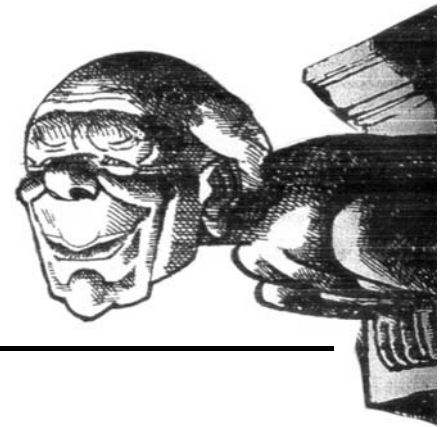


# THE GARGOYLE

THE JOURNAL OF THE MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE SOCIETY  
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Every imaginable and unimaginable facility  
exists for making ourselves heard and seen.

But have we anything to say?

Anything to show?

I love the irony that God in his infinite  
mercy injects into all our feats, to keep us  
humble lest we should harbour the fatal  
illusion of being gods ourselves, and to  
keep us laughing lest we take ourselves  
seriously. Besides the steeples climbing into  
the sky he plants the gargoyles grinning  
down at the earth - a celestial contribution  
to the theatre of the absurd.

**Malcolm Muggeridge**

*(Lecture - The Fourth Temptation 1977)*

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All with an interest in the work  
and the varied life of Malcolm  
Muggeridge are invited to join  
this Society. Join via the  
Society's website:  
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**THE GARGOYLE** is published  
quarterly and contributions are  
welcomed by the Editor on any  
aspect of Malcolm's diverse life  
and times.

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*Letter from the President of the Society*



I particularly thank John Dixon for his excellent article on Muggeridge and Kingsmill. We rely on members to keep **THE GARGOYLE** supplied with a flow of articles about any aspect of Malcolm's life, unpublished letters, recollections, photographs or any material of interest to the membership.

**A**t the time of writing this letter, the attention of the entire world has been focused on the sudden and widespread devastation inflicted by the tsunami. We have all been numbed by the loss of lives and livelihoods on such a scale and over such an area, even stretching as far as the African continent, some 4000 miles away from the epicentre.

As so often, we feel the absence of Malcolm Muggeridge. How would he have perceived the unfolding event and the world's reaction to the disaster. We certainly know he had strong and oft repeated views about television, specifically the way that news is sought, selected and sometimes contrived for maximum dramatic effect, and thus reported to the world. However, in this instance, one felt the news cameras could only understate what occurred, and of course, they largely missed live coverage of the terrifying event as it actually happened. And what would he have made of it as a so-called 'Act of God'? Malcolm's view as once expressed to Bill Buckley was that "ultimately the only prayer there is to say is 'Thy will be done'. In other words, if something can happen and if that something happens, it can only be part of the purpose of our Creator for His creation, and that it might seem to be utterly destructive and hopeless, but out of it would come continuation." So was it a manifestation of God's will? As always, his views were controversial.

In the next issue in April we aim to publish an account and pictures of our visit to Egypt in March. Accompanied by veteran actor Peter Stockbridge, we will be presenting a number of events to the expatriate population, including a special performance of **Mugg Shots**. I will also be preaching at the Church of St. John the Baptist in Maadi on Lent V, 12 March 2005. Full information can be obtained on [www.maadichurchstjohn.org](http://www.maadichurchstjohn.org). The lead article in this issue recounts Malcolm and Kitty's time in Minia and Cairo in the late twenties.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sally Muggeridge'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sally Muggeridge  
President  
[sally@malcolmmuggeridge.org](mailto:sally@malcolmmuggeridge.org)

## Sojourn in Egypt

By Malcolm Muggeridge

*[In 'The Green Stick', the first volume of his biography 'Chronicles of Wasted Time', Malcolm Muggeridge recalls the time spent in Egypt early in his career from 1927 to 1930. It was to be his second teaching job overseas and an important stage in Malcolm's life – one which eventually saw his transition from teacher to writer and journalist. Aged 24 on his arrival there and recently married, he was accompanied by Kitty his wife.*

*The extract has been slightly edited in length]*

From Mr. Dobb's point of view, with his old-fashioned Anglo-Irish views as to what constituted success in a career or socially, a son-in-law who was an elementary school supply teacher was not to be brooked. It was he, therefore, who drew my attention to an advertisement for teachers at government schools in Egypt. The salary was appreciatively more than I was getting in Birmingham, the conditions of employment seemed satisfactory; what, above all, recommended the job to me was that it involved making off. One more fix with the going-away drug! I applied and was accepted. There was not much competition, anyway; employment with the Egyptian P. I. (Public Instruction) offered no prospects in the way of advancement or pensions, and most of the applicants were very young, and from what are now called Red Brick universities, or middle-aged to elderly, with indeterminate qualifications and an air of having failed or run into trouble somewhere along the line, characters for Evelyn Waugh. Kitty and I packed up our effects, such as they were, and set off cheerfully for Minia in Upper Egypt, via Paris, Genoa, Alexandria and Cairo.

Life in Minia was rather reminiscent of India, except that the erosion of British power had proceeded farther. As the Empire ran down, the former beneficiaries – the putative colonial governors, district administrators, collectors and all other recipients of the vast and varied patronage it offered to the middle and upper classes of its heyday – displayed a remarkable flair for knowing when to leave the sinking ship. It seems to be almost their sole surviving talent. There was a British Consul in Minia who was also district manager for a large British cotton firm. He maintained a position of sorts, had the Royal Arms over his door and gave parties; there was even a club where local English gathered, along with Egyptians of standing like landowners and important civil servants. The local Greeks were mostly excluded as being beyond the pale; we in the P.I. were accepted, but only just, our academic qualifications compensating for our lowly position as teachers under an Egyptian headmaster. Our school work was mostly no more than elementary language teaching; even then, I am doubtful if the boys

learnt much from me. I stood in front of the class just as I had in Alwaye [India] and in Birmingham, a blackboard behind me and faces before me, only vaguely aware of what I was supposed to be doing, and listening for a bell to ring, bringing my release. Kitty and I spent most of our time in one another's company; we went for walks by the Nile, and in the evenings I sat at my typewriter, expecting her to listen appreciatively to the results of my labours and bolster up my so easily sagging spirits, which she valiantly did. Occasionally, we strolled into the centre of the town where there was a rickety hotel and a Greek grocer with extraordinary protuberances on his head. The only dissipation offered was to sit at a café table and drink a cup of sweet Turkish coffee. From the window of our flat we looked across the Nile, with the desert always in view; the river running like a silver vein through strips of brilliant green vegetation, and, parallel with it, a road, a railway and a canal. Whenever I see an Egyptian head or stone figure, I think of these parallel lines and the built-in symmetry of so narrow a land. After two terms in Minia, I was summoned to Cairo to join the staff of the university there.

