oscar Levy, for all that he disapproved of Christianity, accepted that at least Catholicism was the most aristocratic and pagan of Christian sects.⁷³ This instrumental admiration for the discipline and hierarchy of Catholicism parallels the attitude of Maurras who also lacked the basis of true faith. Nevertheless, Kennedy in more circumspect moments recognized that the Roman Catholic Church was lost to the majority of English people and thus largely irrelevant to the contemporary struggle: 'The old English spirit is struggling for its rights; but it is not looking to the Roman Church for its spiritual support.'⁷⁴ The idea of a Catholic internationalism was used by S. Verdad to rile Chesterton, claiming that it compromised his nationalism. Chesterton, however, countered by using the example of those states where Catholicism and nationalism were mutually reinforcing such as Poland and Ireland.⁷⁵ T.S. Eliot, too, was later to criticize Ludovici's *A defence of conservatism* for putting Catholicism above Anglo-Catholicism.⁷⁶ It took a very particular and marginal viewpoint to see Catholicism as *English*. Nevertheless, this did not stop interest in its structures and ideology, even if their analysis of Englishness prevented an adoption of its forms. Robert Ferguson claims that T.E. Hulme told Ashley Dukes that if he were French he would, as a nationalist, profess Roman Catholicism. Not being French, however, 'he always said he was a member of the Church of England...'⁷⁷ For Belloc, of course, the Church was truth, and therefore self-evidently the saviour of the English as well as rooted in their historical soul.

For Orage, an admiration of the discipline of the church was compatible with a hatred for its dogmatic intolerance. The idea of spirituality was laudable but dogma was stultifying: 'The French people have accomplished the miracle of preserving faith without dogma; of preserving the artistic side of the church without its pernicious dogmatic side.'⁷⁸ This positive view of Catholicism was not shared by all in the *New Age*. A.E. Randall thought that the fact that modernist thought discussed the nature of Catholicism did not in any way make it compatible with it: 'Catholicism condemns, silences, modern thought whenever and wherever it can; modern thought, on the other hand, supplies a platform and an audience for Catholic propaganda. The difference is vital and characteristic — and it does not tell in favour of Catholicism.'⁷⁹

This religious conception had certain similarities with Orage's belief in the subliminal mind of the people. It is difficult to reconstruct the realities of Orage's occult beliefs, as he himself was reticent about expressing them

openly, especially in the period before 1914. This murkiness is perhaps compounded, as Leon Surette suggests, by the failure of modernist scholarship to take occult beliefs seriously.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, in his obituaries this side of his character was emphasized. Æ Russell, admittedly a fellow occultist, cited Orage's key influences as 'the wisdom of sages like Kapila, Vyassa or Patuigali'.⁸¹ More interestingly, both G.K. Chesterton and T.S. Eliot drew surprising parallels between this and Christianity. Chesterton compared Orage to Yeats, and claimed that 'he originally stemmed out of the more intelligent and independent growths of a sort of theosophical thought'. Chesterton admitted not sharing this enthusiasm, but claimed, 'they had saved both men from the godforsaken cheap materialism of most revolutionists of their day.'⁸² Occultism and Christianity saved Chesterton and Orage from their mutual materialist enemies. Eliot's view was somewhat subtler. He too admitted Orage's mysticism, and perhaps hinted at his own earlier interest in similar ideas and the links with his later Christian conversion: 'Perhaps my own attitude is suggestive of the reformed drunkard's abhorrence of intemperance; at any rate I deprecate Orage's mysticism as much as anyone does.'⁸³ Moreover, Eliot claimed that the *outré* nature of Orage's beliefs actually aided his role as mediator between the spiritual and the temporal. He did not represent a contested religion, such as Catholicism, that might have enabled people to compartmentalize his spiritualism, 'Had he been a Catholic his mysticism would have repelled; as that of an irresponsible religious adventurer, his mysticism was merely smiled at.'⁸⁴ Eliot almost suggests that Orage's spiritual and religious conception was more effective in that it disarmed people who did not take it seriously. It thus infiltrated all his ostensibly secular formulations with myth, morality and spirituality. This was true, above all, in the modern myth of nationalism.

The war led to a recentralization of this spiritual conception, often expressed in religious terms. For the *New Witness*, the war was nothing less than a crusade, so they had 'every right to appeal to the God of Battles to bless our arms.'⁸⁵ For De Maeztu, too, the war seemed to reawaken religious and spiritual values. De Maeztu used the example of a French artillery officer who died with the words 'Vive la France' on his lips to meditate on how the themes of death and resurrection were reflected in war. Such a mystery showed the power of national myth and the importance of a non-material reality. It showed that life was a tragedy, 'the tragedy of Death and Resurrection'. Such an example should stimulate the world to give up what he described as an aspiration towards 'athanasia' (a quality of deathlessness) 'far from the flux of life'. The world should cease to seek for its immortality in material things, and nothing expressed this clearer than death on the battlefield. 'The example of the heroes who die

that their country may live will stimulate the nations to give up their dream of a Malthusian and pacifist Olympus; and thinkers to adjust, as far as possible, their theories to the mystery of life and reality: Death and Resurrection.⁸⁶

IV

This type of spiritual nationalism, could, in both papers, be paraded as a force capable of liberating the people from oppression. The oppression of certain sections of the community led to what they saw as a decline in the virility of the national spirit. It was 'a simple and incontrovertible fact of spiritual dynamics' that the subtraction of spirit from the working class was a loss to the entire community.⁸⁷ More importantly, the fact that the populace were permitting themselves to be oppressed and the rich were content to 'hug the machinery of such oppression' meant that the nation was unable to fight. In such a case, the 'cancer is cut out sooner or later by a foreign knife.'⁸⁸ This oppression would lead to the nation failing in war, its ultimate test. The establishment was unprepared for military action. According to Romney, the *New Age* military correspondent, the aristocracy had become soft and decadent because it had given up the military arts.⁸⁹ What is more, according to the *New Witness*, the Liberal government, in alliance with rootless intellectuals and social reformers, had deliberately repressed the martial spirit.⁹⁰

Nevertheless, both papers were at pains to point out that the spirit of the people — the 'subliminal' or 'sunken' mind of the nation according to Orage⁹¹ — was still ready for war. The fault was with the 'politicians' rather than the nation:

Despise the politicians as much as you like. But remember that they form only a tiny fraction of the English people. That people has in the past been great in many things, including war, which is after all the supreme test of a people. When they come into their own they will be great again.⁹²

The *New Witness* used every opportunity to emphasize this difference. The *New Age*, too, saw war as an opportunity, an energy of revolutionary proportions: 'A bloody war would sweep the arrivistes away all right — gentry of that sort become less pushing when the bullets whiz about — but it might sweep the Army and the Country away in the process.'⁹³ A series of letters from 'A Rifleman' kept this idea burning in the paper's pages but couched in the language of practical military good sense. 'To act as an agency to achieve what no other agency can possibly achieve,'

claimed 'A Rifleman': 'that in all ages has been the sociological function of war.'⁹⁴

Mostly, however, the energy of warfare was expressed in mystical terms, as a necessary outpouring of energy, and the only conclusion to the build up of tension within and without:

All that best can come of it is a violent delirium, whether of civil or foreign war, in which against each other or against a foreign people the nation will discharge its bile to its own relief — in all probability to start collecting it again.⁹⁵

The idea that English people would be *prepared* for war often came in tandem with the idea that they were suited to it. Real nationalism was essentially a military virtue. 'Nature has given Englishmen an appetite for battle...'⁹⁶ wrote the *Eye-Witness*, 'If a man would understand the love of England he must do what hardly anyone would dare to do, that is, he must clearly envisage England defeated and ask himself, 'What should I do then?'⁹⁷ There was shame 'in giving up your sword'⁹⁸ either in military or labour disputes. British people should relish the challenge: 'All mankind has ever felt that arms are the ultimate test of a nation ... when we know how men fight we know what they are.'⁹⁹

These more extreme attitudes were often hidden behind practical suggestions. Both papers favoured a strong navy.¹⁰⁰ The *New Witness* insisted on the importance of aviation in modern warfare.¹⁰¹ Rothschild's idea of a Channel Tunnel, 'must be opposed tooth and nail by all patriotic men in this country'.¹⁰² The *New Age* called for a citizen army and recommended compulsory military training in secondary schools.¹⁰³ Indeed, sometimes the arguments seemed to temper overt national militarism. But was Orage really forsaking nationalism when he said that, 'God can never be safely predicated as on the side of the big battalions or on the side of the small. Reason must look for him wherever he is and join him on whatever side he happens to be?'¹⁰⁴ Or was he manufacturing excuses for the use of British naval might? Belloc, too, rejected accusations of extreme militancy — but somewhat unconvincingly in that he believed war should come before any loss of independence. In 1911 he claimed: 'We do not desire "war for its own sake": especially in the existing military situation. As for Arbitration, we have nothing to say against it if it is resorted to voluntarily. But a nation which pledges itself to refer *all* disputes to the arbitrament of a foreigner forfeits its independence.'¹⁰⁵ In the *New Age*, there was an added sense that war would be a healthy way of fostering change. While not as developed as the Italian nationalist agitation for a 'national revolutionary

war', the editorial on the Great War's eventual outbreak symbolized the frisson of excitement at the danger and possibility of revolutionary change: 'Worse things than the war now at our doors the world has never seen; better things than the world has ever known may result from it.'¹⁰⁶

When the war came, therefore, it was welcomed as a moral tonic which brought people together in a common cause. Whereas before the war, the corruption of England had led to a 'steady failing of the military spirit'¹⁰⁷ the outbreak of war seemed to lead to an outpouring of energy. The Guildsmen become increasingly intent on analyzing the 'national' part of their title as the war has shown 'the extraordinary vitality' which still lay in Nationalism.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the writers thought that it was almost worth being at war 'to realise once more the existence of a national spirit.'¹⁰⁹ The *New Age* saw this spirit reflected in the people as a whole. In mystical terms, the gravity of the event was 'faithfully reflected in the soul of the people'.¹¹⁰ However, for all that this spirit was in general a good thing, it was to be regretted that it expressed itself in the crude jingoism of the right. The lack of a general culture had led to spirit that was 'jingoistic' rather than 'sacrificial'. The crude materialism of modern life remained even in times of war and one reviewer pessimistically concluded that the 'national spirit' was dead and only the 'national interests' survived.¹¹¹ Jingoism was rejected because it encouraged people to fight for things rather than ideals.

The rejection of the material side of war even extended to the reporting from the frontline. Ramiro De Maeztu's reports from the front line in 1916 did not emphasize material conditions but rather the psychic effects of warfare. Indeed, in 1916, de Maeztu suddenly has the 'intuition' that 'war cannot be so unendurable as it has been depicted by humanitarian novelists.' If it were so unendurable then 'men would not endure it'. Instead he sees the war as a triumph of will over matter, a constant and exciting feeling that 'one's will is asserting itself.' His conclusion, therefore, was that war was 'the organisation of adventure.'¹¹² War in microcosm was a triumph of spirit over material horror. It was seen as something necessary to 'culture' and 'civilization'. In a review of Bernhardt, A.E. Randall saw that destruction was not simply negation but also 'the opportunity for creation.' Militarism was not necessarily the antithesis to culture but something that went in sequence with it; war remained 'intrinsic to reality and necessary to civilisation.'¹¹³ To consider war as merely a regrettable necessity was to negate the undeniable fact that 'civilisations as fine, and finer, than ours have risen, and rotted, and fallen by the sword...'.¹¹⁴ War was to be embraced, not merely accepted.

V

The military spirit of both papers obviously threw up other enemies, most notably pacifists and Germans. The *New Witness* constantly made fun of, 'the hypocritical vapourings of the pacifists'.¹¹⁵ They were exposed as effeminate figures of fun: 'The mere thought of such a thing [war] is, of course, enough to set our Pacifists shrieking, and some of their shrieks would in a less serious posture of affairs be exquisitely ludicrous.'¹¹⁶ Bertrand Russell, the epitome of the pacifist intellectual generated ire from both papers. T.E. Hulme attacked Russell in a series called 'War notes' ran in the *New Age* from 27 January to 2 March 1916.¹¹⁷ These articles were reprinted in the *Cambridge Magazine* and led to a public quarrel between the two men.¹¹⁸ The *New Witness* was even more extreme: 'We would submit that the question is less whether the Hon. Bertrand Russell ought to be at Trinity College, Cambridge, than whether he ought to be anywhere in England outside an internment camp.'¹¹⁹

Pacifists in general were seen as hypocrites, especially the Quakers, 'who teach us that it is wrong to carry arms in the defence of one's country' but not to break strikes.¹²⁰ Most noxious of all however, were those cosmopolitan figures of 'dubious' race who were embroiled in every sort of political and economic corruption. The following passage, worth quoting at length, was typical of the *New Witness* style of exposure and insinuation:

Some little time ago a gentleman resident, we believe, in Paris and if we are not mistaken an English correspondent in that city, published under the pseudonym of Norman Angell one of those books which come out with tedious regularity to prove that there is something wrong with the armed maintenance of one's national independence and honour. He had a predecessor in Bloch, who not only denounced the immorality of war, but boldly declared it (a little before the South African and Manchurian campaigns) to be impossible under modern conditions. Bloch, as his name implies, was a money-dealer somewhere in the East of Europe. It is not irrelevant to note that Mr. Angell's book (which points out that war is not necessarily lucrative) has enjoyed an endowment of £20,000 from a philanthropist who declares himself, on the eve of the election at West Ham, where he is the new 'Liberal' candidate, to be no less than that sturdy democrat, the Baron de Forest.¹²¹

Like Jews, Pacifists were also accused of the deadly sin of name changing, which seemed to sum up their noxious hypocrisy.¹²² Name changing was

particularly hated because it seemed explicitly anti-nationalist. It removed certainty, place and roots. It was cosmopolitanism embodied.

Pacifism was seen as a materialist heresy by all of the writers concerned. It stemmed from a sentimental misunderstanding about the nature of mankind. Humans were not all governed by the same values. According to Orage there were 'men who hate peace, hate truth, hate brotherhood, hate, in fact, all the things the others love.' Mankind was not, therefore, 'the homogeneity that pacifists conceive.'¹²³ For the *New Witness*, pacifism was immoral and unnatural, similar to suicide in its moral repulsiveness.¹²⁴ Cecil Chesterton produced an extreme attack on both pacifism and pacifists in *The Prussian bath said in his heart*. Pacifism was not only 'unchristian' and 'unchivalrous'¹²⁵ but it was also 'materialistic'.¹²⁶ He saw it as no different to Prussianism in its atheistic materialism, in the way in which it saw physical pain as more important than spirit. It was an 'allotropic modification of the Atheism which Friedrich the Great made the foundation of the Prussian State'.¹²⁷

Before the war, hatred of Germany was sometimes tempered by grudging admiration. The rabidly anti-Semitic Frank Hugh O'Donnell from the League for Clean Government felt that at least the 'Gothic Barbarian' had 'brought an intrusion of manliness to the sunken State.'¹²⁸ Kennedy claimed English physical superiority, but this would be useless without leaders, hinting that Germany was more fortunate in this regard: 'We may be stronger than Germany, we may have more money, more men, more ships; and these are valuable weapons. But if we can breed no leaders to show the business men and the mob how to use these weapons, we must eventually go under.'¹²⁹ Nevertheless, there was widespread conviction that any possible conflict would be entirely justified. Cecil Chesterton wrote in a review of Charles Sarolea's *The Anglo-German Problem* that a power behaving like Germany ought to be destroyed.¹³⁰ Similarly, there was an increasing tendency to insist on the kinship with France over that of Germany. This manifested itself in both papers in a desire to racially separate the English from the Germans. English people were European and Latin, central to civilization and not marginal to it like the barbarian Teutons and Celts. Cecil Chesterton was insistent on this point:

...the reason that I dislike the 'Gaelic' movement is exactly the same as the reason I dislike the 'Anglo-Saxon' humbug. Both mean at bottom that we like to be on the side of the Barbarians. There are Englishmen who would rather trace the origins of England to a few North Sea pirates than to the Roman roads and that Holy Roman Empire to which we must soon or late [sic] return.¹³¹

According to Milburn, the *New Age* also preferred France to Germany. On the outbreak of war, Kennedy was convinced that in this racial conflict Britain should take the side of 'the Slavs plus the Latins' since this was a more natural combination for the British than 'an alliance with the Teuton.'¹³² Orage also claimed that 'intellectually and morally we have much more in common with France than with Germany.'¹³³ Interestingly, the writers could combine this view with their interest in German culture. One form this took was the split between 'good Germany' (music, philosophy, culture) and 'bad Germany' (Prussia and the Kaiser). The tragedy of the new German state was that the 'bad' German values had almost completely subsumed the good ones. Such an opinion was confirmed by the outbreak of war. 'Under the hegemony of Prussia', wrote a *New Witness* editorial in 1915, 'the old Germanic instincts of brutality and greed, which had been curbed and softened by contact with humaner peoples, have revived.'¹³⁴ For the *New Age*, too, the way in which this split was articulated became somewhat more extreme. The good Germanism was in the past, in those elements that had been 'softened' by French and Italian culture. The problem with modern German *Kultur* was that it was a counter attraction to civilization: 'A new magnetic pole was found in the North; and the mind was turned from Paris and Rome.'¹³⁵

The war naturally radicalized the way in which the Germans were treated. Much of the time they were demonized in extreme language. The *New Age* claimed that: 'With the declarations of war all sense of sociality, even of decency, has been cast off, and we are confronted with the nakedness of the Teuton.'¹³⁶ Cecil Chesterton used more extreme language in his propaganda work, *The Prussian bath said in his heart*. This claims the whole of Prussia was an atheistic society that had been set on the wrong course since Friedrich the Great who is variously described as 'King, philosopher and pervert'¹³⁷ and 'the Anti-Christ'.¹³⁸ The images of nightmare were used somewhat interchangeably. After the battle of the Marne, the barbarians were driven back 'towards the darkness out of which they came.'¹³⁹ And the whole aim of the war in one sense was drive a 'dreadful stake through the vampire heart of Friedrich the Second.'¹⁴⁰ Sexual, religious and demonic images thus combined to hammer home the sheer otherness of the Prussian ideal.

These propagandistic and extreme images were merely the most colourful examples of a theory that connected the Germans to the range of values that were destroying the world. In this sense the war was perceived as a war of ideas and ideals: 'The thing the Allies are really fighting against is a spirit, a tradition, a creed.'¹⁴¹ Prussia symbolized a creed that, for most of the *New Witness* circle, was militarist, atheistic and materialist. The first of these was a somewhat ambiguous criticism for many of the writers. Cecil

Chesterton was at pains to point out that the militarism of Prussia was not 'the reverence for arms which is part of the very stuff of Christendom.'¹⁴² Rather it was the materialistic sense in which arms and force were good in themselves. The idea of military sacrifice, especially for a cause, was a noble one, but the perverse thing about this German militarism was that it revered the soldier, 'not because he is killed, but because he kills (...)'¹⁴³ Oscar Levy, too, saw the militarism of Germany as the 'lesser evil of this country'. Indeed, he saw that this led to 'virtues of the second order' such as 'obedience, efficiency, and self-sacrifice'.¹⁴⁴ Even Orage, who continually protested against the spread of German militarism, had a grudging admiration for the way in which German culture was aggressively exported. This was a 'distorted ideal' but it was far superior to the ideal of the English ruling classes which was merely to exploit the workman as much as possible without regard for 'nonsense' such as culture and civilization: 'The advantage of the English ideal is that it yields immediate material results to the employers; the advantage of the German ideal is that it inspires men to fight.'¹⁴⁵

It was the *materialism* of Prussia, therefore, which was its greatest evil. This common opinion linked even Chesterton and Levy who disagreed strongly about the nature of atheism in Germany. For G.K. Chesterton, Prussia was atheism embodied. For Oscar Levy, however, the dangers of Prussianism were an extension of Christian morality. Levy's main ire was against 'Germany's democracy and her democratic materialism and romanticism, which cultivates no virtues whatever and only lead to uncleanness in thought and action.'¹⁴⁶ This materialism was expressed in many cases as a reverence for 'things' over 'men'. Cecil Chesterton thought that an allied victory would be '...a victory for man over the work of his hands'.¹⁴⁷ De Maeztu echoed the same point in a meditation on the differences between English and German culture.¹⁴⁸ The English gentleman respected other people, hence his natural reserve, whereas the German respected material possessions. This led to the German ideas of cultural intolerance: 'This is my way of living; it is the right way, and you must live in the same way.'¹⁴⁹ German culture was therefore 'inhuman but efficient' while English culture was 'dilettante but lovable'.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, De Maeztu was keen to point out the English gentleman was not soft but made of stern stuff underneath. Indeed he tried to define the gentleman as 'the velvet glove on the iron hand'.¹⁵¹ What better metaphor for the way in which the threat of force lay underneath the construction of 'character'? The English gentleman would prevail over the Prussian materialist in the end, but only by using his own weapons. Criticism of Prussian militarism and materialism in no way detracted from the glory of arms.

Although all writers shared a common hatred of Prussian materialism, there was a variation in the way in which these attitudes towards Germany translated into behaviour towards Germans. It was *New Witness* policy that 'every German subject in this country should be interned.'¹⁵² This was to be a policy that the paper continually called to be applied to rich Germans as well as poor ones. What is more, they felt it should be applied to those of German origin, not merely those of German citizenship. Culture and nationality were fixed and unchangeable values; it was pure hypocrisy to assume 'that naturalisation is a supernatural operation automatically changing the soul.'¹⁵³ There were of course, 'practical' arguments for the Germans' internment. One of these was that each of them was a potential spy: this point is mentioned continually by the *New Witness*, and also by Romney in the *New Age* who thought interning Germans was a natural precaution against a state that had 'perfected espionage to such a degree.'¹⁵⁴ Many writers, therefore, reflected the spy hysteria of the Northcliffe press. However, many in the *New Age*, especially Orage, took a very different line on this issue, but one that was also predicated on English nationalism. For Orage, the anti-German fervor expressed in rioting against Germans in Britain was barbaric and contrary to the aim of the war. The real justification of the fighting was to give 'a lesson in manners to a nation that was Orientalising itself'; to show up the superiority of Western values over Eastern ones. Therefore, Orage claimed, it was necessary to be polite to foreigners as a mark of English superiority; since the war started he claimed to have been 'formidably polite to all foreigners indiscriminately.'¹⁵⁵ Force of character should overcome prejudice: 'In the name of civilisation that we are upholding, let us be gentlemen.'¹⁵⁶ Orage's paper spoke out against the incarceration of Prince Louis of Battenburg¹⁵⁷ and criticized the Northcliffe press for whipping up anti-German riots in London.¹⁵⁸ There was also a feeling in the *New Age* that, however horrific Prussianism was, they should not stoop to publishing pure propaganda. Arthur Kitson was given a rough time by the letters page for his unsubstantiated stories of German atrocities.¹⁵⁹

These divergent attitudes led to major disagreements between the two papers about the future of Germany. For Orage (after the death of Kennedy writing under the name of S. Verdad) there was a difference of 'continents and centuries' between his view of the Prussians and the view of G.K. Chesterton. Orage claimed that in the *New Age*: 'I think, we all think, that it is useless merely to vilify the Prussians, and to declare that they all should be exterminated like rats before peace can reign.'¹⁶⁰ Orage continued to make a difference between government and people; for Chesterton the two things were connected. In this case, it seems Chesterton's tribalism had overcome his humanity.

The writers on the *New Witness* who hated Nietzsche saw the German empire as the embodiment of his evil ideas. G.K. Chesterton called the will to power a 'Prussian doctrine'. Modern Germany was run by 'Supermen' who 'have put their anti-moral doctrines to the test with the most deplorable results.'¹⁶¹ Nietzsche's ideas were thus generalized into the cultural expression of the northern European against which Latin Europe had to fight: Chesterton talked of 'the huge and naked insanity of the North, against which the lucid Latin and the devout Slav instinctively and instantly combine.'¹⁶² Cecil Chesterton, too, saw these ideas as expressions of a certain national and cultural context. He was, for example, anxious to dissociate the idea of heroism from the idea of the superman. Napoleon, whom Chesterton admired, was an old fashioned hero, not a superman because 'such mystical devilries were altogether alien to the lucid Latin brain...'¹⁶³

This view of Nietzsche as somehow being the inspiration behind the destruction of the German armies was one which was reflected in popular culture. The *New Age*, which was deeply troubled by the association, contains reports of how this connection had reached the level of the common man. A bookshop in London put a sign in its window reading: 'the Euro-Nietzschean War. Read the Devil in order to fight him the better.'¹⁶⁴ The *New Age* also quotes a story (probably apocryphal) of how two regular Tommies went into a bookshop in Charing Cross Road to enquire for a work by 'this Nich or Nych': 'The bookseller divined their want as something by Nietzsche and showed them a book of extracts. They examined it together in blank astonishment for a while and then handed it back, saying they couldn't see anything by the Kayzer in it.'¹⁶⁵ More than evidence that the public in general saw Nietzsche as the philosopher of the Kaiser, this story shows how the *New Age* itself was troubled by the way in which its favourite theorist was being perceived during the war.

Their defence of Nietzsche took two main forms. On the one hand they emphasized other philosophers who were more clearly and correctly associated with the Prussian doctrines they despised. One article pointed out that Treitschke and Houston Stewart Chamberlain were very different from Nietzsche and much more clearly reflected in the policies of the German empire.¹⁶⁶ Romney criticized these theorists in more strident language as 'half-baked and barbarian cads'.¹⁶⁷ Their other tactic was to continually push Nietzsche as a philosopher that repudiated militarism and nationalism. In subtle correction of the way in which Nietzschean quotes were assembled in order to build up a picture of a violent German nationalist, the *New Age* published a collection of quotes under the title 'Nietzsche and Germany'

that emphasized his anti-national and anti-militarist sides.¹⁶⁸

Sometimes this presentation of the benevolence of Nietzsche went, tongue somewhat in cheek, beyond a mere dissociation of Nietzsche with the war. One article went as far as to claim that Nietzsche's influence had been to 'refine' the war rather than create it: 'For any gentlemanly conduct the Prussians have shown, Nietzsche may safely be given the credit. I should be surprised, indeed, to discover that Prussian chivalry is in every case directly traceable to the influence of Nietzsche.'¹⁶⁹ Oscar Levy, too, went to great lengths, in a somewhat un-Nietzschean way, to present the acceptable side of the Nietzschean creed. Orage complained that Levy had gentrified him too much, presenting him as a 'German William Morris'.¹⁷⁰ After all, as most of the writers recognized, Nietzsche saw war as a regenerative force for a decadent nation: 'for nations that are growing weak and contemptible war may be perceived as a remedy, if they want to go on living.'¹⁷¹ Oscar Levy recognized that just as Nietzsche would not have approved of the forces that led to war he would have approved of war itself as a 'brutal cure' to 'the growing consumption and decadence of Europe during the last and our own century...'¹⁷² Such attitudes were not absent in Britain either.

For many in the *New Age* circle the war led to feelings that went beyond nationalism to a resurrection of the European ideal. Nietzsche was a 'good European' in that he hated nationalism and wanted all of Europe to be united by a common standard. Orage even described him as 'a kind of Roman Catholic on his head.' The Roman Empire had tried to make Roman citizens the inhabitants of Europe. The Catholic Church had sought to make the children of God the inhabitants of Europe. In Orage's opinion Prussia had the same 'catholicity of aim' in that its ambitions were with regard to Europe as a whole. The reaction of alarm to this had reawakened the spirit of Europe. Orage hated Prussia's aim, therefore, but claimed to respect her motive.¹⁷³

The European side to Nietzsche's thought was heavily pushed by Oscar Levy as a way of distracting from his Germanness. He dramatized this tension in a long-running fictional conversation between 'a German' and 'a European'.¹⁷⁴ Although attacking the German for his nationalism and materialism, the European admits that war is a necessary cure for the sickness of society.¹⁷⁵ Indeed, by the end of the series of dialogues he thanks the German for starting the war and for casting the dice that will lead to the regeneration of the world: 'That Europe which we and our ancestors have known can be no more and will be no more. The hollowness of all the values it was based upon has been made clear to every thinking brain and seeing eye...'¹⁷⁶ The war would lead to a remaking of society according to Levy's aristocratic image: 'Europe is looking for new Masters, and it will find

them in the end.¹⁷⁷ Yet again the violence of war was courted as a way of unblocking the ills of a decadent society

VI

The *New Age's* favourite German theorist, Nietzsche, could therefore be adopted because of his own critical attitude towards Prussianism and German nationalism. Hulme, too, saw no reason not to push Worringer as an original and important theorist of art, despite his increasing ambivalence to Prussianism. Milburn, therefore, is not entirely convincing when she traces a moderation of Orage's Nietzscheanism as a result of the cooling towards German nationalism which had acquired negative connotations by 1909.¹⁷⁸ Surely Orage's post 1909 views were not moderated. Rather, the political situation entailed Orage's own English nationalism to unmask itself, aided by his now mature and personal Nietzscheanism. This could be set against all things German as the political climate demanded. Orage believed the war could revitalize the nation and lead to the return of 'spiritual sanities'.¹⁷⁹ He also saw the need for a 'national spirit' to preserve a '...superior human and social culture against the inferior culture of our enemies.'¹⁸⁰ Peppis also mistakenly reads Kennedy when he claims that Kennedy had always necessarily admired Germany over France because he disagreed with the French Revolution. This ignores the alternative tradition of the French radical right, which influenced Kennedy and Hulme. Kennedy does not use the phrase 'Latin democracy' as Peppis suggests, but the very different concept that democracy is unsuitable for Latins.¹⁸¹ Peppis's claim that when it came to the crunch Kennedy 'exchanges cosmopolitanism for patriotism'¹⁸² needs modification: he, like most intellectuals in his set, combined awareness of foreign events and movements with nationalism in an attitude of cultured anti-cosmopolitanism.

