

# ORTHODOX ENGLAND

*In this issue:*

*St Swithin of Winchester  
the Wonder Worker*

*The Celts and Rome:  
A Millennium of Orthodoxy*

*The Tragic Ideology of Cristobal Colon  
I Hold the Universe. I Count the Stars*

*and much more . . .*

**Vol 14, Number 2**  
**December 2010**



ORTHODOX ENGLAND VOL. 14 NO. 2

[www.orthodoxengland.org.uk](http://www.orthodoxengland.org.uk)

A Quarterly Journal of English Orthodox Reading

December 2010

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Published with the blessing of the Very Reverend Mark, Archbishop of the Diocese of Great Britain and Ireland of the Church Outside Russia.

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Publication dates: 1 September, 1 December, 1 March, 1 June.

## Editorial: MODERN PELAGIANISM AND MODERN MANICHÆISM

### Pelagianism

**L**ITTLE is known about the life of Pelagius (c.354 – c.430). Although he is frequently referred to as 'British' (presumably Romano-Briton, since his Latin was so good), it is not certain what his origins were. We do know that he lived in Rome 'for a very long time', but he was also well known in the Roman province of Britain.

Pelagianism, the theory named after him, says that ancestral sin did not taint human nature and that human will is still capable of choosing between good and evil without Divine aid. Pelagianism viewed the role of Christ as 'setting a good example' for the rest of humanity (thus counteracting Adam's 'bad example') and providing redemption for our sins. In short, humanity has full control. Pelagius taught that the human will, tempered by good deeds and rigorous asceticism, was sufficient to live a sinless life. He told his followers that right action on the part of human beings was necessary for salvation, as a condition for God's gracious forgiveness. To him, the grace of God did not make man free, since creation did that, but the grace of God was an influence on human will to help him to obey.

Pelagius was opposed by Blessed Augustine. While Pelagius taught that moral perfection was attainable in this life because of free will, Blessed Augustine contradicted this by saying that we are born sinners with a sinful heart and will. The Pelagians accused Blessed Augustine of Manichæism. This philosophy taught that the body was in itself sinful and denied that Christ had come in the body. This charge carried weight, since Blessed Augustine had been a Manichee before his conversion. In fact, somewhat over-reacting to Pelagius' error, Blessed Augustine said that salvation came solely through an irresistible free gift, the grace of God, and no free choice was involved in salvation. The debate between Pelagius and Blessed Augustine was essentially between free will and what Blessed Augustine called 'original sin'.

On account of his over-reactions and Manichæan influences, Blessed Augustine was not successful in seeing Pelagius condemned by the Church according to his definitions. However, Pelagianism was condemned by Church Fathers

who followed an Orthodox position, not tainted by Manichæism. This was in 418 at the Council of Carthage. These balanced condemnations, represented by such as Blessed Jerome of Stridon, were later confirmed by the Third Universal Council in Ephesus in 431.

### Manichæism

Mani lived in approximately AD 216–276 in Babylon. He had allegedly received a revelation as a youth from a spirit, whom he later called his Double, Protective Angel or 'Divine Self'. This spirit, a demon, taught him truths which he developed into a religion. Thus he became a 'gnosticus', someone who claimed exclusive knowledge. He claimed to be the 'Paraclete of the Truth', (the Spirit of Truth, that is the Holy Spirit) and the Last Prophet (as Mohammed also later claimed), finalizing a succession of earlier figures, which for him included Zoroaster, Buddha and Jesus Christ.

Manichæan theology was dualistic with regard to good and evil. The key belief of Manichæism is that there is no omnipotent good power. This addresses part of the problem of evil by denying the infinite perfection of God and postulating two opposite powers. The human person is seen as a battleground for these powers: the good part is the soul, which is composed of light, and the bad part is the body, composed of 'dark earth'. The soul defines the person and is incorruptible, but is under the domination of an alien power.

Manichæism spread with extraordinary speed through both east and west. It reached Rome by AD 280 and Manichæan monasteries existed there in 312. By 354 St Hilary of Poitiers wrote that the Manichæan faith was a significant force in southern France. When Christians encountered Manichæism, they at once deemed it a heresy, since it had come from a heavily Gnostic area of Persia.

Blessed Augustine (AD 354–430) converted to Christianity from Manichæism in the year 387. According to him, after nine or ten years of adhering to the Manichæan faith as a member of the group of 'hearers', he became a Christian and a strong adversary of Manichæism, seeing their intellectualist and elitist beliefs that knowledge was

the key to salvation as too passive and unable to effect any change in our life. Nevertheless, as we have seen above, many believe that Manichæism did to some limited extent influence the development of Blessed Augustine's ideas. These include the nature of good and evil, the idea of hell, the separation of groups into elect, hearers and sinners and an apparent hostility to the body.

