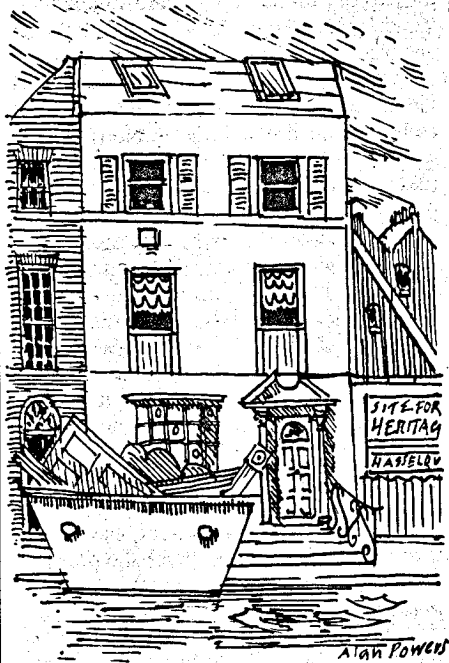


strained in splashing out on a fibreglass and bongo wood entrance 'feature'. As the Heritage industry constantly points out, historical authenticity is unimportant, the great thing with old buildings is to enjoy 'the excitement of our vivid history'.

The brick or stonework of the façade of your property can be transformed by cleaning and repointing. Whether brick or stone, the most approved method of cleaning is industrial sand-blasting. This has the great advantage of not only taking off the dirt but the whole surface of the original material, thus giving an exciting new texture like Ryvita biscuits. In the case of London stock brick, which was traditionally toned down with soot-wash, sand-blasting gives the brickwork an unusual bright yellow colour. Where the old work has been patched recently with pinker bricks cleaning makes the whole surface look like a slice of Battenburg cake, a



delicious effect which the original designer would, no doubt, have greatly appreciated had he been able to envisage such a result.

Repointing can do a lot for your building too. It is essential to use a very hard dark cement mortar with absolutely no lime in it. Avoid flush joints, which are far too unobtrusive and boring. Go for a really thick struck-joint. Most builders will provide this as a matter of course unless specifically instructed otherwise, so you do not have to worry too much about this crucial detail. A good example of the sort of standard to aim for is provided by the recent restoration of Hawksmoor's stable block at St James's Palace.

If you wish to spend a more substantial sum on improving the front of your house you can cover it from basement to parapet with cement render patterned with unusual trowel marks. Best of all is a striking new

surface of stick-on crazy-patterned plastic stonework the colour of dog biscuits. This type of treatment is particularly appropriate in smaller Georgian towns like Richmond in Yorkshire where the proximity to real stone makes the artifice of the substitute much more enjoyable to the trained eye.

Having dealt with the walls, there is still the roof to be considered. Of course you can replace the old graded slates with more regular machine-made asbestos substitutes. But while you are at work up there why not make use of the space and convert the roof into an extra room or two? Any

jobbing loft-conversion company can do a really good transformation, with a big dormer picture window in the front for the views, or even better, a recessed roof-terrace with sliding aluminium-framed patio doors. It is best to give any roof extension a flat top so as to mark it out as an addition in the 'style of our time'. While you are at it take down the chimneys to save future maintenance. With central heating, you will never need to use them again, and in any case you will have stripped out all the fireplaces as part of the upgrading of the interior to meet 'modern standards'.

## A ROMANTIC MANIFESTO

*Miss Lucinda Tyrrell explains why she dresses up in funny clothes*

THE average Romantic is female, well-educated, and somewhere between 18 and 45. She is female for what are called 'historical reasons'. The Romantic movement is said to have been born, or at any rate gestated, in an Oxford women's college which did not at that time admit men.

The Romantic inhabits an imaginative world, which, perhaps, women feel freer to do in these days. She genuinely finds the modern world mad and impossible to take seriously and sees her own Romantic 'bubble' as an oasis of sanity. When people accuse her of turning her back upon reality one imagines her (if she deigned to answer at all) gesturing disdainfully at the modern world and saying: 'You mean that?'

Her clothes are what one first remarks about her, but, though they may be striking, it is the way she wears them that really marks her out as a Romantic. Whether she wears crinolines or Thirties chic, or one of the 'neo-hyphen' or eclectic styles, she wears them with utter self-consciousness and completeness. It is this self-consciousness, this completeness, both in dress and in manner, which distinguishes the Romantic from other modern types and indicates that she is essentially not modern. The Sloane Ranger will wear jeans under a Savile-Row overcoat for 'counterpoint'. The Voguette will wear workman's boots under lacy Victorian petticoats. The Young Fogey will wear the coat of a pinstripe suit with grey flannels and a fawn cardigan. The Romantic sees all these things as modern — a word which

needs no further comment as a term of dismissal.