This cultured anti-cosmopolitanism also infused their art criticism. On the one hand there was sometimes a marked sense of cultural inferiority in their discussions, especially towards France. Nevertheless, Peppis is broadly convincing in seeing this internationalism in ideas as way of upholding nationalism. This could operate either as a way of 'unprovincializing' English culture and therefore making it stronger, or by pillaging other countries for thinkers whose national template intended for one country could theoretically be imposed on another. Paris was certainly seen as the literary centre of Europe, especially in the *New Age*. 'Berlin may set the fashion for the Scandinavian and semi-Slav nations, London sets the tone for the Anglo-Saxon world,' wrote Orage in his 'Readers and Writers' column, 'But Paris is still the literary arbiter of Europe.'¹⁸³ Ezra Pound

summed up his view of the literary life of London, and contributed to the general complaints about the anti-intellectual bent of British society:

And London? Is just an easy-chair, the most comfortable place in the world. And the London life of letters? In my five years of residence I have found exactly one man who is really happy when someone else writes a good book; one man with a passion for good writing! and a few with whom one can talk.¹⁸⁴

It was these attitudes which were behind the magazine's championing of advanced European thought. Hulme's articles on Bergson caustically remarked on the hitherto sluggish manner in which Britain picked up on such things, 'The twenty years required for an idea to cross the channel are fulfilled and now we will hear of nothing but Bergson'.¹⁸⁵ Oscar Levy, weary after years of championing Nietzsche, was pessimistic as to the chances of any meaningful cultural transfer at all. Nietzsche in Britain was met with a ghastly silence:

For the first time it then dawned upon me that Europe, in spite of ever quicker means of communication, was intellectually divided up into ever stricter watertight compartments: a feeling of mine which the passage of years has only strengthened and confirmed, leading me to the conclusion that only ideas of minor importance, that only the standard articles of the spirit, are ever immediately transferred from one country to another.¹⁸⁶

Interestingly, even in the articles of Nietzsche in the *New Age*, it was the comparison with France rather than Germany that was underlined. The cultural superiority of France was a matter of national envy, as Orage underlined in a review of *Beyond Good and Evil*:

Nothing vexes our patriotic soul more than the reflection that in France, which is only a few hours' distant from London, one can buy a cheap and complete translated edition of Nietzsche, while in all the British Empire a man, unless he reads either French or German, must content himself with five expensive translations of only five of the sixteen books written by the greatest humanistic philosopher of modern Europe.¹⁸⁷

Indeed, even when considering this German philosopher, there was a tendency, especially in Kennedy and Orage, to equate Britain with the

Latin rather than the Teutonic spirit. This was not merely a tactical realignment after the Agadir crisis. As early as 1907 Orage wrote:

...there is a flame in his style and ideas which easily communicates itself to imaginative minds, and just as readily alarms the pedants who dislike nothing so much as heat, even when it is luminous. Hence Nietzsche will always appeal to the Latin more than to the Teutonic temperament. The latter, indeed, will probably never understand Nietzsche; or, understanding him, will become obsessed after the faithful Teutonic way.¹⁸⁸

This view of Nietzsche could be backed up by his own writings. Nevertheless, it is clear that the purpose of introducing Nietzsche and other foreign thinkers was to use this knowledge to encourage a dynamic *English* cultural life. The frustration of trying to achieve this sometimes broke out into new expressions of cultural insularity. Orage angrily grouched in 1913 that, 'The best advice that can be given to young English writers is to shun Paris and to cease reading French. The best preparation for writing great English is living in England and reading, writing, and, above all, talking, English.'¹⁸⁹

In the *Witness*, despite its international outlook, the balance was much more in favour of insular English art, rooted entirely in English tradition. National drama should be exactly that, understood in its most conservative sense: 'A National Theatre ought to be, as Sir John Hare says, the home of a national tradition and not turned to the use of rebels against that tradition, whether able and entertaining like Mr. Shaw, or merely banal like most of the experimenters in 'the Drama of the Future.'¹⁹⁰ No-one expressed this more forcefully than Charles Granville, the owner of the paper, in an article entitled, 'The Artist and his Nation'. For Granville cosmopolitanism was not necessary to the artist. He gained his imaginative power from having seen foreign countries fleetingly. Residence added nothing; it merely confirmed his vision or dulled it:

Is cosmopolitanism really necessary, as Mr. Grierson would appear to think, for the production of the creative work of the future? The answer to this question must, in my opinion, be in the negative; further I am disposed to the belief that, not only is cosmopolitanism unnecessary, but it may prove to be a positive hindrance.¹⁹¹

A cultural *séjour* in Paris was almost *de rigneur* for intellectuals and writers at this time. For Granville at least, his trip was completely useless. Residence

merely confirmed his intuitive perception of Frenchness gained on a fleeting visit where 'the *douane*, the porters, the restaurants, the trains' impressed upon him 'another clime, other customs, another mentality'.¹⁹²

Nevertheless, even the *New Witness* extended to a cultural appreciation of France in its other correspondents. Desmond McCarthy remarked upon the fact that in France the cultural and political aspects of a review were considered organically, and both had a specific agenda: 'For instance, if the NEW WITNESS were a French paper, I have no doubt that the literary side of it would reflect convictions on aesthetic subjects as positive and as uniform in their way as its views on politics.'¹⁹³ The literary side of the *New Witness* was less coherent than the political. In the *New Age*, the political and the literary were increasingly seen as inseparable.¹⁹⁴ For Kennedy, Orage and Hulme, part of the specifics of this view came from the classical / romantic distinction which was imbibed through Laserre and the *Action Française*. As Kennedy underlined:

(...) a period of strength, expansion and conquest in a nation is, generally speaking, followed by a period of weakness, shrinkage and degeneration. This law holds good in the realms of literature — the strong, expansive, healthy period of classicism is followed by a flaccid, shrinking, degenerative period of romanticism.¹⁹⁵

This intersects overtly with the discourse of nationalism in the question of *purity*. Just as the nation should be an object of worship more than merely a political category, so literature must reject realism and look towards the absolute. Modern drama, according to the *Witness*, had failed in this regard, in France as well as Britain. The theatre in Paris and in London had been 'invaded by realism'. This had resulted in crisis because the 'ugly phraseology of realism was not their own', not part of the true national tradition.¹⁹⁶ Indeed, at the riots at the performance of Synge's, *Playboy of the Western World* in 1907 in Dublin — a striking example of where the ideal of national womanhood came up against the realism of an author — the *New Witness* ran an article in retrospective praise of the rioters.¹⁹⁷ For the *New Age*, too, beauty came above realism: 'As doctors exist to make health prevail, lawyers to make justice prevail, so I conceive that it is the economy of artists to make beauty prevail.'¹⁹⁸ Sometimes this had overtly anti-democratic and elitist overtones. The artist needed his isolated space in which his soul could sing. 'What is a holiday spent in a crowd? Where is the rest in the midst of a scurrying herd?' asked Orage.¹⁹⁹ The artist could work in the atmosphere of a stately home, but, 'the wealthy have stolen from him for their own ignoble use the only places in which

he could happily sing.²⁰⁰ Similarly, there were certain things which were intrinsically not suited to art. The artist should discriminate: 'Selection is the genius of the artist, and his art is revealed by it. The denial of this truth is a major error.'²⁰¹ Dirty, ignoble reality should be avoided: '(...) disease ought never to be treated by the artist; likewise vulgar murders, rapes, adulteries, kitchen squabbles, the doings and sayings of repellent persons, the sexual affairs of nonentities, the trivial, the base, the sordid, the mean.'²⁰² It is easy to see how the cool, clear edges of geometric abstract art, and imagist poetry could appeal to these attitudes. The hierarchical eye imposed its order on the world. Beauty was a platonic truth: 'with all the world open to him, the writer who laboriously extracts (or, as I prefer to say, superimposes) beauty from the mean is or appears to be imprisoned or maimed by his imagination.'²⁰³ Only the worthy were capable of appreciating this truth. Culture spread too thinly was a bad thing. As an article against the *Everyman* series stated, 'You may democratise people, but not literature.'²⁰⁴

Which contemporary art movements did they see embodying these ideals? Nevinson used the pages of the *New Age* to try and talk up the English avant-garde:

(...) the public are now beginning to realise that we have in England today a movement or, rather, movements, in modern art, that are going to be of the utmost importance in European intellectual achievement — virile, original and, above all, English.²⁰⁵

This protest was perhaps a way of reaffirming his patriotism against claims that his own art was merely a copy of the resolutely Italian Futurist movement. Nevinson published an 'English' Futurist Manifesto with Marinetti in 1914 in *The Times*, *The Observer* and *The Daily Mail*.²⁰⁶ Futurism itself was reviewed almost entirely negatively in the *New Age* from its outset. It was uncontrolled: 'Paradox, bombast, and exaggeration are the foundations of Futurism.'²⁰⁷ It was vulgar in that it did not seek immortality: 'This, I think, is the worst sign upon their movement; for an art that does not aspire to immortalise its work is vulgar from the beginning.'²⁰⁸ What is more, it was uncivilized in that it sought to go beyond language before its use was perfected: 'To return now to animal souls and typographical glyphs would be to abandon our task and to relapse into barbarism.'²⁰⁹ Which of the English movements provided what the Futurists lack? Certainly not the Cambridge school. A review of *Cambridge Poets 1900–1915*, acidly remarked: 'Except the poems we have distinguished, here is nothing but feebleness, sentimentality, and morbidity — decadence.'²¹⁰ More surprisingly, even Vorticism was criticized, a movement which did more

than any other to create an art which was nationalist and avant-garde. Orage was quick to point out that his rubbishing of *Blast* was not through any lack of avant-garde credentials on his part:

It is, I find, not unintelligible — as most of the reviewers will doubtless say — but not worth understanding. Blake, it is certain, has gone into the making of it — but Blake without a vision, Blake without spiritual certitude.²¹¹

The criticisms of the rest of the British avant-garde became more extreme during the war. Wyndham Lewis in his biography had described the pre-war artistic scene as the ‘big bloodless brawl prior to the Great Bloodletting’.²¹² For Orage, Vorticism was not half so exciting. It was a bubble that had now burst, and compared with the war it was ‘incomparably feeble’.²¹³ Art was nothing compared to the new reality. In October 1914, Orage slated Imagism, reiterating the fact that there was ‘nothing’ of value in the movement and even going as far as hoping ‘they may all perish in the war’.²¹⁴ The war, too, could help get rid of all this anarchic decadent nonsense. Orage hoped the war would ‘clean up the mess’. What is more, he made a connection between the barbarism of this art and the barbarism of the war. He drew parallels between, ‘Imagism and Savagery, between anarchic verse and anarchic conduct’: these were the things which the war was being fought against.²¹⁵

The rejection of Vorticism had as much to do with personal animosity and publishing rivalry as doctrinal antipathy, however. Certainly the pitch of Vorticism was a little too high for Orage and Hulme’s classical revival. But the editor of the *New Age* could hardly hand over the accolade of the future to an upstart review of an ex-correspondent. Hulme, too, had had difficult personal relations with Lewis — friction over a woman a recent biography has suggested²¹⁶ — that led to Hulme hanging Lewis upside down on the railings of Soho Square. This surely helped confirm any reservations Hulme might have had about putting his name to the Vorticist Manifesto. However, this should not prevent us from appreciating the extent to which the earlier *New Age* had influenced Pound and Lewis’s politics. The manifesto followed the *New Age* in the disapproval of cosmopolitan intellectuals:

But there is violent boredom with that feeble Europeanism, abasement of the miserable ‘intellectual’ before anything coming from Paris, Cosmopolitan sentimentality, which prevails in so many quarters.²¹⁷

Not only that but they boldly proclaimed the classical revival that Hulme, Orage and Kennedy had fertilized. The Vorticist manifesto, however, anglicized this 'hardness': 'They [the English] are the inventors of this bareness and hardness, and should be the great enemies of Romance.'²¹⁸ By disapproving of the toadying to France and ignoring the French provenance of some of these ideas, the Vorticist Manifesto shows both the influence of the ideas of the *New Age* circle on its development, and, conversely, its need to hide this influence in order to carve out its own 'original' contribution.

The *New Witness* rejected the whole 'scandal of abstract and geometric art', but did allow for the fact that 'an artist or two of consequence will arise in England. In his new pictures at the Allied Artists, Mr. Wyndham Lewis seems to be feeling his way towards something which should be the expression of an artist rather than of a theory.'²¹⁹ Surprisingly, therefore, we are led to a similarity between the supposedly avant-garde *New Age* and the resolutely traditional *New Witness*. Both were rigidly opposed to the decadents, the *New Witness* from instinct, the *New Age* in a desire to be more modern. But they were both for a new purity which was above the vulgar realism of contemporary authors. Both rejected Wells, Bennett and Shaw. For some in the *New Age* this led to calls for more abstract art which reflected a hard geometric purity, in the *New Witness* it simply led to more calls for traditionalist anti-modernism. Yet the striking thing is how this parallel showed up the reactionary bent behind the classical modernism of the *New Age* circle. Forging ahead with tradition did not preclude the new, but it shared the hatred of the same things as the backward looking traditionalist. It became either a reformulation of the same thing, or the production of a different thing for the same reasons. It could lurch into a dynamism to make the old, new.

VII

The nationalism of these writers, therefore, did not preclude foreign influence. Sometimes the ostensible alliance was with the European left. Orage compared the welcome given in Britain to Garibaldi and Kossuth with 'the coldness and indifference with which Englishmen seem to see the unrolling of a far nobler and more significant drama of liberation in Russia.'²²⁰ Other comparisons, however, owed more to the new European radical right. For Belloc especially, the comparison with continental political culture which would make so much more of its scandals was constantly emphasized. The spectacle of Isaacs being made Lord Justice would have been met with 'violence' in France.²²¹ In a report of a meeting of the League for Clean Government at the Imperial Club, Lexington Gardens, June 27, 1914, 'Mr. Belloc gave the Englishmen and Englishwomen present additional food for thought when

he stated that no other country in Europe would tolerate the raising of Isaacs to the bench, unless, indeed, the term Europe was extended to cover Turkey.²²² Belloc also mirrored the continental radical right in his analysis of the Portuguese revolution which he characterized as an anti-national Masonic plot.²²³ It is with regard to France, however, that the comparison was most striking. Both papers made much of their special position in reporting French affairs, and the paltry knowledge of most of the reading public. 'Although France is our nearest neighbour, and though the Channel is at its narrowest only twenty-five miles wide,' wrote Romney, 'we know less of her and her spirit than of Prussia, or of that mess of religions and races whom we rule precariously in Hindustan.'²²⁴

It is not so much that France was unknown, but that both papers sought to provide an alternative lens to the liberal one which saw it as the somewhat unstable home of democracy. Kennedy sympathized with the Catholic Church in his review of W.L. George's, *France in the Twentieth Century*:

It seems to me personally that the hysterical outburst against the Church in France has now vented itself, that heads are becoming cooler, and that a few more years will see this great and universal institution once more honoured and respected in France, if not venerated and held in awe to the same extent as before.²²⁵

Kennedy also took pains to prove that the real spirit of France was not democratic at all:

Democracy, as I have said once or twice before, does not suit a Latin country, particularly France. The people are too individualistic, and the struggle for power and 'la gloire' is particularly bitter and continuous; hence the fifty or sixty Ministries in France since the formation of the Republic and the consequent changes of policy.²²⁶

This view point found its most virulent expression in Orage's extraordinary tirades against the French Revolution which seem so inexplicable to those who see him as basically a 'socialist' in the modern sense.²²⁷ Orage talked of 'the three headed dog' of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity: 'In every sense, individual, social, national, these three ideas have done more harm and less good than any trinity ever invented. The world will not be sane till it forgets them.'²²⁸ Liberty had 'no existence even as an ideal'. 'It is emphatically *not* a good thing that nations, any more than individuals, should be allowed to do what they choose. Free choice — which is what fools understand by liberty — is generally ruinous.'²²⁹ The search for equality was

equally mistaken: 'By any real standard, things are unequal both in force and in quality of force. A nation that pretends they are not is either dishonest or silly. The pursuit of equality is, therefore, an occupation for knaves or fools.'²³⁰ As for fraternity, Orage only liked one in twenty people he met: 'Your Fraternalist ... tells me not only that I ought to feel what, in fact, I do not feel towards these alien people, but I should act towards them as I felt it. This is to ask me to act a lie. And I conclude from this analysis that individuals and nations who do so act do act a lie; and I affirm that no good comes of it.' Justice was by far the better alternative.²³¹ At the end of the article, in implicit sympathy with the French radical right, Orage announced the task required of them:

I really believe that if the Tricolour were trampled in the dust and justice were raised in its stead, the world would breathe easier. Of all the curses that abortion, the French Revolution, brought amongst men, the worship of its trinity is the worst. Let France that raised the flag be the first to haul it down.²³²

This is an explicit example of the congruence between the intellectuals around Orage and the new political movements on the continent. For many of the writers, the influence was explicitly stated. J.M. Kennedy made this clear in the introduction to *Tory democracy*:

Another matter on which I have thought it worth while to lay some emphasis is the new anti-socialist movement in continental thought: not merely Nietzsche's criticisms on Democracy and Socialism from the standpoint of a higher morality; but the general philosophic movement against the equality of man.²³³

The *New Witness* also contained numerous favourable references to French right wing nationalists. It eulogized Maurice Barrès and bemoaned his lack of popularity in Britain. His lack of influence in Britain was, according to Eccles, symptomatic of his strengths. He was not a 'cosmopolite', his cadences were only truly expressible in the French language and he was, in true Barrèsien terms, rooted to the soil of France. Nevertheless, his defence of national tradition should be taken up by *Witness* readers in Britain, 'precisely because it insists upon frontiers, concerns all nations which have a settled home, and among whom an undercurrent of superior thought moves from time to time in favour of colourless ideals.'²³⁴ Similarly, Paul Déroulède's obituary in 1914 was entirely sympathetic, even to the role he played in the Dreyfus affair. 'With characteristic ardour,' wrote Eccles, 'he

took the side of the French Army against the international conspiracy which sought to weaken it by exploiting the more or less legitimate doubts subsisting in the minds of honest Frenchmen.²³⁵ What is more,

Thanks to Déroulède and a few other men of energy, hope has been kept alive, acts of resignation have been avoided and time has been gained in which a generation far more alert, more clear sighted and more spirited than the last has grown up in France.²³⁶

Frank Hugh O'Donnell also made a sly insinuation towards the need for a native British movement (perhaps the League for Clean Government) when talking about Déroulède's *Ligue des Patriotes*: '*It is a bad sign in a country when a special organisation has to set about saving the country.*'²³⁷ (Italics in original).

The most obvious influence of the European radical right in the *New Age* and the *New Witness*, however, was in Hulme and Belloc's appreciation of Charles Maurras and the *Action Française*.²³⁸ Hulme had imbibed this thought through Laserre in Paris and took from it both the romantic / classical distinction as applied to art and politics, and the desire to produce a motivated and dynamic Tory movement. Belloc had been interested in the French right since youth — he was half-French and Déroulède was a family friend. He was drawn to Maurras through a common belief in the Latin past of Europe, reasserted though the Roman Catholic Church, and a hatred of parliamentarism, capitalism, freemasons and Jews. Belloc did not share Maurras's antipathy to the French Revolution, but this does not prove lack of affinity with the French right. His view of the revolution as an outpouring of national energy was similar to that of Déroulède and Barrès and his admiration of Napoleon was as a popular monarch much in the style of mystical royalism. These affinities certainly shone through much of his writing for the *New Witness*, and account for many of his ideas. After he had left the *Witness*, this interest carried on. A full-page analysis of the *Action Française* by F.Y. Eccles appeared in 1914.²³⁹

VIII

Would the description 'cultured anti-cosmopolitanism' also be appropriate for these writers' views on empire? It is impossible to ignore the effect of imperialism on English nationalism and literature, especially in this period, the zenith of British imperial power. The British Empire at the turn of the century consisted of about half a million square miles, inhabited by three hundred and forty-five million people. Nevertheless, it is perhaps surprising how few were the concrete references to imperial policy and theory. Perhaps this is a facet of its enormity: imperialism so saturated life that it

would be impossible to separate it. This is certainly true of the influence of imperialism on the more abstract theory of race which will be dealt with in the next chapter. But the first thing that becomes apparent in a close reading of the conscious political pronouncements of these two periodicals at least, is that the necessary alliance (or accidental slippage) between nationalism and imperialism is problematic. British nationhood was not always equated with imperial dominance.

In the case of many of the writers for the *New Witness*, it was not empire as such to which they objected but to the present British manifestation of it. For all Belloc's anti-imperial stand in the Boer war, according to an anonymous letter, he was in parliament, 'the zealous defender, not only of Tsarism, but of King Leopold's government of the Congo.'²⁴⁰ This was perhaps a little unfair, but Belloc refused to condemn the atrocities, seeing such a stance as British hypocrisy. Cruelty was a necessary adjunct of the clash of civilization with savagery: 'It is an elementary fact' he told the House 'that wherever Europeans come into contact with races so inferior as the races in the Congo basin there must necessarily be acts of cruelty and tyranny. It is an elementary fact, because such things have happened in all our colonies.'²⁴¹ Perhaps not a zealous defence, but certainly an apologia as much as a jibe at Britain's own imperial misdeeds.

Indeed, the core of Belloc's criticism was that imperial policy concentrated on rhetoric rather than reality. He was in no doubt that the Empire should be a military union:

... it pleases public opinion in this country to regard the various portions of the Empire as one whole for the purposes of self-satisfaction and of self-congratulation, but as a loose alliance — and hardly that — for the purposes of discipline and self-sacrifice.²⁴²

He was especially adamant in this regard on the case of Australia. According to one article, Australia could not have its cake and eat it; the Empire entailed military union and if Australia claimed independence from this it would become an entirely separate nation.²⁴³ The same all or nothing attitude applied to Ireland, 'We ought not', reasoned Belloc, 'at one and the same time be abused by the Irish as their oppressors and called in by them as their policemen.'²⁴⁴ Later, under the editorship of Cecil Chesterton, articles which can only be described as pure jingoism appeared under the auspices of the Clean Government League.²⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Belloc had also made it clear that the paper supported the Empire as long as it represented

a military reality. In indignant reply to a complaint that an earlier article saw 'Little Englandism' as more national than imperialism, Belloc wrote:

Our correspondent seems to be under the wholly erroneous impression that we opposed the idea of territorial expansion. We did nothing of the sort. What we did was to point out that merely 'painting the map red', as the silly phrase goes, is futile unless accompanied by real national supremacy.²⁴⁶

Indeed, it becomes clear that the only real objection Belloc and many of the *New Witnesses* had about Imperialism was that it was not national enough. According to Christopher Hollis, 'Belloc was a soldier of imperial Rome. He objected to the British imperialism because it was the rule of an anonymous plutocracy.'²⁴⁷ This is borne out by his complaints about imperial exploitation in Egypt which was not condemned per se but because: 'The exploitation has tended more and more to become not national but cosmopolitan.'²⁴⁸ Even the rabidly anti-Semitic Frank Hugh O'Donnell was an anti-imperialist in this sense. He complained about 'godless capitalism' going hand in hand with British imperialism and making wage slaves out of the black, brown and yellow races.²⁴⁹

This was not the only criticism of imperialism in either paper, however. The other dominant attitude was that of little-Englandism or anti-imperial nationalism. This could be expressed in complete congruence with elitist and hierarchical theories in the case of J.M Kennedy (writing under the pseudonym of S. Verdad).²⁵⁰ He complained about the colonies taking all the aristocratic talent from England and setting it to work. England's sons should be doing more immediate good for the mother country: '...not all the colonies are worth an English county.'²⁵¹ G. K. Chesterton was here in rare accord with Kennedy. His view of the Empire was as an anti-national distraction: 'It consoles men for the evident ugliness and apathy of England with legends of fair youth and heroic strenuousness in distant countries and islands.'²⁵² What is more, it was for him not a symbol of strength or virility but yet another sign of decadence and decline: 'not merely an occasional wrong to other peoples but a continuous feebleness, a running sore, in my own.'²⁵³ This, as Belloc and Chesterton's anti-Imperial radicalism of their Boer war days, was motivated by national feeling, not by any liberal notion of the 'brotherhood of man'. Such a view was entirely congruent with the viewpoint of Irish nationalists and their opposition to British imperialism. It was also representative of much pro-Boerism in continental Europe which was similarly infused with romantic anti-capitalism and nationalism.²⁵⁴ But in Belloc and Chesterton's case it was used

against the Imperial motherland. It was nationalism in opposition to the shams of liberal capitalist imperialism. For Belloc therefore, if less so for Chesterton, this was entirely consistent with a praise of the right sort of empire. Curiously, then their opposition resembles the revisionist view of the Empire as a 'modern' exporter of global capitalism.²⁵⁵ Naturally, they saw this as a 'bad thing'.

As for the 'Empire' closer to home, there was perhaps some evidence that the constant confusion between 'English' and 'British' in later histories and literary analyses was representative of real attitudes among the writers themselves. Certainly, Orage cavalierly ignored any real analysis of Welsh problems joking that, 'Welsh Disestablishment appears to us a problem about as urgent as the navigation of the Martian canals.'²⁵⁶ Ireland, however, was not so easy to ignore. The continued call for a free and independent Ireland from the former nationalist MP Frank Hugh O'Donnell was met with much bickering in the correspondence columns of the *New Witness*: 'We can quite see that it might be a fine sight to see the O'Donnells and O'Neils raise the standard of holy war for the expulsion of the alien and the reconquest of the stolen territory,' wrote one, 'But it is not practicable, and Mr. O'Donnell must know that it is not.'²⁵⁷ Sometimes the paper raised itself to a level of constructive analysis, but the proposed solution — that each county was to vote independently whether it wanted Home Rule or not²⁵⁸ — was hardly perfect as subsequent events were to show. Nevertheless, the dominant attitude in the *New Witness* was pro-Home Rule, even pro an entirely independent Ireland. This was perhaps the biggest dividing point from the attitude of the Tory extreme right. For the Witnesses such virulent nationalism was a good in itself: 'Being Nationalists, we have always sympathised with Irish Nationalism; for it is the definition of Nationalism as a philosophy that one patriotism can and should exist parallel with another.'²⁵⁹ Hilaire Belloc had Irish ancestry. His great grandfather on his father's side was an Irishman called Colonel Swanton, who had been an officer in the Berwick Brigade in Napoleon's army but fought on the Royalist side in the Revolution. Belloc's writings were well-received in Irish nationalist circles. Ernst Blythe, writing in *Irish Freedom*, proposed a 'co-operative commonwealth' that was inspired by *The servile state*.²⁶⁰ Arthur Clery, an important writer for D.P. Moran's *The Leader*, also admired Belloc.²⁶¹ Belloc cited Ireland, along with France, as the closest European state to a Distributist ideal. This particular viewpoint also illustrates the role Catholicism played in Belloc's political choices. His nationalism was a Catholic nationalism above an English nationalism — but, of course, in his ideal world the two things would be inseparable. Above all there was a sense (similar to the admiration of the French

nationalists) that Irish nationalists exhibited a virulence that was sorely lacking in England.

Views in the *New Age* were more mixed. A letter from A.H. Lee in the *New Age* characteristically saw nationhood as a given, but saw imperialism as merely a temporary political situation. 'Now, whatever we may think of the Irish question in particular,' he wrote 'I maintain that empires and alliances are transitory, while, on the other hand, country and fatherland are permanent ideas. Man is only at times an imperialist animal.'²⁶² Kennedy seemed rather silent on the question, given his Ulster background. Perhaps for him the Irish question was too mundane and reminiscent of his provincial roots. Orage, however, somewhat sentimentally saw the English connection as the only real future for Ireland, as long as England retained its imperial status:

The keenest, meanest, and least sentimental of people, the Irish will be loyal as long as England remains an Empire. Given the foppery of freedom — which for Ireland in the present instance means no more than new openings for her upper and middle-class sons in politics and public affairs — Ireland will remain attached by the umbilical cords of love to her adopted motherland.²⁶³

The writers were tied to Ireland in a way that they were not tied to the Empire because of their self-consciously European vision. Extra-European concerns were for the most part outside their field, and the British imperial mission was to them merely a liberal capitalist sham.

IX

The *New Age* and the *New Witness*, therefore, reflected the nationalist concerns of their age, but also approached their own theory of nationalism. They hoped to find a space between naïve pacifism and unthinking jingoism. The *New Witness* made this clear in its statement of editorial aims. They stood for 'the idea of nationality and honour of arms' against 'those twin idiots, the Pacifist and the Jingo.'²⁶⁴ J. M. Kennedy sought in the *New Age* a perspective similarly beyond right and left:

(...) a manly attitude towards the rest of the world is as far removed from jingoism as it is from the sentimentality of liberalism — jingoism, indeed, is simply the sentimentalism of the conservatives.²⁸⁵

For Orage in 1907 this was a kind of mystical socialist nationalism which would inspire death by its perfection:

Only the state that gives life may demand life; only the state that gives life needs to make no demands, since life will always be given for life. Show men that your country must be died for as their beloved must be died for, because she is so surpassingly beautiful in their eyes that her glamour hides the terror of death.²⁶⁶

Coercion was alien to this vision; only reform and perfection would entail national loyalty.²⁶⁷ It became increasingly clear to Orage over the period 1910–14, however, that to create this state of perfection it was necessary to oppose the anti-national politics of the day. Nationalism could be invoked on the side of revolution as much as the government. In this sense, many of the pronouncements of both papers represent oppositional nationalism reminiscent of the Italian or French movements — nationalism used as a weapon against the established order rather than in support of it. The Insurance Act could be attacked on these grounds, as being injurious and non-national:

...we have confined ourselves to the single criticism that Mr. Lloyd George's Insurance Act is contrary to the spirit, the character, the traditions and the future of the English people (...) Resistance, therefore, to his Act may be anarchism in his foreign and alien opinion; but in English national opinion it is the duty of every patriot.²⁶⁸

The National Insurance Bill was against the supposed libertarian instincts of the English male. An earlier article and only half-jokingly referred to the Insurance Bill as the work of foreigners — Lloyd George was Welsh; Garvin, Irish; Astor, American; Carnegie, 'Scotch American' and Cadbury, 'a Quaker'.²⁶⁹ The energy and mysticism of socialist revolution, therefore, ended up as that of nationalist palingenesis. Cecil Chesterton despaired of the government, but not of the people. 'I believe that there is in the English people a vast fund of elemental virtue, courage, honour, of which the politicians know nothing, but of which the world will know one day,' he claimed: 'I do not think that we are dying. I think we shall arise.'²⁷⁰ For both he and Orage this was mixed with a mystical quasi-religious sense of the soul and the national character embodied in a holistic society:

The only remedy, we repeat, not merely for this, that, and the other evil in society, but for all (in so far as they are not natural to man), is the

restoration to society of its soul, the human means of which lie in the re-union or the sundered classes by the abolition of the dividing wage system and the establishment of a national partnership. Then only will the crucified Christ of society come down from the cross, and the two thieves with him.²⁷¹

By 1913 and 1914, however, this was coupled with a deep pessimism about the imperfectability of man and the lack of authority in society. In 1913 the *New Age* saw the problems of England as at their height:

It is impossible that they should become worse without national death ensuing within a generation at the outside. It is even impossible that they should remain at their present height of favour without national delirium (of which there are already disquieting signs) setting in.²⁷²

Little wonder, therefore, that the war began to appear as the perfect answer to this active pessimism, a way of harnessing a national, non-class based energy. Indeed, for Orage the war acted in the same way as it did for Sorel and certain Italian syndicalists — as the kind of spiritual motivation for the people which the class struggle had failed to give. His words on the outbreak of the First World War perfectly exhibit this and place his ideas firmly in the anti-positivist politics of the European radical right:

The nation is at a moment when a great and momentous decision is necessary — a decision which mere reason is incapable of making. Everything the nation as a nation holds dear is at the present moment in imminent peril of being lost. The only question is whether the national subliminal consciousness of the working class will divine the issue and thrust into articulate consciousness a new and great spiritual resolution.²⁷³

In one sense, therefore, nationalism was simply the currency of the time, which underwrote all of their discourse, consciously or not. In another sense, however, these papers promoted a nationalism which was oppositional, irrational and anti-materialist, and in some senses anti-imperialist, which drew on traditions of romantic protest and the language of revolution. What is more, it consciously used and adapted the nationalism of foreign movements while disavowing ‘cosmopolitanism’ and ‘internationalism’. It was different, therefore, from the ‘hegemonic’ nationalism used for nation building and claimed, in different ways, by the

Liberals and the Unionists. The war could be seen as a kind of answer, as a force which clarified spiritual values and choices. Before the war, however, the Jew and the non-European provided the non-assimilable parts of this spiritual mission.