In Cairo we lived in a little house on the edge of the desert in Helmia Zeytoun. For my walks I strode over the desert, where the sand was hard; sometimes in the scorching sun, sometimes, when the *hamzin* wind was blowing, breathing in dust which gritted one's nose and throat; best of all, in the evening when the sun went down, leaving the empty sky bloodshot, and dripping lurid colours on to the yellow sand. Whenever I have been – in town or country, desert or jungle, in rain or snow or ice or tropical heat, up mountains or by the sea-shore or along urban streets – I have always walked; not caring particularly about the surroundings or the conditions, often scarcely noticing them, so that for all I knew I might be in Thornton Heath or the Himalayas or Park Avenue or the Alpes Maritimes. Just pounding along, from nowhere to nowhere; sometimes with thoughts likewise pounding through my mind, sometimes not. Sometimes just vacant; unthinking, unseeing, unfeeling. In motion merely.

The university at this time was in the Zaffaran Palace; a building formerly used by the Khedive for the accommodation of his harem. In the classrooms and along the corridors there were still odd traces of the previous usage. Little frivolous twists and turns in the masonry and woodwork, fragments of marble frescoes; up in the ceilings, coloured designs and figures, now faded, and in the neglected garden a rusty disused fountain in the middle of what had one been obviously an ornamental pool. It added an extra dimension of fantasy to our disquisitions on *Antony and Cleopatra*, chosen for

its topicality. Later, the university moved to new premises in Giza. The students all wore tarbooshes and suits with narrow trousers bunched up round shoes with narrow pointed toes. They seemed to be faraway, lost in some distant dream of exotic bliss; a consequence, no doubt, in the case of many of them of their addiction to hashish, widespread among the *effendi* class, and prevalent among the *fellahin*, especially the ones who had moved into the towns. The deleterious effects of this addiction were, in those days, universally taken for granted; and the Egyptian authorities, following a plan of modernisation and national revival on the general lines of Kemal Ataturk's in Turkey, spent a lot of money and effort in an attempt to stamp it out. Russell Pasha, the head policeman and the last Englishman to hold the post, was particularly active in trying to prevent hashish getting into the country, and in reducing indulgence in it. When I now hear or read apologies for hashish, I recall the Zaffaran Palace and the stupefied faces and inert minds of so many of the students there; the dreadful instances of the destructive effects of this drug on bodies and minds which any resident of the Middle East was bound to encounter. I know of no better exemplification of the death wish at the heart of our way of life than this determination to bring about the legalisation of hashish so that it may ravage the West as it has the Middle East and Far East.

As at Always, my duties were not arduous; the students anyway were frequently on strike, and did not even, like the Indian students, take their examinations seriously, let alone their studies. They were expected to be able to follow lectures in French as well as English, and, of course, in Arabic. My impression is that, hashish apart, only very few of them had the faintest notion of what we lecturers were talking about.

We often used to go swaying and clanking into Cairo from Heliopolis on the Belgian-constructed tramway which vaguely recalled Knocke, Heyst and Blankenburg. On days when riots threatened, there would be more hats than tarbooshes. Foreigners were known as *howagas*, or hat-wearers; and as they still had their own Mixed Courts, and were not subject to the Egyptian courts, it was dangerous to involve them in public disorder. Thus, a hat provided a certain immunity. Cairo gave an impression of being inflammatory. In the dry burning heat, after weeks and weeks without rain, one expected the place to catch fire; as indeed, it did some years after I left, with most of the places I knew, like Shepherd's Hotel, burnt to the ground, though, alas, 'The Awakening of Egypt', a massive monument standing outside the railway station, remained intact. I expect it is indestructible. For the time being, however, British troops were still stationed in Cairo and Alexandria; King Fuad was on the throne, and Lord Lloyd, the High Commissioner, was the effective boss, and behaved as such. I saw him once or twice driving about in a large car flying a large Union Jack, with

motor-cycle outriders; a short, pale, nervously energetic man whom I afterwards got to know, when he was head of the newly constituted British Council. He told me that in his High Commissioner days King Fuad used quite often, literally, to weep on his shoulder. It conjured up a remarkable scene; that great swollen royal visage, with its thick, upturned moustache drawn to a point like the Kaiser's, tearful, and drooping on to Lloyd's little imperial shoulder; great sobs braking from him, as well as a curious barking noise due to a hole in his gullet resulting from a shot fired at him by a jealous uncle. I was familiar with this barking noise, having heard it at a reception at the Royal Palace to which all professors and lecturers at the university were invited. It was so weird that a court chamberlain warned us in advance not to be surprised or disturbed if the King seemed suddenly to start barking. Even so, it came as a shock. At such receptions the regulation attire was a frock coat and tarboosh; most of us had to be content with just the tarboosh, but Dobrée, the head of our department, characteristically had provided himself with an authentic frock coat with silk facings, and with his tarboosh rakishly a little awry, looked every inch a Bey, if not a Pasha.



A favourite haunt was Old Groppi, a garden café in a courtyard with trees growing in it, and tables set under their shade or under coloured umbrellas. There, all day long sat the Pashas and Beys and Effendis consuming their tiny cups of sweet Turkish coffee, and keeping the flies at bay with their whisks; occasionally rising to greet one another with many courteous bows and gestures, but mostly, like my students, seemingly sunk in a long brooding reverie. Such a variety of faces, from dark Nubian to pale Greek, with many curious blends; as, ginger hair crowning a Bedouin head, or Negroid features contained in a pink skin. One or two, in majestic immobility, sucking at a hubble-bubble pipe; others scanning newspapers – the *Bourse Egyptienne*, *Al Ahram*, the *Egyptian Gazette*; none, as far as could be seen, engaged in any business or occupation, with appointments to keep or duties requiring their attention. Their inertia gradually became infectious, and one would like-wise sit on and on, as the sun moved across the courtyard, with only the snores of a sleeping Pasha, the

rhythmic gurgle of a hubble-bubble, the incursion of a newsboy, to disturb the scene's somnolence.

It was at this time that Kitty first became pregnant. I found the whole process utterly wonderful; her stomach gradually swelling up, and the thought that out of our fleshly gyrations, beautiful and hilarious and grotesque all in one, should come this ripening fruit, this new life partaking of us both, and breaking out of its cocoon - her womb - to exist separately in the world. I had seen death, now I was to see birth. After a summer holiday in Austria I took Kitty into a German Deaconess's Hospital in Cairo, and left her there; more aware of her presence when I had left her than when we were still together. Seeing her face on the pillow; as it were, saying it over, as I might some lines of verse committed to memory. The next morning I went back to the hospital, driving myself there in an ancient Chevrolet we had acquired; seated high up, and looking out, terrified, at the swirling traffic. At the hospital, the matron told me in her broken English, grinning, almost leering, that the labour had begun. So I waited, counting the passing minutes, until a nurse came to take me to Kitty and my son, already, as I thought, wearing the expression of cool, ironic detachment combined with infinite sweetness, which characterises him to this day.