'Modern' in a case like this carries with it an implication of cowardice. The modern person is afraid to do the thing properly; afraid of falling into self-parody — that is, of doing it too completely. He has to supply the inverted commas in what the Romantic would consider a caddishly un-subtle manner, just to prove to the onlookers that he is, at root, one of them; that he too knows that one does not really do these things these days.

The Romantic is not one of them, and she (or he) does really do these things — and what are 'these days' anyway? One does not believe one has heard of them. The two keynotes of modern dressing are casualness and individuality. Even when these are not enforced too rigidly, it is *de rigueur* that the modern dresser should look at ease and himself. Neither of these things is much admired by the Romantic. The phrase 'natural and unaffected' is often used by Romantics to mean that someone is modern and boring. A Romantic should be affected and not too natural. This is not to say that she lacks ease or confidence; on the contrary, a Romantic is one to whom affectation comes naturally.

The Romantic would never, of course, wear Victorian or any other underwear as outerwear. It would be far too modern and predictably eccentric. 'Neurotic' is a word she might use for this type of dressing, meaning that it springs from the fragmented and unregulated consciousness

of the modern world. Put these out-of-place garments together with the aforementioned workman's boots and the Romantic feels as if she is witnessing a chaotic dream. So, come to that, does the modernist, but the modernist, having been through surrealism and psychedelia, finds chaotic dreams exciting and clever, while the Romantic looks on them with an unashamedly pre-Freudian mind and finds them sinister. When the Romantic calls the modern world 'mad' she is not using a figure of speech.

To understand the Romantic, one must realise that she is never eccentric — not, at any rate, in the sense of breaking with any fundamental convention. She appears to the outside world to be eccentric, and if she had any respect for the outside world that might trouble her, but the outside world ('the natives') does not consist of People Who Count. She appears to flout all sorts of conventions, but in fact she never flouts the conventions that matter. When she wears a crinoline ball-dress with a high collar and bobbed hair, she is not being odd. She is following an accepted style which has been in vogue for several years (fashions change at a more 19th-century pace in the Romantic world).

In dress, the Sloane Ranger or the Young Fogey tries to express conventional and traditional values from within the constraints of the compulsory individualism and pseudo-eccentricity of modern culture. The Romantic, conversely, expresses her individuality, and even her eccentricity if she is genuinely eccentric, from within the formal constraints of Romantic convention.

This brings us on to the Romantic attitude toward social class. Romantics do not necessarily share the same views on everything, but their attitude to this subject is pretty consistent. To begin with, they are much less coy about class than almost any other group of English people. They make no bones about the fact that the Classless Society — whether socialist or Thatcherite — is a bad thing. Indeed, this is probably the root cause of their distaste for both socialism and Thatcherism and, indeed, post-war politics as a whole.

The distinctions between social classes are one of the foundations of civilisation. The decline of domestic service, social deference and what the Romantic satirist Sparrowhawk has called 'natural, organic hierarchies' has been a de-civilising influence upon every class of society.

The ideal Romantic *ménage* includes a number of voluntary bonded servants who are looked after and protected in return for their service in a quite feudal manner, thus making the household a microcosm of the ideal Romantic-Feudal state.

Few Romantics are actually of lower-class origins and those who are are either servants of some sort or have improved themselves beyond all recognition and

probably rewritten their history. Curiously, Romantics do not object to either of these things. If some one is clever, amusing and un-modern, dresses correctly and speaks correctly they have usually no desire to enquire into humble social origins.

Conversely, the Romantic is not necessarily impressed with high birth. This does not mean that she does not respect breeding and ancient lineage. She does — perhaps with a more genuine, mediæval sort of respect than most people today — but she also has an almost oriental consciousness of the possibility of loss of caste. She does not necessarily regard the mod-



A Romantic

ern scion of the ancient family as a fit and true representative of the Tradition. Kind hearts may not be more than coronets; but coronets without sound traditional values and attitudes do not make People Who Count.