5. THE *NEW AGE*, THE *NEW WITNESS* AND THE JEWS

The *New Age* and the *New Witness* represent two different strands of anti-Semitism in Edwardian periodical literature. The *Witness* engaged in political anti-Semitism. It claimed to be the only paper that could discuss the 'Jewish question', but progressively became a forum agitating for its solution. Supposedly an amalgamation of Catholic cultural anti-Semitism and the left wing 'socialism of fools' agitation against Jewish financial influence, it slid more and more into modern 'racial' anti-Semitism and political agitation against prominent Jews. The *New Age* was not programmatically anti-Semitic in the same way, but tried to set itself up as a free, 'manly', unsentimental arena of discussion where such views could be aired with impunity. This led to a mixing of cultural modernism with anti-Semitism in its pages, which provided a precedent and context for the later political and cultural ideas of Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot.¹ These anti-Semitisms need to be contextualized. On the one hand, they relate to earlier traditions and modes of hostility to Jews. Equally they can be seen as part of their network of attitudes on *other* subjects. Anti-Semitism is thus considered at two levels: as a manifestation of prejudice or attitudes which were shared by many at the time, and as a conscious analytical tool used to prove political or cultural questions.² These uses intertwined with intellectual thought from the continent and, in certain cases, with new racial and biological theory. The anti-Semitism of the Chesterton / Belloc circle and that of the early modernists was neither merely an indifferent 'prejudice' nor a proto-genocidal desire but a necessary and important ingredient of complex political and social arguments which were hammered out in these two periodicals. Hostility to the Jews did not go uncontested in either paper, nor were the modes of hostility uniform. Nevertheless, both papers acted as sites of 'universalising Semitic discourse'.³ The diameters of these sites orientated the opinions of those who chose to

write in them and the ways in which these opinions were read and received. Studying anti-Semitic discourse within an intellectual community, therefore, should follow the guidance of David Feldman, 'to shift the initial historical question away from the problem of why men and women objected to the Jews, to the question of what they meant when they were doing so.'⁴

I

Hostility to the Jews had been prevalent in European culture since their dispersion after Titus's conquest of Jerusalem. In medieval times their activities were legally restricted to money lending and trade. They were expelled from England by Edward I in 1290 and not officially readmitted until 1656. From then on they officially had the same rights as any non-Protestant citizen and were excluded through religious oaths and declarations from crown office and parliament. Emancipation in Britain took the form of piecemeal reform of these restrictions in the nineteenth century. Eligibility to Parliament was confirmed in 1858 and the Promissory Oaths Act of 1871 allowed Jews to high office.

Historians have understandably tended to de-emphasize social data behind distribution of the Jews in explanations of anti-Semitism. This is usually in an attempt to dissociate themselves from interactionist models of racial hatred where anti-Semitism slips from being 'understood' to being condoned as a reaction to real facts. The writers lived in a city where 120,000 to 150,000 Jews settled between 1880 and 1914.⁵ What is more, it was a point of call for emigrants to other countries. According to Geldshtyn, 15 percent of all Jewish emigrants to the United States passed through London, so the demographic and cultural impact far exceeded the actual number of immigrants.⁶ The particulars of the Jewish demographic were also perhaps significant: 120,000 were living in the East End.⁷ While this was neither the reason nor the focus of their specific notion of anti-Semitism, it was the social background which magnified and imposed the question upon them. This mass immigration had resulted in much generalized anti-Semitism, especially in East London where it was linked to pressures on wages and the housing market.⁸ Anti-Semitism was especially prevalent in the context of the more general anti-alien settlement culminating in the Aliens Act of 1905. The British Brothers' League, the Londoners' League and the Immigration Reform Association all agitated against Jewish immigration from 1901–5. Some of the more extreme Conservative MPs also flirted with the formulations and programmes of these organizations in the Aliens debate, especially the MP for Stepney, Major William Eden Evans-Gordon.⁹ On the extremes, the books of Arnold White and Joseph Bannister accused the Jewish immigrants of spreading disease and poverty. Extreme anti-Semitism,

explicitly directed against poor Jewish immigrants was thus especially prevalent in the East End, and in the period immediately preceding the publication of the *New Age* and the *Eye-Witness*.

The particulars of much Edwardian anti-Semitism, however, were more ostensibly concerned with the rich Jews of the City of London. Jewish involvement in finance had been institutionalized by medieval statute and the Jewish money-lender was a cultural stereotype reflected in writers from Shakespeare to Dickens. Disdain for rich Jews extended to all social classes and political persuasions and was as likely to appear in *Justice* as the *National Review*.¹⁰ On the left, figures as diverse as Beatrice Potter, Keir Hardie, Blatchford, Hyndman and Ben Tillett all criticized the Jews for taking advantage of capitalism's lack of morals at one time or another.¹¹ The court of Edward VII had been criticized for being prone to 'modern Mammon worship'¹² and for the number of 'Jewish plutocrats' in its entourage. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century several international Jewish banking dynasties had established themselves in the City, and excited comment for their cosmopolitan non-national allegiances. The Rothschilds, Bischoffsheims, Erlangers, Lazards, Speyers and Sterns were all big banking families.¹³ The 'non-Englishness' of their names made them attractive shorthands for the evils of finance as a whole. There *was* a large Jewish presence in merchant banking and high finance which *did* rely heavily on family and international connections. In the context of much oppositional writing, however, these 'realities' shaded into the crediting of further characteristics dependent on their 'Jewishness' that had not been empirically observed. Realistic assertions about big Jewish names thus slipped into chimerical assertions about eternal Jewish qualities.¹⁴

Feldman and others have demonstrated that in the mid-nineteenth century the nation was 'principally a political construct'. 'It was centred on a relation between the individual and the state that was taken to guarantee a range of indigenous freedoms, rather than upon the people themselves and their culture. The demands for conformity in these circumstances were narrow.'¹⁵ This conception also dramatically narrowed the political space for racial or cultural criticisms of the Jews. Before the First World War, however, alternative conceptions of the nation made inroads. The 'liberal' conception of the individual remained strong. That even Conservative leaders refused to consider British born citizens of immigrants as anything other than British showed the limited political manifestations of culture and race as determinants of national identity. However, the papers here studied represent the fraying of this conception. They also problematize the whole notion of liberal nationalism in that they

supported the political liberties of individuals against an encroaching state but also an organic conception of nationhood.

II

The theories behind the *New Witness* attitude to the Jews were explicitly developed by Belloc in a series of articles entitled 'The Jewish Question' and then discussed in the correspondence pages and specially organized symposiums. There is little real argument about whether Belloc privately harboured prejudices against the Jews. Even his supporters admit his anti-Semitism. His letters are full of admittedly private jokes and references to them, bordering on obsession. In 1897 he wrote to his mother from the steamship USMS St. Louis in America:

Item. All the passengers are Jews. Absolutely all except a French violinist and myself. This is absolutely true and without exaggeration. I do not suppose there have been many Jews in one ship since Titus sent his prisoners to [Rome?] (...) It is something dreadful. They shtinck. (...) Certainly the U.S. gets all the scum of Europe...¹⁶

This letter also contained caricatures of the passengers, studies of their noses and so on. In public, however, Belloc realised that in order to be taken seriously he had to modify his views. In a letter to Maurice Baring he explained the impotence of fanaticism:

...It is legitimate to point out ... the fact that Jewish financial power has prevented people from knowing the truth about the most famous foreign trials where Jews were concerned. But just because these matters so nearly verge upon violent emotion, it is essential to avoid anything like the suspicion of fanaticism. It destroys all one's case and weakens all one's efforts.¹⁷

His articles on the Jews which appeared in September and October 1911 were not intended, therefore, as an extreme political opinion piece, but as a stayed and logical contribution to policy. They were written not only with an internal seriousness but with a practical intent. The major complaint was that the 'Jewish question' had been ignored in Britain, or when it had been addressed it was not dealt with 'radically or manfully'. For Belloc, stated in a way which bristles with enforced understatement, the presence of a Jewish minority had proved a cause of 'friction', and that the aim should be to reduce this to a minimum.¹⁸ Throughout the articles, his prose struggles to keep its balance and swings between reason and passion. A stayed account of the history of

the Jews in Britain is exploded by the use of Judaism as a metaphysical idea. He called his old *bête noire*, the Reformation, 'largely Judaic in spiritual origin'.¹⁹ He insisted on the naivety of believing in secret societies but then remarked upon extraordinary congruence between the supposed work of secret societies and what the Jews wanted.²⁰ He vaguely tried to counter exaggerations about their role in finance and the press before using the examples of the Boer War, the Dreyfus Affair and the Russian revolutionary movement to show their real power.²¹

Having painted this picture, Belloc then went through the solutions. Assimilation was completely rejected, as had been insinuated all along: 'Deliberately mix (as the English governing class has mixed) the European with the Jewish blood, and no mixed type is produced; the irritant and the contrast appear but the more acerb.'²² Exclusion was also wrong because it acted against the poor Jew, not against the cosmopolitan financiers. Belloc's answer was 'privilege' but:

Privilege, in the old, strict sense of that word. A private law, that is, a special law, distinct from the Common, whereby shall be regulated this particular case which is so distinct from every other problem European society has to meet.²³

Privilege, in other words, which could be recast as separation or exclusion. Belloc did allow that a Jew should be free to 'abjure his inheritance'. But the exclusion was not merely religious: 'It is not a question of religion, it is a question of race (...)'. Belloc here goes beyond religious prejudice against the Jews and into the categories of modern racial anti-Semitism. And the example of Dreyfus was surely uppermost in his mind when he graciously admitted that, 'to the racial reality thus recognised very important advantages shall attach, the chief of which, without question, should be throughout Europe exemption from military service.'²⁴ The solution remarkably went beyond that which obtained within medieval Europe, or even that in contemporary Russia. When Belloc visited Russia in 1913 he commented favourably on their handling of the Jews in a letter to his wife:

When you get behind certain line not a single Jew is to be seen except occasional travellers in the great hotels. The Russian have wisely determined to keep these behind a sort of fence. But one [unreadable word] is that inside this fence there is at least one Jew to every three Europeans, as half the Jews in the world live in the Russian Empire.²⁵

Belloc's articles opened up the *New Witness* as a field in which the 'Jewish Question' could be discussed 'manfully'. This inevitably meant an increasingly congenial space for extreme anti-Semites such as Frank Hugh O'Donnell, especially when Belloc was replaced as editor by the less cautious Cecil Chesterton. Throughout 1913 the *New Witness* held supposedly neutral 'symposiums' on the Jewish question. The first one represented a broad range of opinion. M.D. Eder, a Jew, spoke of the need for a national homeland in Palestine. E.S.P. Haynes represented the liberal who understood the conflict with the Jews, but preferred assimilation. However, the extreme anti-Semitism of Frank Hugh O'Donnell was then placed as a legitimate third party in this discussion with his talk of the 'Judean combine' and 'avid, ragged, swarthy myriads'. He painted a picture of extreme anti-Judaism:

Every country has got the Jews which it deserves. If a country lets go the principles, flings away the securities, and casts down the ramparts of its European civilization, the sap-and-mine business of the invader is done for it in advance, the way to the citadels and sanctuaries of the national life stands open to him, he has only to enter into his good city of Jerusalem-on-Thames.²⁶

The second symposium had G.K. Chesterton speaking on the need for differences: 'If the Jew were dressed differently we should know what he meant; and when we were all quite separate we should begin to understand each other.'²⁷ However, it was obvious that the paper had difficulty enlisting the other side of the argument. The comments under 'Filius Judaei' were probably invented by the editor and were merely a hash of baldly stated liberal views:

There seems to be no Jewish problem as such. It is certainly debateable under what conditions, if at all, we should permit a steady infiltration of any aliens from the continent. The undesirables are not all Jews.²⁸

This is a measure of how the *Witness* changed from being an open space for discussion to an extremist 'rag' with a reputation for anti-Semitism. The third symposium had only two speakers, where one rejected assimilation and believed in a separate enclave (like the East End), and the other accused the Jews of being, '[a] danger to the State in their unnational cosmopolitanism, in their international, not national, racial homogeneity.'

The Jew remained 'a non-assimilable, ethnological, phenological, physiological foreigner in every country.'²⁹

Alongside these theoretical discussions, the *Witness* ran various campaigns against rich Jews and their involvement in finance, politics and the Empire. The *Eye-Witness* regularly talked of 'cosmopolitan Jewish financiers' as a mendacious power behind contemporary ills. In some ways this was part of a generalized attack on high finance capital as a pernicious aspect of modernity that spelled the end of the free individual and the cultured nation. The language used conjured up conspiratorial images of 'the curious workings of cosmopolitan finance which are sometimes as difficult to follow as the windings of a snake.'³⁰ Indeed, 'cosmopolitan' became a coded reference to Jews. It is difficult to separate cause and effect within the writers' minds. At his most reasonable, Belloc merely said the danger was that the 'racial Jewish element in Finance is unusually high.'³¹ But this did not mean that all cosmopolitan capitalisms were equally bad. Jews and capital almost magnetically came together. This was expressed relatively loosely to begin with, associating *particular* Jews with universal ills, for example: 'this cosmopolitan, unnatural, pernicious and useless capitalism, of which men like Samuels are a perfect type'.³² The programmatic pronouncement of the 1913 *New Witness*, however, singled out Jewish finance: '...we resent especially the effect of money power in the hands of men alien to the nation.'³³

Jewish influence provided a key for understanding the mendacious aspects of the Empire. The connection between despotism and the Orient which many of the writers used had been a common theme in Liberal criticisms of Conservative imperial policy in the eighteen-seventies. Disraeli was seen as the Jewish representative of an international and un-Christian tyranny in foreign affairs. Some of the rhetoric in support of intervention against the Turks after the Bulgarian massacres suggested that Disraeli was unable to empathize with the plight of a Christian people. A pamphlet entitled, *Peace or War! An Indictment of the Policy of the Government* summed up Disraeli's policy as 'modern Anglo-Israelitish Caesarism.'³⁴ The criticism of Jewish involvement in the Boer War was in some ways part of this tradition, but this time with the added emphasis on Jewish capitalism. Feldman has suggested that this 'offered one way of understanding the evident interplay between finance and politics in British expansion overseas.'³⁵ This remained true later. Belloc and Chesterton framed their opposition to the South African War in anti-Semitic language, yet at this time considered themselves uncompromising heirs of the liberal tradition.³⁶ G.K. Chesterton portrayed those Jewish financiers who had supposedly desired the war as cruel and cut off from national life:

Leave them the gold that worked and whined for it,
 Let them that have no nation anywhere
 Be native here, and fat and full of bread;
 But we, whose sins were human, we will quit
 The land of blood, and leave these vultures there,
 Noiselessly happy, feeding on the dead.³⁷

Harking back to the polemics of the Boer War, Belloc wrote in 1911 of 'the universal Jewish influence over English Imperialism'³⁸ and Frank Hugh O'Donnell more straightforwardly of the 'Jew-Jingo gang'.³⁹ Belloc complained that the tax of poor peasants in Egypt was given over to rich French Jews.⁴⁰ He later complained that the money was not spent in England and therefore went to enrich 'Paris and the Riviera'. The power of Jewish speculators was seen as even more worrying at times of international crisis where it was assumed that the Jew, bereft of nationhood himself, would profit from the conflict of others. Belloc warned of possible market instability after the Agadir crisis, again harking back to his formative experience in the Boer War and emphasizing that the Jews were equally powerful in Germany: 'This was certainly done here in regard to South African investments, and there is no doubt that the cosmopolitan Hebrew speculator is at least as powerful (if not more so) in Berlin as in Throgmorton Street.'⁴¹ This spearhead opened up comments from more extreme anti-Semites which even associated the very idea of imperialism with Judaism, theorizing a prejudice into an abstract political idea: 'Indeed, I have come to believe that Imperialism (which means the denationalising of nations) and the neo-Judaic ideas, as now expounded and as now animating politics in England (and perhaps more in France), are one and the same thing.'⁴² The addition of Jews to their criticism of imperialism therefore simplified their attempt to be anti-imperialist but virulently nationalist. The worst aspects of the Empire were not English in the best sense of the word at all, but the unnatural despotism of alien financiers.

Anti-Semitism was also seen by the *New Witness* as a sign of their liberation from Victorian pieties. For them, however, it was Victorian Liberalism rather than Victorian morality which was the culprit. Anti-Semitism was wrong, but it was less wrong than ignoring the Jewish question altogether. Thus although anti-Semitism was a 'most morbid and dangerous distortion', it was still true that 'the educated Victorian would have broadened his mind by being an Anti-Semite.'⁴³ However distasteful anti-Semitism might be, it could nevertheless uncover real problems. Thus Cecil Chesterton became increasingly aware that he was using anti-Semitism as a conceptual key: 'Again and again' he wrote 'we find ourselves interested in some totally different question; and

it turns into the Jewish question.²⁴⁴ He was also increasingly aware that this anti-Semitism was part of his political development and growing maturity. He talked about his earlier membership of the Fabian party as a time of political innocence before he had been made aware of the salience of the Jewish question: 'In those days I only thought of a Jew as an Englishman with an odd religion, and I knew nothing of the sacred blood of the Liverpool pawnbrokers or of the old moneylender's purchase of a peerage which was probably even then being negotiated.' He went on to further emphasize the way the role of the Jew in politics had illuminated his political outlook and confirmed his drift away from socialism: 'If I had known when I was a Fabian all that I know now about the way in which England is governed, many things hidden from me would have been plain. Only perhaps in that case I should not have been a Fabian.'²⁴⁵

III

The *New Witness's* attitude towards race and nationhood was drawn out in the coverage of four famous trials which supposedly said something about the role of international Jewry. The first was the Dreyfus case. Belloc had been a fierce anti-Dreyfusard in the nineties, and the case had become an obsession for him. Although the majority of the British establishment were pro-Dreyfus (or, at least, in favour of his release), Belloc's view reflected many of those, including some Marxists such as Hyndman and certain Irish Catholics such as Lord Justice Kilween, who felt alienated from this establishment.⁴⁶ Few were as obsessed as Belloc, however. When accused of being the only British person to be against Dreyfus he took this as yet more evidence of the strength of Jewish power in Britain.⁴⁷ He was convinced that the intelligence betrayed by Dreyfus fatally prolonged the Great War by permitting the German surprise on Mons in 1914.⁴⁸ 'It was the Dreyfus case which opened my eyes to the Jew question', Belloc was to remark in his old age.⁴⁹ The anti-Dreyfusard politicians Henri Rochefort and Paul Déroulède were given favourable obituaries the columns of the *Witness*.⁵⁰ Every time the case was mentioned it was as a stick with which to beat international Jewish power.

The coverage of Stinie Morrison, a poor Jew (unjustly) convicted and imprisoned for murder was used by the paper at the time (and by apologists afterwards) to show that they harboured no real prejudice against poor Jews but merely against the rich combines. But in every case the coverage of Morrison was used *exclusively* as a way of getting at the hypocrisy of rich Jews. Cecil Chesterton contrasted the lot of the rich Jew on trial against that of the poor: 'All that the resources of the Jew money power could do for him was done, with the result that after many vicissitudes and another

trial (at which he was condemned) he received a free pardon and was restored to his rank in the French Army.⁵¹ He then used it as an opportunity to subtly denigrate Jews, to emphasize their difference and to extol the moral superiority of the truly English:

It is not perhaps altogether to the credit of the Jewish community, which is so powerful in this country, that it has not rallied to the support of poor Morrison as it rallied to that of the wealthy Dreyfus. But there must surely be some Englishman left in whom the love of justice and an equal law is not dead.⁵²

More telling was the comparison of Dreyfus with Stewart, an English soldier who was convicted of spying in Germany. The *Witness* was outraged that the same voices that were raised for Dreyfus should not be raised for Stewart.⁵³ However, it was evident that the concern was not merely with judicial evidence. Dreyfus was not an Englishman's concern, yet the press were obsessed with it: 'If an innocent man suffered his blood was not on our head. Yet for a year or so our Press could talk and our middle classes could apparently think of nothing else but the misfortunes of this foreigner.'⁵⁴ Yet, 'Mr Stewart is an honourable English gentleman. He has, as we have said, served his country in arms and risked his life for her.'⁵⁵ The inference was that protests should be made against Stewart *because* he was English and *because* he had fought for her. The same reasons which conversely made a rootless Jew more likely to sell secrets to the enemy. Belloc went further than he perhaps meant to in venting his spleen, calling on primal racial passion to take vengeance on those of the same blood as Stewart's oppressors: 'For one Englishman subject to this terrorism in Germany, we have a hundred Germans under our hands today. A virile society would know how to deal with such an opportunity.'⁵⁶ The political climate was sympathetic towards such pronouncements on Germans. Was it anything more than the prevailing wind which held him back from saying something similar about the Jews?

The Mendel Beilis blood libel case in Kiev occupied the thoughts of Frank Hugh O'Donnell in 1914 and is indicative of the extremist drift of the paper's politics. O'Donnell saw Jews as the 'directors of the Revolutionary movement' who wished to secure Beilis's release. According to O'Donnell, 'The sensitive Judeans make a universal rumpus about every Jew traitor or monster from the Seine to the Volga or further.'⁵⁷ What is more, he claimed the honest Russian peasants wanted to hang Beilis, but did not because of an artificially produced jury disagreement. The foreign press reported an acquittal because they were afraid to print the truth.

The Board of Deputies of British Jews was accused of not giving Englishmen a fair hearing of the case by banning Richard Burton's book on ritual murder. This was given editorial support by Cecil Chesterton who wrote that the 'classic work of a great Englishman' should indeed be made available. The editorial reply to a letter from Israel Zangwill on the resulting Russian pogroms sympathized with the Russians and claimed that the Jews would 'be equally savage' if put in a similar position.⁵⁸

IV

It remains to be seen how these comments about the Jews were received and how they were in turn justified. Belloc had already acquired the reputation of anti-Semitism before he started his magazine. Yet it said something of the intellectual community of the time that his views were considered semi-respectable, they were not beyond the pale of normal intellectual enquiry. Thus Belloc was even afforded an interview by the *Jewish Chronicle* in 1910 where he gave a shorter and a milder version of the arguments which he used for his series in the *Eye-Witness*. Nevertheless, he insisted on the absolute impossibility of assimilation — 'the interests of the two races, their ideals, their psychology, are different' — and complained about 'Jewish cosmopolitan financial influence' which was 'unrestrained by all patriotic ties'. He also warned the Jews that persecution could follow if the rich Jews continued as they were. Nevertheless he was keen to grant freedom of religious observance and insist on his goodwill:

Whatever you print of this conversation please remember that never, either now or at any time, have I ever said anything that is antagonistic to an absolute freedom in the exercise of the Jewish religion.⁵⁹

The response to this interview was overwhelmingly hostile. J. Finn, a socialist, complained 'it is altogether immaterial to which race belong certain people who wield certain powers.' He thus saw Belloc's pseudo-legitimized ideas as particularly insidious:

Because Mr. Belloc is not one of those who accuse the Jews of eating Christian children, you regard him as a harmless sort of anti-Semite. Permit me, sir, to point out to you that just because he is not of the 'rabid order', he is the most dangerous.⁶⁰

C.A. Treeden agreed with this, considering that as such ideas were moved by 'conviction' rather than 'narrow mindedness' they were far more harmful than those of the 'rabid reviler or the persecutor.'⁶¹ There were also complaints

about the propriety of holding the interview in the first place, ‘the hospitality of your respected and widely-read columns inevitably gives them [Belloc’s ideas] a prominence and a publicity which their own merits would not secure.’ This put the editor on the defensive, and led him to claim that it was better to expose and destroy such ideas. While defending the interview, he certainly demonstrated that Belloc’s views were not appreciated in Jewish circles: ‘The ‘prominence and publicity’ we afforded to Mr. Belloc’s views will, we hope, have the effects which free ventilation gives to all disease germs.’⁶²

This interview also led to a gradual movement of the field of respectability away from the political discourse of Belloc and his associates; part of the reason behind the setting up of his own magazine. The *Jewish Chronicle* did publish another interview with the more mildly anti-Semitic G.K. Chesterton, with a similar outraged response in 1911. From then on, according to Dean Rapp, Greenberg’s papers ignored Belloc, the Chesterton brothers and their publications. During the Marconi Affair Greenberg did not single out the *New Witness* for condemnation even though he was aware of its anti-Semitic response.⁶³ This was due to a deliberate policy of ignorance rather than lack of offence. Cecil’s paper had acquired a reputation of extreme anti-Semitism amongst most Jews by 1913. Nevertheless, in November 1913 Cecil was invited to speak in front of the Young Hebrew Association. A letter to the editor of *The Jewish World* denounced this invitation of ‘an open, avowed and unblushing anti-Semite’ whose ‘calculated lies’ against the Jews appeared to be the *raison d’être* of his weekly. The invitation was withdrawn.⁶⁴ By the end of that year, Greenberg’s paper spoke out wholeheartedly against the *Witness*, warning that it ‘was like a stench from a small cesspool that if not stopped up could spread fever and pestilence. Consequently, it could not be ignored, nor could its editor.’⁶⁵ Within the Jewish community, therefore, initial attempts at dialogue led to hostility and the anti-Semitism of the paper and its editors was confirmed.

Within the paper itself, there was evidence of early Jewish readership and involvement. This certainly suggests that the question was not the absolute taboo insinuated by some Liberal newspapers. Belloc’s articles on the Jewish question even received favourable letters from Jews. Arthur J. Lewis wrote:

As a Jew who thinks that the Jewish habit of never frankly discussing what we are aiming at is most harmful, I should like to thank you for these articles, which I hope will be republished.⁶⁶

M.D. Eder also initially gave his assurance that ‘I really don’t mind a bit all the things you had to say about us — so much seemed true...’⁶⁷ However, the other side of the coin was the printed letters from extreme anti-Semites who

wanted to push the policies against the Jews further. Take this from P. Varnals, who urged people,

(...) to use all their legal rights for the purpose of taking power and authority out of Jewish hands or the hands of those who pander to the Jews and placing them with such as have at heart the welfare of the English people.⁶⁸

The paper was, to begin with, a contested space that contained Jewish input. This was soon lost, however. M.D. Eder withdrew his initial support in a letter where he complained that ‘...I must count you as definitely hostile towards my race. Week after week you have nothing but some indignant notice about the Jews — not only about rich and therefore bad Jews, as I once hoped to see your case.’⁶⁹

The writers for the *Witness* constantly denied their anti-Semitism. Belloc claimed explicitly that, ‘we have not the smallest prejudice against Jews as Jews, nor should we dream of doing them the injustice of regarding Isaacs as a fair specimen of their national character.’⁷⁰ Thus the attack was still rooted to rich Jews. Nevertheless, this kindly (or ironically magnanimous) note was soon replaced when Cecil Chesterton became editor and the main defence was the retrospectively more sinister notion of ‘respect’:

You do not fail in respect for a nation because you face its existence as a problem; you do not necessarily fail in respect for a nation because you treat it as a peril or even as an enemy. Fear is itself a kind of respect, and enemies can always respect each other.⁷¹

Cecil was pushed again and again to justify or defend the anti-Semitic notions of his paper, forever claiming Jews among his ‘personal friends’ or that he had ‘not the smallest amount of ill will’ towards them. Nevertheless, even in the defence he admitted the obsessive and necessary concern with Jewish names in the ‘infesting of politics’ and saw the condition as ‘inevitable’, ‘when a people, deprived of its own fatherland, is obliged to live among alien nations which are yet unable to absorb it.’⁷² The defences also warned of the danger of real brutal anti-Semitism, using this fear as an excuse for the necessity of their own milder version. This raises the question as to why the writers were so anxious to deny their anti-Semitism when it was a celebrated selling point of the magazine that it was a space where the ‘Jewish Question’ could be discussed without the apologies of the liberal media. Partly this was obviously an indication that prejudice expressed as prejudice was neither a selling point nor an attractive quality. But

it was also out of a sense of elitism and originality. They did think their position to be different from the more extreme 'gutter' anti-Semites and the openly anti-Semitic foreign press with which Belloc and Eccles would have been more familiar than most. They genuinely did not consider themselves to be anti-Semites, but their contortions of defence belied their intentions.