Shortly afterwards Mrs Dobbs arrived to visit us. I met her at Cairo station. The arrival of the boat train from Alexandria in those days was quite an event; uniformed men with the names of hotels on their hats - Shepherd's, Mena House, Semiramis - stood at the barrier to coax any clients they could into their buses. When Mrs Dobbs, dressed, as ever, in collar and tie, hat perched well forward on her head, long billowing skirt and boots, appeared at the barrier, not one of them made any move to procure her custom. Only an Egyptian in a dirty galabieh whispered in her ear: 'YWCA! YWCA!' She in any case, was too earnestly in conversation with two other Egyptians she had got to know in her third-class carriage to pay any attention. 'Ah!' she said when she saw me, 'here I am!' and proceeded to introduce me to her two friends, to whom, I gathered, throughout the journey from Alexandria she had been giving particulars of her sisters Beatrice Webb and Lady Courtney. I took her bag - she never used a porter if it could possibly be avoided - and we climbed into the Chevrolet. Seated side by side on our two high perches, and picking our way through the tumultuous traffic, she at once plunged into a conversation about the pyramids, and whether it was possible, as her psychic sister Teresa (Stafford Cripp's mother) had believed, that they contained information about the Lost Tribes of Israel. It was with reluctance that, when she saw Kitty and our son (whom we called Leonard after Kitty's brother), she switched from this subject on to more immediate personal matters.

During the days she was with us, she went off each morning with her sketching things into the desert,

and sketched away through the heat of the day, returning only after sunset. She took provisions, and the inevitable Thermos with her; occasionally, she told us, one or other of the Egyptians who gathered round to watch her would make an offer for the sketch she was working on - forty or fifty piasters, which she of course accepted. When the time came for her to depart for Upper Egypt, I took her to the station, where she was seized with a sudden panic as to whether she had her purse, which she kept in a body-belt round her waist. Checking involved largely undressing, which created some interest among passers-by. All was fortunately well, and she calmed down. As the train steamed out, I waved good-bye, with a sense of great relief, and also with a pang of regret. One always so wanted her to go, and then, when she had actually gone, missed that vivid crazy presence, that corncracking voice, those random, inconsequential maddening remarks of hers.

The men in suits and tarbooshes, the Pashas and Beys and Effendis, constituted the new effective ruling class, able to bring the fellahin into the polling-booths to vote for this or that Pasha on behalf of the Wafd, the organ of Egyptian nationalism. I became absorbed in the Egyptian political scene. It would have been far more advantageous to study Arabic, or ancient monuments like the Ibn Tulun Mosque with which Cairo abounded, or the splendid Tutankamen remains in the Cairo Museum. Alas, I did none of this, but spent my time arguing about the Wafd and its then leader, Nahas Pasha, a curious, distracted, almost Ramsey MacDonald-like figure; successor to Zaglul, considered to be the founder of modern Egyptian nationalism. My indoctrination at the Saturday evening gatherings in South Croydon came into its own; I found I had a lamentable facility for translating a particular political situation into a morality play or western. Once this technique is mastered - and God knows it's easy enough - it is possible to be a successful and instant commentator in any medium, written, spoken, visual, on any situation in any part of the world. The style, studiously reasonable, and working up to occasional outbursts of idealistic fervour and satirical spleen - come almost of itself. Thus: 'A certain amount of street turbulence, in any case greatly exaggerated in some of the reports, should not blind us to the vitality and vision of Egyptian nationalism, or induce us to think yet again in terms of conqueror and conquered, with the inevitable consequence of struggling on for a few more years towards predictable disaster. The awakening of formerly subject peoples like the Egyptians is an essential fact of the twentieth century...' One could easily have produced a prototype for this kind of composition, leaving blank spaces for the name of the country, capital city and local personalities, useable at any time anywhere.

I sent off an offering in such a vein to the *Manchester Guardian*. It flew into the window of the Cross Street office like a homing pigeon, and duly

appeared in the paper; attributed to 'A correspondent in Cairo', the lowliest of all appellations. I got a letter from the editor, which greatly delighted and excited me, asking for more material along the same lines. This I gladly provided, and had the additional satisfaction of seeing myself quoted in the Cairo press. Then, to complete my happiness, I received an intimation that Arthur Ransome was coming to Cairo as *The Guardian's* special correspondent, and would be coming to see me.

Ransome, when he turned up, proved to be an amiable and attractive man, with a luxuriant blond soup-strainer moustache, a rubicund complexion, a large mouth from which more often than not a pipe protruded, and a hearty disposition. He was carelessly dressed in unseasonable tweeds, and wore a large, loosely tied coloured tie of the kind favoured in those days by middle-brow aesthetes of the C.E. Montague - J.C. Squire variety. As I came to realise subsequently, he was in a sense the epitome of all *Manchester Guardian* writers; amateurish, literary, opinionated, conceited, eccentric; immediately recognisable in any gathering of journalists, however large, by virtue of a certain self-righteousness of expression and bearing; the firm mouth and chin saying that news is sacred, the bright left eye, that comment is free.

Truth to tell, neither Ransome nor I took the Pasha and their prospects too seriously; with all our progressive pretensions, we had a somewhat lordly attitude to Egyptian politics and politicians, dwelling rather on their comic opera aspects. There would always, we felt, be a Pasha to form yet another government. Ransome described to me his encounters with them at the Mahomet Ali Club, where they foregathered in the evening, as well as conversations he had with Egyptian and British officials. As he talked, I could see the script being shaped for yet another version of the great morality play, in which virtue would once more be vindicated in the overthrow of Imperialism, heroes and villains given their parts and speaking their lines. The obtuseness of British official attitudes, the brutality of British troops in action; the reasonable of Egyptian demands, and the advantage of the extremists would derive from a stubborn refusal to meet them – it all fitted into place like a Willow Pattern. The Master Myth of our time.

My aptitude in this field was so marked that Ransome recommended me to the *Guardian* as a promising recruit, and in due course I received a letter from E.T. Scott suggesting that I might like to join the editorial staff for a probationary period of three months. I believe I have never received a letter which gave me so much delight; waving it triumphantly in the air, I rushed to tell Kitty, and then to the Post Office to telegraph my acceptance of the offer. Whatever feelings I may have had subsequently about the high proportion of my time and energy given to journalism, I cannot claim that harsh necessity drove me into the trade. No one could have

embarked upon it more hopefully or thankfully or joyously. Though, or perhaps because, I had never so much as seen a copy of *The Guardian* I was confidently of the opinion that it was the most enlightened, disinterested and progressive newspaper in the world. To be offered a chance to join its staff and write in its columns, seemed to me the most marvellous thing that could possibly have happened.

I owed this great opportunity to Ransome, and was duly grateful. He, as it turned out, went on only one more journalistic assignment – to China. Then he retired to a house in the Lake District with his agreeable Russian wife, Jenia, said to have been at one time on Trotsky's staff. Kitty and I were later to visit them there several times and it was at this time that he wrote the first of his very successful children's books, *Swallows and Amazons*; a myth sans Commissars and sans Pashas; purer, sweeter, than the ones from Our Special Correspondent.

Kitty and our son went ahead, and I followed as soon as the term was over. It was the greatest possible relief to get away from Egypt. The place, to me, had an arid feel about it; I never put out any roots there, as I had in India, or made any close friends there, or had any sense of the past – of the great civilisations which had flourished in the Valley of the Nile. It was all just an excavation site as far as I was concerned; sand and shouts, and buildings that looked like one of those international exhibitions set up quickly to seem impressive for a little while, but soon growing shabby and derelict. Yellow sandstone turrets and domes and minarets standing amidst vast expanses of yellow sand. As for the so-called cosmopolitan society to which we always referred when we said how interesting living in Cairo or Alexandria was – I had never found them particularly alluring.