Romantics have great confidence. Some, of course, are shy, and to be brash or strident is considered modern and unpleasant. Nonetheless, the Romantic is usually possessed of a quiet confidence. Most Romantics have been Romantic without using that word since early teens at least, and to be able to pose the question: 'Is the world around me wrong and am I right?' and to answer calmly 'Yes' takes a certain degree of confidence. Membership of Romantic society increases this natural confidence considerably.

Romantic society encourages the flowering of the individual. Romantics enjoy other Romantics being flamboyant, they watch with appreciation as one develops new affectations. They expect one to improve one's 'performance'. 'All the world's a stage', said one Romantic, 'but it helps to

have a decent house.' The modern world, with its instinctive dislike of anything larger than itself (which includes most things), makes a very poor house.

Romantics are renowned for the curious flights of whimsy in which they indulge (whimsy is a Romantic word for fantasy. The latter term is seldom employed, being somewhat soiled by modern usage.) Some write stories, usually for private circulation among themselves only (though some are now seeing the light of publication in the *Romantic* and the *English Magazine*) and the barrier between these stories and real life is often alarmingly thin. They put each other into their stories under their real names and their pseudonyms (Romantics often have several pseudonyms). They become each other. They tell extraordinary tall stories about themselves and their friends and sometimes the tallest turn out to be true. People often think tales of Romantics wearing crinoline day-dresses in the streets or having unpaid bonded servants are tall tales, for example, but both are true and, indeed, quite common.

Despite this cavalier attitude toward factual truth, Romantics regard themselves as both honest and honourable (the latter word is perhaps a Romantic monopoly these days). They despise lying for mean personal advantage and regard their word as sacred. A Romantic will not give a promise lightly, and when given it will be kept under any circumstances. Romantics will transact serious business among themselves on an oral agreement. When Miss Hester St John heard, some months after the event, of the end of the real Stock Exchange (an event which is regarded by Romantics as a milestone in the Decline of the West and which was the last nail in the coffin of any sneaking affection which their anti-socialist instincts might have given them toward neo-capitalism) she proposed at a dinner that the motto *Dictum meum pactum* should pass to the Romantics.

The sacredness of one's word is one important reason for the Romantic dislike of divorce. If one cannot keep a promise solemnly pledged before God and the congregation, then what kind of a person is one? There is a certain leniency toward things that have taken place before one became a Romantic because everyone knows that the modern world is a jungle, but marriages contracted within Society (i.e. Romantic society) are for life.

As a Romantic man recently remarked: 'Ultimately, one's word is the only thing one really has.'

Romantics tend to be apolitical as far as practical modern politics go because, as Sparrowhawk put it: 'The entire spectrum of modern politics is so far removed from anything one believes in that one cannot take sides in its battles without compromising one own point of view.' Some Romantics, of course, are just apolitical. None would be likely to vote in an election.

Some Romantics feel that in living the

life they do they are preparing the way for a gentle transition to a civilised future. They believe that the time has not come for any sort of action even if they were inclined to take it, but that the real changes in the world's history begin in the hearts and minds of men (and girls). By saying the things that no one else is saying, and practising those things in their lives, they are the first breeze of a necessary and

inevitable change which will come upon the cultural climate of the world.

Many Romantics, of course, do not think anything so grandiose. They just enjoy having a jolly time and staying, as far as possible, out of the rain of modern vulgarity; but most Romantics believe, in their heart of hearts, that they are fundamentally right and that history, in the end, must be on their side.

## UNHOLY CITY: NEW JERUSALEM

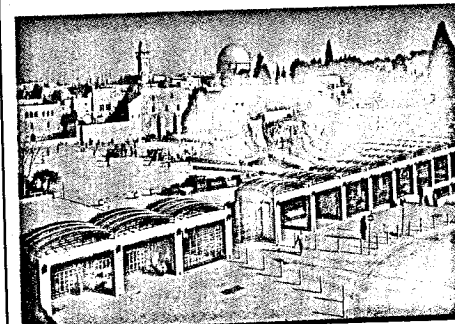
Gavin Stamp surveys  
the sad state of the  
most sacred city

THE DEVIL may not always have the best tunes but in Jerusalem the Muslims certainly have the best architecture. The famous view of the ancient walled city from the east, from the top of the Mount of Olives, is dominated by the Dome of the Rock, the third most holy site for Islam, built by the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik at the end of the seventh century. Its pure octagonal form is clothed in gorgeous faience tiling while the present dome of gilded aluminium — a rather vulgar product of King Hussein's restoration of the 1950s — glows in the sun. The Dome stands proudly and in isolation on the Haram al-Sharif, the 'Noble Sanctuary', a raised plateau where once stood the Temple of Solomon and it is, along with the nearby al-Aqsa Mosque, a supreme expression of the clear, precise, rigid nature of Islam.