It was symptomatic that throughout these editorial contortions, the fringes of the *Witness* were gradually overtaken by more and more extreme anti-Semites. Some of these do not have the same editorial compulsion to nuance their position, and neither, more to the point, did the editors. Take for example:

Our country is really suffering from an invasion of the Jews. We have the right to defend ourselves against invasion and under the circumstances I have therefore no hesitation in signing myself,
Yours faithfully,
Anti-Semite. (M.E.W.)⁷³

Frank Hugh O'Donnell was also allowed to write long extremely anti-Semitic articles from the end of 1913 through 1914. Nor was he isolated within the circle. Cecil Chesterton introduced him with pride, as if he were a real catch for the paper:

The Editor feels great satisfaction in having been able to induce Mr. Frank Hugh O'Donnell, who played so brilliant a part in the Parliament of the seventies and eighties, to contribute a series of articles, which must needs be of notable historic interest.⁷⁴

Even Belloc himself grew increasingly anxious about the anti-Semitic tone of many of these contributors, in terms of conviction as well as taste and policy, '...I told him (Chesterton) repeatedly that the things he allowed O'Donnell to publish were unwise and deplorable.'⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Belloc was not entirely innocent here, as O'Donnell's first contribution, the publication of a letter which had been rejected by *The Times*, had occurred (albeit with an official caveat) under his editorship.⁷⁶ The narrowing of defensive options became such that the main defence became merely that of freedom of expression. By the end of 1913, anti-Semitism was no longer specifically denied,

We have printed contributions that might, without absurdity, be called Anti-Semite; (...) We have printed these various views for the simple

reason that separates us from nearly the whole Press: that we are not paid to suppress them.⁷⁷

The editors also complained their views were compatible with Zionism. This enabled Cecil Chesterton, in one defensive letter to the *New Age* to call his views ‘Semitism’. Zionism was considered entirely consistent with their own exclusionist policy, ‘We may have used the word ‘Jew’ in denunciation, but only when the implication was ‘Crypto-Jew...Israel should have its own life, its own representations, its own law.’⁷⁸ This meant that although the *New Witness* was ignored by the liberal Jewish press, it included contributions from prominent Zionists, such as M.D. Eder. Nor did Israel Zangwill see the periodical as ‘out of bounds’: Cecil Chesterton printed a long letter from Zangwill in 1914 complaining about *New Witness* criticisms of his play, *The Melting Pot*, and included an editorial reply sympathetic to territorial Zionism.⁷⁹ This is not as incongruous as it might seem. ‘The fact is inescapable [writes Professor M. Scult of Vassar College] that many Zionists and anti-Semites share in common the conviction that integration into non-Jewish society is impossible and that basically the Emancipation was a mistake.’⁸⁰ The *New Witness* noted sympathetically the eleventh Zionist Conference at Vienna and supported Jewish traders in Jerusalem who insisted on speaking Hebrew rather than German.⁸¹ Even Belloc admitted in a letter that the desire ‘for recognised nationhood, if possible with a territory attached to it, is one that absolutely suits the solution we have suggested.’⁸² The key point remained, however: it was not only a recognition of difference, it was a fundamental lack of empathy; even a refusal to admit that empathy was possible. ‘The ethics of the Oriental we do not propose to judge; we cannot understand them anymore than they can ours.’⁸³ Thus a respect for Zionism could coexist with Frank Hugh O’Donnell’s dehumanizing and biological metaphors for the Jews — ‘locusts’, ‘weevils’ — which would have looked completely at home in Nazi propaganda.⁸⁴ This is a difference of degree rather than kind once empathy is explicitly denied as an ideal rather than merely a practical difficulty.

V

The war radicalized the *New Witness*’s criticisms of the Jews. The paper ran many articles on the German connections of wealthy Jewish financiers. It was not as if they *were* German, as they were ‘cosmopolitans, wanderers on the face of the earth, indiscriminate looters of the European nations’. Nevertheless, the ‘immediate and intimate connections’ of men such as Speyer and Shuster were German.⁸⁵ Part of the *Witness* claim against the

financier was couched in the language of equality — the poor Germans were being punished and interned, so why should the wealthy financiers go about unrestricted?⁸⁶ The war normalized their pre-1914 claims that such men should not be allowed to influence the affairs of the ordinary Englishman. The *New Witness* recommended that the ‘whole group of German and German-Jewish financiers (...) should be packed off into a concentration camp until the end of the war.’ The editorial nevertheless suggested that they should be treated well; perhaps ‘set to wood-cutting or some such thing.’⁸⁷ Presumably these rustic activities would have a salutary effect on such cosmopolitan and rootless degenerates.

Even those Jews who were not involved in financial dealings with the Germans were increasingly seen as naturally pacific. This was even the case for those who chose to fight in the war. G.K. Chesterton felt he was praising the Jews when he singled out those who did fight as being especially brave. He thought that ‘it must have been by sheer individual imagination and virtue that they pierced through the pacifist materialism of their tradition, and perceived both the mystery and meaning of chivalry.’⁸⁸ Such a comment unwittingly shows the extent to which he thought most Jews were infected by ‘pacifist materialism’. More revealingly, however, it emphasized Jewish difference. Even those who went to war only ‘perceived’ chivalry through an effort of imagination; it was not something that could ever be natural to them. With regard to the ‘natural’ pacifism of the Jewish majority, Chesterton’s language became clearer. In an ominous and disingenuous piece of advice, he warned the Jews that, ‘If they talk anymore of their tomfool pacifism to raise a storm against the soldiers and their wives and widows, they will find out what is meant by Anti-Semitism for the first time.’⁸⁹ Jews were naturally pacific, but they ought to keep their mouths shut or accept the consequences. Chesterton’s *New Witness* opinions thus wrapped up prejudice in supposedly well-intentioned advice.

If Jews were not seen as explicitly German or pacific, their supposedly internationalist character could be presented in an increasingly negative light during the war years. Jewish finance had shown itself to be ‘openly anti-national’⁹⁰ even where it was not consciously in league with Germany. Cecil Chesterton’s move away from socialism was confirmed by the ‘Jewish’ internationalism of Marx. He asked whether there was any reason socialists had assumed there was a connection between concern for the poor and internationalism, ‘except the fact that their economic theory ... was invented by a Jew, who naturally saw no difference between Europeans, just as we see no difference between Chinamen.’⁹¹ In the eyes of the *New Witness*, internationalism even prevented the Jews from doing good. The fact that the reception committee for Belgian refugees was organized by Jews

rather than Englishmen was considered an 'outrage'.⁹² Fears of internationalist influence were naturally increased after the Bolshevik revolution. The Russian revolution was seen to be a good thing as long as it was a national revolution. The Witness stated plainly that it did not care how revolutionary it was, so long as it was Russian.⁹³ However, the increasing danger was that it was being hijacked by an 'unnational element' that should be recognized as a 'clique of Jews'.⁹⁴ And once the Bolshevik revolution had taken Russia out of the war, the Russian demonstrations in London were seen as explicitly Jewish in character, a fact that they felt had been concealed in the mainstream newspapers.⁹⁵

As always, G.K. Chesterton tried to temper these outright expressions of anti-Semitism and anti-cosmopolitanism and, as often was the case, he ended up merely giving them a more nuanced defence. For him there was good Jewish cosmopolitanism as well as bad cosmopolitanism. Oscar Levy was an example of the former, and Chesterton praised the 'colossal candour in his intellect'.⁹⁶ Dr Levy could use his international position to be a neutral witness to world events. However, for the bad cosmopolitan Jew, it was natural that they should become, 'the spy, the seller of secrets, the wire-puller of mean wars'. In an unfortunate attempt to clarify things he insisted that 'it is not that Jews are traitors, but rather that traitors are Jews'.⁹⁷ In other words it was not mere idle prejudice that Jews should be accused of espionage, as their cosmopolitan nature made them far more likely to be involved in such things. The fact that not *all* Jews were spies merely backed up the lesser claim that many of them were likely to be so. This increasing insistence on the internationalism of the Jews led to playful rejoinders from the *New Age*. Taking issue with Chesterton's fulminations against the Jews, Orage claimed that the policy of international Catholics was equally anti-national.⁹⁸ However, Orage's opinions were more an attack on Catholicism than on anti-Semitism: 'If we *must* have an international tyranny (though I deny the necessity) give us the Jewish capitalists, who demand only the labour of our bodies to pay their interest, rather than the tyrannical Church which demands our souls into the bargain'.⁹⁹

The war also increased calls for Zionism as an answer to 'the Jewish question.' The 1917 Balfour declaration was welcomed.¹⁰⁰ The reason for this support of Zionism had been repeatedly expounded. Cecil Chesterton felt that once a Jewish state existed, 'it would be easy to treat them [the Jews] in every country as a foreign community with their proper privileges and their proper disqualifications'.¹⁰¹ This reasoning became less guarded as the war progressed. In a 1917 leader on the Jewish question, the paper accepted that it was a good idea for the Jews to build Jerusalem 'where they are entitled to build it' but that they took issue with those Jews who 'seem to have taken

the immortal words of Blake too literally, and have decided to build "Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land", and to use the same as a permanent abiding place.¹⁰² This reasoning was accompanied by a feeling that Zionism would reduce more brutal anti-Semitism. The *Witness* understood this brutal anti-Semitism even if it did not condone it. Cecil Chesterton felt that there was 'abundant material' for violent anti-Semitism even if he did not himself desire it.¹⁰³ Zionism was for the good of everyone as it exposed the failure of assimilation: 'It will be better for the Jew in the long run to be distrusted as an alien and respected as a stranger, than to be trusted as a citizen and shot as a traitor.'¹⁰⁴ Zangwill's letters complaining about spy-mania, therefore, could be perceived by the *New Witness* as fair only if Zangwill claimed to speak only as a 'Jewish patriot'. In making such a defence, however, the *Witness* was keen to point out that 'he and all his people will have lost for ever all claim to be British citizens.'¹⁰⁵

This support of Zionism confirmed the essentialist and exclusive nature of the *New Witness* nationalism. It was impossible for someone to go against their nature. Choice had nothing to do with it; nor had liberal notions of citizenship. Increasingly the *Witness* rejected the old Catholic view that a Jew ceased to be a Jew on conversion: 'One might as reasonably say that if a black-a-moor adopts Calvinism he immediately turns white.'¹⁰⁶ The racial and cultural identity of Jews was seen as fixed. Naturalization was a sham because it did not change the *essence* of a person. It was an 'empty form'¹⁰⁷, especially when coupled with the equally empty and deceitful sin of name-changing. Indeed, as the war progressed the *New Witness* called for name changing to be made illegal.¹⁰⁸ The problems inherent in such a fixed and uncompromising view of national and cultural identity were dimly perceived by the editors. In one reply to a letter complaining about the Jewish policy of the paper they openly expressed their confusion:

We have never denied that a Jew who is sure he feels like an Englishman might logically be naturalised as one; but only that he can be both an Englishman and a Jew. At the same time, we are far from sure he would be right in being sure of it. The trouble is that the Jew was outside the nations during the process that made them, and the last point is itself an example.¹⁰⁹

It is almost as if the writers did not want to say that a Jew could not be an Englishman for fear that it would be interpreted as overtly anti-Semitic, yet the ambiguously expressed 'far from sure he would be right in being sure' suggests that in their hearts they felt he could not. Culture could not be

chosen but was part of a dialogue with the ancestors which could not be rejected. This insistence on cultural difference led to further rejections of the possibility of empathy. That fact that two Jews were involved in directing a memorial to Scott of the Antarctic was seen as inappropriate, as none of their race was involved in the expedition. The purity of this mission should not be sullied by those who were not culturally connected to it: 'It is somewhat of a travesty' went the article, 'that the sentiments of the English people on behalf of the dead men should find expression through Mr. Levy Lawson, MP, and Sir E. Speyer, neither of whom can know anything about the country whose 'memorial' they are directing.'¹¹⁰ Zangwill, too, was almost excused his anti-war remarks because of the difficulty a Jew has in understanding 'the motives that influence Europeans.'¹¹¹ For Belloc, again, this lack of empathy was wrapped up in opinions that were thought to be good for the Jews. Conscription was not necessarily wrong but it was wrong for the Jews because 'to compel a Jew to die or risk death for national ideals that are not his own, and cannot be his own, is as wicked a thing as can be conceived'.¹¹² Once again, empathy was not only mistaken but also impossible.

The *New Witness* continued to claim that its hard headed policy was good for the Jews. It rehashed the familiar argument that if the Jews took notice of the paper's 'reasonable' criticisms they would avoid a real and brutal anti-Semitism. But the appearance of anti-Semitism in the British press outside their own columns was not necessarily something that they regretted. That the *Morning Post* was doing so was unfortunate in some respects, but evidence of the fact that more papers would need to discuss the Jewish problem. This seemed to vindicate their earlier position:

This paper was long regarded as the only English paper that could be accused, even hastily, of Anti-Semitism. Eventually, for all we know, it will be the only Pro-Semite organ; in the sense of the only paper prepared to protect the Jews from a really irrational persecution.¹¹³

The only way to avoid 'irrational' persecution was presumably to accept justified criticism. It was felt that the *New Witness* view of the Jews was increasingly being vindicated. The paper 'had the name of a fanatical rag in the time of a heavy and hypocritical peace'¹¹⁴ but war had shown the wisdom of its policies. Indeed, when physical attacks on the Jews took place during the war, G.K. Chesterton expressed his regret, but felt that it was partly the Jews' fault for not reading the *New Witness*.¹¹⁵ Such unpleasantness would not have happened if 'we had got rid of the whole hypocrisy of not calling a Jew a Jew'.¹¹⁶ This led to G.K. Chesterton himself becoming

increasingly the target of complaints about his attitude. Austin H. Johnson complained that he was left ‘dumb with astonishment’ at Chesterton’s views and felt that such a popular writer ‘has a responsibility which does not belong to the ordinary person, and it behoves him to use his position with dignity and restraint.’¹¹⁷ G.K. Chesterton surely took such opinions to heart, for this article was far more extreme than those that he was to pen in the inter-war years. There is a sense, indeed, that he tried to obliquely apologize for these kind of views, claiming that the whole nature of the paper made him more political than he would otherwise been.¹¹⁸

VI

The *New Age* did not rise to programmatic editorial anti-Semitism at the same level. Nevertheless, its acceptance and toleration of it in the name of editorial freedom provided a similarly sympathetic forum. Indeed, this led to expressions of extreme anti-Semitism in its pages. Arthur Kitson’s article expressed the ideas of evil and secretive Jewish wire-pullers equally as virulently as anything in the *Witness*:

The world’s rulers are men mainly conspicuous by their noses, who occupy quiet offices at the backs of the great building houses of London, Paris, New York, Berlin and Vienna — men who know nothing of the smell of gunpowder except that used for killing grouse or pheasant. Your modern Napoleon is a money lender, a credit dealer, a direct descendant of those who Christ drove from the Temple!¹¹⁹

Arthur Kitson, an inventor, currency reformer and entrepreneur, was to become a prominent member of the vehemently anti-Semitic ‘Britons Society’ in the 1920s.¹²⁰ He obviously saw the *New Age* as a radical haven for such views, if not always editorially supportive. But the idea of Jewish capacity for finance as a racial characteristic *was* an editorial view, expressed by Orage. While not making the connection itself, it offered justification for the other criticisms of Jewish financial capital within its pages:

It is part of the apologetics of humbug to pretend that the Jews (as a race, of course) had ever any genius for anything else but money. In agriculture and the other occupations they have no skill, and for such occupations they have no native liking. With the utmost freedom of choice and in open competition with the other races, they would still have chosen finance, for the simple reason that in every other business they would be condemned to inferiority.¹²¹

Quintus's later anti-Semitic jibes, which quoted Houston Stewart Chamberlain, saw the *New Age's* economic view as entirely consistent with his own hatred of the Jews.¹²²

The *New Age*, for all that it was not programmatically anti-Semitic in the same way as the *New Witness*, received many complaints about its allegedly anti-Jewish attitude. Anti-Semitism entered the *New Age* because of a very elitist notion of freedom. Nothing should be beyond the pale of discussion or criticism, especially in an intellectual and responsible journal. A letter from Samuel Rich complained of the 'bitter attacks' on the Jews in the paper, regretting that in the 'Utopia' conceived by the paper, the 'race of Isaiah' would find no place.¹²³ This letter particularly saw such views as alienating to 'decent people' stressing that the remarks were not necessarily confined to the fringes of the paper, 'a few weeks back ... it was given as an editorial view that Jewish lawyers should not be permitted to practice in "our" courts'.¹²⁴ The editorial justification for this was to be repeated many times,

We have no intention of being unfair. There are exceptions to every rule, and we should have allowed for them. But our correspondent should recognise that the Jews receive no worse criticism in THE NEW AGE than the Scotch, the Welsh, the American — and how many other races and nations?¹²⁵

In other words, the Jews were no special case; they should stop complaining and accept possibly justified criticism. As this unmediated justification was repeated it became more and more insulting. Romney, for example, used the same argument with more violent language in February 1914:

The Jews have no special right to complain. God may have made them his chosen people, but I have not made them mine, and if I do not like them I shall say so. They must take the thick with the thin, like all the others.¹²⁶

After this tilt at Jewish arrogance, the next week's justification was spiced up with a criticism of Jews' unmanliness and unimportance. He complained about not being able to say anything about the Jews 'without arousing a temper of silly and unmanly squealing'.¹²⁷

The ability to express hostility to the Jews, therefore, became part of the freedom and supposed strengths of the paper. Indeed, for some of the contributors, its free expression was part of their emancipation from Victorian

pieties, a proof of their avant-garde credentials. Ezra Pound's contributions were a case in point. Far from the 'suburban prejudice'¹²⁸ he derided later, his anti-Semitism was in this case precisely the opposite, shocking and untrammelled free expression worthy of the metropolitan intellectual. Even the one attempt at extended criticism and extended examination of anti-Semitism entitled, 'The Folly of Anti-Semitism' revealed much in common with the anti-Jewish and racial assumptions of the *New Witness*. Orage first complimented Britain on the lack of organized anti-Semitism, blamed the Catholics (possibly Chesterton and Belloc) for what there was and cited the Marconi Scandal. However, Orage insisted that this was 'not due to any want of race feeling among Englishmen', suggesting that race feeling, and the passion which it produced, were good things. The English were as 'nationalistic' as other races and rightly so. Orage also insisted that the 'British and Jewish races are anti-pathetic'. The real reason for the collapse of anti-Semitism was 'an embarrassing absence of facts and data on which to base such a movement'. He claimed that Jewish racial proportion in finance was not excessive, that many more 'Saxons' and 'Celts' were involved and that most Jews hated usury.¹²⁹ This argument suggested that if it could be proved that Jews *were* racially dominant, then the prejudice would be justified. What is more, Orage went on to show that this did not mean that he approved of 'semitic habits, influence or culture'. Much in Jewish life was 'properly the subject of adverse criticism'. The Jews were not a financial problem but they were a 'racial and ethnic problem'. They were 'Oriental' and therefore 'servile'. What is more, they should be kept separate, and indeed held good lessons for the purity of other races:

They are a race apart, and probably it is better that they should so continue. A Jew of ancient lineage recently said to us: 'I trace my descent from Benjamin; who am I that I should marry into an upstart race?' If his arrogance amused us, we also admired it. We thought that we too belonged in 'no mean city'; that our own race might, after all, deteriorate by intermixture; that racial destiny, whether for Jew or Gentile, was a sacred thing and best developed to its final purpose in purity of blood and spirit.¹³⁰

This particular brand of philo-Semitism was also striking in J.M. Kennedy, the second most important writer on the *New Age* staff. In his series on the 'Present Kalpa' he praised the 'eastern race', especially the Semites and the Hindus, for having developed with hierarchy. What is more, in his book, *The Religions and Philosophies of the East*, he saw the Jews as an intellectual bulwark against democracy: 'The morality of even the later

Jewish prophets, however, is masculine and aristocratic as compared with that of the Christian apostles, which is feminine and democratic.²¹³¹ What is more, this characteristic in the Jews was singled out for special praise as they had maintained their 'aristocratic' status in the face of all the odds: 'Without a country, weighed down by persecution, oppression, prejudice, and unjust laws, they have yet been able to maintain their existence as an aristocratic race in the midst of the most profound hostility which has ever been vented on any sect.'²¹³² Curiously then, using racist terminology, Kennedy criticized anti-Semitism and democracy at the same time: 'From the aristocratic standpoint, as opposed to the democratic outlook and the equality of man laid down by Christianity, what we owe to the Jews must never be forgotten.'²¹³³ It is possible that Kennedy was influenced in some of these ideas by Disraeli himself. According to recent scholarship, Disraeli had not only characterized the Jews as an aristocratic race, but also emphasized their 'manliness'.²¹³⁴

Nor was this argument confined to the Jews, it was applied to other races. This was an Orientalism which, instead of seeing the East as inferior or as anti-pathetic, saw it as the origin of a hard, masculine, anti-democratic ideology suitable for the *New Age*. When Nietzsche's *Beyond good and evil* was first reviewed in the *New Age*, the reviewer (probably Kennedy) referred to India, 'where for at least three thousand years, the Nietzschean doctrine of Beyond Good and Evil has been taught more or less explicitly.'²¹³⁵ This attitude sometimes led to perverted insights. For example, he saw it as wrong to enforce western civilization on a completely different race. But his conclusion from this was: 'It requires an aristocracy to administer India as we must administer India; the English middle classes are not aristocrats; and there is an end on't.'²¹³⁶ Indeed, the mysticism of the east is used as the source of some half-explained 'ideal' which might rejuvenate the west: 'Only in Asia is this ideal wholly to be found; in the Latin countries of the rest of the world it still subsists to some extent. Whether the human race is destroyed to rise or to sink, depends upon the ultimate recovery or the complete loss of this ideal.'²¹³⁷ Kennedy exhibited a striking counter myth to Rousseau, where early humanity was powerful and aristocratic rather than free and equal. He urged looking into ancient legends and biblical riddles: '[the reader] will find that an attempt to answer this question will lead him back into early Babylonian times. There, perhaps, the splendour of the Sun-God will enable him to discard the heavy cloak of arguments and conjectures that pedants have wrapped round him; and, freed from this tiresome encumbrance, he will realise to the full the poetry of early humanity.'²¹³⁸ Robert Casillo has uncovered similar beliefs in the early work of Pound.²¹³⁹ Kennedy's book on *The Religions and Philosophies of the East*

makes unexamined links between these ancient caste structures and modern society. For example, he claimed that:

It has virtually been established, for instance, that the present upper or governing classes throughout Europe are the descendants of the invading western Aryans, the menials (i.e. the so-called 'working' classes) being the descendants of the uncivilised and ill-developed aborigines.¹⁴⁰

This did not lead to the caste system as in India, but nevertheless the differences remained, and provided justification for hierarchical theories of political organization:

The result is that at this day the two races, the higher and the lower, appear to the superficial eye to have fused, more especially as common advantages and necessities have long since developed what, for want of a better term, we may call a semi-instinct, 'patriotism'. Nevertheless, when great moral (not political) crises occur, the difference between the high and low races becomes apparent.¹⁴¹

He was keen to point out that the Aryan would have nothing but contempt for democracy or women's suffrage. He would be motivated by 'the most aristocratic individualism it is possible to conceive'.¹⁴² Kennedy ended his book with a note of regret: 'If only the Brahmanical caste system could be introduced into Europe and maintained in a pure form for three or four thousand years ...'¹⁴³

This conception of the east was rejected by the *New Witness* writers. It is indicative that the argument, however, was based on the same set of assumptions. The new aristocratic Nietzscheanism of Kennedy was attacked in the name of the old practical Toryism where men were set in subordination because it worked and it was convenient to accept it. However, the ideas were attacked for their provenance as much as the content. The theory was bad because it was 'eastern'. Anti-Semitism also subtly came into the attack: 'It is significant that the only political thinker in England who sometimes hinted at it was the Oriental Disraeli.'¹⁴⁴ The imagery of the east was presented in demonic terms: 'It is one of the evil things out of the East which are besieging our civilisation at this moment of its temporary decline and striving to force an entrance. It is a thing we should fight like Hell — the Hell from which it comes.'¹⁴⁵ Both the *New Age* eastern mysticism and the *New Witness* attack on it were therefore variations of a similar Orientalist and reductive viewpoint. Just as Kennedy lauded the

east for its aristocratic and Aryan mysticism, the *New Witness* loaded this symbolic site with everything they saw as bad in the modern world. G. K. Chesterton objected to its people as insects, encouraging an image which flits from prejudiced eastern myths to suggestion at the new danger from reforming politicians and intellectuals:

The Eastern Armies were indeed like insects; in their blind, busy destructiveness, in their black nihilism of personal outlook, in their hateful indifference to individual life and love, in their base belief in mere numbers, in their pessimistic courage and their atheistic patriotism, the riders and raiders of the East are indeed like all the creeping things of the earth.¹⁴⁶

East was a negative quality in Belloc's work too, the opposite to Western European civilization. The East End was the Jewish enclave: 'The dirty light grew in the east of the world, and lit without hope the labour and despair of the city; the masts and spars of the ships a long way off in the docks showed delicate and true.'¹⁴⁷ Indeed, in the work of the *New Witness*, 'Asiatic' and 'Oriental' became euphemisms for the Jews. Lunn has suggested that this might be a conflation of imagery with the massive wave of Chinese immigration in London.¹⁴⁸ This further demonstrates the fact that at base these ideas were about exclusion rather than emancipation from tyranny. Cecil Chesterton drew explicit parallels between the 'alien' Japanese in America and the Jews in Britain in his comment on the proposed measure of the State of California to limit alien (especially Japanese) ownership of land:

The Asiatic Exclusion Law prevents the Japanese from becoming naturalised. He can sell or barter, rent land or till it, make money or owe it, but, and therein lies the crux, he will remain a Jap and a foreigner, and the pitiful masquerade of an Asiatic posing as a white man is prevented. (...) The danger of allowing a tribe of alien immigrants to assume the rights of citizenship has been too clearly demonstrated within recent times to need further comment.¹⁴⁹

This again hammers home the lack of empathy, the refusal even to consider that empathy was possible. Moreover, this cut both ways and was used as an argument against Samuel being in a position of power over a European people: 'The mind of the oriental is notoriously unable to gauge the character of a Western people, and Samuel has shown himself more than usually obtuse in this respect.'¹⁵⁰

For both papers, this lack of empathy, coupled with a desire for purity in politics and art, led to a horror of miscegenation. For the *New Age* this was an off-shoot yet again of the unsentimental urge to accept the reality and modernity of racial difference. Orage approved of the boycott of Jack Jackson, 'the negro pugilist', writing that, '...the colour prejudice is real, and in our opinion properly so. Miscegenation is one of the worst fates that can befall any nation. To the extent that individual coloured men are publicly applauded here, the wise tabu on intermixture is weakened.'¹⁵¹ What is more, this is linked to the same spiritual unity which informed their project for the organization of labour:

We are, as our readers know, against miscegenation, the intermixture of races, for nothing but harm in our experience has come from it. We are equally opposed to what may be called economic miscegenation, which is no other than the intermixture of standards of living with bastard results.¹⁵²

Indeed, the question of race in the future organization of labour was explicitly touched upon. There were plenty of letters expressing fear of foreigners who would be prepared to work for a lower wage than the 'pure Saxon' and thus hold up his emancipation. The reply to this did not explicitly rule out immigration, but came down in favour of controls, appealing to the 'aristocracy of labour' and underlying the exclusivity of guilds, 'Industrial England under the Guild System can control immigration by the simple means of refusing membership to any but first class workmen.'¹⁵³ Orage actually foresaw the future of National Socialism in an unequal world system, but reassured himself that under a higher form of life, such things would be impossible.¹⁵⁴

These considerations on race did not always lead to an interest in eugenic racial theories. There was, of-course, in both papers a belief that blacks were inferior to whites. 'The negroes, wherever they are to be found,' wrote J.M. Kennedy, 'belong to an inferior race.'¹⁵⁵ J.M. Kennedy himself was believer in scientific racial distinctions, commenting on the International Race Congress of 1911 that, 'This would have been a valuable Congress if its members had not had the fatal *arrière-pensée* that race distinctions were bad and should be got rid of.'¹⁵⁶ Similar theories were expressed in the 'Symposiums on Racial Development'¹⁵⁷ held in the magazine's pages, and in favourable book reviews to racial theorists such as the bizarre *Awakening of a race* by G.E. Boxall which explained all modern trends through the interaction of two races, the black-haired *Melenochroi* and the fair-haired *Xanthochroi*.¹⁵⁸ However, there were equally many

dissenters to racial characterization. The Symposiums on Racial Development were not necessarily indicative of an essentializing racist viewpoint that was particular to the *New Age*. Rather, they were merely facets of the paper's self-styled sophistication and place at the forefront of new ideas. Indeed, many of the contributors to these symposiums, including Hobhouse and Bosanquet, rejected notions of biological or racial degeneracy, and others, while mute about the concept, denied that it was happening. Others did use it as a platform for eugenic or racial theories, but it was a platform that at least had the other side. Those with eugenic propensity wrote more, but that was because they were more interested in the subject and the questions were tailored towards them. Even then, most of this was what has been characterized by Searle and others as 'positive' eugenics in that it approved of sociological rather than biological intervention to improve the race.¹⁵⁹ Only one correspondent out of nineteen, E. Ray Lankester, overtly talked of stock and breeding: 'Looked at from the breeder's point of view the case is simple enough. It is merely this, that there is in modern states no attempt whatever made to favour good stock, and every facility given for diseased injurious stock to permeate the whole breed and bring it ultimately into a relatively worthless or 'degenerate' condition.'¹⁶⁰ Another, J.S. Mackintosh, talked of the inability of the blond race to adapt to modern industrial conditions (a cause, apparently, of Nietzsche's bitterness). This led him to racial theories about 'square pegs in round holes'.¹⁶¹ These symposiums were genuinely an unbiased forum for such ideas, therefore, rather than an editorial policy on eugenics. They were indicative merely of the acceptability, but also the lack of universal acceptance, of such ideas in Edwardian intellectual society. Elsewhere in the paper, T.E. Hulme saw 'all this racial gossip about philosophers' as 'a little tedious'.¹⁶² Orage cautioned against a preoccupation with the physical means of eugenics: '...their means, my friend, their means! Preoccupation with the actual process of child production is a mark of superficiality, if not of degeneracy, wherever it appears.'¹⁶³

The *New Witness*, despite its insistence on separate spheres, saw scientific racial theories as part of the same liberal reforming paradigm as all the other ills of modernity. Cecil Chesterton complained that 'Once you begin substituting a fancy thing like race for a solid thing like nationality there are no end to the insanities in which you may be landed.'¹⁶⁴ Racial eugenic theories were also seen as un-Catholic. The paper campaigned against the 1913 Mental Deficiency Act, and Belloc and the Chesterton brothers criticized the 'progressive' eugenicists.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the striking thing remains how much the modern discourse of racial differences had seeped in to their views of Jews, despite their ostensible efforts to the contrary.