I took a deck passage from Alexandria to Venice on an Italian boat, munching my own provisions, washed down with chianti, and sleeping by night where I sat by day, my little luggage beside me, the bright stars above me, and the moonlight streaming down, suffusing the sea and the ship; as it seemed, the whole universe made luminous. We sailed up to the Grand Canal and into the heart of Venice at dawn. I can remember now my exhilaration at the beauty of it; the delicacy of the Campanile in that glowing rose-grey first light, and all the hopes I had. Though far more alluring than Venice, in my thoughts, was Manchester, city of print rather than of churches, where all my future hopes were founded.

ENDS

**BACK ISSUES**

**If you missed some past editions of the Gargoyle and would like them, see page 15.**

## Muggeridge and Kingsmill

By John Dixon

To gain any deep insight into Muggeridge as a writer, one has to know something about the life and work of Hugh Kingsmill, his comparatively early friend and mentor.

“Kingsmill”, Muggeridge wrote “is the only human being I have ever known in whose company I never suffered one moment of boredom; whose solid figure I never once saw looming up, and whose voice I never once heard, except with unalloyed happiness.” Actually, of course, this description is more idyllic than strictly truthful. No human relationship, by its very nature, is, or ever can be, perfectly harmonious. All the same, the fact that he could portray it as such is highly significant because it demonstrates how much Muggeridge felt his own and Kingsmill’s view of life coincided. It is certainly true that the extent to which this woefully neglected genius permeated Muggeridge’s thinking was incalculable.

It was not merely that Kingsmill influenced his intellectual understanding, or as both would have preferred to say, imagination. He also had some uniquely prophylactic quality which ministered to all the ideological confusion and moral chaos of Muggeridge’s earlier years. At times of crisis, - for instance, when he tried to drown himself in Mozambique during the Second World War - it was Kingsmill’s palliative company which he invariably craved the most.

Interestingly, Muggeridge’s acquaintance with Kingsmill began, not as a result of any professional or literary association, but rather quite by chance. His father-in-law just happened to be an employee of Kingsmill’s own father, Sir Henry Lunn, the Victorian entrepreneur who founded the well-known travel agency of the same name. I am sure this was a classic example of what Muggeridge used to call ‘Fearful Symmetry’, an image taken from William Blake’s famous ‘Tyger’ poem meaning all sorts of things, not the least of which was that coincidences are not really coincidences at all, but part of some preordained plan which gradually reveals itself only with the benefit of hindsight.

One of the difficulties in trying to understand the significance of Kingsmill’s influence on Muggeridge’s mind is that, on the face of it, they seem to have been such dissimilar writers. Not only does the disparity in subject, treatment and style immediately strike one, but also an apparent divergence in fundamental attitudes. For instance, Kingsmill frequently emphasises the virtues of sex, even to the extent of suggesting that it should be released from social restraint.

By the same token, he could be highly critical of any sort of organized religion. One might easily conclude that he typified a generation of writers who came to fruition in the lush pastures of Edwardian revolt: precisely the sort who would have provoked the odd pejorative sideswipe in the course of Muggeridge’s later journalism. In point of fact, on both counts, the very reverse was true. Kingsmill never did really enjoy any public recognition, while Muggeridge was unflaggingly devoted to his memory throughout his life.

On closer scrutiny, it is possible to see that this may not be such a paradox as it might initially seem. In the first instance, Kingsmill was always predominately, though by no means exclusively, concerned with the mystical intimations which accompany sexual love rather than with its erotic gratification; and in the second, his objections to religion were not that he disbelieved in a transcendental view of life - indeed, quite the contrary - but because he refused to embrace doctrinal rigidity or denominational triumphalism - aspects of the Christian religion which were much more prevalent when he was young than they are today.

Kingsmill was quintessentially a voice crying in the wilderness; a lone prophet, though ‘prophet’ was actually a term he strongly disapproved of. His insistence that the ultimate purpose of human existence was to fuse man’s divided nature, which could only be achieved through individual effort rather than collective panaceas was so totally out of kilter with the spirit of his age that it was greeted with nothing but hostility and complete incomprehension. Perhaps, given the patent futility with which vast cohorts of splintered and fractious organizations now desperately struggle to hold our society together, it will gradually dawn on everyone that Kingsmill had been right all along.

Whatever the validity or otherwise of his convictions, they certainly endowed Kingsmill with a degree of serenity and detachment about the world, which for Muggeridge, as for others, was a central part of his appeal. One gets the impression that he was altogether too sane to be a twentieth century citizen, and Muggeridge was, by temperament, naturally disposed to sympathize. “In some mysterious way,” he wrote “he managed to remain uncontaminated and unbrainwashed in an age that specialised in both processes.” This meant, of course, that Kingsmill was always a self-condemned pariah; something to which, if it did occasionally exasperate him, he usually responded with commendable good humour. “This was one of the reasons his company

was so pleasurable.” Muggeridge again wrote, “He had no part in the age’s grisly buffooneries.”

Kingsmill’s mind was forged by the heritage of English civilisation at its zenith and its immense canon of literature with which he was prodigiously conversant. Sadly, this had already lost much of its relevance, even in his own day, other than to provide barren fodder for academic study and erudition. There may have been some truth in the criticism advanced by Anthony Powell (who, Kitty Muggeridge once told me, constantly denigrated Kingsmill in private conversation) that this preoccupation led him to neglect the merits of European literature. In any event, I do not think Kingsmill ever grasped the need for polemical or explicit statement. He tended to confine himself to perceptive observations, some distinctly esoteric, about authors and poets, which left his readers to infer for themselves such general conclusions as he deduced from literature on the subject of life. This, of course, they never did.

The best work by far to illuminate exactly how Kingsmill’s ideas influenced Muggeridge is *God’s Apology* by Richard Ingrams. *God’s Apology* narrates the story of the friendship between three writers: Hesketh Pearson, Kingsmill and Muggeridge himself. They were known at one time as the ‘Horseshoe Group’ on account of their habit of frequenting The Three Horseshoes pub at the bottom of Tottenham Court Road. Who coined this name, or in what context it was used, I am not sure, but in any case, it was something of a misnomer. A cardinal tenet of the ‘Group’ was that where literature was

concerned, every authentic work of the imagination must reflect the vision of the individual who created it, and can never be transmitted through some sort of school, as with pictorial art.

Kingsmill and Pearson might be described as the two senior partners of the trio, both born in the late 1880’s, both of conventional though not identical backgrounds and both dedicated to literary biography. Muggeridge, by contrast, was born some fifteen years later into the then subversive stable of Socialism and was dedicated primarily to journalism. Despite the colossal affinity which obviously existed between Kingsmill and Pearson, it was, oddly enough I feel, Muggeridge rather than Pearson who fully assimilated Kingsmill’s philosophy.