For C. R. Ashbee, the Arts & Crafts architect who was civic adviser to the British military and civilian administration in Jerusalem from 1918 to 1922, the Dome 'represents and draws into its heart the three religious traditions, Moslem, Christian, Jew. Yet in a way it transmutes and transcends them all. Perhaps that was overdoing it, but it is still true that the Dome is the great symbol of Jerusalem, as is shown by the covers of guides and picture books, whether Israeli or Gentile. And compared with the spacious order of the present state of the Temple Mount, the places of worship of the two other great historical religions are not immediately impressive.

Below the Haram and contained by the city walls — Roman, Mameluke, Turkish — Jerusalem is a dense, tight network of narrow streets based on a Roman plan. The architecture is introverted, tucked

away. It had to be: the domestic tradition here was an intelligent response to communal conflict: Jew, Christian and Mohammedan could withdraw into their own distinct quarters. By day, the main streets leading from the Damascus Gate are almost impassable, thronged with the crowds, bustle and noise of the Orient. But today, because of the *intifada*, the shutters go up after noon and at night the Old City is like a ghost town or an Expressionist film set: dimly lit soukhs echo with the sound of



The new colonnade before the Western Wall

one's footsteps but all that move in the shadows are some of Jerusalem's many cats. Yet, behind closed doors, thousands of Palestinians live, and wait . . .

Towers and campaniles on the skyline mark the presence of Christian churches, yet they are hard to find. The Holy Sepulchre itself is almost hidden until you emerge into a small square with the Gothic arcade of the Crusaders on one side. This place should be the holiest spot in Christendom yet many visitors are disappointed, perhaps because Christianity here is so dark, grimy and Oriental, with every space festooned with hanging lamps outdoing any Turkish mosque; perhaps because of

the touting guides. 'I've never felt so pagan and repelled in my life,' wrote Ashbee. 'To come back to this mediaevalism after the quiet reverence and sanity of Islam . . . is something like a shock.'

My own disappointment was that the church was full of scaffolding and the tiny Holy Sepulchre itself — that is, the Greek reconstruction of 1810 after a fire — is strapped together with girders. The restorers and the archaeologists have been at work, picking things clean and somehow sanitising what must have been wonderfully chaotic and neglected. Yet the old spirit survives. Fifteen lamps burn at the Holy Sepulchre — with dozens and dozens more hanging outside — five for the Orthodox, five for the Latins, four for the Armenians and one for the Copts. These precise numbers are important, and two other communities have rights in different parts of the church under the status quo established by the Turks: the Syrians and the Ethiopians.

Jerusalem is not a good advertisement for ecumenism. The city rather exemplifies the oldest of Christian traditions: sectarianism. A poignant illustration of this is the elevated position of the Ethiopians who, because at one stage they could not pay up, were exiled to the roof. Little houses sit up there with the dome of St Helena's Chapel rising through the courtyard. But there have been some changes. My Murray of 1903 notes how on entering the church 'the first object that strikes our eye is a Turkish divan to the left on which recline Moslem officers and soldiers, sipping coffee and smoking narghiles. They are stationed here to prevent the priests and votaries of the different Christian sects from open strife and bloodshed — a precaution which experience has proved to be only too necessary.'

At least those soldiers have gone — but there is still a strong military presence in Jerusalem today: teenage soldiers, boys and girls, all armed, lounging about outside the City gates, or sitting high on the walls, guns at the ready. But they are there not to stop Christians fighting each other but to keep the Arabs from the Jews. For Jerusalem is a divided city and, for most of its inhabitants, the old city is a city under military occupation.

In 1948 the cease-fire line cut Jerusalem in half. To the west, in Israeli territory were the suburbs which had sprung beyond the city walls after the beginning of large-scale Jewish immigration in the late 19th century. Here are the shops along Jaffa Road, the garden suburbs planned in the 1920s by German architects, the museums and institutional buildings and most of the luxury hotels. But the old city and the area immediately to the north remained in Jordanian hands. Following the war of 1967, Jerusalem was, in theory unified but the division remains. The chanting of three shabby Armenians celebrating mass on their little patch in the north