Both the *New Age* and the *New Witness* tried to set themselves up as elitist, free arenas of discussion where any idea could be expressed, including anti-Semitism. In the *New Age* this was not given express editorial approval, but it was nonetheless allowed to exist freely. Indeed, its constant expression — deliberately speaking the prejudice much as a child swears — was often seen as proof of its manly ‘freedom’ and avant-garde credentials. In the *New Witness* the prejudice was not merely a residue of feeling but was reified into a theory. It became an essential part of the paper’s criticism of parliamentary corruption and capitalism. While to begin with this was claimed merely to be an attack on certain sorts of rich Jews it became an exclusionary tactic against the Jewish ‘race’ as a whole. From being the only paper to discuss the Jewish question, it became a forum agitating for its solution. The reactions of the Jews in the wider community from early ambivalence or sympathy to later revulsion shows the gradual awareness of how such ideologies could act in the wider political framework, and shows up the myth of a neutral intellectual sphere divorced from everything else. Anti-Semitism was an acceptable currency in the intellectual climate in which these journals were produced and consumed. For the *New Age* it was useful, for the *New Witness* essential.

6. 'STERILE VIRGINS ON THE DRAB RAMPAGE': THE IMAGE OF WOMEN IN THE *NEW AGE* AND THE *NEW WITNESS*

The *New Age* and the *New Witness* were predominantly and self-consciously male spaces.¹ This was not merely a normative reflection of the status of journalism as a whole; almost all newspapers were, after all, written by men and projected an inherited construction of masculinity and male issues. However, paradoxically, the connection and proximity to progressive feminist movements and issues through personnel, publishing and doctrinal affiliation meant that both papers had to self-consciously situate themselves against the vote and against the liberties of women. The need to affirm their views on such questions is a reflection of modernity, in the sense that it admits the debate rather than holding it as self-evident. The strength and visibility of the women's movement was what made this such a burning issue in the years before the war. In both papers, rejection of the female vote took an organic place in their ideological system, alongside their distrust of the mechanisms of liberal parliamentary democracy and the organization of the English workman. However, beyond these political constructions lie a plethora of images and discussions about the role of women in general (rather than the suffragettes or the vote in particular) which oscillated between misogyny, patronization, and an attempt to observe and neutralize some of the gains of feminism.

I

Both papers were, of course, completely opposed to the suffrage movement. The *New Witness* saw the suffragettes as rich, middle-class prigs. It complained that the vote had been abused by a group of smart ladies to deflect the democratic movement from its course.² The wealth of those involved was constantly emphasized, as if to insinuate the cynical reality behind their posturing. They were already well-off and the vote was

useless to them anyway. They were also seen to lack humour, the deep belly laugh of the freeborn Englishman that was later blessed by the Vorticist manifesto. Two things had 'distinguished the movement from its inception; an abnormal supply of money and an abnormal absence of humour.'³ These wealthy women were also seen as elitist in that they did not believe in democracy. The *Witness* rejoiced when the suffrage movement was put in a difficult position when shown not to want the enfranchisement of *all* ladies.⁴ The deep subconscious current of democracy was against them. The paper constantly emphasized the opposition of the real people of England. Suffragettes were against the referendum, 'for the reason that they know perfectly well that the mass of the English people, the great body of English thought which is strongest and most native to the populace, the immixture of women in public life is odious.'⁵ Lansbury had been defeated in the 1912 by-election at Bow and Bromley, according to the *Eye-Witness* analysis, because suffragettes made his support for them the sole issue of the election. Nor was this hatred for suffragettes confined to working-class men. This hatred 'is as nothing to the emotions which that sort of thing arouses in the wife and mother of the working class.'⁶ The vote for women was a hobby of the middle classes, despised or unwanted by the majority of the population, and therefore undemocratic. It was obviously the 'negation of democracy'. The *New Witness* even suggested a referendum which should include women. Cecil Chesterton had 'no objection whatsoever' to raise to this idea. He was 'convinced that the only result will be to make the majority against votes for women considerably greater.'⁷ This view of the suffrage movement was a significant argument used by anti-suffragists at other levels of society, especially those on the left. Indeed, it was perhaps as much of a linchpin to anti-suffragist arguments on the left as 'natural order' ideas were to the right.⁸ Belloc himself had been involved in a campaign committee emphasizing this point during his time as an MP. This committee, which included A. MacCallum Scott and Neil Primrose from the Liberals and J.W. Hills and Arnold Ward for the Conservatives, attempted to dissuade members from supporting Kemp's Conciliation Bill in May 1911. They also provided their own anti-suffrage petitions signed by 337,000 people in 1908, by 254,000 in 1909, and by 329,000 in 1911.⁹

Coupled with this invocation of true democracy, however, was the same mistrust for its liberal parliamentary manifestation. The wealthy women were seen as part of the clique of financiers and Liberal politicians who were using parliament for their own ends. The suffragettes, according to the paper were, 'closely connected in various ways with the little co-opted clique that really directs the government'.¹⁰ Miss Pankhurst was criticized in the same language as the politicians for trying to ingratiate herself with the Party System:

'Truly Miss Pankhurst is already familiarising herself with the machinery she may some day have to handle, and getting well into training for her "career"'.¹¹ Even if the women deserved the vote, therefore, they should not have it because the vote was useless. 'Voting is not democracy,' said the *Eye-Witness* explicitly, 'it is at best a more or less useful method of achieving democracy'.¹² This was disingenuously even used in parliament's favour when it defeated the Women's Suffrage Bill by 47 votes, acting in this one case in a 'democratic' way.¹³ Nevertheless, the machine as it stood was the negation of democracy:

As things stand today, it clearly would not matter in the least if women had the vote, or if babies had the vote, or if cows had the vote. In nineteen cases out of twenty the Machine succeeds in returning the candidate it wants to return, and, if this result were obtained by counting cabbages instead of electors; it would be difficult to show that anybody would be a penny the better or worse.¹⁴

G.K. Chesterton tried to express this in a way which was advantageous to women. 'The question is not whether women are good enough for the vote,' he insisted, 'but whether votes are good enough for women'.¹⁵ Readers would have been aware that Chesterton saw parliamentary democracy as inherently flawed, so this comment says as much about a perceived pure role of women as it does about the impotence of the mechanisms of political power. The same idea was expressed much more harshly in the *New Age*. The whole question was meaningless because of the effeminacy of democratic ideas. Only homosexuals or women would want to vote anyway. 'I am entirely in favour of women's suffrage,' sneered the Nietzschean A.M. Ludovici. 'Truth to tell, only women ought to vote; only women do vote.'¹⁶ And Ezra Pound told women that they were 'perfectly welcome' to his vote because he didn't want it.¹⁷

The tone of the attacks on the suffrage movement ranged from humour to fear. At times the women were seen as merely an observed spectacle from a privileged male sphere. Women were stupid to attack property, 'The Suffrage movement, whatever may be said of the Suffrage itself,' yawned the *New Age* at yet more parading women, 'is dying of dullness'.¹⁸ The *New Witness* also projected this attitude on to the 'populace' who apparently 'regard these escapades as an absurd sport of the rich, and treated them with that sort of indulgence which animates the crowd that always gathers to watch an intoxicated gentleman'.¹⁹ However, if a new 'turn' was a fun variation to the normal political routine, the average man, 'does object to going in fear of his life and property'.²⁰ At other times, therefore, even in the abstract, the seriousness of the women's question

could not be ignored. This anti-holistic war was considered part of the general disintegration of society. The women's revolt was part of the 'ferment of our dissolving and religionless society'.²¹ The sexes misunderstood each other because 'there is no definite standard of faith to which they can appeal'.²² J.M. Kennedy made much of this in his analysis of the present 'Kalpa': 'The sexes — the very roots of the nation — are at war with one another; a portentous [sic.] fact indeed.'²³ The use of the nation as the standard of appeal sometimes mutated into the discourse of race. Many letters complained about suffragettes being symptoms of 'decadence' and 'racial decay'.²⁴

There was no parallel with the praise of the energy of the worker's struggle, showing up how much that instinct for revolt was gendered. The worker's movement was held up as a true movement, constantly compared favourably with the frivolity of the suffragettes. For the *Witness* the agitation for the vote was merely the unpleasant froth above the real movement, the movement of the people:

Meanwhile, something much larger than the acidity of the wealthier and unoccupied women is arising from the ferment of our dissolving and religionless society; the very hour which will see the victory of the wealthy and middle class women — a victory with no objective, a mere explosion — that success and a hundred other unpleasant phenomena attaching to their break-down of character among the leisured, will be dwarfed by the organised, perhaps unsuccessful but certainly final, revolt of the dispossessed English: who number about seven-tenths of the English people.²⁵

The dignity of the worker, both actually and historically, was compared to the antics of these middle-class ladies. Their own comparison was emphatically rejected:

The Homonists are fond of comparing their gyrations to the vigorous action of those men who in past years demanded a more democratic franchise — as if any one could imagine a Chartist hiding inside a piano and appearing in the middle of Lord Palmerston's speech!²⁶

What is more, the women's movement was not economic, because of the vastly different roles and aspirations of the two sexes. Their struggle should be subsumed under the man's struggle, just as a woman desired to be subsumed under her husband:

There are few women in industry to-day who would not be married if they had the chance; and married, for preference, to a man who could afford to keep them out of industry for ever. With this kind of economic devotion in their hearts, it is impossible, we say again, that the women's movement can be economic in character.²⁷

Indeed, the emancipation of women was seen as part of the same progress of capitalism which the workers rejected. In *What's wrong with the world*, G.K. Chesterton specifically objected to the economic character of the women's movement which sought to improve its position within a flawed system: 'Most of the Feminists would probably agree with me that womanhood is under shameful tyranny in the shops and mills. But I want to destroy the tyranny. They want to destroy the womanhood. That is the only difference.'²⁸ 'Votes for women' was seen as yet another example of the progressive and capitalist being in alliance to enslave the people of England. Chesterton used the example of Grudge, the 'obstinate Conservative' and Hudge, the 'energetic Progressive': 'Grudge wants women workers because they are cheaper, Hudge calls the woman's work, 'freedom to live her own life.'²⁹ In fact, however, according to Chesterton women were giving up their freedom in order to work. In typically rough and irreverent terms he asked how Mrs Pankhurst would like it if he had her 'kidnapped, carried off to my house, chained to a typewriter and compelled, under the lash, to act as my secretary and assist in turning out a ceaseless stream of anti-Suffrage and anti-Feminist papers and pamphlets'.³⁰ Being against the emancipation of women was therefore inextricably part of Chesterton's criticism of capitalism and the oppression of the workers.

The same holds true for one of the *New Age's* lengthy denials of their support for the woman's movement, the longer than average 'Notes of the Week' of August 29, 1912. This also saw votes for women as symptomatic of the success of capitalism. That such a thing could happen was a demonstration of how far capitalism had disturbed the natural order: 'And the cry of votes for women means no more and no less to us than a cry of fire. It is a symbol, indeed; a symbol that the capitalist has broken into the home and turned out its inhabitants and trampled upon their lares and penates.'³¹ The *New Age* used the same conflation of capitalism with progressive, pseudo-emancipatory doctrines like free marriage and free love. Such doctrines 'are without exception as contrary to the facts of human and divine nature as they are peculiarly pleasing to the demoniac facts of the capitalist system'.³² It criticized capitalism for preventing marriage *and* for prostitution, thus driving 'the sexual appetite to indulge

itself merely on the cheap'.³³ Capitalism not only led to enslavement, therefore, but, in a typically Edwardian formulation, to, 'Immorality and the degradation of the race'.³⁴ The moral progressives were assisting such a process and thus were denied their masculinity: '...we know our Labour leaders and our Labour Party. To a man they are women every one'.³⁵ The object of the women's movement, therefore, was to enter capitalism and the wage system, just as it was the aim of the working man to get out of it. The only solution was through the men, and the system of labour organization which the *New Age* advocated. If men's wages were doubled, 'the women's movement would die of euthanasia the day after'.³⁶ This conflation of capitalism and the women's movement constantly resurfaced, sometimes in a way which anticipated the left wing opposition to women's suffrage in many European countries, but which contained behind it a reactionary view of women's roles:

We are afraid, in short, that unpopular as women's suffrage is and more unpopular still as it is likely to become, it will be passed as soon as women's votes are needed to redress in the interests of capitalism the balance of the men's.³⁷

This is why the 'subconscious' mind of the populace was against votes for women. However, this symbol had much more behind it in the eyes of the writers for the *New Witness*. In the usual way, Cecil Chesterton put the subconscious objection of the populace in his own words:

If you offer us the vote as a certain measure of protection, or as a convenience, or as an amusement, we should have no great objection in accepting it. But you offer it as a 'symbol'. We want to know what that 'symbol' means. We have a pretty shrewd suspicion of what it means. It means what you call 'living your own life', a thing which we are accustomed to describe in coarser terms. It means 'the economic independence of women'. It means that it is degrading for a woman to look for support to her husband (as he must eternally look to her), but dignified for her to look for it in state officials. It means that writing a book is more important than having a baby. It means that the superintendence of other people's drains glorifies and completes womanhood more than the rearing of our own children. It means all the inheritance of Lillith, all the sophistries of Satan when he tempted our first mother.³⁸

This negative appeal against capitalism went with an appeal to tradition and the past. The editors of the *Eye-Witness* claimed that the emancipation of women was alien to 'ancient human traditions'.³⁹ Even the heroic women of the past were given mock interviews about the vote. The Queen of Sheba, Joan of Arc and Sappho all agreed that it was a terrible idea.⁴⁰ Wherever they looked, the past provided the answer. For J.M. Kennedy it was Aryan society, where, 'there was decidedly no trace of a woman's suffrage movement'.⁴¹ Women were a symbol of the pre-industrial world in more obtuse ways. The modern female 'crowd' was especially frightening. In the ancient world, women were separate and captive. In the modern world they were united and terrifying. 'Every woman is a captive queen' wrote G.K. Chesterton, 'But every crowd of women is only a harem broken loose'.⁴² These groups or combinations of women were given demonic connotations. G.K. Chesterton again cried that '... one Pankhurst is an exception, but a thousand Pankhursts are a nightmare, a Bacchic orgy, a Witches Sabbath. For in all legends men have thought of women as sublime separately but horrible in a herd'.⁴³ His brother expressed the same idea in the pages of the *Eye-Witness*, talking of the 'frenzy which seemed to bear some resemblance to the madness of the Bacchae'.⁴⁴ That the same fear of combination did not extend to the man further illustrates the authoritarian, elitist and holistic elements of their intended labour organization. The combined men were not bad because they embodied the right unitary idea, and they were organized for a national end. The women in a group were frightening because they were combining *on their own terms*. Indeed, combination *per se* was not necessarily a bad thing. The *New Age* called for female organizations as part of their national guild system (as long as the chimera of political power was dropped):

Let the women combine. If a very small part of the energy that has been given to the illusory vote had been devoted to the forming of a women's League for the advancement of women's interests and influence in social life, much might have been done.⁴⁵

The unconscious stress on social life showed the reliance of all these arguments on the absolute acceptance of separate spheres. Although consciously articulated, this does not really differ from the largely unspoken and unexamined prejudice which they shared with most of their contemporaries. Real women's roles were rigid for the *New Witness*. 'Wifhood and motherhood' were the 'real woman's work of the world'.⁴⁶ For Maurice Reckitt their real freedom should consist of being in control of their own household: 'It is the cookery book rather than the ballot-box that will give them true independence', he claimed 'and in Mrs. Beeton rather

than in Mrs. Pankhurst that they should pin their faith.²⁴⁷ All the writers agreed that women were not really suited to the political sphere:

It is man, the eternal gas-bag, who should vote and attend meetings and demonstrate and orate and write books and fill the cafés. Every woman is at heart a Puritan. She does not really enjoy letting herself go; so when she does let herself go she goes far. She only really enjoys working, serving.⁴⁸

The *New Age* argued that the majority of women in Britain accepted this inferior and separate status, enshrined in the institution of marriage: '...a very large class of women allow it to be presumed by the State that their sex entitles them to the privileges of a minority. In other words, they accept their inferior status.'⁴⁹ For Orage, marriage was a selfish act on the part of women in order to get a fair price for their sex. Marriage was freely chosen: 'Believe me, marriage is the first resort of women who instinctively scent inferiority in every other occupation. It is the State that drives them to it, but they who go of their own accord.'⁵⁰ The legal guarantor of all this was the man, so why should women have the vote as well? The essence of the *New Age's* view of the separation of roles and their purpose was aptly summed up by Orage: 'the good of the race will be served if men become more manly and women more womanly.'⁵¹ He did not see himself as opposed to women, therefore, but rather on the side of true womanhood. His view was a reflection of the general sense of crisis shared by social theorists of all political persuasions that the best and the brightest in womanhood were remaining single and thus hastening the decline of the British race.⁵²

II

Where these roles were confused or shared, criticism was heaviest. This was part of the rigid hierarchy applied through the eye to art, and through authority to politics. G.L. Mosse talks of the same thing all over Europe in this period, where the insistence on rigid gender roles seemed to be a way of 'ordering a world which seemed on the brink of chaos'.⁵³ Hulme saw art as 'a refuge from the flux and impermanence of outside nature'.⁵⁴ The *New Witness* used a frequent characterization of the perverted androgyny of the suffragettes, 'riding astride, wearing trousers instead of petticoats, trying to talk in a *bass* voice'.⁵⁵ For G.K. Chesterton, in an attempt at wit, the suffragettes were not feminist at all, but 'homonists': 'women pretending to be men'. There were elements of confused sexual tension in these denouncements. Take this

passage which contrasts the suffragettes as prim, proper and bespectacled but also violent and lustful:

Anti-feminists are not unreasonable. They simply demand that a woman shall be a woman — not a frump who can only be called a woman because she cannot be called a man, not a prim inspector sniffing around drains and investigating the details of noxious trades, not a bespectacled pundit poring over blue-books, not a fury slinging the flame of invective and sowing the dragon's teeth of sex-hatred, not a monster hatching forth the cockatrice brood of hatred, malice and all uncharitableness, still less a being with murder in her heart, whose instinct is that of a tigress — to destroy; but a true woman who attends to the ways of her household, whose mouth speaketh wisdom, and on whose tongue is the law of mercy; and angel in the house whose sympathy is as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and whose inspiration is as the light of a pharos on a stormy sea.⁵⁶

This was a reflection of the general crisis which the suffragettes had imposed on society's essential ideas about women. According to Jane Miller, 'their actions shattered gender definitions, and threw the public's ideas about femininity and masculinity into confusion.'⁵⁷ Elsewhere, in the story of a petroleuse, the masculine woman was seen to take sexual pleasure in violence, 'The flat-chested, hectic-cheeked young woman looking up at it [the fire] felt herself already an acclaimed heroine and, in some fantastic way, martyr.'⁵⁸ This was surely mixed up with repressed curiosity and fear of lesbianism. The polemics over the White Slavery Bill (a euphemism for prostitution) exposed the same sexual tension. On the one hand there was the pornographic horror of the 'ferocious and lustful advocacy by women of the flogging of men'⁵⁹ and on the other hand the kind of puritanical punishment insisted on by, 'canting bishops, old women in trousers and violent unsexed women'.⁶⁰ Orage complained that 'women, if there is any choice in the matter, are more cruel, more brutal, more vindictive, more barbaric than men'.⁶¹ Indeed, the polemics over this revealed, above all, naked, male sexual terror — that the woman would be let off and the man flogged, that 'women at the same time that they are complaining of their powerlessness are increasing their power; and increasing it, we think, for evil'.⁶² The suffragettes were thus accused of being both sexually terrifying and stultifyingly frigid. This duality seemed to be superficially backed up by the extremes of the feminist movement itself. On the one hand, there were the claims of Christabel Pankhurst in *The*

Great Scourge and How to End It (1913) that 75 to 80 per cent of British men had venereal disease and that it was women's political duty to abstain from sexual activity.⁶³ But equally there were the increasingly frank questioning and portrayal of female sexuality in the pages of *The Freewoman*. All that this really demonstrated, however, was the inappropriateness of looking at either women or feminism as a homogeneous entity.

The writers were much more comfortable when describing the other, controlled, passive, historic image of women. Violent methods did not suit women and a violent woman, 'is inevitably ridiculous in men's eyes and in women's no less'.⁶⁴ For a woman to take up the weapons of force was 'against nature' and, consequently, it was 'degrading'.⁶⁵ Blurring of roles led to fear and violence. Martin Pugh suggests that this more extreme misogyny did not necessarily find representation on a more popular level. A letter by Sir Almroth Wright in *The Times*, 1912, which accused the suffragettes of being 'sexually embittered' and 'incomplete', caused widespread outrage.⁶⁶ Even in the music halls, where cross gender stereotypes were a tempting figure of fun, the populace was far from universally hostile. Some shows such as *The Suffragette*, by Arthur Aiston, appealed to a sense of fair play.⁶⁷

In the *New Age* and the *New Witness*, however, the same blurring in men led to the same sexual tension and insult. A real man would be capable of keeping his woman under control, 'No wife, certainly, whose husband can remain a man long remains a suffragist...'⁶⁸ The 'Effeminate male suffragist' and the 'militant female suffragist' were both 'symptoms of a declining type'.⁶⁹ This locked in to an inherited rhetoric of homosexuality and decadence in the wake of the Wilde trial.⁷⁰ It also played on general fears of 'degeneration' that had coursed through fin de siècle thought.⁷¹ In one of the grand linkings of art, sex and politics typical of the *New Age* (we have seen how 'sentimentality' had been used as shorthand for 'liberalism'), Orage wrote: 'We have had constantly for some years to deplore the spread of sentimentality in men, of a sentimentality that can only be regarded as effeminacy.'⁷² One writer even explicitly linked male supporters of the suffrage with homosexuality and 'diseased humility'.⁷³ Wyndham Lewis made the same assumption after the war in *The Art of Being Ruled* where he characterized the 'homo' as 'the child of the suffragette'.⁷⁴ Morley Seymour, however, tried to mitigate it with an 'objective' caveat: 'This may or may not be true; but what certainly is true, is that the suffrage element or feminine influence is doing an immense amount of harm in this country'.⁷⁵ Here, everything bad about the country was seen as feminine. The foreign policy had lost prestige because of the 'feminine element in the cabinet'. He poked fun at the idea of 'your modern effeminate

male suffragist tilting with such an adversary as Bismarck!⁷⁶ The image could work in entirely the opposite direction, however, where femininity was unrestrained and unnatural violence. In one passage Germany was described as 'the mad suffragette of Europe'.⁷⁷ It was perhaps symptomatic of the success and prominence of the suffragettes that metaphorical roles were blurring even in their own language.

III

Just as the feminine was resented, feared and ridiculed in its imposition on the political arena, so within art an exclusive male sphere should be built and maintained. That the feminine was disliked and patronized, but also to some extent feared, is suggested by the metaphor of overpowering smell that is mentioned in several contexts. Jacob Thomson talked of the 'pretentious and ill-made toilettes' in the public of H.G. Wells.⁷⁸ Hulme mentioned the 'blasphemous scents' of women attending Bergson's lectures at the Collège de France.⁷⁹ Orage was even more explicit:

His lectures at the Paris University are now so popular amongst the ladies that not only has he had to protest against the unbearable odours of perfume brought in by them, but on account of the crush of fashion and the rudeness of his audience to his colleagues he has now been compelled to alter the time of his lectures to an hour when the ladies are at lunch.⁸⁰

Smell, primitive and not easily controlled, invaded the masculine world of order and hierarchy. The curious value of this particular metaphor of smell, however, is that it labels women as both primitive and over civilized. On the one hand, the sense of smell is associated with repressed primitive sexuality; according to Freud 'organic repression' began with the adoption of an upright carriage and the replacement of smell by sight as the dominant sense.⁸¹ The olfactory stimuli in this lecture hall were thus disturbing as they reawakened a repressed primitive sexuality. But on the other hand they were wearing manufactured perfumes that aimed to cover up natural smell. In this sense civilization as modernity overpowers an imagined state of odourless purity. But this purity is entirely a misogynist construct. The image therefore blurs the pretentious 'new woman' and the disturbing power of the 'eternal feminine'. Both were a threat to the male sphere. In this respect Hulme's clear geometric lines reasserted the tyranny of the masculine eye over the feminine and romantic senses of aural or olfactory empathy.

Women were consciously excluded from male artistic or intellectual endeavours. Orage ended the description by evoking Coleridge: "From a popular philosophy", said Coleridge, "Good Lord deliver us." But the prayer should be reserved for a philosophy and a philosopher popular among women.⁸² Oscar Levy, in an introduction to one of Anthony Ludovici's books on Nietzsche, actually warned him not to marry and to watch out for women mollycoddling his intellect and taking away the discipline of his masculine solitude.⁸³ Hulme dismissed intelligent women as 'just misplaced whores'.⁸⁴ Thus the self-proclaimed 'Tales for Men Only' were no joke, and came with a serious health warning: 'I cannot too often warn my unintended readers that these hints of tales, rather than tales, are for men only, and not for women, materialists, moralists, or other infants of idealism.'⁸⁵ These tales also flirted with a masculine violence which was not as elitist as they supposed. Sapper and other 'clubland heroes' portrayed the same aesthetic in a more popular format.⁸⁶

The need for authors to cater for the new audience of women and children, according to the *New Age*, 'has degraded their performance by seducing writers to play to the gallery of the nurses and the nursed.'⁸⁷ This was not a new idea. In the 1890s Gosse had attacked the popularity of New Women novels, seeing them as appealing to the lowest common denominator of novelty and sex. He too had blamed the education of women and lower classes as responsible for the levelling of taste.⁸⁸ The classical revival was gendered, in the same way as the old Socratic / Platonic image of male bonding and intellectual endeavour invoked here always had been. Alongside a restricted audience, Orage wanted, 'pure and simple English, and a style not greatly different from conversation at its greatest conceivable perfection; and the result, I am sure, would be a classical revival.'⁸⁹ This view was significantly paralleled in the representation of women in *Blast*, the canonical expression of the pre-war English avant-garde. The whole manifesto was geared towards 'ENGLISHMEN'.⁹⁰ The advice to suffragettes admired their energy but patronizingly told them to 'stick to what you understand.' 'WE MAKE YOU A PRESENT OF OUR VOTES' it implored 'ONLY LEAVE WORKS OF ART ALONE.'⁹¹ Such artistic purity involved a self-conscious sexual denial. Women in literature had led to an over-emphasis on sex, a turning away from purity:

We have learned to abhor lust, the primal curse; we already suspect that love is nothing but a veil for lust: friendship may prove the abrogation of the curse. A work of art, setting forth the delights of friendship, would restore the minds of many men who have lost their balance over sex-love, and the modern mandarins would find no prey but

women. Generally, women would be disdained as readers by the artist whose business is with beauty and truth in literature. The patronage of women invariably results in the decline of the arts.⁹²

In one of his ‘Tales for Men Only’, Orage wrote of a Secret Samurai type group which would ‘give philosophers the courage of their natural chastity’.⁹³ The feminine was shorthand for much of what they disliked. They talked of ‘the effeminacy of democratic ideas’.⁹⁴ J.M. Kennedy attached sex worship to the mob and democracy — somewhat confusingly using the effeminate males and suffragettes who elsewhere had been characterized as elitist:

An appalling spectacle, is it not? Sex — magic word of the mob! — sex examined under a microscope by weedy, sad-eyed youths and scraggy bluestockings, emaciated Adonises and angular Venuses, who might have stepped straight out of one of Monticello’s deplorable canvasses and donned modern attire! And then they deafen and sicken us with their interminable “discussions”, in which nothing is ever solved. It is more cleanly to live in a pigsty beside a dunghill than in this modern atmosphere of unrelieved sexual filth.⁹⁵

The real artist had to exercise self-control and keep himself in a state of purity. The elite had to be nurtured in a state of pure nobility:

If, early in life, when he is most susceptible to outward impressions, a man of noble nature is constantly confronted with the mean and the sordid, his instincts may run the risk of being influenced for the worse. Our modern age, where examples of physical and spiritual degeneracy meet us at every street corner, in every picture gallery, in every theatre, book, and court-room, is therefore particularly dangerous to artists.⁹⁶

In some of these discussions, sex was misogynistically seen as purely feminine, as if women *were* sex. Kennedy quoted the Buddha on this, and insisted with finality on the male nature of creative endeavour:

‘Lewdness’, he once declared, ‘clings to women like filth!’ — an exaggerated statement of the unconsciously exaggerated statement of the unconsciously sexual or child-bearing nature of all real women, and a characteristic which has been observed by every keen critic of human nature, from Juvenal to Weininger. It is likewise a

characteristic, however, which all men of thought seem to detest when in the company of such women, because it interferes with their own child-bearing — their books.⁹⁷

Here, once again there is the willed rule of a benevolent but wholly male leader caste. Indeed, one correspondent even saw this as the result of the woman's movement: 'My reading of the woman's movement is that its biological intention is to rouse men to thought and from awakened perception to the imaginative leadership demanded of him.'⁹⁸

IV

When the war began it was felt that the outpouring of manly suffering would kill the frivolous demands of the suffragettes. The *New Witness* was delighted that the 'silly business' had been settled and felt the death of the militant women's movements was one of the outstanding features of the war.⁹⁹ In the letters page of the *New Age*, 'Ixion' saw the war as a purifying force which would kill such decadent movements for ever. He expressed the hope that Britain would emerge from these 'purifying fires' a stronger power for 'justice, freedom and cleanliness'.¹⁰⁰ This fitted into the general feeling that the war was a force for good which would reinvigorate society and put it back on the right track. However, the violence which was the inevitable part of war led to some tongue in cheek but rather vindictive letters about the lesser violence of the suffragettes. Arch Gibbs called for the suffragettes to be sent to war as they had always claimed to be 'soldiers'. In typically patronizing terms he wondered why they could not 'bite and scratch and kick the Uhlans'.¹⁰¹ He also complained that McKenna had amnestied 'these useless, destructive reptiles'.¹⁰² G.K. Chesterton's mistrust of female labour also continued during the war, going further against the general trend of societal attitudes as a whole. He felt that work would lead to 'stunted ... neurotic children' and began complaining about the 'flapper'; a liberated and appalling 'female monstrosity' that first made its appearance in the First World War.¹⁰³

Both papers remained opposed to the suffrage even after it looked clear that women were going to gain some kind of enfranchisement in parliament. G.K. Chesterton thought that war work was at most a regrettable necessity and in no way should inevitably lead to the vote.¹⁰⁴ Orage thought that the speeches in the House of Commons to the effect that the suffrage was a reward for war work were self-serving and hypocritical. He felt that the suffrage would serve mainly to strengthen capitalism and dilute the zeal of the enfranchised working man.¹⁰⁵ He thus took what many historians have seen

as a reason why Conservative MPs might have been converted to the suffrage as a continued reason for opposition to it.

