

"Here is the land of the free. Come and take this freedom and make of it what you can." Even the land offered to homesteaders was not a gift of anything other than freedom and opportunity. First, the great majority of immigrants came not for homesteads but for jobs in New York, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, etc. Secondly, the homesteader received no title until he had worked the land for a number of years. Thus the title was really the counterpart to the wages which the

worker was paid in the cities. Thirdly, the lots were vacant land. No one was taxed to provide the homesteader with his sustenance. That early America offered true fairness, not the fraudulent "fairness" of the minimum wage, state welfare and the rest.

... Thus I conclude that intellectual enlightenment can go far to cure the modern democratic state of its moral obliquity. How then ought we to proceed? Intellectual enlightenment preached to the desert air will of course

have no effect. It needs to be linked with and supported by those forces in American life which are still essentially healthy. I believe that there are three from which the forces of regeneration may take sustenance. They are religion, patriotism, and pride in individual achievement. These are far from dead in America. Ally your intellect to them and you will move mountains. And your grandchildren will bless you for the America which you will have bequeathed to them.

Principalities & Powers

by Samuel Francis

"Black History Month," sometimes called "February," used to be about as exciting as National Jogging Week, but this year it stood up and pranced. First, executives at CBS gave the bounce to commentator Andy Rooney to punish him for unkind remarks he may or may not have uttered about the African-American gene pool. Then, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, lifelong liberal Democrat, arrived at Vassar College to harangue the students in the annual "Eleanor Roosevelt Lecture," only to hear himself denounced for "racism." Probably other, less illustrious citizens also fell under the month's lash for their insensitivity to such well-established historical truths as the negritude of Nefer-titi and the African origins of the Pythagorean theorem, but their names have not surfaced and their fates are unknown. In any case, to humiliate a leading senator and nearly ruin the career of a nationally famous opinion-maker in the space of less than a month is itself no small historical achievement.

Yet the greatest accomplishment of this year's Black History Month was the decision of the New York State Board of Regents to scuttle the "Eurocentric" orientation of its entire educational system and to authorize development of a curriculum that would reflect, in the words of the *New York Times*, "the contributions of non-white cultures" to American civilization. The most likely such plan, which already exists and which New Yorkers spent most of January and February fretting about, is the now-notorious "Curriculum of In-

clusion," which recommends sending Eurocentric values, ideas, and assumptions to the back of the school bus.

The plan, written by Dr. Henry Hamilton of the State University of New York at Albany, where he chairs the Department of Atmospheric Sciences, begins with the assertion that "African-Americans, Asian Americans, Puerto Ricans/Latinos, and Native Americans have all been the victims of an intellectual and educational oppression that has characterized the culture and institutions of the United States and the European American world for centuries." The purpose of the new curriculum is to destroy that "oppression" by overturning and reversing the racial and cultural dominance on which it is based.

One way to achieve that purpose is to insist, as the report and its appendices do throughout, that European and American civilizations are themselves derived from or dependent on non-white and non-European races and cultures (the term "minorities," the report warns us, merely reflects the assumption that the European-descended majority is dominant). Thus, the report faults the current syllabus on "Global History" used in New York schools because it fails to acknowledge sufficiently that "the latest scientific evidence has established Africa as the birthplace of humanity and the earliest cradle of civilization. . . . The African factor is crucial in world history and the Nile Valley is fundamental to appreciating its significance." The new teaching on the role of Asians and blacks in American history will emphasize the importance of

their labor in the economies of the Far West and the Old South, and neither the Framers nor even poor old Christopher Columbus is sacred any more.

"The erroneous and racist attribution of Christopher Columbus as so-called 'discoverer' and 'civilizer' of Native Americans [i.e., Indians] can be exposed as an essential part of the ideology of 'white nationalism' designed to justify the exploitation and eventual genocide of indigenous Americans," writes Leonard Jeffries, head of the Black Studies Department at CCNY, in an appendix to the report. Exploring the contributions of "Native American" traditions to American government can combat the "racism" of the Constitution and the quaint conceit that the Framers had any original ideas. "Some of these [Native American] traditions, such as the Iroquois system of governance," writes Dr. Jeffries, "have had an impact on the development of institutions and practices of the State of New York and the United States." Anthropologist William A. Starna, incidentally, in a letter to the *New York Times* on March 7, 1990, noted that "no good evidence exists to support" the idea that the Iroquois had any influence on the forming of the U.S. Constitution. But that's only one of the falsehoods the "Curriculum of Inclusion" perpetuates.