Extending Muggeridge’s notion that those who truly see into the realities of life beyond the shifting sands of history represent God’s Spies, I sometimes see Kingsmill and Muggeridge as a kind of partnership; a two-man resistance movement against the Twentieth Century. Perhaps, this is the first time God’s Spies have functioned in this way: Kingsmill beavering away in isolation and obscurity to formulate the strategy; and Muggeridge, the field agent, penetrating enemy activity and institutions, with a divine brief to expose all their fatuity and fraudulence in the fullness of time, and with every scrap of wit and irony at his disposal.

ENDS

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## Malcolm Muggeridge’s Scourging of Liberalism

By Russell Kirk (1918 – 1994)

*Extracted and edited from The Heritage Foundation  
Lecture Number 229*

*Delivered September 21st, 1989*

His many books are so quotable that one is tempted to compose a lecture entirely of passages from Muggeridge, unadorned by comments. Restraining myself, nevertheless, I will try to trace for you the course of Malcolm Muggeridge’s abhorrence of the political and moral attitude that is called liberalism. Muggeridge has very nearly arrived at Heaven’s Gate, after much stumbling and tribulation and fierce combats with the pen as weapon. Others wandering in a dark wood may profit from both his blunders and his successes.

But it is not Muggeridge, the Christian apologist of late years, that I mean to discuss with you today. Rather, I give you Muggeridge the satirist, successor to Aristophanes, Juvenal, Rabelais, and Swift. In an age of

general decadence, satire may miss its mark. In the dictionary’s definition, satire is ‘directed to the correction of corruption, abuses, or absurdities in religion, politics, law, society, and letters.’ Mockingly, the satirist contrasts what is with what ought to be, and particularly, he contrasts the squalid present with a nobler past.

Yet when standards or norms have been long flouted and almost forgotten, often satire is thrust before blind eyes, or falls upon deaf ears; for not many people remain who recall that once upon a time there was talk of virtue. Such is the condition, in large part, of our culture in the latter half of the 20th century. This considered, Muggeridge’s success in waking wits and consciences has been phenomenal. For the past fifty-five years, Muggeridge (to borrow two lines from Ben Jonson) has dared to “strip the ragged follies of the time/ Naked, as at their birth.” In particular, he has scourged the moral and political folly called liberalism.

Muggeridge's indignation at the folly and the knavery, during his Moscow winter, of both Western visitors to Russia and foreign correspondents posted there became the recurring theme of his several books and his almost innumerable periodical pieces. Thirty-seven years later, he returned to his commination of the fatuous liberals that he encountered in Moscow. "In those days, Moscow was the Mecca for every liberal mind, whatever its particular complexion," he would write in 1970.

They flocked there in an unending procession, from the great ones like Shaw and Gide and Barbecue and Julian Huxley and Harold Laski and the Webbs, down to poor little teachers, crazed clergymen and millionaires, and drivelling dons; all utterly convinced that, under the aegis of the great Stalin, a new dawn was breaking in which the human race would at last be united in liberty, equality, and fraternity for evermore....They were prepared to believe anything, however preposterous; to overlook anything, however villainous; to approve anything, however obscurantist and brutally authoritarian, in order to be able to preserve intact the confident expectation that one of the most thoroughgoing, ruthless and bloody tyrannies ever to exist on earth could be relied on to champion human freedom, the brotherhood of man, and all the other good liberal causes to which they had dedicated their lives.

Malcolm and Kitty Muggeridge had arrived in Moscow quite as credulous about the dictatorship of the Proletariat as were the other visitors whose foolishness he soon would denounce. But they had eyes with which to see; and they departed much wiser and overwhelmed by sadness. They had learned the hard truth about the communist regime; they had learned the shallowness and falseness of the Western liberal ideology.

So Malcolm Muggeridge rejected liberalism-from 1933 onward. And the liberal establishment rejected him. For after he left the *Guardian* in disgust, he could secure no post with any English paper, being found "too extreme" in his words about the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. An interim appointment in Switzerland with the League of Nations bureaucracy was shameful servitude; the attempt to support his household by occasional free-lance writing soon collapsed. A novel based upon his experiences at the *Manchester Guardian* was suppressed foolishly by its publisher, upon the threat of a suit for libel. He came upon an advertisement of an editorial post vacant at an English-language newspaper in India; knowing something of India, he applied, though he had been thinking of suicide. Off he went, perforce, to the *Calcutta Statesman*; but the time would come when he would be the best-known journalist in the world, and the most mordant and dashing adversary of the liberal mentality. His acerbic prose would bring down many an eminent pomposity. One thinks of the lines of John Taylor, the 17th century "Water Poet":

Pens are most dangerous tools, more sharp by odds  
Than swords, and cut more keen than whips or rods.

We turn now to the wit and the invective of his case against liberalism. If one would find a source for his detestation of the liberal mind-aside, that is, from his personal experience of liberalism's impotence in several quarters of the world today-why, that source is the wisdom of Dr. Samuel Johnson, Muggeridge's favorite English writer, so often quoted by him. Johnson died before "liberalism" had become a term of morals and politics, but the self-proclaimed Enlighteners of France during the age of Johnson were the intellectual ancestors of our 20th century liberals. The common-sensical reasoning of Johnson was Muggeridge's weapon, too, and later in life, Johnson's reliance upon the authority of Christian teaching.

In the 18th century, nobody was more "the true-born Englishman" than Samuel Johnson. In the 20th century, Muggeridge is our best extant example of old English character and the English cast of mind.

What is this liberalism that Muggeridge so valiantly assails? He is not referring to the economic doctrines of Manchester-not primarily, at least. Muggeridge is not given to quoting John Henry Newman, but a passage from Newman's *Apologia* may suggest Muggeridge's fundamental objection. Newman remarks that he first heard the word "liberalism" in connection with the opinions of Lord Byron and his admirers. "Afterwards," Newman continues, "Liberalism was the badge of a theological school, of a dry and repulsive character, not very dangerous in itself, though dangerous as opening the door to evils which it did not itself either anticipate or comprehend. At present it is nothing else than that deep, plausible skepticism,... the development of human reason, as practically exercised by the natural man." Doubt of tradition, authority, things long established; deep corrosive doubt of the long-received belief in a constant human nature; doubt especially of man's power of moral choice and man's moral responsibility for his actions-these had become the characteristics of liberalism by Muggeridge's day. Their descent from the liberal sceptics of Newman's day, and more remotely from the Enlighteners of Johnson's day, is sufficiently obvious.

Bourgeois society, from which the liberal mentality arose, has been working its own destruction, Muggeridge asserts in *The Green Stick*; far more than any mob of revolutionaries, the bourgeois liberals' innovating notions have gnawed at the footings of personal and social order. Two bourgeoisie-"a typical Viennese general practitioner, and a British Museum Reading Room enrage - Freud and Marx...undermined the whole basis of Western European civilization as no avowedly insurrectionary movement ever has or could," Muggeridge writes, "by promoting the notion of determinism, in the one case in morals, in the other in history, thereby relieving individual men and women of all responsibility for their personal and collective behaviour."

Muggeridge's most burning piece of invective against 20th century liberalism, "The Great Liberal Death Wish," was first published in 1970 and is reprinted in my anthology *The Portable Conservative Reader*. He commences his slashing essay with a reference to his Moscow experiences in 1932-1933, and he then proceeds to trace the misfortunes brought on by liberalism-which, he was to declare later, would bring to pass the disintegration of Christendom.