As well as the continued opposition to the suffrage, many of the more abstract political arguments about the nature of the war were infused with contrasts between the 'masculine' and the 'feminine'. This was especially true in a long-running debate between Orage and A. E. Randall about the relationship between civilization and war. Orage rejected the view put forward by Randall that civilization was 'negative, passive, feminine' and that it therefore required 'the antithesis of the positive, the active and the masculine'. For him, civilization was not merely defensive but also active, and therefore 'masculine'. War, then, was 'one of the instruments of civilisation', not its opposite.¹⁰⁶ What is striking, however, is that for all they disagreed about the relationship between war and civilization, they did agree that passivity was a 'feminine' concept. A.E. Randall went further than Orage in pushing this contrast. He personified the female sex and 'Life' and the male sex as 'Death'. He therefore concluded that civilization was an interaction between these two forces. He felt that civilization 'was originally feminine; and like most things that are originally feminine, it had no great development until man ... set to work to make something better of it'.¹⁰⁷ The male was the origin of all activism and creativity, war was merely an extreme expression of this. Such ideas were echoed by Pound, when he talked of driving new ideas 'into the great passive vulva of London'.¹⁰⁸

This gendering of the war became led to further exertions from Randall when he reviewed a pamphlet by Cloudesley Breton entitled "Who is Responsible? Armageddon and After". Breton claimed Germany represented the masculine ideal, and the war was necessary to 'compel that country to recant its hominism and accept the feminist ideals'.¹⁰⁹ Initially this led Randall to ask himself whether peace was even desirable if it were to lead to the 'consequent subjection of man to the purposes of woman'.¹¹⁰ However, he overcame this fear by showing that war would be disastrous to the cause of feminism because of the warriors which war would create. Once again the war was presented as an engine of change, in words which echoed both Nietzsche and Eastern Religion. He felt that the old world had been dominated by the 'Vaishya' caste — the merchants of the Indian caste system. The war, however, had led to the creation of a 'Tshatriya [sic.]' caste. Presumably Randall means *Kshatriya* (the military caste). This dominance of this new cast as a result of the war would enable the values of the world to be 'transvalued'. The values of the old society such as 'feminism, male-slavery, peace and "the world for the women"' would be 'relegated to the limbo of forgotten things'.¹¹¹ The

masculinity of war would, in Randall's vision, lead to a society where feminine ideals were justly cast aside.

V

Given such opinions, it is perhaps surprising that these male spaces were not entirely run by men. The women who did write for the *New Age* and the *New Witness* provide interesting case studies of how their writing was sidelined, and how they had to adapt their work and views to fit in to the masculine culture in which they worked. This was especially true of Ada Jones of the *Witness* and Beatrice Hastings of the *New Age*.

Ada Elizabeth Chesterton (née Jones) was born in 1869 and became a Fleet Street Reporter at the age of sixteen. After the war she became famous for her account of life among the homeless of London which she published as *In darkest London*. She is perhaps best remembered for setting up the refuges for homeless women in London which became known as the Cecil Houses in honour of her late husband. In the period before the war, however, Ada Jones was a major writer for the *New Witness*, especially during Cecil's editorship. Indeed, his many years of propositioning paid off and she finally married him in 1917. Her adaptation to the male sphere was more obvious in her favourite nom de plume — John Keith Prothero. She was a supporter of the *Witness* causes and a key member of the editorial team. G.K. Chesterton called her 'the most *intransigente* of the New Witnessers'.¹¹² Indeed, Haynes, who called her Miss Prothero, suggested that she held some of the responsibility for the extremist drift of the paper's politics. He complained in a letter to Belloc: 'I find that a letter of Hease, mildly protesting on behalf of the Jews, has been suppressed by Miss P. This is quite against your ideas and mine. You have always encouraged freedom of speech.'¹¹³ Haynes even suggested that Miss Jones was a power behind the editorial throne. Dissatisfied with the state affairs under Cecil, he wrote that, 'Mr Chesterton has not the least idea how to run an office and appears to be entirely under female influence.'¹¹⁴ E.S.P. Haynes also complained to G.K. Chesterton that Cecil was 'under the thumb' of Miss Prothero, and came to the conclusion that she is 'a perfectly impossible person to have in charge of a paper'.¹¹⁵ Her influence was resented, and even when it was decisive, it accentuated rather than mitigated the bent of the paper's politics.

Beatrice Hastings was one of the most prolific female contributors to the *New Age*. Her real name was Emily Alice Haigh and she was born in the Cape Colony of South Africa. She wrote widely on a variety of issues and introduced the poet, Katherine Mansfield to the journal. She wrote had an extraordinarily wide range of pen names, including: Alice Morning, A.M.A,

E.H., B.L.H., Beatrice Tina, Cynicus, Robert a Field, T.K.L., D. Triformis, Edward Stafford, S. Robert West, V.M., G. Whiz, J. Wilson, and T.W.¹¹⁶ She sometimes used these various aliases to discuss or criticize work she herself had submitted. This could be seen, with some justification on a literary level, as supremely representative of the fractured self, and an ironic play on textual self identity. A more simple reason why she needed so many aliases, however, was that she could not foster real debate with the male readership. She was very much on the inside of the group socially. Indeed, she was Orage's mistress until 1914, according to O'Sullivan and Scott.¹¹⁷ Yet despite this, she always felt isolated and on a limb in terms of her literary career. In a later book, *The old New Age: Orage — and others* she emphasized the bitterness which this caused her.¹¹⁸ This vitriolic and intemperate piece has led some readers to treat it as a case of literary sour grapes. She accused Orage of trying to 'dry up the blood' of his victims and claimed the literary world had been 'had' by him.¹¹⁹ Nevertheless, there was perhaps real hurt behind such statements as '— how they slandered! That pack of trans-channel, café-caucus "intelligentsia"'.¹²⁰ Katherine Mansfield, too, was cruelly dropped by Orage in 1912. One of her prose poems was published by Orage as a letter in the correspondence columns rather than a stand alone piece in what has been seen as 'a piece of editorial malice'.¹²¹ Orage also caricatured her as deluded and licentious in 'A Fourth Tale for Men Only' which appeared in the *New Age* in six instalments from 2 May to 6 June, 1912.¹²²

It is even possible to read in Beatrice Hasting's developing political opinions a desperate and ultimately unsuccessful attempt to be accepted. This was especially true of her attitude to the suffrage question. She developed from an unambiguous pro-suffrage stance to one which saw the vote as secondary to the cause of spiritual emancipation. In 1908 she debated with the high profile anti-feminist, Belfort Bax and praised the activities of militant suffragettes.¹²³ In August of that year, however, she saw the opposition to the suffrage as 'profound and serious'.¹²⁴ By 1913–14, she was criticizing the materialism of those seeking 'equal pay' and lauding eternal femininity.¹²⁵ While she might have been genuinely convinced of the merits of this new individualist feminism, it was also far more easily compatible with the out and out anti-suffragism of the male *New Age* circle. It could almost be read as self-censorship in an attempt to make her more successful in the male literary field in which she was writing.

Indeed, the strangest part of the *New Age's* image of women was its constant insistence that it was in favour of the 'spiritual emancipation' of women. It shows some similarity with the views of the writers of *The Freewoman*, a paper which occupied a similar space in the field of Edwardian periodical culture.¹²⁶ *The Freewoman* rejected the vote as a means to

emancipation, concentrating instead on spiritual, egotistical, Stirnian and Nietzschean ideas about self-realization and genius.¹²⁷ In some ways, this was mocked by the *New Age*. Take this poem which laughed at the ideas of feminine realization through violence:

THE NEW GENIUS

With the maligned and martyred suffragette
Genius to a new note is set,
Which is, as our brave militant explains,
A great capacity for breaking panes.¹²⁸

Nevertheless, the month before, Orage had written that, 'We have already hinted that the mystical idea of the emancipation of woman is not unlike the mystical idea of the transfiguration of man into superman.'¹²⁹ This was very similar to *The Freewoman's* position. But it is perhaps a weakness of *The Freewoman's* ideas that they could be so easily compartmentalized and recast as anti-feminist in any real sense of the term. In the early days of *The Freewoman*, Orage was happy to quote it in a more extreme anti-suffrage context than was intended, 'in its [*The Freewoman's*] first issue its editors remark: "Feminism is the whole issue, political enfranchisement is a branch issue". We agree.'¹³⁰ For the *New Age*, 'spiritual emancipation' should involve no external power: 'With the spiritual emancipation of women, if there ever was such a movement, we are in the heartiest accord; but with the movement to give them more power over women or men or beasts, we are and shall remain in opposition.'¹³¹ If *The Freewoman* did achieve more than this, it did not do so in the eyes of the *New Age*, perhaps suggesting how easily it could be 'captured' or 'contained' by the editors and tone of the *Egoist*. In the *New Age* never does the feminine escape from the individual in a positive sense, as does masculinity when it is extended to gendering the 'manlier' national organisation of labour.¹³² Orage was thus able to publish the radical modernism of such female authors as Katherine Mansfield without upsetting the overall manliness of the *New Age* space.¹³³ The image of women was kept within a separate sphere even when granted self-realization.

Behind the criticism of the vote as a criticism of liberal democracy lay a reactionary but vividly expressed misogyny which invoked the techniques of art and the language of socialism, revolt and modernity to recast itself. Even the female geniuses of the *New Age* need to be seen in this cultural context.

CONCLUSION

The *New Age* and the *New Witness* are important sources for an intellectual counter-culture that rejected the liberal parliamentary consensus in early twentieth-century Britain. They were sites where contested ideas were hammered out. More than this, both papers acted as the centre of an anti-liberal cultural community of writers and political thinkers. These journals were extremely self-referential and helped foster this sense of community. However much they were ostensibly concerned with 'the people', therefore, both the audience and the arguments were elitist. They were observers of, not participants in, the struggles of the working class. Jews and women were at the edge of their social as well as their political vision. The nature of the intellectual field in which the discussion took place helps account for the shade of their political ideas. Whereas they saw themselves as setting up a free space of intellectual and political discussion, the nature of this freedom was fixed by the need to oppose the sentimental liberalism of the day. They became, therefore, the nurturing places not only of literary modernism and Distributism, but of political ideas that anticipated fascism and reflected the revolt against materialism and liberal democracy elsewhere in Europe. Those accounts that see their politics as a free area of discussion where opposing ideas colluded without prejudice fall victims to the periodicals' own propaganda: the critic himself is drawn into the same intellectual community.

This book has attempted to explore some of the political ideals that this cultural space produced. The term 'socialist' seems to be of little use in defining such ideas, even when used in the widest possible sense. Socialism can be divorced from materialism and even from the mechanics of the class struggle, but to divorce it from political and social equality is to stretch it too far. Describing any of these figures as representative of

the 'radical right' is equally distorting as it fails to take account of complicated attitudes towards revolution, labour, and capitalism. Achieving a watertight political definition that unites all the disparate intellectuals that wrote in these reviews is impossible and ultimately fruitless. The least that can be said, is that all the writers were to various degrees anti-parliamentary, anti-liberal (but not anti-libertarian), anti-capitalist and nationalist. The ways in which these things were expressed could vary enormously. The *New Age* nurtured ideas that were hierarchical, elitist, classical, Nietzschean and in some ways self-consciously modern. The *New Witness* expressed ideas that were romantic, populist and reactionary. What is striking, however, is the intersection of these ideas when they acted upon real problems. Both streams, which seem on first sight to be united only by what they are against, come to remarkably similar conclusions on various political questions.

With regard to the labour unrest of the early twentieth century, all the writers praised the workers for their violent struggle against both capitalism and the Labour party. The revolt was seen as being against a servile state that intended to enslave the workers through wages and reforms. Vociferous criticism, therefore, was directed at those reforms of the Liberal government that seemed to favour this process, especially the Insurance Act. Violence and energy in the manly struggle of the workers was praised; framed either as the spirit of the free-born Englishman in the *New Witness* or as the soul of the working class by the more socialistically inclined *New Age*. In future visions of labour, however, the contradictions of this seemingly libertarian revolt were more apparent. In Guild Socialism at least, the state was not to disappear but rather to arbitrate, and keep a strong role in a national and military sense. The system of the future would be both disciplined and spiritually fulfilling; true individualism would find its greatest expression in its obedience to the right kind of order, just as it had been praised for its resistance to the wrong kind. In the *New Witness*, similar ideas were hinted at by the belief in social networks underpinning individual freedom: nationality, religion and tradition.

A similar ambiguity infuses attitudes towards the party system, parliament and democracy. In one sense, most of the attacks seem to be in favour of a free parliament, without jobbery and wire-pulling, without the intrigues of the party system duping the electors, and without the corruption which demeaned the nation. As these criticisms gradually became more extreme, however, it became clear that the democracy they intended to reinstate rested on a reactionary view of the people as an organic unity. In the *New Age* it was suggested that the will of this 'people' could be *interpreted* by a great leader. The more obviously Nietzschean and anti-democratic contributors suggested that these great leaders could do what they wanted and that the people

would be happy in their subordination. In the *New Witness*, ostensibly against such Nietzschean ideas, but faced with the *bête noire* of a liberal parliamentary democracy which was leading to the worst kind of progressivism and corruption, they initially called for more referenda and eventually argued for a stronger monarch who would be in direct interface with 'the people'.

On one level, therefore, 'the people' were whatever these writers wanted them to be. In some cases they were the irrational and unwashed crowd, in others the heroic workers striving for a post-capitalist order. These views were a direct challenge to the liberal nineteenth-century belief in the citizen as an autonomous individual. Their view of nationalism helped underwrite such an attack. The nation was seen as a unifying force. Nor was this unity merely practical, it was a spiritual and metaphysical construct; a deeper reality that ran in the 'blood'. Such a view was not merely a reflection of the hegemonic nationalism of the time, but an oppositional nationalism that used a deeper national idea against the anti-national politics of the moment. The honour of the nation could be resurrected through war; hence the glorification of military struggle when it came.

Such an organic view of the national community, however, led to expressions of distaste for those who were not part of it. The *New Witness* exhibited a programmatic anti-Semitism where the rich Jew was a signifier of everything that was modern, cosmopolitan and corrupt in contemporary society, always (apart from in the open prejudice of Frank Hugh O'Donnell) expressed in the language of reasoned discussion where the Jew was not seen as 'bad' but merely different. The *New Age* did not concern itself with anti-Semitism to the same extent, but its deliberate editorial stance of manly unsentimental freedom allowed its expression. Yet the *New Age* showed exclusionary tactics against non-European races, allowing its pages to be a forum for the new science of eugenics which was breaking down the sentimental liberal heresy of the equality of nations and races.

With regard to women, too, the supposed modernity of the *New Age* and the anti-modernism of the *New Witness* led equally to exclusion. Both papers rejected the suffrage movement and excluded women from the artistic sphere. For the *New Witness* this was merely an extension of the separate spheres argument, given the gloss of being 'understood' by the populace. For the *New Age* this co-existed with more modernist concerns of allowing the women spiritual emancipation — a contained rebellion that kept them out of the political sphere.

Together, then, these papers provided an anti-liberal nexus for a number of writers in early twentieth-century Britain. The ideas contained within them rejected the liberal parliamentary system from a direction that fused the ideas of right and left in a manner that anticipated fascism. This political

space has been ignored by those who have looked for similar ideas primarily in relation to existing parliamentary parties, or sealed in a discrete realm of literary culture. Violence in the mass of people was courted and fetishized, but eventually tied to their own ordered ends. Parliamentary representation, based on the individual autonomous citizen, was rejected, and a leadership based on the 'true national will' was countenanced. War was seen as a positive unifying force. Jews and those of a 'non-European race' were excluded from this vision and the whole was gendered with a conscious and virulent masculinity. This is not to say that these views *were* fascism or to simplify them by placing an anachronistic label upon them. Elements of their thought were completely opposed, especially the not entirely rhetorical libertarianism. But the concept of fascism is as multifarious as the writers themselves, and while some elements were different, some clearly belonged to the same intellectual and political tradition. To ignore this is to create an even more wilful anachronism.

These ideas formed part of a British and European cultural tradition. On the one hand they take on elements of ideas that had motivated criticisms of both parliamentary democracy and capitalism in the nineteenth century — paternalistic Toryism, Tory Democracy, Cobbett-inspired radicalism, the 'anti-modern' socialism of Morris or the medievalism of Ruskin, and liberal criticisms of mass democracy. On the other hand they have much in common with a European tradition of radical right-wing anti-parliamentarism. The ideas of the *New Age* and the *New Witness* showed similarity with, and indeed in many cases were consciously influenced by, similar thinkers and movements on the continent, especially the *Action Française*, Sorel and Nietzsche. On another level they look forward to inter-war criticisms of parliamentary democracy. The Chesterbelloc circle and the Distributist leagues of the nineteen thirties look like an idiosyncratic cul-de-sacs in terms of domestic British politics. But seen from this wider view-point, and in relation to the European right, they take on a broader significance. Most importantly, these ideas need to be seen as part of the cultural and political crisis of the early twentieth century, a crisis Britain did not feel as violently as some countries, but which affected it nevertheless. The thought of the *New Age* and the *New Witness* is the British manifestation of the pan-European, political revolt against liberal parliamentary democracy. This kind of cultural rebellion was not absent from Britain, therefore, it just took different forms and did not find the same circumstances for political manifestation. In Britain, these ideas remained isolated on the intellectual fringe, but they provided an arsenal of arguments from which later disaffected intellectuals could draw.

NOTES

Throughout the notes the *New Age*, the *Eye-Witness* and the *New Witness* are referred to as *NA*, *EW* and *NW*.

Introduction

¹ The bibliography on this is enormous ranging from general accounts such as R. Butler, *The roots of national socialism 1783–1933* (London, 1941) to seminal works of political theory such as H. Arendt, *The origins of totalitarianism* (2nd rev. ed., London, 1967) and J.L. Talmon, *The origins of totalitarian democracy* (London, 1955), and ‘psychoanalytical’ theories such as T. Adorno et. al., *The authoritarian personality* (New York, 1950) and E. Fromm, *Fear of freedom* (London, 1942).

² G.L. Mosse, *The fascist revolution. Towards a general theory of fascism* (New York, 1999); *The image of man: the creation of modern masculinity* (Oxford, 1996); *Nationalism and sexuality: respectability and abnormal sexuality in modern Europe* (New York, 1985); *Masses and man: nationalist and fascist perceptions of reality* (New York, 1980); *The crisis of German ideology: intellectual origins of the Third Reich* (New York 1969); *The nationalization of the masses: political symbolism and mass movements in Germany from the Napoleonic wars through the Third Reich* (New York 1975); ‘Caesarism, circuses and monuments’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 6 (1971), pp. 167–82; ‘The genesis of fascism’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 1 (1966), pp. 14–26; R. Stackelberg, *Idealism debased: from völkisch ideology to national socialism* (Kent, 1981).

³ F.R. Stern, *The politics of cultural despair* (Berkeley 1961).

⁴ Mosse, *Crisis of German ideology*, p. 3.

⁵ See R.A. Nye, *The anti-democratic sources of elite theory: Pareto, Mosca, Michels* (London, 1977). This theory is not unchallenged. M.A. Finocchiaro rejects the proto-fascist labelling of Mosca and his pairing with Pareto. He situates him in a tradition of ‘democratic elitism’ that includes Gramsci, and transcends the left / right dichotomy. M.A. Finocchiaro, *Beyond right and left: democratic elitism in Mosca and Gramsci* (London, 1999), p. 17 and passim.

⁶ G. Berghaus, *Futurism and politics: between anarchist rebellion and fascist reaction, 1909–1944* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 1–8.

⁷ Cunsolo, R.S., ‘Libya, Italian nationalism and the revolt against Giolitti’, *Journal of Modern History*, 37 (1965), pp. 186–207.

⁸ N. Bobbio (tr. L.G. Cochrane), *Ideological profile of twentieth-century Italy* (Princeton, 1995), p. 45.

⁹ In Z. Sternhell, *La droite révolutionnaire 1885–1914: les origines françaises du fascisme* (Paris, 1972), and Z. Sternhell with M. Sznajder and M. Asheri (tr. D. Maisel), *The birth of fascist ideology: from cultural rebellion to political revolution* (Princeton, 1994).

¹⁰ J.R. Jennings, *Georges Sorel: the character and development of his thought* (London, 1985) emphasizes all this but is less insistent than Sternhell on his relationship with fascism.

¹¹ R. Griffin (ed.), *International fascism: theories, causes and the new consensus* (Oxford, 1998), p. 37. The general context of this revolt is explored by H.S. Hughes, *Consciousness and society* (London, 1967), R. Williams, *Culture and society 1780–1950* (2nd

ed., New York, 1983) and J.W. Burrow, *The crisis of reason: European thought, 1848–1914* (London, 2000). The results of a recent conference on this interpretation are collected in Z. Sternhell (ed.), *The intellectual revolt against liberal democracy 1870–1945: international conference in memory of Jacob L. Talmon* (Jerusalem, 1996).

¹² D.D. Roberts, 'How not to think about fascism and ideology – intellectual antecedents and historical meaning?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000), pp. 185–211.

¹³ See G.D. Philips, *The diehards: aristocratic society and politics in Edwardian England* (Cambridge, 1979); G.R. Searle, *Corruption in British politics, 1895–1930* (Oxford, 1987), *Eugenics and politics in Britain, 1900–1914* (London, 1976), *The quest for national efficiency: A study in British politics and political thought 1899–1914* (Oxford, 1971); B. Semmel, *Imperialism and social reform: English social imperial thought, 1895–1914* (London, 1960); B. Storm Farr, *The development and impact of right-wing politics in Britain 1903–1932* (New York, 1987); A. Sykes, 'The radical right and the crisis of British conservatism before the First World War', *Historical Journal*, 26 (3), 1985, pp. 661–676; R.C. Thurlow, 'Political witchcraft: roots of fascism', *Patterns of Prejudice*, 11 (1977), pp. 17–22. Thomas Linehan discusses the intellectual origins of British fascism in *British fascism 1918–39: parties, ideology and culture* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 1–37. Writers are reluctant to link Britain to a general European trend, possibly out of an anxiousness to avoid the polemics about the origins of fascism. P. Kennedy and A. Nichols, *Nationalist and racialist movements in Britain and Germany before 1914* (Oxford, 1981) is relational rather than comparative.

¹⁴ G. Searle, 'The 'revolt from the right' in Edwardian Britain' in Kennedy and Nicholls, *Nationalist and racialist movements*, p. 34.

¹⁵ E.H.H. Green, *The crisis of conservatism: the politics, economics and ideology of the British Conservative party, 1880–1914* (London, 1995), pp. 329–33.

¹⁶ Searle, *Corruption*, passim.

¹⁷ Dan Stone, *Breeding superman: Nietzsche, race and eugenics in Edwardian and interwar Britain* (Liverpool, 2002), p. 5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹⁹ D.G. Bridson, *The filibuster: a study of the political ideas of Wyndham Lewis* (London, 1972); W. Chace, *The political identities of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot* (Stanford, CA., 1973); A. Julius, *T.S. Eliot, anti-Semitism and literary form* (Cambridge, 1995); J.

Meyers, *The enemy: a biography of Wyndham Lewis* (London, 1980); P. Morrison, *The poetics of fascism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Paul de Man* (Oxford, 1996); J. Morse, 'T.S. Eliot says "Jew"', *American Literary History*, 10 (1998), pp. 497–507; J. Nash, *Wyndham Lewis: friend to the enemies* (New Delhi, 1993); V. Sherry, *Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and radical modernism* (Oxford, 1993); J. Veitch, 'T.S. Eliot and ideology', *Journal of American Studies*, 30 (1996), pp. 150–1; G. A. Wagner, *Wyndham Lewis: a portrait of the artist as the enemy* (London, 1957); C. C. O'Brien, 'Passion and cunning: an essay on the politics of W.B. Yeats' in A.N. Jeffares and K.C.W. Cross (eds.), *In excited reverie: a centenary tribute to William Butler Yeats 1865–1939* (London, 1965).

²⁰ K. Asher, *T.S. Eliot and ideology* (New York, 1995) and K. Asher, 'T.S. Eliot and Charles Maurras', *ANQ*, 11(3), pp. 20–29; E. Svarny, *The men of 1914: T.S. Eliot and early modernism* (Milton Keynes, 1988); C. Ferrall, *Modernist writing and reactionary politics* (Cambridge, 2002).

²¹ J. Carey, *The intellectuals and the masses: pride and prejudice among the literary intelligentsia, 1880–1939* (London, 1992).

²² J.R. Harrison, *The reactionaries* (London, 1966). A similar book, E. Tange Lean, *The Napoleonists: a study in political disaffection, 1760–1960* (London, 1970), although thought provoking, is too idiosyncratic for general theoretical application.

²³ E. Bentley, *The cult of the superman: a study of the idea of heroism in Carlyle and Nietzsche: with notes on other hero-worshippers of modern times* (London, 1947).

²⁴ P. Peppis, *Literature, politics and the English avant-garde: nation and empire, 1901–1918* (Cambridge, 2000).

²⁵ W. Martin, *The 'New Age' under Orage: chapters in English cultural history* (Manchester, 1967); <http://www.modjourn.brown.edu>, last accessed Nov. 30, 2004.

²⁶ The only article concerned with its running is about its successor, G.K.'s *Weekly*, A.E. Day, 'The story of G.K.'s *Weekly*', *Library Review*, 24 (1974), pp. 209–12.

²⁷ Quoted in J. Coates, *Chesterton and the Edwardian cultural crisis* (Hull, 1984), p. 238. Orage and his circle are also written about in J. Carswell, *Lives and letters: A.R. Orage, Beatrice Hastings, Katherine Mansfield, John Middleton Murry, S.S. Koteliantsky, 1906–1957* (London, 1978); P. Selver, *Orage and the 'New Age' circle: reminiscences and reflections* (London, 1959) and T. Steele, *Alfred Orage and the Leeds Art Club, 1893–1923* (Aldershot, 1990).

²⁸ S. Hynes, 'The New Age', *TLS*, Apr. 25, 1968, p. 437.

²⁹ For example see D. Stone, "'An entirely tactless Nietzschean Jew': Oscar Levy's critique of western civilization' *Journal of Contemporary History* 36 (2), 2001, pp. 271–292 at p. 273.

³⁰ R. Scholes, 'General introduction to *The New Age 1907–1922*', <http://www.modjourn.brown.edu/mjp/NAGenInt.html>, p. 2, last accessed Oct. 30, 2003.

³¹ S. Pierson, *British socialists: the journey from fantasy to politics* (London, 1979).

³² T. Steele, 'From gentleman to superman: Alfred Orage and aristocratic socialism' in C. Shaw and M. Chase (eds.), *The imagined past — history and nostalgia* (Manchester, 1989), p. 121.

³³ Steele, *Alfred Orage*.

³⁴ Ferrall, 'The New Age' and Fernihough, 'Modernism and the spectre of democracy'.

- ³⁵ Ferrall, *Modernist writing*, pp. 13–20. His sections on The New Age are based on his thesis, ‘The politics of reactionary modernism before the Great War: T.E. Hulme, Wyndham Lewis, Ezra Pound and The New Age circle’ (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1991).
- ³⁶ Ferrall, *Modernist writing*, pp. 16–18.
- ³⁷ A.L. Ardis, *Modernism and cultural conflict, 1880–1922* (Cambridge, 2002), Chapter 5, ‘“Life is not composed of watertight compartments”: the *New Age’s* critique of modernist literary specialization’, pp. 143–172.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- ³⁹ J.G. Watson, ‘Closed fists, open hands: literary modernism and the rhetorics of protofascism and radical humanism (Wyndham Lewis, Rebecca West, T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound)’, (PhD thesis, University of Notre Dame, 2000).
- ⁴⁰ M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972).
- ⁴¹ J. Herf, *Reactionary modernism: technology, culture and politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1984).
- ⁴² Lee Albert Garver, ‘Lost politics: The New Age and the Edwardian socialist roots of British modernism’ (PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 2001).
- ⁴³ See n. 9 above and also D. Beetham, ‘From socialism to fascism’, *Political Studies*, 25 (1977), pp. 3–24 and pp. 161–188; A.J. Gregor, *Young Mussolini and the intellectual origins of fascism* (London, 1979).
- ⁴⁴ B. Hastings, *The old ‘New Age’: Orage and others* (London, 1936) n. p. 22.
- ⁴⁵ Selver, *Orage and the New Age circle*, p. 19.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁴⁸ P. Mairet, *A.R. Orage: A Memoir* (London, 1936), p. 62
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Chapter 1

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Chapter 2

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⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 570.

⁶³ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, May 1, 1913, p. 3.

⁶⁴ G.K. Chesterton, 'At the sign of the world's end: the whiggery of Bertrand Russell', *NW*, Jan. 11, 1917, p. 331.

⁶⁵ *NA*, July 25, 1907, p. 199.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *EW*, Aug. 31, 1911, p. 329.

⁶⁸ 'Miscellaneous notes on guild socialism', *NA*, June 12, 1913, p. 166.

⁶⁹ Letter, H. Belloc to E.S.P. Haynes, Dec.29, 1913, Hilaire Belloc archive, British Library.