The curriculum's goal is not simply to supplement school courses with increased knowledge about the contributions of nonwhites to American civilization but to challenge the merits and legitimacy of "Eurocentric" culture itself. "An educational system centered

around the Eurocentric world view," the report informs us, "is limited and narrow." "The near exclusion of other cultures in the curriculum gives European American children the seriously distorted notion that their culture is the only one to have contributed to the growth of our society." It makes white children "arrogant" and instills in them the idea that they are "part of the group that 'has done it all,'" while exerting "harmful" effects and "negative socialization" on nonwhite children.

Conservatives and neoconservatives, of course, have generally howled splenetically in response to the "Curriculum of Inclusion," and properly so. But, as is common in such responses, they often seem not to have grasped firmly the fundamental issue the proposed reforms raise.

U.S. *News & World Report's* John Leo, for example, was one of the first columnists to criticize the report (November 27, 1989), while praising an alternative curriculum reform co-authored by neoconservative education expert Diane Ravitch that was adopted in California. The California plan, Mr. Leo wrote, "frankly celebrates America's democratic values—freedom, tolerance, equality, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship—not as the inventions of a white power structure but as the heritage of all Americans, regardless of color." Similarly, Scott McConnell and Eric Breindel, criticizing the "Curriculum of Inclusion" report in the *New Republic* (January 8-15, 1990), accurately noted that "European intellectual traditions" were "essential to the establishment of political democracy on these shores," and they argued that

in the years since the Founders, immigrants from all over the world have come here because they were attracted by that democracy and the vibrant economy it engendered. This blend produced a genuinely pluralist society—indeed, the very concept of pluralism is itself a product of the European (or "Eurocentric") tradition.

But the problem with such criticisms of "A Curriculum of Inclusion" is that they fail to recognize that "America's democratic values" and "pluralism" are

not only precisely what the "Curriculum of Inclusion" is rejecting, but also that pluralism in itself contains nothing with which to prune the budding totalitarianism that the report manifests. Indeed, by acknowledging the legitimacy of even anti-pluralistic ideas and their expression, pluralism provides the soil in which totalitarian minds and movements can sprout. The "multiculturalism" of "A Curriculum of Inclusion" exploits pluralist assumptions to demand acceptance. But since it rejects any serious commitment to the values of Western liberalism, its advocates have no intention of preserving pluralist mechanisms.

Moreover, regardless of the rhetorical and propaganda excesses of "A Curriculum of Inclusion," it is bang-right about one thing: American civilization historically has been the product of European-descended peoples and their ideas. What else can "Eurocentric dominance" mean? The language, the religion, the dominant political institutions, the economic organizations and goals, and the literary, intellectual, and aesthetic traditions that have informed American culture from its inception have all derived from Europe and its peoples. It is all very well to point to black cotton-pickers and Chinese railroad workers, but the cotton fields and the railroads were there because white people wanted them there and knew how to put them there. Almost all non-European contributions to American history either have been made by individuals and groups that have assimilated Euro-American ideas, values, and goals, or have been conceived, organized, and directed by white leaders.

At least implicitly, the "Curriculum of Inclusion" acknowledges this truth; it just doesn't like it, and its authors resort to the most labyrinthine confusions about the role of nonwhites in American history to get around the truth and reverse it. What they are seeking, then, is not simply to join a civilization that has excluded and subordinated them and their peoples but to delegitimize it and destroy it, with the idea of replacing it with their own conception of civilization, to which whites themselves will be subordinated.

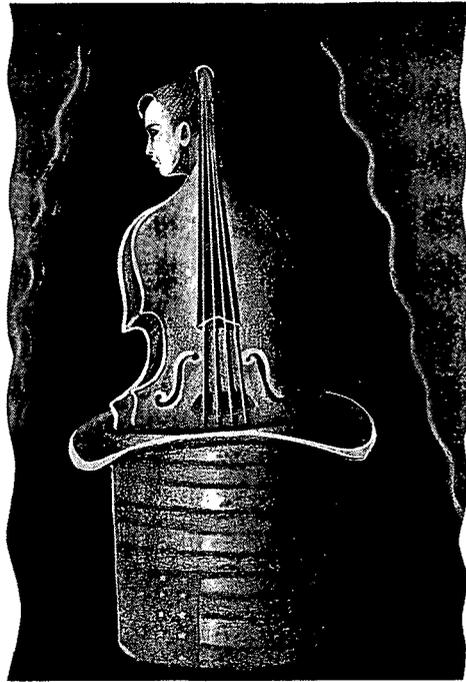
Of course, "A Curriculum of Inclusion" is not the only such challenge to historic American civilization. It is all of a piece with the attack on "Western