The fundamental error of liberalism is its false gospel of automatic and ineluctable progress, Muggeridge declares. This fallacy grew out of infatuation with Darwin's theory of natural selection. He despises the evangels of Scientism:

... a Herbert Spencer, or a poor, squeaky H.G. Wells, ardent evolutionist and disciple of Huxley, with his vision of an earthly paradise achieved through science and technology; those twin monsters which have laid waste a whole world, polluting its seas and rivers and lakes with poisons, infecting its very earth and all its creatures, reaching into Man's mind and inner consciousness to control and condition him, at the same time entrusting to irresponsible, irresolute human hands the instruments of universal destruction....

The enthronement of the gospel of progress necessarily required the final discrediting of the gospel of Christ, and the destruction of the whole edifice of ethics, law, culture, human relationships and human behaviour constructed upon it. Our civilization, after all, began with Christian revelation, not the theory of evolution, and, we may be sure, will perish with it, too-if it has not already.

Along with T.S. Eliot and Donald Davidson, Malcolm Muggeridge tells us that, as Christian belief is rejected, so modern civilization stumbles down to dusty death. So thought the novelist Robert Graves; so the historian Eric Voegelin; so the sociologist Pitirim Sorokin. Culture arises from the cult; when the cult dissolves, so in time does the culture. Thus Muggeridge's declaration that the destruction of religious belief causes the collapse of modern society is not peculiar to him; but he expresses this shattering judgement with high sardonic power. Take this passage from "The Great Liberal Death Wish":

"It is, indeed, among Christians themselves that the final decisive assault on Christianity has been mounted; led by the Protestant churches, but with Roman Catholics eagerly, if belatedly, joining in the fray. All they had to show was that when Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world, He meant that it was. Then, moving on from there, to stand the other basic Christian propositions similarly on their heads. As, that to be carnally minded is life; that it is essential to lay up treasure on earth in the shape of a constantly expanding Gross National Product; that the flesh lusts with the spirit and the spirit with the flesh, so that we can do whatever we have a mind to; that

he that loveth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. And so on. One recalls a like adjustment of the rules in Orwell's *Animal Farm*. A whole series of new interpretative 'translations' of the Bible have appeared supporting the new view, and in case there should be any anxiety about the reception of these adjustments in Heaven, God, we are told on the best theological authority, has died.

Christian faith arose upon belief in Christ's promise of the resurrection of the flesh and the life everlasting. What liberalism seeks is not the life eternal, but the oblivion of death: the liberals' doctrinaire advocacy of contraception and abortion is evidence of their overpowering death wish. Copulation without population is their obsession."

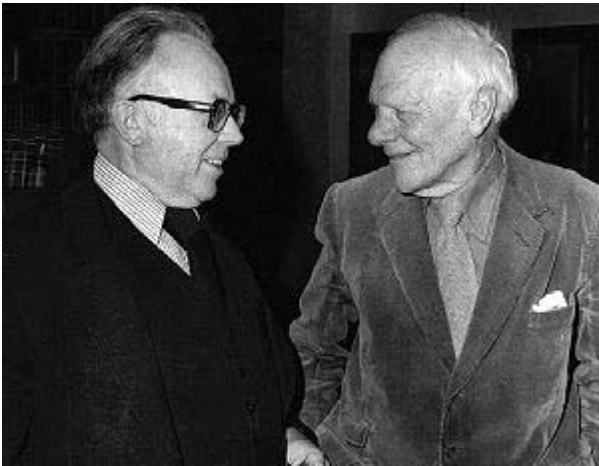
In Muggeridge's words: "If sex provides the mysticism of the great liberal death wish, it needs, as well, its own special mumbo-jumbo and brainwashing device; a moral equivalent of conversion, whereby the old Adam of ignorance and superstition and the blind acceptance of tradition is put aside, and the new liberal man is born-enlightened, erudite, cultivated. This is readily to hand in education in all its many branches and affiliations. To the liberal mind, education provides the universal panacea. Whatever the problem, education will solve it. Law and order breaking down?-then yet more statistics chasing yet more education; venereal disease spreading, to the point that girls of ten are found to be infected?-then, for heaven's sake, more sex education, with tiny tots lispng out what happens to mummy's vagina when daddy erects, as once they did the Catechism; drug addiction going up by leaps and bounds, especially in the homes where television is looked at...-surely it's obvious that what the kids need is extra classes under trained psychiatrists to instruct them in the why and the wherefore of narcotics."

Muggeridge touches in this article and elsewhere upon the liberals' perverse attachment to whatever political causes are hostile to things established in our civilization-for example, on why any friends to British or American interests are denounced by the liberals as reactionaries. One instance, "Why, in a world full of oppressive regimes and terrorist practices, in England the venom and fury of the liberal mind should pick on the white South Africans with particular spleen when their oligarchic rule only differs from that of a dozen others-Tito's, Franco's, Ulbricht's, Castro's, etc.-in that they happen to be anxious to be on good terms with the English."

The liberal mentality seems bent upon annihilation of the convictions and circumstances that have made possible a liberal democratic society. Everywhere today's liberals demand more freedom. But freedom from what? Why, freedom from that order, public and personal, which has nurtured justice and true liberty. The typical latter-day liberal is not aware that his proposals and his actions are

life denying; nay, he fancies that they are life enhancing; nevertheless, he is driven by his unrecognized death wish. Down with civilization that we may be liberated from all restraints.

RUSSELL KIRK WITH MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE



Muggeridge cries prophetically: "I see the great liberal death wish driving through the years ahead in triple harness with the gospel of progress and the pursuit of happiness. These are our three Horsemen of the Apocalypse—progress, happiness, death. Under their auspices, the quest for total affluence leads to total deprivation; for total peace to total war; for total education to total illiteracy; for total sex to total sterility; for total freedom to total servitude. Seeking only agreement based on a majority, we find a consensus based on a consensocracy, or oligarchy of the liberal mind...."

Malcolm Muggeridge abandons all hope for this temporal world of ours, this society in love with death, willing its own dissolution. I have quoted many times the final paragraph of his overwhelming jeremiad: "As the astronauts soar into the vast eternities of space, on earth the garbage piles higher; as the groves of academe extend their domain, their alumni's arms reach lower; as the phallic cult spreads, so does impotence. In great wealth, great poverty; in health, sickness; in numbers, deception. Gorging, left hungry; sedated, left restless; telling all, hiding all; in flesh united, forever separate. So we press on through the valley of abundance that leads to the wasteland of satiety, passing through the gardens of fantasy; seeking happiness ever more ardently, and finding despair ever more surely."

In his lectures to our ISI seminar, Mr. Muggeridge was so despairing of our bent 20th century culture that the undergraduates in our audience, by contrast, took me for a carefree optimist. Corrupted by our intellectual delusions, intoxicated by our affluence, betrayed by our own gadgets, Muggeridge told our seminar, why, modernity is not long for this world, and good riddance.