⁷⁰ Quoted in D. Thatcher, *Nietzsche in England, 1890–1914: the growth of a reputation* (Toronto, 1970), p. 225.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² R. De Maetzu, 'War and solidarity', *NA*, May 27, 1915, pp. 81–83.

⁷³ A.R. Orage, 'Towards socialism VI. The meaning of liberty', *NA*, Nov. 7, 1907, p. 29. The influence of Nietzsche's *The birth of tragedy* is apparent here. F. Nietzsche (ed. M. Turner, tr. S. Whiteside), *The birth of tragedy out of the spirit of music* (London, 1993 edn.), p. 8 and *passim*.

⁷⁴ A.R. Orage, 'Towards socialism IV', *NA*, Oct. 24, 1907, p. 407.

⁷⁵ 'Present-day criticism', *NA*, Mar. 19, 1914, p. 624.

⁷⁶ C. Chesterton, 'Woman's suffrage', *NA*, Apr. 3, 1913, p. 539.

⁷⁷ A. R. Orage, 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov 14, 1912, p. 30.

⁷⁸ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions — money changers in literature', *NA*, May 11, 1911, p. 35.

⁷⁹ 'The crisis in literature', *NA*, July 27, 1911, p. 296.

⁸⁰ I. Brown, 'Guilders of the chains. 11. — Charlie Chaplin', *NA*, Sept. 23, 1915, p. 495.

⁸¹ I. Brown, 'Guilders of the chains. 111. — Charles Garvice', *NA*, Sept. 30, 1915, p. 518.

⁸² I. Brown, 'Guilders of the chains. IV. — Mr. Albert de Courville', *NA*, Oct. 7, 1915, p. 544.

⁸³ I. Brown, 'Guilders of the chains. VI. — Mr. Horatio Bottomley and Mr. Austin Harrison', *NA*, Oct. 21, 1915, p. 592.

⁸⁴ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions: 111 — a new aristocracy', *NA*, Dec. 8, 1910, p. 132.

⁸⁵ Review of A.R. Orage, *Consciousness: animal, human and superman*, *NA*, June 6, 1907, p. 92.

⁸⁶ O. Levy, 'Was Nietzsche a Brute?', *NA*, Nov. 5, 1914, p. 23.

⁸⁷ Translated as the desire to 'render politics aesthetic' in W. Benjamin, 'The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction', in W. Benjamin, (ed. H. Arendt, tr. H. Zohn), *Illuminations* (London, 1970), p. 243.

⁸⁸ K. Tidrick, *Empire and the English character* (London, 1992).

⁸⁹ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions: III — a new aristocracy', *NA*, Dec. 8, 1910, p. 132.

⁹⁰ A. Boutwood, *National revival: a re-statement of Tory principles. With an introduction by Lord Willoughby de Broke* (London, 1913), p. x. See also Kennedy, *Tory democracy*, G. Brands, *Friedrich Nietzsche* (London, 1914) and A. Ludovici, *A defence of aristocracy: a text book for Tories* (London, 1915).

⁹¹ H.G. Wells, 'The labour unrest: 1 — distrust', *The Daily Mail*, 13 May, 1912, p. 8.

⁹² This organic view of the people had something in common with Le Bon's theory of 'crowd' that had made headway in English sociology through the theories of William MacDougall and Wilfred Trotter. See R. N. Soffer, 'New elitism; social psychology in pre-war England', *Journal of British Studies*, 7 (1969), pp. 111–140 and 'The revolution in English social thought, 1880–1914', *The American Historical Review*, 75 (1970), pp. 1938–1964. For the reception of 'crowd' theories elsewhere

in Europe see R. L. Geiger, 'Democracy and the crowd: the social history of an idea in France and Italy 1890–1914', *Societas*, 7(1), 1977, pp. 47–71.

⁹³ 'Unedited opinions. The government of the mind', *NA*, July 27, 1911, p. 299.

⁹⁴ See especially A. Ludovici, 'Nietzsche and the national guilds system', *NA*, 5 Feb., 1914, p. 445.

⁹⁵ 'Unedited opinions. The government of the mind', *NA*, July 27, 1911, p. 299.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ The wider context of guild ideas is looked at by A. Black, *Guilds and civil society in European political thought from the twelfth century to the present* (London, 1984); J.L. Finlay, *Social Credit: the English origins* (Montreal, 1972) and S.T. Glass, *The responsible society: the ideas of the English guild socialist* (London, 1966).

⁹⁹ S. Pierson, *British socialists: the journey from fantasy to politics* (London, 1979) p. 206.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

¹⁰¹ 'Notes of the Week', *NA*, Sept. 24, 1914, p. 491.

¹⁰² J.W. Burrow, *The crisis of reason: European thought, 1848–1914* (London, 2000), pp. 113–20.

¹⁰³ A.J. Penty, *The restoration of the gild system* (London, 1906). Penty's thought is discussed in A.J. Kiernan, *A.J. Penty: his contribution to social thought* (London, 1941) and more recently in P.C. Grosvenor, 'A medieval future: the social, economic and aesthetic thought of A.J. Penty (1875–1937)' (Ph.D. thesis, London, London School of Economics, 1997).

¹⁰⁴ Penty preferred the medieval spelling.

¹⁰⁵ 'The leisure state', *NA*, Apr. 9, 1914, p. 713.

¹⁰⁶ A.J. Penty, 'Guilds and universality', *NA*, Mar. 26, 1914, p. 651.

¹⁰⁷ A.J. Penty, 'The restoration of the guild system. The collectivist formula', *NA*, July 31, 1913, p. 389.

¹⁰⁸ *EW*, July 6, 1911, p. 66.

¹⁰⁹ 'The great industry and the wage system', *NA*, May 9, 1912, p. 29.

¹¹⁰ S.G. Hobson, *Pilgrim to the left: memoirs of a modern revolutionist* (London, 1938), p. 176.

¹¹¹ R. Kenney, *Westering* (London, 1939), p. 197.

¹¹² P. Nicholls, *Ezra Pound: politics, economics and writing. A study of 'The Cantos'* (London, 1984), p. 21.

¹¹³ L. Surette argues as such in 'Ezra Pound and British radicalism', *English Studies in Canada*, 9 (1983), pp. 435–451.

¹¹⁴ 'Notes of the Week', *NA*, Aug. 31, 1911, p. 411.

¹¹⁵ 'State socialism and the wage system', *NA*, May 16, 1912, p. 54.

¹¹⁶ 'The heart of the argument', *NA*, June 5, 1913, p. 134.

¹¹⁷ 'State socialism and the wage system', *NA*, May 16, 1912, p. 55.

¹¹⁸ F. Matthews, 'The ladder of becoming: A.R. Orage, A.J. Penty and the origins of Guild Socialism in England' in David E. Martin and David Rubenstein (eds.), *Ideology and the labour movement: essays presented to John Saville* (London, 1979), p. 155.

¹¹⁹ 'Unedited opinions. What is the soul?', *NA*, Nov. 7, 1912, p. 10.

¹²⁰ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 14, 1912, p. 29.

- ¹²¹ ‘Miscellaneous notes on Guild Socialism’, *NA*, June 12, 1913, p. 165.
- ¹²² M. B. Reckitt, ‘The national guild system’, *NA*, Sept. 4, 1913, p. 540.
- ¹²³ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁴ It was an editorial tactic of Orage to sign these articles collectively, to frighten the labour movement into thinking the ‘national guildsmen’ were already a coherent group. This caused problems and frictions later, when, to maintain the deception, Orage published Hobson’s articles with his own name as editor in A.R. Orage, *National guilds. An inquiry into the wage system and the way out* (London, 1914). (Hobson, *Pilgrim to the left*, pp. 178–9.)
- ¹²⁵ ‘Notes of the week’, *NA*, Sept. 7, 1911, pp. 434–5.
- ¹²⁶ ‘Guild Socialism IV — a working model’, *NA*, Oct. 24, 1912, p. 631.
- ¹²⁷ Hobson, *Pilgrim to the left* p. 177.
- ¹²⁸ I.J.C. Brown, ‘Geography and human grouping’, *NA*, Oct. 8, 1914, p. 545.
- ¹²⁹ G.W. Taylor, ‘A.R. Orage, *The New Age* and Guild Socialism’, (Ph.D thesis, University of Wales, Swansea, 1990), p. 57.
- ¹³⁰ Matthews, ‘The ladder of becoming’ in Martin and Rubenstein (eds.), *Ideology and the labour movement*. Orage’s letter to Guildsmen (1920), pp. 153–4.
- ¹³¹ M. B. Reckitt, *As it happened: an autobiography* (London, 1941), p. 107.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*
- ¹³³ G.D.H. Cole, *The world of labour* (London, 1913), p. 83.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 202.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 127.
- ¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- ¹³⁷ J.E.F. Mann, N. J. Sievers, R.W.T. Cox, *The real democracy (first essays of the Rota Club)* (London, 1913), p. 250.
- ¹³⁸ G.K. Chesterton, ‘A new Oxford movement’, *NW*, May 1, 1913. Reprinted in *The Chesterton Review* 28(3), 2002, pp. 317–21 at p. 318.
- ¹³⁹ ‘Notes of the week’, *NA*, Mar. 27, 1913, p. 490.
- ¹⁴⁰ ‘National guilds XVIII’, *NA*, Dec. 4, 1913, p. 135.
- ¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- ¹⁴² Taylor, ‘A.R. Orage’, pp. 249–51.
- ¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 137.
- ¹⁴⁴ ‘Notes of the week’, *NA*, July 4, 1912, p. 220.
- ¹⁴⁵ A.R. Orage, ‘Towards socialism VII’, *NA*, Nov. 14, 1907, p. 50.
- ¹⁴⁶ ‘Miscellaneous notes on guild socialism’, *NA*, Dec. 5, 1912, p. 102.
- ¹⁴⁷ ‘Guild socialism — XIII the bureaucrat and the guild’, *NA*, Feb. 20, 1913, p. 375.
- ¹⁴⁸ ‘Notes of the week’, *NA*, May 28, 1914, p. 73.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.
- ¹⁵⁰ ‘Guild socialism V — industries susceptible to guild organisation’, *NA*, Nov. 7, 1912, p. 6.
- ¹⁵¹ ‘Guild socialism III — an outline of the guild’, *NA*, Oct. 24, 1912, p. 606.
- ¹⁵² For a discussion of this see J. Meadowcroft, *Conceptualizing the state: innovation and dispute in British thought 1880–1914* (Oxford, 1995).

- ¹⁵³ G.R. Searle, *The quest for national efficiency: a study in British politics and political thought, 1899–1914* (London, 1971).
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- ¹⁵⁵ H. Belloc, *The servile state* (London, 3rd ed., 1927).
- ¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- ¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- ¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- ¹⁶¹ V. Feske, *From Belloc to Churchill: private scholars, public culture and the crisis of British liberalism 1900–1939* (London, 1996), pp. 11–12.
- ¹⁶² J.P. McCarthy, *Hilaire Belloc: Edwardian radical* (Indianapolis, 1978), p. 322.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 323.
- ¹⁶⁴ ‘Towards national guilds’, *NA*, July 23, 1914, p. 270.
- ¹⁶⁵ A.N. Wilson, *Hilaire Belloc* (London, 1986 edn.), p. 152.
- ¹⁶⁶ M. Stirner, (ed. D. Leopold), *The ego and its own* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 105.
- ¹⁶⁷ A.R. Orage (ed.), *National guilds: an inquiry into the wage system and the way out* (London, 1914), pp. 259–263.
- ¹⁶⁸ Quoted in Meadowcroft, *Conceptualizing the state*, p. 228.
- ¹⁶⁹ Presscutter, ‘The New Age and the Press’, *NA*, July 30, 1914, p. 311.
- ¹⁷⁰ ‘Towards national guilds’, *NA*, July 23, 1914, p. 269.
- ¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷² Quoted in Wright, *G.D.H. Cole*, p. 26.
- ¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 21–2.
- ¹⁷⁴ Cole, *World of labour*, p. 4.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 204.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 350.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 400.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 51–2.
- ¹⁸⁰ A.E.R.’s reply to I. Brown, ‘Democracy and the guilds’, *NA*, Feb. 18, 1915, p. 437.
- ¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- ¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 365.
- ¹⁸⁴ For an analysis of the thought of Reckitt in relation to Orage see Taylor, ‘A.R. Orage’. For an examination of the influence of Anglican social thought on T.S. Eliot see S. Collini, ‘The European modernist as Anglican moralist: the later social criticism of T.S. Eliot’ in M.S. Micale and R.L. Dietle (eds.), *Enlightenment, passion, modernity: historical essays in European thought and culture* (Stanford, CA., 2000).
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- ¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 108. Hobson was later to publish S.G. Hobson, *Guild principles in war and peace: with an introductory essay by A.R. Orage* (London, 1917).
- ¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 112.
- ¹⁸⁸ Reckitt, *As it happened*, pp. 155–6.
- ¹⁸⁹ Mann et al., *The real democracy*, pp. 44 and 63.
- ¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 38.
- ¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 240.
- ¹⁹² Ibid., p. 237.
- ¹⁹³ Marc Stears, 'Guild socialism and ideological diversity on the British left, 1914–1926', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 3 (1998), pp. 289–305.
- ¹⁹⁴ K. Csengeri (ed.), *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme* (Oxford, 1994), p. 239.
- ¹⁹⁵ Ramiro de Maeztu, *Authority, liberty and function in the light of the war* (London, 1916).
- ¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 23.
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 107.
- ¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 255.
- ¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 268.
- ²⁰⁰ J.P. Corrin, 'Catholic writers on the right', *The Chesterton Review*, 25 (1999), p. 92.

Chapter 3

- ¹ For the failure of the radical right see E.H.H. Green, *The crisis of conservatism: the politics, economics and ideology of the British Conservative Party, 1880–1914* (London, 1995); for the failure of the radical left see R. McKibbin, *The ideologies of class: social relations in Britain 1880–1950* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 4–41.
- ² H. Belloc and C. Chesterton, *The party system* (London, 1911). This was serialized in *The New Age* in the year before its publication as a monograph.
- ³ P. Pombeni, 'Starting in reason, ending in passion. Bryce, Lowell, Ostrogorski and the problem of democracy', *Historical Journal*, 37 (1994), pp. 319–41.
- ⁴ W.H. Greenleaf, *The British political tradition. Volume two, the ideological heritage* (London, 1983), pp. 88–95.
- ⁵ For a discussion of Belloc's relationship with Maurras and the French radical right see T. Villis, 'The influence of the ideas of Action Française, Georges Sorel and the French radical right in Britain and Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' (M.Phil thesis, Cambridge, 2000); J.P. McCarthy, *Hilaire Belloc: Edwardian radical* (Indianapolis, 1978), pp. 40–43; A.N. Wilson, *Hilaire Belloc* (London, 1986 edn.), p. 110.
- ⁶ Quoted in D. Stone, 'An 'entirely tactless Nietzschean Jew': Oscar Levy's critique of western civilization', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36 (2001), pp. 271–292 at p. 274.
- ⁷ Quoted in K. Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal and related aspects of British anti-Semitism, 1911–1914' (Ph.D. thesis, Sheffield, 1978), p. 201.
- ⁸ S. Pierson, *British socialists. The journey from fantasy to politics* (London, 1979), p. 202.
- ⁹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 23, 1911, p. 76.
- ¹⁰ Belloc and Chesterton, *The party system*. The book followed on from earlier works by Cecil Chesterton, especially C.E. Chesterton, *Gladstonian ghosts* (London,

1906) and *Party and people: a criticism of the recent elections and their consequences* (London, 1910).

¹¹ H. Belloc to E.S.P. Haynes, Jan. 28, 1911, Hilaire Belloc Archive, British Library (microfilm copies).

¹² *Socialism and the servile state. A debate between Messrs. Hilaire Belloc and J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.* (The South West London Federation of the Independent Labour Party, 1911), p. 29.

¹³ J.P. Corrin, 'Labour unrest and the development of anti-statist thinking in Britain, 1900–1914', *The Chesterton Review*, 8 (1982), pp. 225–243 at p. 235.

¹⁴ Its members were Arthur E. Beck, President of the British Labour Party, G.K. Chesterton, Sir Hiram Maxim and Rev. Charles Voysey of the Theistic Church. L. A. Hetzler, 'Chesterton's political views, 1892–1914. Part 2', *The Chesterton Review*, 7 (1981), pp. 229–249 at p. 245.

¹⁵ E.S.P. Haynes to H. Belloc, Feb. 13, 1911, Hilaire Belloc Archive, British Library.

¹⁶ Advert in *TLS*, June 22, 1911.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *The party system* was recommended to readers in *NA*, Feb. 9, 1911, p. 339 and reviewed by A.E. Randall in *NA*, Feb. 16, 1911, pp. 365–6.

²⁰ Advert for *The party system*, *EW*, June 29, 1911, p. 62.

²¹ Review of *The party system*, *TLS*, Feb. 10, 1911, p. 56.

²² Belloc and Chesterton, *The party system*, p. 201.

²³ *NW*, May 15, 1913, p. 57.

²⁴ *NA*, Feb. 9, 1911, p. 339.

²⁵ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 23, 1911, p. 76.

²⁶ 'Some appreciations', *NW*, July 31, 1913, p. 392. George Lansbury had also written an earlier article for the paper entitled 'Is parliament useless?', *NW*, Dec. 19, 1912, pp. 208–9.

²⁷ Alfred A. Randall, review of *The party system*, *NA*, Feb. 16, 1911, pp. 365–6.

²⁸ 'Sir George Kemp's testimony', *EW*, Aug. 8, 1912, p. 225.

²⁹ 'At it again!', *EW*, May 2, 1912, p. 617.

³⁰ *EW*, Apr. 4, 1912, p. 484.

³¹ 'Why We Object', *EW*, Sept. 28, 1911, p. 456.

³² *EW*, Nov. 16, 1911, p. 706.

³³ *EW*, June 22, 1911, p. 5.

³⁴ 'An open letter to a person of constructive mind', *EW*, Sept. 7, 1911, pp. 361–2.

³⁵ 'Sir George Kemp's testimony', *EW*, Aug. 8, 1912, p. 226.

³⁶ 'A message from Mr. Belloc', *NW*, Aug. 7, 1913, p. 423.

³⁷ Wilson, *Hilaire Belloc*, pp. 179–80.

³⁸ The *Eye-Witness* was not the only magazine dedicated to exposing corruption in this period. But it is possible that its success, especially after the Marconi Scandal, inspired less well-known periodicals such as Mr. Gibson Bowles's *Candid Quarterly Review*.

³⁹ 'An open letter to the readers of the Eye-Witness', *EW*, June 13, 1912, p. 811.

⁴⁰ 'Present-day criticism', *NA*, Mar. 26, 1914, p. 660.

⁴¹ 'Comments of the Week', *NW*, Mar. 19, 1914, p. 617.

⁴² *Official report Fifth series. Parliamentary debates. Commons* vol. XIV, p. 120.

⁴³ 'The Jewish question VII. The second solution: exclusion — contemporary', *EW*, Oct. 19, 1911, p. 554.

⁴⁴ 'An open letter to Mr. Israel Zangwill', *NW*, Dec. 19, 1912, p. 201.

⁴⁵ *NW*, Jan. 16, 1913, p. 330. The author of this poem is unknown. Some of the contributors to the *Witness* were anonymous. When asked to produce an anthology of the poems that appeared in the *Witness*, Belloc wrote that the task would be difficult because, 'some of the nastiest knocks at the politicians were written in collaboration or by outsiders who didn't want their names, or again *by people whose names we never knew!* — so strong was the terror.' Belloc to W.S. Blunt, Sept. 13, 1913, Blunt MS., Box 4, West Sussex Record Office, Chichester.

⁴⁶ 'Samuel asks for more', *NW*, July 24, 1913, p. 356.

⁴⁷ 'Comments of the week', *NW*, Oct. 16, 1913, p. 739.

⁴⁸ F.H. O'Donnell, 'Beilis not acquitted!', *NW*, Jan. 15, 1914, pp. 336–8.

⁴⁹ B. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society: Racial representations, 1875–1945* (Cambridge, 1993) and B. Cheyette, 'Hilaire Belloc and the "Marconi scandal" 1913–14', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 8 (1989), pp. 131–42.

⁵⁰ H. Belloc, *Emmanuel Burden* (London, 1904); *Mr. Clutterbuck's election* (London, 1908); *A change in the cabinet* (London, 1909); *Pongo and the bull* (London, 1910).

⁵¹ Belloc, *Emmanuel Burden*, p. 66.

⁵² *Ibid.* p. 298.

⁵³ *EW*, Sept. 5, 1912 (verses 4+5). *The New Age* also published a verse supposedly comically identifying 'Ikey Moser' as a financial swindler and political wire-puller: 'When Welsh meets Jew', *NA*, Feb. 29, 1912, p. 427.

⁵⁴ Belloc, *Mr. Clutterbuck's election*, p. 214.

⁵⁵ This has been discussed at length elsewhere, see especially, Lunn, 'Marconi scandal', *passim*. Cecil Chesterton's role in the scandal was the political awakening for A. K. Chesterton [D. Baker, *Ideology of obsession: A.K. Chesterton and British fascism* (London 1996), p. 88.] It was also the subject of a Nazi anti-Semitic study: 'Der Markoni Skandal' in P. Aldag, *Das Judentum in England* (Berlin, 1943), pp. 400–413 [Lunn, 'Marconi scandal', p.v.].

⁵⁶ 'Marconi', *EW*, Aug. 15, 1912, p. 258.

⁵⁷ 'The Marconi scandal', *EW*, Aug. 8, 1912, p. 230.

⁵⁸ 'Marconi', *EW*, Aug. 15, 1912, p. 258.

⁵⁹ This account of the Indian silver affair is taken from G.R. Searle, *Corruption in British politics. 1895–1930* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 201–212; C. Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British society, 1876–1939* (London, 1979), p. 77 and Y. Cassis, *City bankers, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 220.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Searle, *Corruption* p. 211. For Belloc's views on the Jews see pp. 155–66.

⁶¹ 'Samuel asks for more', *NW*, July 24, 1913, p. 354.

⁶² 'Our appeal', *NW*, July 31, 1913, p. 386.

⁶³ 'The Marconi scandal', *EW*, Aug. 8, 1912, p. 230.

- ⁶⁴ H. Belloc to W.S. Blunt, 29 July, 1913, Blunt MS., vol. 1, nos. 4 and 5, West Sussex Record Office, Chichester.
- ⁶⁵ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Oct. 17, 1912, p. 577.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 578.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 578.
- ⁶⁸ *NA*, Apr. 10, 1913, p. 541.
- ⁶⁹ See p. 26 above and *NA*, Apr. 10, 1913, p. 542.
- ⁷⁰ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Apr. 3, 1913, p. 516.
- ⁷¹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, June 26, 1913, p. 223.
- ⁷² 'The Marconi scandal', *EW*, Aug. 9, 1912, p. 230.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ F.H. O'Donnell, 'Twenty years after — XIV', *NA*, May 29, 1913, p. 108.
- ⁷⁵ 'Corruption in government' Speech by George W. Kekewich at a meeting for the National League for Clean Government, *NW*, Nov. 6, 1913, p. 15.
- ⁷⁶ The league's organization and aims are also discussed in Lunn, 'Marconi scandal', pp. 233–258, Searle, *Corruption*, pp. 160–1 and Holmes, *Anti-Semitism*, pp. 102–3.
- ⁷⁷ *NW*, May 15, 1913, p. 37.
- ⁷⁸ June 27, July 4, 11, 18 (1913).
- ⁷⁹ Advert, *NW*, July 31, 1913, p. 415.
- ⁸⁰ 'A league for clean government', *NW*, Oct. 9, 1913, p. 705.
- ⁸¹ A. Chesterton, *The Chestertons* (London, 1941), pp. 113–14.
- ⁸² 'The national league for clean government', *NW*, Oct. 9, 1913, p. 711.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ F.H. O'Donnell, 'The need for clean government', *NW*, Oct. 9, 1913, p. 717.
- ⁸⁶ 'A league for clean government', *NW*, Oct. 9, 1913, p. 706.
- ⁸⁷ Lunn, 'The Marconi scandal', pp. 233–258.
- ⁸⁸ Quoted in *Ibid.*, n., p. 268.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 236.
- ⁹⁰ *NW*, Oct. 30, 1913, p. 832
- ⁹¹ 'The fight for clean government', *NW*, Nov. 6, 1913, p. 8.
- ⁹² 'The fight for clean government', *NW*, Nov. 13, 1913, p. 39.
- ⁹³ F. H. O'Donnell, 'Twenty years after — XXXVII', *NW*, Nov. 13, 1913, p. 45.
- ⁹⁴ *Berkshire Chronicle*, Nov. 7, 1913, p. 3.
- ⁹⁵ *NW*, Dec. 4, 1913, p. 136.
- ⁹⁶ Rowland Hunt, MP, 'Money and the party system', speech at meeting of the National League for Clean Government, Essex Hall, Dec. 8, 1913. *NW*, Dec. 18, 1913, p. 218.
- ⁹⁷ E. Hopkins, *Charles Masterman (1873–1927), politician and journalist: the splendid failure* (New York, 1999), p. 278, n. 23. The view that Belloc resented Masterman's marriage is taken from an obituary of Lucy Masterman by Sir Arthur Butler (Charles Masterman's former secretary) in *The Times*, Apr. 26, 1977.
- ⁹⁸ L. Masterman, *C.F.G. Masterman: a biography* (London, 1939), p. 197.
- ⁹⁹ E. Cowley, 'Our victory at Ipswich', *NW*, May 28, 1914, p. 103.
- ¹⁰⁰ *East Anglian Daily Times*, May 23, 1914, p. 7.

- ¹⁰¹ *East Anglian Daily Times*, May 25, 1914, p. 6.
- ¹⁰² 'Party politics and the press', speech by Vivian Carter (editor of *The Bystander*) at a meeting for The National League for Clean Government, Feb. 26, 1914: *NW*, Mar. 5, 1914, p. 557.
- ¹⁰³ Quoted in Lunn, 'The Marconi scandal', p. 245.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury*, May 29, 1914, p. 7.
- ¹⁰⁵ G.R. Searle, *Corruption in British politics 1895–1930* (Oxford, 1987), p. 117 and *passim*.
- ¹⁰⁶ Green, *The crisis of conservatism*, pp. 329–33.
- ¹⁰⁷ 'Politics and the wage system 1', *NA*, June 27, 1912, p. 198.
- ¹⁰⁸ 'Belated reforms', *EW*, Aug. 10, 1911, p. 234.
- ¹⁰⁹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, July 18, 1912, p. 268.
- ¹¹⁰ *NA*, Sept. 18, 1913, p. 586.
- ¹¹¹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, July 18, 1912, p. 268.
- ¹¹² J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa XXI — representatives (concluded)', *NA*, Apr. 17, 1913, p. 578.
- ¹¹³ G. Hervey, 'Democracy — The great dead end', *NA*, July 24, 1913, p. 357.
- ¹¹⁴ A.J. Penty, 'The restoration of the guild system VI', *NA*, Aug. 28, 1913, p. 512. Medievalism was not particular to Penty and had been a constant theme in many nineteenth-century writers and political theorists, most notably Morris and Ruskin. See, A. Chandler, *A dream of order: the medieval idea in nineteenth-century English literature* (London, 1971). See also pp. 62–3.
- ¹¹⁵ This is similar to Belloc's use of the word in his discussion of the Jews, 'The Jewish question. The end — privilege', *EW*, Oct. 26, 1911, p. 588. See p. 156. It is also similar to the Indian caste system, something which would surely have been dismissed by Belloc as 'eastern', but which was admired by J.M. Kennedy in *The religions and philosophies of the east* (London, 1911). See p. 175.
- ¹¹⁶ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa XX — representatives (cont.)', *NA*, Apr. 10, 1913, p. 553.
- ¹¹⁷ E. Wake Cook, 'Nietzsche and art', *NA*, Aug. 17, 1911, p. 382.
- ¹¹⁸ A.M. Ludovici, 'The mastery of life', *NA*, May 30, 1912, p. 112.
- ¹¹⁹ A. M. Ludovici, 'The Sonderbund exhibition at Cologne', *NA*, July 25, 1912, p. 307.
- ¹²⁰ A.J. Penty, 'Art as a factor in social reform', *NA*, Jan. 29, 1914, pp. 394–6.
- ¹²¹ A.J. Penty, 'Art and revolution', *NA*, Mar. 19, 1914, pp. 617–18.
- ¹²² A.M. Ludovici, 'Art. An open letter to my friends', *NA*, Jan. 1, 1914, p. 281.
- ¹²³ T.E. Hulme, 'Mr. Balfour, Bergson and politics', *NA*, Nov. 9, 1911, p. 39. The same uses of Laserre's terms were then used in university courses by Eccles and Eliot. See F.Y. Eccles, *La liquidation du romantisme et les directions actuelles de la littérature française. Trois conférences faites à Bedford College, Université de Londres, Les 17, 20 et 22 août, 1917* (Oxford, 1919); T.S. Eliot, *Syllabus of a course of six lectures on modern French literature* (Oxford University Extension Office, Oxford, 1916).
- ¹²⁴ P. Laserre, *Le romantisme français* (Paris, 1907).
- ¹²⁵ K. Csengeri, *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 255–262.
- ¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

- ¹²⁷ 'The year', *NW*, June 13, 1912, p. 801.
- ¹²⁸ 'Resolute government', *NW*, Apr. 30, 1914, p. 808.
- ¹²⁹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 28, 1912, p. 74.
- ¹³⁰ 'Unedited opinions: life and death', *NA*, Jan. 16, 1913, p. 251.
- ¹³¹ E. Pound, 'Patria mia VI', *NA*, Oct. 3, 1912, p. 564. Tim Redman emphasizes the importance of *The New Age* for Pound's political education in *Ezra Pound and Italian fascism* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 50.
- ¹³² E. Pound, 'Through alien eyes 1', *NA*, Jan. 16, 1913, p. 252.
- ¹³³ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa X — limits (cont.)', *NA*, Jan. 30, 1913, p. 299.
- ¹³⁴ A.M. Ludovici, 'Democracy and Mr. Cox', *NA*, Mar. 19, 1914, p. 639.
- ¹³⁵ A.M. Ludovici, 'Mr. Chesterton and anarchy', *NA*, June 13, 1912, p. 167. Ludovici's political development is explored in D. Stone, 'The extremes of Englishness: the 'exceptional' ideology of Anthony Mario Ludovici', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 4 (1999), pp. 191–218.
- ¹³⁶ J.M. Kennedy, 'The party system', *NA*, Feb. 23, 1911, p. 405.
- ¹³⁷ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Mar. 20, 1913, p. 465.
- ¹³⁸ C. Chesterton, 'That know not Joseph', *NW*, July 23, 1914, p. 273.
- ¹³⁹ *NA*, Nov. 3, 1910, p. 3.
- ¹⁴⁰ P.V. Cohn, 'Belloc and Nietzsche', *NA*, Jan. 2, 1913, p. 214.
- ¹⁴¹ 'A Tory idealist', *EW*, Aug. 22, 1912, p. 311.
- ¹⁴² C. Chesterton, 'Tory democracy: some warnings', *NW*, Mar. 26, 1914, p. 695.
- ¹⁴³ *EW*, Aug. 31, 1911, pp. 331–2.
- ¹⁴⁴ Vincent McNabb also praised A. Boutwood's *National revival* (London, 1913), which has an introduction by the die-hard Lord Willoughby de Broke, who was a regular contributor to the *National Review*. See V. McNabb, 'A Tory seer', *NW*, June 5, 1913, p. 152.
- ¹⁴⁵ Letter from H. Belloc, *NA*, Mar. 23, 1911, p. 499.
- ¹⁴⁶ C. Chesterton, 'A second letter to a backwoodsman', *NA*, Apr. 20, 1911, p. 580.
- ¹⁴⁷ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa XIX — Representatives', *NA*, Apr. 3, 1913, p. 521.
- ¹⁴⁸ 'Some questions for Lord Murray', *NW*, Jan. 8, 1914, p. 298.
- ¹⁴⁹ *EW*, Aug. 3, 1911, p. 194.
- ¹⁵⁰ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, July 27, 1911, p. 290.
- ¹⁵¹ *EW*, July 6, 1911, p. 72.
- ¹⁵² 'An obituary letter to the House of Lords', *EW*, Dec. 14, 1911, pp. 211–12.
- ¹⁵³ *EW*, Aug. 10, 1911, p. 233.
- ¹⁵⁴ *EW*, Aug. 17, 1911, p. 258.
- ¹⁵⁵ Belloc and Chesterton, *The party system*, p. 199.
- ¹⁵⁶ G. Lansbury, 'Parliament', *EW*, Nov. 23, 1911, p. 721.
- ¹⁵⁷ *EW*, July 20, 1911, p. 130.
- ¹⁵⁸ Belloc and Chesterton, *The party system*, pp. 15–16.
- ¹⁵⁹ This is reminiscent of a congressional system such as that in the USA. Indeed, Cecil Chesterton praised the American constitution in his book, *A history of the United States* (London, 1919).