culture" courses at Stanford a couple of years ago and at other universities and colleges across the country. At the elementary and secondary levels, a group called the "National Black United Front" is launching similar assaults on school curricula in at least ten major American cities and school systems, according to Carol Innerst of the *Washington Times*, with the purpose of expunging what its activists call the "white supremacy" of the public schools. "Now that we are clear," says NBUF's chairman, Conrad Worrill, "that the European world did not bring the light of civilization to Africa, and in fact it was the other way around—Africans in ancient times had a profound influence on the rest of the world—we ought to put African contributions at the center of the curriculum." And, of course, feminist and homosexual activists seek similar "revisions" of traditional curricula to challenge male heterosexual dominance. No wonder this year's Black History Month was such fun.

The total assault is part of the struggle for what the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci called "cultural hegemony," the subversion and control of the dominant ideas, values, tastes, and moral standards of a society, which is an essential precondition for seizing political power and without which enduring revolutionary power is not possible. The assault is also part of the continuing cultural dispossession of the historic core of American civilization, and as such it enjoys at least tacit support from the already dominant elites that gain power through managing and manipulating social change and which therefore thrive on "pluralism."

Invoking "pluralism" and "democratic values" will do nothing to resist the assault but will only legitimize it, since the attackers rely on such slogans of liberalism and the sanctity these slogans enjoy to move their vanguard forward. Those Americans who want to preserve their historic civilization will need to reassert their own hegemony against that vanguard, and incantations of pluralism and democracy will be of less help to them in achieving it than a firm insistence on the greatness of who they are, where they come from, and what they have achieved.





The Art of Revolution

by Thomas Fleming

Most Americans don't know much about art, but they do know what they don't like, namely blasphemy, pornography, and perversion. When they began to realize, in the course of 1989, that their own government, through the National Endowment for the Arts, was funding exhibitions of homosexual photographs and crucifixes in urine, they blew off enough steam to heat the entire city of Washington for several weeks.

Many sensible people wondered why a government agency would subsidize a revolution against public taste and decency. Doesn't the American system, they asked, depend upon certain broadly accepted standards of right and wrong, and aren't those standards undermined by the likes of Mr. Serrano and Mr. Mapplethorpe? Isn't there a conflict, they wondered, between the surgeon general's crusade against AIDS and the NEA's campaign to promote homosexuality? Why, in sum, would a regime deliberately set out to undermine itself?

To ask these questions is to misconceive—and misconceive seriously—the nature of political regimes. Individual political actors may be reckless or occasionally honest; entire political classes may grow too fat and lazy to look after their own interests (as they did in Eastern Europe); but no regime deliberately spends its surplus capital on projects that might lead to its own destruction. If the NEA's atrocities against public decency were only a case of misunderstanding, it would be a simple matter to persuade them of their mistake.

This sort of optimism is the grand illusion of American conservatism: if only we could enlighten the responsible

people in government and business, if only we could show them that the interest of the nation depends upon a return to "traditional values," then congressmen would join with bureaucrats, businessmen, and professors in an effort to restore an America that has not existed, for the past fifty years, anywhere outside the campaign speeches of Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan.

This is never going to happen. People like Senators Simon and Kennedy—indeed, most men and women in positions of power—actually like things the way they are. To be sure, they might prefer safer streets or a lower divorce rate, but not at the expense of a free and democratic people who would insist upon running their own affairs. Our rulers might not positively enjoy the idea of funding strippers as art, but any degradation is preferable to the dangers lurking in a community of artists and writers that were not lackeys of the regime. They have only to look at Czechoslovakia and shudder: why weren't the communists smart enough to subsidize Vaclav Havel?

Whenever a political community undertakes to commission or support the arts, the main object is not beauty or truth but defense of the regime. In their private capacity, tyrants and kings are free to indulge their own taste in buying paintings and in patronizing writers whose works they admire. Stalin is said to have assisted even Bulgakov, a writer he must have regarded as a political problem, and Charles II of England put up with the Earl of Rochester's impudence far longer than the poet deserved.

But what kings and tyrants do personally has to be