The triumph of television seals our doom, he declared: mass inanity and the manipulation of public opinion, the overwhelming of decent taste, the undoing of books and schooling—these are the gifts of the boob tube. It is not possible to un-invent television.

Now it was through his regular and unforgettable appearances on television for the British Broadcasting Company that Malcolm Muggeridge had grown famous and prosperous in the 1960s. His craggy face with its deep-set eyes, his urbanity of manner, his sharpness of wit had won him an immense audience of viewers. The man who speaks from the television screen to gullible millions possesses power, but Malcolm Muggeridge rejected such power.

As Ian Hunter writes in his able biography of Muggeridge: ...[he] has always been fascinated and repelled by the spectacle of power and those who wield it....Power is to the collectivity, he believes, what lust is to the individual—'an expense of spirit in a waste of shame' in Shakespeare's elegant phrase. Through the practice of half a century of journalism, and particularly since the advent of television, he has been brought in contrast with prime ministers, potentates, and despots, people who have achieved power over their fellowmen by acclamation, birth, persuasion, the ballot box, or the barrel of a gun. Its effect on almost all of them, he has observed, is to corrupt—not in the more obvious sense in which Lord Acton spoke of power corrupting, but in subtler, more insidious ways; principally, by diverting their attention from what is enduring, true, and worthwhile to what is evanescent, circumstantial, and tawdry. 'Here am I, Captain of a Legion of Rome,' runs an inscription Muggeridge is fond of quoting, 'who served in the Libyan desert and learns and ponders this truth—there are in life but two things, love and power, and no man can have both.'

His view has partly been shaped by his own experiences... of ballot boxes and interminable parliamentary debates in Paris and London and Washington, which finish up in societies so aimless and enfeebled that they are unable to resist either external aggressors or internal terrorists, yielding simultaneously to barbarians from without and within, and in their last legislative gasp striving to extinguish individual freedom through the closed shop and individual life through legalized abortion.

Choose love, not power, Muggeridge tells us. He does not show our society any way of escape from Avernus. But he does exhort us, as souls, to seek our salvation with diligence.

As a pilgrim for eighty-six years in this dark wood of our time, Malcolm Muggeridge has beheld the destruction of much and the ugly alteration of more. Yet, like Democritus, he is always laughing. "All that I can claim to have learnt from the years I have spent in this

world is that the only happiness is love," he writes in the first chapter of *The Green Stick*, "and that the world itself only becomes the dear and habitable dwelling place it is when we who inhabit it know we are migrants, due when the time comes to fly away to other more commodious skies."

So, sincerely, writes the most convincing satirist of our age. At whatever risk, ever since 1932, Malcolm Muggeridge has uttered the truth. One of his harder truths

is that liberalism now has become rotten to the core. Somewhere Muggeridge remarks that people learn not from exhortation, but from experience.

Before this century is out, doubtless the surviving votaries of liberalism will be taught some more disagreeable lessons.

ENDS

*Russell Kirk (1918-1994) is the author of some thirty-two books, hundreds of periodical essays, and many short stories. Both Time and Newsweek described him as one of America's leading thinkers, and The New York Times wrote in 1998 that Kirk's 1953 book The Conservative Mind "gave American conservatives an identity and a genealogy and catalyzed the postwar movement."*

*He wrote and spoke widely on modern culture, political thought and practice, educational theory, literary criticism, ethical questions, and social themes. He edited the educational quarterly journal The University Bookman, was founder and first editor of the quarterly Modern Age, for quarter of a century wrote a page on education for National Review, and for thirteen years published, through the Los Angeles Times Syndicate, a nationally syndicated newspaper column.*

*Among Kirk's closest literary and scholarly friends were Malcolm Muggeridge and William F. Buckley, Jr. Dr. Kirk's wife Annette was an active member of the National Commission on Excellence in Education and is now President of the Russell Kirk Center which has continued Kirk's work since he passed away on April 29, 1994. Annette is also a founder member of The Malcolm Muggeridge Society*

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## Gargoyles - a chip off the old block

By David Williams

Gargoyles have been around for thousands of years and we tend to take them rather for granted. Why are they there as architectural ornament, and why do they take the form they do?

Some of the earliest known forms of gargoyle have been found in ancient Roman and Greek ruins. These were originally fabricated in terra-cotta but later figures were carved of wood. A complete shift to carving in stone took place by the 13th century.

Gargoyles were originally intended as waterspouts and drains to keep rain water from running down the walls of buildings and damaging the foundations. Projecting out from the roof or parapet, they served to throw the water from the gutter clear. The term *gargoyle* is a contraction from the Latin *gurgulio* and the Old French *gargouille*, sharing an obvious root with our English word *gargle*, and means "throat". It also describes the "gurgling" sound which tends to be made by water as it runs through these architectural features.

Probably created by medieval architects and stone carvers in an attempt to articulate ancient and popularly-held superstitions, gargoyles frightened away evil spirits

while at the same time serving a more practical function. Gargoyles normally incorporated a carved face. The mouth is normally open allowing the escape of water, but water pipes were often incorporated above or below the stone. The usual site chosen was in the cornice, but occasionally they were installed on the front face of a buttress. After lead drainpipes began to be introduced in the sixteenth century and rainwater disposal could be better arranged than pouring down on the people below, gargoyles primarily served a decorative function.

Although we think of gargoyles as having grotesque or distorted features, the term has come to include very many types of image. Some, for example were depictions of monks, or combinations of real animals and people, half man – half beast, or chimeras, many of which were intentionally humorous. Others took the form of mythological beings often with associated floral motifs. Some designs may also have been inspired by the skeletal remains found of prehistoric animals such as dinosaurs and giant reptiles, or else derived from fossils. A stone carving that does not carry water and has a face is more properly described as a Grottesque. These serve solely as ornamentation and the word derives from *grotto*, the Italian for a subterranean apartment - the

original Roman forms of grotesque were found buried in ruins during the Renaissance. In practice, the term grotesque is now synonymous with gargoyles and the differentiation in terminology is rarely made today.

Gargoyles can be found on many types of buildings, but are mainly associated with Gothic architecture. Many of our ecclesiastical buildings were erected in the middle ages when there was a fashion for awesome visual images to help in the spreading of the scriptures. These early visual aids not only included gargoyles, but also stained glass, paintings, bas-relief and sculpture. High vaulted ceilings and upward reaching designs also served to create awe and wonder.