¹⁶⁰ Belloc, *NA*, Mar. 2, 1911, p. 425.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 426.

¹⁶² Report on proceedings of a debate in Queen's Hall, Langham Place, London, S.W., on Tuesday, Jan. 28, 1913, between Mr. Hilaire Belloc and Mr. George Bernard Shaw, Papers of George Bernard Shaw, British Library, Add. 50686, p. 35.

¹⁶³ G.L. Mosse has pointed out that every modern ideology, even fascism, is based on an ideal (however distorted) of popular sovereignty in *The fascist revolution: towards a general theory of fascism* (New York, 1999), p. 2.

¹⁶⁴ *EW*, Feb. 29, 1912, p. 321.

¹⁶⁵ C. Chesterton, 'A Tory idealist', *NW*, Aug. 22, 1912, p. 311.

¹⁶⁶ A.J. Penty, 'Art and plutocracy', *NA*, May 7, 1914, p. 10.

¹⁶⁷ 'Our Appeal', *NW*, July 31, 1913, p. 386.

¹⁶⁸ H. Belloc, 'The party system', *NA*, Mar. 9, 1911, p. 436.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa. XIX — representatives (concluded)', *NA*, Apr. 17, 1913, p. 578.

¹⁷¹ Quoted in J. Meadowcroft, *Conceptualizing the state: innovation and dispute in British political thought 1880–1914* (Oxford, 1995), p. 101. The Rainbow Circle was also set up in this period to consider single chamber government. See M. Freedon (ed.), *Minutes of the Rainbow Circle, 1894–1924* (London, 1989).

¹⁷² *EW*, July 13, 1911, p. 105.

¹⁷³ Review of J.M. Kennedy, *Tory democracy* in *EW*, Dec. 29, 1911, p. 57.

¹⁷⁴ See for example the opinion of P.C. Loftus, *EW*, July 20, 1911, p. 150 and in *The Conservative party and the future* (London, 1912).

¹⁷⁵ First published in *The Commentator* in five instalments: (3 Apr., 1912), pp. 294–5; (10 Apr., 1912), p. 310; (1 May, 1912), p. 362; (8 May, 1912), p. 380; and (15 May, 1912), pp. 388–9. Signed 'Thomas Gratton'. Reprinted in A. R. Jones, *The life and opinions of T.E. Hulme* (London, 1960) and K. Csengeri (ed.), *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 232–245.

¹⁷⁶ C. Chesterton, 'The path to democracy 11 — the referendum', *NA*, Jan. 12, 1911, p. 246.

¹⁷⁷ *EW*, Aug. 8, 1912, p. 226.

¹⁷⁸ T.E. Hulme, 'Notes on the Bologna congress', *NA*, Apr. 27, 1911, p. 608.

¹⁷⁹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, June 25, 1914, p. 169.

¹⁸⁰ *EW*, Feb. 8, 1912, p. 230.

¹⁸¹ *NA*, Apr. 10, 1913, p. 544. J.H. Grainger also compares Belloc to Bolingbroke in *Patriotisms: Britain 1900–1939* (London, 1986), p. 25.

¹⁸² *EW*, June 22, 1911, p. 7.

¹⁸³ 'A Tory idealist', *EW*, Aug. 22, 1912, p. 312.

¹⁸⁴ *EW*, Sept. 5, 1912, p. 355. Bolingbroke was praised again in *NW*, Dec. 30, 1915, pp. 258–9.

¹⁸⁵ Quoted in R. Faber, *Beaconsfield and Bolingbroke* (London, 1961), p. 95.

¹⁸⁶ J. Plunkett, *Queen Victoria: first media monarch* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 116–17.

¹⁸⁷ Romney, 'Military notes', *NA*, Feb. 11, 1915, p. 397.

¹⁸⁸ Romney, 'Military notes', *NA*, July 30, 1914, p. 294.

- ¹⁸⁹ Romney, 'Military notes', *NA*, Aug. 6, 1914, p. 317.
- ¹⁹⁰ E. Nolte (tr. L. Vennewitz), *Three faces of fascism: Action Française, Italian Fascism, National Socialism* (London, 1965), p. 429.
- ¹⁹¹ A.E.R., 'Views and reviews: democracy again', *NA*, Feb. 24, 1916, p. 400.
- ¹⁹² A.E.R., 'Views and reviews: on aristocracy', *NA*, Mar. 4, 1914, p. 490.
- ¹⁹³ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 19, 1914, p. 59.
- ¹⁹⁴ S. Verdaz, 'Foreign affairs', *NA*, Dec. 20, 1917, p. 144.
- ¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹⁶ K. Csengeri (ed.), *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme* (Oxford, 1994), p. 395.
- ¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 362.
- ¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 408.
- ²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 409.
- ²⁰¹ H. Belloc, 'On doing the trick', *NW*, Jan. 25, 1917, p. 378.
- ²⁰² 'The abdication of parliament', *NW*, Apr. 1, 1915, p. 338.
- ²⁰³ 'Mr. Asquith's counter stroke', *NW*, Nov. 4, 1915, p. 1.
- ²⁰⁴ H. Belloc, 'The present position and power of the press', *NA*, Feb. 1, 1917, pp. 317–18 at p. 317.
- ²⁰⁵ G.K. Chesterton, 'At the sign of the world's end: the questions of a guildsman', *NW*, July 5, 1918.
- ²⁰⁶ 'A "National Government"', *NW*, May 13, 1915, p. 50.
- ²⁰⁷ H. Belloc, 'The Bastille and parliaments', *NW*, July 12, 1917, p. 252.
- ²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 253.
- ²⁰⁹ H. Belloc, 'An appeal to the politicians in the matter of Alfred Harmsworth – 11', *NW*, Oct. 7, 1915, pp. 554–6 at p. 556.
- ²¹⁰ G.K. Chesterton, 'At the sign of the world's end: the impossibility of the dictator', *NW*, Mar. 2, 1916, pp. 538–9.
- ²¹¹ 'The abdication of parliament', *NW*, Apr. 1, 1915, p. 338.
- ²¹² H. Belloc, 'Certain social tendencies of the war', *NA*, June 22, 1916, p. 175.
- ²¹³ H. Belloc, 'The passing of parliament', *NW*, Nov. 15, 1917, p. 61.
- ²¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²¹⁵ 'A change of heart', *NW*, Sept. 13, 1918, p. 381.
- ²¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²¹⁷ All quotes in this paragraph from 'Comments of the week', *NW*, Nov. 3, 1922, p. 275.
- ²¹⁸ H. Belloc, 'Current affairs: the Italian revolt against parliament', *NW*, Nov. 3, 1922, p. 278.
- ²¹⁹ Pro Fascists, 'The Fascists', *NW*, Nov. 24, 1922, p. 335.

Chapter 4

¹ I have relied on the following for the historical treatment of the concept of nationalism: B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism* (Rev. and exp. ed., London, 1991); E. Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Oxford, 1983); A. Hastings, *The construction of nationhood: ethnicity, religion and*

nationalism (Cambridge, 1997); E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780: programme, myth, reality* (2nd ed, Cambridge, 1992).

² 'Our appeal', *NW*, July 3, 1913, p. 386.

³ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, July 4, 1912, p. 220.

⁴ See J.A. Jr. Hutcheson, *Leopold Maxse and the National Review, 1893–1914: right-wing politics and journalism in the Edwardian era* (New York and London, 1989).

⁵ 'An Open Letter to an animal', *EW*, Nov. 16, 1911, p. 685.

⁶ 'Our appeal', *NW*, July 3, 1913, p. 386.

⁷ See p. 158.

⁸ R. Blake, *Disraeli* (London, 1966), p. 523.

⁹ K. Csengeri (ed.), *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme* (Oxford, 1994), p. 108.

¹⁰ J. Benda, *La trahison des clercs* (Paris, 1927).

¹¹ J.M. Kennedy, 'The lawyer in politics', *NA*, Jan. 9, 1913, p. 223.

¹² *NA*, May 4, 1911, pp. 7–9; May 18, p. 54; June 1, p. 100; June 15, pp. 148–9; June 29, p. 197; July 13, pp. 244–5; July 27, p. 292; Aug. 3, p. 320; Aug. 10, pp. 341–2; Aug. 17, pp. 366–7; Aug. 31, p. 417; Sept. 7, pp. 439–40; Sept. 14, pp. 460–61, Sept. 21, pp. 490–91. Revised and expanded in J. M. Kennedy, *Tory democracy* (London, 1911).

¹³ Letter from Helen Hayes to M. Roberts, Aug. 9, 1941, T.E. Hulme Archive, Keele University. A similar Toryism was being developed by Edward Storer in *The Commentator* — see A. Robinson, *Poetry, painting and ideas, 1885–1914* (London, 1985), p. 107.

¹⁴ Csengeri (ed.), *The collected writings of T.E. Hulme*, p. 207.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 214.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 216.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

¹⁹ A. Orage, 'Towards socialism V — the meaning of civilization', *NA*, Oct. 31, 1907, p. 10.

²⁰ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Mar. 20, 1913, p. 466.

²¹ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions', *NA*, July 4, 1912, p. 228.

²² 'Renaissance', *NA*, Oct. 10, 1912, p. 569.

²³ G. Le Bon, *The crowd: a study of the popular mind* (London, 1896); W. Trotter, *Instincts of the herd in peace and war* (London, 1916). See also Sir M. Conway, 'Is parliament a mere crowd?', *Nineteenth Century* LVII (June, 1905), pp. 898–911 and R. A. Nye, *The origins of crowd psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the crisis of mass democracy in the Third Republic* (London, 1975).

²⁴ M. Tratner, *Modernism and mass politics: Joyce, Woolf, Eliot, Yeats* (Stanford, CA., 1995).

²⁵ M. Baring, 'A letter to an Englishman', *EW*, Aug. 24, 1911, pp. 304–5.

²⁶ G.K. Chesterton, 'The new obscurantism', *NW*, July 30, 1914, p. 400.

²⁷ This phrase refers to Cadbury, the Birmingham chocolate manufacturer, and the newspaper that he owned, *The Daily News*. Cadbury had been accused of hypocrisy as, an emancipationist by conviction, he was alleged to have bought raw cocoa from the island of San Thomé, off the Angolan coast, where slave-labour was still

practised. G. Searle, *Corruption in British politics, 1895–1930* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 129–31. He similarly earned the *New Witness's* wrath for being a capitalist, a Liberal, a Quaker and a pacifist.

²⁸ G.K. Chesterton, 'The plague of foreign news', *NW*, Jan. 8, 1914, p. 313.

²⁹ *NA*, June 6, 1917, p. 95.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *EW*, Aug. 24, 1911, p. 311.

³² C. Chesterton, 'The cultus of barbarism', *EW*, Apr. 18, 1911, p. 555.

³³ *EW*, Sept. 5, 1912, p. 357.

³⁴ S. Verdard, 'Foreign affairs', *NA*, May 23, 1912, p. 77.

³⁵ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 29, 1912, p. 410.

³⁶ I.J.C. Brown, 'Nationalism and the Guilds', *NA*, Jan. 14, 1914, p. 275.

³⁷ I. Brown, 'Guilders of the Chains. No. 1.— Sir Joseph Lyons', *NA*, Sept. 16, 1915, p. 470.

³⁸ F.H. O'Donnell, 'Twenty years after — XVIII', *NW*, June 12, 1913, p. 202.

³⁹ 'Comments of the week', *NW*, Feb. 13, 1913, p. 451. The more general reception of Scott's death as a heroic example of English 'character' is explored in M. Jones, *The last great quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic sacrifice* (Oxford, 2003).

⁴⁰ R. Griffin labels 'palingenetic ultra-nationalism', or the will towards national rebirth, as the minimum of his 'generic fascism' in *The nature of fascism* (London, 1993), pp. 32–6.

⁴¹ See pp. 86–7 above and 'The Marconi scandal', *EW*, Aug. 9, 1912, p. 230.

⁴² 'The Marconi scandal', *EW*, Aug. 9, 1912, p. 230.

⁴³ 'Marconi', *EW*, Aug. 15, 1912, p. 258.

⁴⁴ 'Samuel asks for more', *NW*, July 24, 1913, p. 354.

⁴⁵ 'Our appeal', *NW*, July 3, 1913, p. 386.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ 'The traffic in honours', *NW*, Feb. 26, 1914, p. 520. (My italics).

⁴⁸ *NW*, Dec. 25, 1913 and Jan. 1, 1914.

⁴⁹ G.L. Mosse, *Nationalism and sexuality: respectability and abnormal sexuality in modern Europe* (New York, 1985).

⁵⁰ *NW*, Jan. 1, 1914, p. 266.

⁵¹ G.K. Chesterton, 'Resurrections and "The New Witness"', *NW*, July 31, 1913, p. 401.

⁵² *NW*, Oct. 9, 1913, p. 706.

⁵³ 'The lack of authority', *EW*, June 6, 1912, p. 775.

⁵⁴ 'To recapitulate', *EW*, Sept. 26, 1912, p. 456.

⁵⁵ 'The lack of authority', *EW*, June 6, 1912, p. 775.

⁵⁶ N. Keith, 'Land of the lodger', *EW*, Aug. 15, 1912, p. 276.

⁵⁷ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa. (4) Permanence (continued)', *NA*, Dec. 19, 1912, p. 154.

⁵⁸ R. Kenney, *Westerling* (London, 1939), p. 328.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 326–31 and L. Welch, *Orange with Gurdjieff in America* (Boston, 1982).

⁶⁰ A.J. Penty, 'The restoration of the guild system. The collectivist formula', *NA*, Aug. 7, 1913, p. 423.

- ⁶¹ 'Free trade in microbes II — the case of meat', *NW*, Apr. 16, 1914, p. 752.
- ⁶² J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa. (3) Permanence', *NA*, Dec. 12, 1912, p. 131.
- ⁶³ M.J. Weiner, *English culture and the decline of the industrial spirit, 1850–1980* (Cambridge, 1981) and A. Howkins, 'The discovery of rural England' in R. Colls and P. Dodd (eds.), *Englishness: politics and culture 1880–1920* (Beckenham, 1986).
- ⁶⁴ 'Our appeal', *NW*, July 3, 1913, p. 386.
- ⁶⁵ 'A good fight', *EW*, Sept. 26, 1912, p. 458.
- ⁶⁶ *EW*, Mar. 7, 1912, p. 397.
- ⁶⁷ 'The decline of a state', *EW*, July 6, 1911, p. 78.
- ⁶⁸ Letter, signed 'G', 'The all-British weekly', *EW*, Feb. 15, 1912, p. 280.
- ⁶⁹ Alan A'Dale, 'The Eye-Witness', *EW*, May 9, 1912, p. 664.
- ⁷⁰ J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa. (8) A plea for the parish pump', *NA*, Jan. 16, 1913, p. 249.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 248.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 249.
- ⁷³ O. Levy (ed. and intro.), Count Arthur de Gobineau, *The Renaissance* (London, 1913), p. xxvi.
- ⁷⁴ S. Verdad, 'A few remarks', *NA*, May 7, 1914, p. 21.
- ⁷⁵ G.K. Chesterton, 'At the sign of the world's end', *NW*, Nov. 8, 1917, pp. 34–5 at p. 34.
- ⁷⁶ R. Griffiths, 'Three "Catholic" reactionaries: Claudel, T.E. Eliot and Saunders Lewis' in R. Griffiths (ed.), *The pen and the sword: right-wing politics and literary innovation in the twentieth century* (London, 2000), p. 70.
- ⁷⁷ R. Ferguson, *The short sharp life of T.E. Hulme* (London, 2002), p. 108.
- ⁷⁸ 'Notes of the Week', *NA*, Aug. 20, 1914, p. 363.
- ⁷⁹ A.E.R., 'Views and Reviews: Catholicism', *NA*, Jan. 16, 1919, p. 180.
- ⁸⁰ L. Surette, *The birth of modernism: Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats and the occult* (London, 1993), p. 29 and *passim*.
- ⁸¹ *The New English Weekly*. A.R. Orage Memorial Number, Nov. 15, 1934, p. 97.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- ⁸³ T.S. Eliot, 'A commentary', *The Criterion*, 14 (1935), p. 261.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ 'The barbarians', *NW*, Aug. 13, 1914, p. 450.
- ⁸⁶ R. De Maeztu, 'Death and resurrection', *NA*, Apr. 1, 1915, p. 584.
- ⁸⁷ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 1, 1912, p. 315.
- ⁸⁸ 'That sort of thing..', *EW*, Nov. 2, 1911, p. 618.
- ⁸⁹ Romney, 'Military notes', *NA*, Nov. 13, 1913, pp. 38–9.
- ⁹⁰ 'The call to arms', *NW*, July 16, 1914, p. 322.
- ⁹¹ G.W. Taylor, 'A.R. Orage, the *New Age* and guild socialism', (Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, Swansea, 1990), p. 79; *NA*, Dec. 5, 1912, p. 434. Also quoted in S. Pierson, *British socialists: the journey from fantasy to politics* (London, 1979), pp. 217–8.
- ⁹² Junius, 'An open letter to a foreigner', *EW*, Dec. 29, 1911, p. 42.
- ⁹³ Romney, 'Military notes', *NA*, Mar. 20, 1913, p. 470.

- ⁹⁴ A Rifleman, 'Letters on war', *NA*, Jan. 1, 1914, p. 266.
- ⁹⁵ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 7, 1912, p. 3.
- ⁹⁶ 'The love of England', *EW*, July 27, 1911, p. 169.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁹⁸ 'The soul of man and pacifism', *NW*, Dec. 26, 1912, p. 241.
- ⁹⁹ 'The call to arms', *NW*, July 16, 1914, p. 321.
- ¹⁰⁰ 'Mr. Churchill and the admiralty', *EW*, Nov. 2, 1911, p. 610 and 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 1, 1912, p. 313.
- ¹⁰¹ 'Military aviation: a test', *EW*, Sept. 14, 1911, pp. 392–3.
- ¹⁰² 'Comments of the week', *NW*, Dec. 25, 1913, p. 236.
- ¹⁰³ C. Chesterton, 'Socialism and the soldier', *NA*, July 25, 1907, p. 198.
- ¹⁰⁴ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions: the roots of sentimentalism', *NA*, May 16, 1912, p. 60.
- ¹⁰⁵ *EW*, Nov. 2, 1911, p. 630.
- ¹⁰⁶ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 6, 1914, p. 315.
- ¹⁰⁷ 'A Call to Arms', *NW*, July 16, 1914, p. 322.
- ¹⁰⁸ I.J.C. Brown, 'Geography and Human Grouping', *NA*, Oct. 8, 1914, p. 545.
- ¹⁰⁹ 'Towards National Guilds', *NA*, Sept. 3 1914, p. 416.
- ¹¹⁰ 'Notes of the Week', *NA*, Sept. 17, 1914, p. 465.
- ¹¹¹ Review of Lieut. Sakurai, 'Human Bullets' in 'Views and Reviews – War', *NA*, Nov. 5, 1914, pp. 15–16.
- ¹¹² Quoted in D. Milburn, *The Deutschlandbild of A.R. Orage and the New Age Circle* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), p. 125.
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.
- ¹¹⁴ A.E.R., 'Views and reviews: civilisation and war', *NA*, Sept. 17, 1914, pp. 480–1 at p. 481.
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Chapter 5

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³ B. Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society: racial representations, 1875–1945* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 275.

⁴ D. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: social relations and political culture 1840–1914* (London, 1994), p. 14.

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⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁷ G. Alderman, *Modern British Jewry* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 117–18.

⁸ Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British society*, p. 89.

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¹⁶ Belloc to his mother, January 1897, Hilaire Belloc archive, British Library.

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- ²⁷ G.K. Chesterton, 'What shall we do with our Jews', *NW*, July 24, 1913, p. 370.
- ²⁸ Symposium, 'What shall we do with our Jews', G.K. Chesterton, J. Stephen, Filius Judaei, *NW*, July 24, 1913, p. 371.
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- ¹²² Letter from 'Quintus', *NA*, Dec. 18, 1913, p. 220. H.S Chamberlain's major work had been translated into English in 1911 by J. Lees: H.S. Chamberlain, *The foundations of the nineteenth century: a translation from the German by J. Lees with an introduction by Lord Reesdale* 2 vols. (London, 1911).
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- ¹²⁹ 'The folly of anti-Semitism', *NA*, Aug. 14, 1913, p. 450.
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- ¹³¹ J.M. Kennedy, *The religions and philosophies of the east* (London, 1911), p. 143.
- ¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 196.
- ¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 258. This was not an uncontested opinion, however. Oscar Levy, although a Jew himself, saw Judaism and democracy (both bad things) as similar trends. He took this interpretation virtually wholesale from Nietzsche.
- ¹³⁴ Nadia Valman argues that this then enabled Disraeli to reflect dominant expressions of national culture, and provide a parallel construction to 'muscular

Christianity'. N. Valman, 'Manly Jews: Disraeli, Jewishness and gender' in T. M. Endelman and T. Kushner (eds.), *Disraeli's Jewishness* (London, 2002).

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¹³⁶ S. Verdad, 'Foreign affairs', *NA*, Nov. 20, 1913, p. 70.

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¹³⁹ R. Casillo, *The genealogy of demons: anti-Semitism, fascism, and the myths of Ezra Pound* (Evanston, Ill., 1988).

¹⁴⁰ Kennedy, *Religions and philosophies of the east*, p. 17.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 267. A. Ludovici also praises the Brahmas in *A defence of aristocracy: a text book for Tories* (London, 1915), p. 364.

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¹⁴⁶ G.K. Chesterton, *What's wrong with the world* (London, 1910), p. 264.

¹⁴⁷ H. Belloc, *Emmanuel Burden* (London, 1904).

¹⁴⁸ Lunn, 'The Marconi scandal', p. 338.

¹⁴⁹ 'Notes of the week', *NW*, May 15, 1913, p. 35.

¹⁵⁰ 'Comments of the week', *NW*, Aug. 28, 1913, p. 516.

¹⁵¹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 28, 1913, p. 499.

¹⁵² 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Dec. 4, 1913, p. 132.

¹⁵³ H. Ince, 'The guilds and immigration', *NA*, July 3, 1913, pp. 275–6.

¹⁵⁴ 'International economy and the wage system', *NA*, May 23, 1912, p. 79.

¹⁵⁵ S. Verdad, *NA*, Dec. 15, 1910, p. 148.

¹⁵⁶ S. Verdad, 'Foreign affairs', *NA*, June 22, 1911, p. 171.

¹⁵⁷ Three symposiums were held, each conducted by Huntley Carter. *NA*, Dec. 22, 1910, pp. 175–6 contained contributions from Lord Avebury, Dr. Bosanquet, Sir Edward Brabrook, Mr. J.H. Harley, Professor J.H. Muirhead, Mr. G. Bernard Shaw and Dr. J. Lionel Taylor. *NA*, Mar. 16, 1911, pp. 471–3 featured Professor Irving Fisher, Dr. E.A. Ross, Professor R.M. Wenley, Professor Lester F. Ward, Professor Charles Zueblin, Dr. J. Beattie Crozier and Professor L.T. Hobhouse. The third symposium, *NA*, June 1, 1911, pp. 105–7, was made up of contributions from Sir Lauder Brunton, Harry Campbell, Sir E. Ray Lankester and J.S. Mackintosh.

¹⁵⁸ Review of George E. Boxall, *The awakening of a race* in *NA*, Aug. 22, 1907, p. 268.

¹⁵⁹ G.R. Searle, *Eugenics and politics in Britain, 1900–1914* (London, 1976).

¹⁶⁰ Sir E. Ray Lankester in 'A symposium on racial development. Conducted by Huntley Carter' *NA*, June 1, 1911, p. 106. Nevertheless, other *New Age* writers not involved in the Symposium, especially Oscar Levy and Anthony Ludovici, were enthusiastic purveyors of eugenics and selective breeding.

¹⁶¹ J.S. Mackintosh in *ibid.*, p. 107.

¹⁶² T.E. Hulme, 'Bergson in Paris', *NA*, June 22, 1911, p. 190.

¹⁶³ A.R. Orage, 'Unedited opinions: the economics of population', *NA*, July 13, 1911, p. 251.

¹⁶⁴ *EW*, Aug. 24, 1911, p. 311.

¹⁶⁵ M. Canovan, 'Chesterton's attack on the proto-Nazis: new light on the black legend', *The Chesterton Review*, 3 (1977), pp. 246–59.

Chapter 6

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² Junius, 'An open letter to a gentleman of advanced age', *EW*, Oct. 12, 1911, p. 524.

³ 'Votes for ladies', *EW*, June 22, 1911, p. 8.

⁴ 'Comments of the week', *EW*, Nov. 16, 1911, p. 675.

⁵ 'The ladies raid', *EW*, Mar. 7, 1912, p. 358.

⁶ *NW*, Nov. 28, 1912, p. 99.

⁷ Cecil Chesterton, 'Democracy and votes for women — III', *NW*, Feb. 13, 1913, p. 455.

⁸ B. Harrison surveys anti-suffragism in *Separate spheres: the opposition to women's suffrage in Britain* (London, 1978).

⁹ M. Pugh, *The march of the women: a revisionist analysis of the campaign for women's suffrage, 1866–1914* (Oxford, 2000), p. 160.

¹⁰ C. Chesterton, 'Democracy and votes for women — I', *NW*, Jan. 30, 1913, p. 392.

¹¹ 'Comments of the week', *EW*, Dec. 21, 1911, p. 5.

¹² C. Chesterton, 'Democracy and votes for women — I', *NW*, Jan. 30, 1913, p. 392.

¹³ 'The defeat of women's suffrage', *NW*, May 15, 1913, p. 39.

¹⁴ C. Chesterton, 'Democracy and votes for women — I', *NW*, Jan. 30, 1913, p. 392.

¹⁵ G.K. Chesterton, *What's wrong with the world?* (London, 1910), p. 179.

¹⁶ *A women's suffrage supplement*, *NA*, Feb. 2, 1911.

¹⁷ E. Pound, 'Through alien eyes IV', *NA*, Feb. 6, 1913, p. 324.

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¹⁹ *EW*, Mar. 7, 1912, p. 356.

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²² J.M. Kennedy, 'Notes on the present kalpa (4) Permanence (continued)', *NA*, Dec. 19, 1912, p. 154.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *NA*, Apr. 10, 1913, p. 565.

²⁵ 'The ladies raid', *EW*, Mar. 7, 1912, p. 359.

²⁶ *EW*, Aug. 15, 1912, pp. 260–1.

²⁷ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Aug. 22, 1912, p. 386.

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- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 276.
- ³⁰ G.K. Chesterton, 'At the sign of the world's end: the suffragette guide to slavery', *NW*, Nov. 22, 1917, pp. 82–3 at p. 82.
- ³¹ 'Notes of the week', *Aug. 29, 1912*, p. 411.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 411.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 412.
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- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 413.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 414.
- ³⁷ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, July 16, 1914, p. 243.
- ³⁸ C. Chesterton, 'Democracy and votes for women — II', *NW*, Feb. 6, 1913, p. 429.
- ³⁹ *EW*, Aug. 17, 1911, p. 276.
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- ⁴² Chesterton, *What's wrong with the world*, pp. 141–2.
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- ⁴⁵ M. Seymour, 'The male suffragist', *NA*, Mar. 20, 1913, p. 475.
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- ⁵² J.E. Miller, *Rebel women: feminism, modernism and the Edwardian novel* (London, 1994), p. 101.
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- ⁶¹ 'Notes of the week', *NA*, Nov. 7, 1912, p. 2.

⁶² Ibid., p. 1.

⁶³ Miller, *Rebel women*, p. 43.

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⁷⁴ A. Hewitt, *Political inversions: homosexuality, fascism and the modernist imaginary* (Stanford, CA., 1996), p. 186.

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