
the Selective Service System. Janowitz also charts the changing tenor of civic education in the public schools. During the 19th century, students were offered courses that gave a long-term historical sense of the American "experience." Since the Great Depression, a new breed of social studies teachers has begun focusing on specific current political and social conflicts, thus reinforcing a general trend toward ethnic and racial "fragmentation." Recalling Franklin D. Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (which, between 1933 and 1942, employed more than three million young adults), Janowitz urges the creation of similar programs of national service, perhaps even privately supported, to help restore a unifying sense of civic obligation—and health to the idea of patriotism.

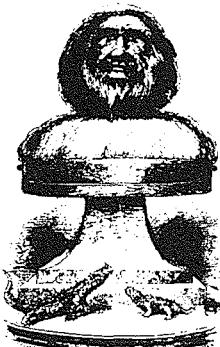
**THE POLITICS AT
GOD'S FUNERAL:
The Spiritual Crisis of
Western Civilization**
by Michael Harrington
Holt, 1983
308 pp. \$16.95

With the disappearance of God from the modern world, an event proclaimed by many philosophers and theologians, "one of the prime motives for noncoerced obedience and acquiescence in the social order" has vanished. That conclusion, surprisingly, comes from one of America's best-known socialists, Michael Harrington (*The Other America*, 1962). Not surprisingly, however, he laments the demise of religious faith mainly for social, political, and economic reasons. Capitalism, for instance, no longer restrained by John Calvin's austere ethic, has become the "compulsory hedonism of unplanned and irresponsible economic growth." Values and moral responsibilities that once bound people together have given way to relativistic codes, all encouraging an unhealthy individualism. Theologians of the 1960s (e.g., Harvey Cox and Paul Tillich) who tried to "demythologize" God created a God too "problematic, subjective, [and] existential" to provide a moral center for individual Americans. And Harrington dismisses the new Protestant fundamentalists as "too secular" to inspire a broad religious reawakening. Religion, Harrington concludes, can no longer be the integrating force it once was in medieval Europe,

but something must fill the vacuum. He calls on religious and atheistic humanists to bury the hatchet and work together "to introduce moral dimensions into economic and social debate and decision."

Arts & Letters

ECCENTRIC TRAVELLERS:
Excursions with Seven Extraordinary Figures from the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries
 by John Keay
 Tarcher, 1983
 216 pp. \$12.95



English eccentrics seem to have a penchant for travel to out-of-the-way places. In our century, the renowned Alfred Thesiger sojourned so long in Arabia that he all but became a Bedouin; his *Arabian Sands* (1959) is a brilliant record of the experience. But the 18th and 19th centuries had their share of oddball British travelers—many of them gifted writers. Keay, a Scottish author, offers portraits of seven. James Holman, a Royal Navy officer who retired in 1810 at age 25 because of blindness, became what Keay calls "the travelling phenomenon of the age." In 1823, he set off on one of his bolder adventures—a 3,500-mile trek from Moscow to Irkutsk. Advised against making the arduous trip through desolate Siberia, particularly since it offered so little to see, Holman reasoned that the trip was a logical one for a blind man. In the life of William Gifford Palgrave, scholar, soldier, Jesuit, "eccentricity lay not in the manifestations of an extraordinary personality, but in the baffling diversity of alibis under which he concealed it." From 1846 until his death in 1888, he posed, variously, as a sheik in Damascus while attempting to convert Moslems to Christianity; as a priest in Egypt while filing reports for the French Foreign Ministry; and as an Arab physician in Gaza. Where his ultimate allegiance lay is hard to determine: Near death in Japan, he seemed to abandon his Catholic faith for Shintoism. All Keay's voyagers were unusually determined and courageous. Not content with merely observing animals, the naturalist Charles Waterton, much admired by his junior in the field, Charles Darwin, journeyed far and wide "to come to grips with them—literally." Traveling in Guyana in 1805 to collect specimens, he enlivened his days by wrestling