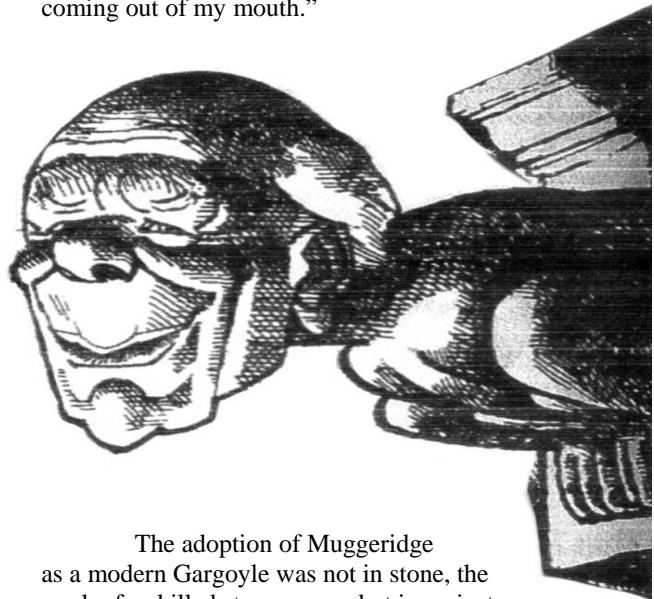
The Gothic architectural style evolved from Romanesque and was adopted all over Europe from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from inclusion of gargoyles, it is typified by a number of specific features including pointed arches, flying buttresses, the rib vault, tracery on windows, a minimalisation of walls by incorporation of arcades or galleries, slender piers and a tendency to vertical features such as steeples. It should be noted that the style recurred at the whim of architects well after the end of the Gothic architectural period, one manifestation being Gothic Revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, typified of course by the Houses of Parliament in London. It was also the preferred style adopted for 'new' cathedrals in many other parts of the world.

So whilst gargoyles of great interest notably adorn cathedrals such as Notre Dame in Paris, France, or of Cologne in Germany, they can equally be found in abundance on Washington Cathedral, USA. These grotesque carvings were perhaps designed to express man's subconscious fears and in so doing they represent the remaining vestiges of paganism - an age when gods would be heard in hills, trees and river plains. Many gargoyles are derived from the legends and figures of the ancients Celts, such as The Green Man or Jack of the Green - the god of tree worship. Artists who carved these were inspired by the long cultural traditions passed down from generation to generation. Churches and Cathedrals were apparently happy to adopt them, maybe to embrace old traditions of belief and remind the masses that "even if God is at hand, evil is never far away".

One ancient French legend has it that a fierce dragon named La Gargouille lived in the River Seine near Paris. The fierce dragon devoured ships and men. The village was saved by St. Romanis, proving the might of Christianity. After the battle, the creature was set ablaze. Its body was destroyed but its head and neck survived which was mounted on a building. This practice spread and La Gargouille perhaps created the model for the gargoyles we see today.

Gargoyles can be dragons, men, cats, bats, frogs, serpents, and countless others. Gargoyles are still being carved and installed today, many to replace carvings which have succumbed to atmospheric pollution or just water erosion. Many bear a modern theme - portraying perhaps a whimsical figure pointing a camera down below, or even a representation of such items as mobile phones or computers.

The modern Gargoyle can also be a caricature of real people. For example, my son's former organist and master of choristers at Hereford Cathedral, Dr. Roy Massey attained a kind of immortality when his face, with characteristic smile, was the model for one of several new carved heads which decorate the cathedral's refurbished Lady Chapel. In this fashion, the stonemason honoured an eminent and long serving member of the cathedral community as a change from the usual long-dead saints and bishops. Dr Massey, who has been associated with Hereford and The Three Choirs Festival for 30 years, said: "I feel very honoured. I'm just grateful they didn't decide to turn me into a gargoyle with a spout coming out of my mouth."



The adoption of Muggeridge as a modern Gargoyle was not in stone, the work of a skilled stonemason, but in caricature, the work of the famous cartoonist Wally Fawkes, better known as Trog. It is extraordinary that the depiction of Malcolm Muggeridge as a gargoyle in ink reached a vastly larger audience than would ever be achieved by that of Roy Massey in stone. The depiction was very apt and appropriate given Muggeridge's fascination with gargoyles and his desire to identify himself with them so frequently in his writing and broadcasts.

Malcolm was, it must be remembered, captured in three dimensional form during his lifetime. Busts were sculpted by at least two artists and subsequently cast in bronze for the benefit of posterity. Malcolm was also given the dubious and more transient accolade of a waxwork in Madame Tussauds, the mark of achieving

celebrity status, but unfortunately long melted down as he himself predicted.

It remains to be seen whether a more permanent Muggeridge Gargoyle is ever commissioned, carved in stone and affixed to a building for future generations to gaze at in awe and wonder. Which cathedral or church would possibly welcome such a controversial addition to its edifice? But wouldn't it be the most fitting memorial to this great Christian thinker and pilgrim if such a building could be found. This may not be in the United Kingdom – most of our Gothic cathedrals sprouting decaying gargoyles are Anglican. He is unlikely to be felt an appropriate architectural adornment on any of these having so publicly entered into the Roman Catholic faith late in life.

A Muggeridgean gargoyle could perhaps make an interesting addition to Broadcasting House, London, home of the BBC. He could look down with amusement and “told you so” resignation at the fine mess broadcasters get themselves into, best typified by the controversial televised broadcast of “*Jerry Springer, the Opera*”. Perhaps his presence there is needed as a constant reminder of his prophesies and dire predictions. In “*Christ and the Media*”, now republished, he lamented the falling standards of taste and the departure of the BBC from maintaining and expounding Christian moral values.

ENDS

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## The Malcolm Muggeridge Society

*The Society seeks to provide a focus of contact for all worldwide who have a continuing interest in his life as journalist, author, broadcaster, soldier-spy and Christian apologist.*

### The aims of the Society are:

- To provide information for those researching the life and work of Malcolm Muggeridge.
- To keep his writings in print and to encourage the publication of new critiques and scholarship.
- To provide a fellowship and virtual forum internationally for admirers to discuss Muggeridge's work.
- To publish a regular newsletter or magazine, and to facilitate republication of his books and publication of unpublished material.
- To maintain a relationship with those media organisations holding archive material worthy of preservation and re-broadcast.
- To provide and encourage linkage with other societies and associations where mutual interest exists (PG Wodehouse Society, GK Chesterton Society, CS Lewis Society, Ukraine Society etc)
- To increase awareness of the papers, writings and memorabilia held in the Malcolm Muggeridge Collection at Wheaton College, Illinois and at other places of learning.
- To provide a web presence with linkages and a sharing of information.
- To organise periodical social and literary events.

### **The Malcolm Muggeridge Society**

**Membership Fee: £10.00 (US\$20.00\*)**

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.....
Postcode.....

**1. Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society**      Please pay the sum of £10 (ten pounds) to  
 Barclays Bank, Barclays Business Centre,  
 Soho Square Branch, PO BOX 4WA,  
 27 Soho Square, London W1D 3QR, England  
 (sort code 20-78-98) for the credit of  
**The Malcolm Muggeridge Society**  
 Account no. 10800619  
 on.....(day).....(month) 2005  
 and then £10 (ten pounds)  
 on 31 May.2006 and on 31 May each following year  
 until further notice.

**2. Name(s) of Account Holder(s)**

**5. Signature**

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**3. Bank sort code (from the right hand corner of your cheque)**

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**4. Bank or Building Society account number**

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**6. Date    dd/mm/yy**

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### Patrons

Sir David Frost

William F. Buckley Jr.

Richard Ingrams

### The Malcolm Muggeridge Archives & Special Collection

Wheaton College, 501 College Ave., Wheaton IL 60187-5593, USA

[www.wheaton.edu/learnres/arcsc](http://www.wheaton.edu/learnres/arcsc)

### The Malcolm Muggeridge Society

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Treasurer: David Williams