### Modern Pelagianism

It is interesting to see how a crude form of Pelagianism has not died out in contemporary society. Indeed, it has been much revived by liberal Protestantism, perhaps especially by secular forms of Anglicanism. Crudely, it could even be said that modern society is dominated by mass Pelagianism, for whom only the life of the body counts. This can be seen not only in sexual promiscuity, the taking of 'feel-good' drugs including alcohol, but also in man-centred, humanistic, attitudes to healthcare, health and safety, sport, 'fitness centres', cosmetic surgery, food and cooking, sunbathing, holidays and general hedonism. Thus crude modern Pelagianism says that the spiritual does not and cannot exist because we have no souls. This is, literally, a heartless society.

Thus, one of two things that clearly separates Orthodoxy from such secularism is the latter's Pelagianist lack of understanding of the Fall and sin. Words like 'sin' and 'repentance' have become politically incorrect – indeed, incomprehensible to many contemporary people. 'Let it all hang out', they say. 'Genes' can be blamed for all shortcomings and genetic manipulation holds solutions to all our problems. So everything is justified. It is not our fault, therefore: there is no need for repentance, for ascetic effort to improve ourselves. Thus the new idolatry is the worship of fallen human nature, which ultimately is the worship of sin.

It is this idolatry of sin that has displaced Faith in modern times. Modernity worships the fallen creation, not the Creator. It feeds idolatry for things and people. In ancient times this had meant the idolatry of the sun, moon, stars, ocean, sea, rivers, mountains, minerals, stones, emperors, kings, generals, lions, tigers, cats. Some of this still exists: sunbathing is sun worship, astrology is the worship of the sun, moon and stars (see the troparion of the Nativity of Christ), the worship of gold (Capitalism), the worship of crystals ('New Age') is the old pagan worship of stones.

The worship of personalities is also very much alive in 'personality cults', celebrity worship and the worship of ideas in the invention of '-isms': from Pelagianism and Manichæism we have gone to Lutheranism, Calvinism, Darwinism, Marxism etc. In modern times we also see the idolatry of countries in nationalism, World Wars and tribal idolatry in football and other sports. All these forms of idolatry promise a better 'feel-good' future, even heaven on earth. In reality, idolatry always leads to profound disillusion, ultimately suicide.

Finally, today we see the narcissistic worship of self in 'me time', the bubbles of Western egoism. 'Spoil yourself', they say and, 'because you're worth it'. This is part of the 'take it for granted' mentality, fostered by consumer Capitalism. Now the State will do everything for you, since you have abdicated responsibility for yourself. You can dress badly and do not need to take personal responsibility. There are only rights in the cult of 'human rightism'. Sin (not politically correct) is justified and there can therefore be no repentance (among some even confession is now called by the politically correct term of 'reconciliation'). From here also comes the 'I'll sue you' mentality. The source of all this is in former Protestant mind-structures, now deprived of any Faith and become atheist Pelagianism.

### Modern Manichæism

Manichæism has not died out either. Crudely, it could even be said that modern society has an elite of Manichees, for whom only intellectualism counts, though in reality, they are pseudo-intellectuals because they deny the All-Powerful Creator and worship only their own created intellects. They oppose the Incarnation and therefore deny that the material can be sanctified. This is modern Manichæism and it means that the material world can be exploited.

It is this that lies behind the current ecological crisis and future shortages of raw materials. Instead of respect for the material world as part of God's creation there is contempt for it and so its rape through exploitation. This can be seen in the widespread practice of incineration of the bodies of the unborn (abortion) and the departed, known as cremation. This is the same paganism as can be seen in cremations and those of the ancient pagan world of primitive peoples.

Here is the second thing that clearly separates Orthodoxy from secularism. For Orthodoxy, since

Christ became Incarnate, since God became man, human nature, the human mind, soul, will and body, can be sanctified (as we see in the Transfiguration and the Resurrection of Christ). This is why the Church has the holy cross, relics, icons, holy water. The nature of this belief is eucharistic. If bread and wine can become the Body and Blood of Christ, then other materials can be transfigured too. And, as we know, the Eucharist is at the centre of the Church, for the Church is the Body of Christ and Her Head is Christ. Therefore, the material world is to be respected and the body is the Temple of God, as the Apostle says

The modern secular vision ultimately has its roots in Protestantism, which created the modern world. And Protestantism has its roots in Roman Catholicism, which had only a weak and under-developed understanding of the potential sanctification of the material world, as it did not fully receive the Incarnational decisions on icons of the Seventh Universal Council. We can see this in its attitude to icons – its imagery has only ever been decorative, not sacramental. And we can also see it in its attitude to the body. It may speak of the salvation of the soul, but not of the resurrection of the body. Today it even refuses to venerate relics, many of which have literally been thrown out of its churches since the 1960s. All this is because its theological and spiritual vision suffers from the *filioque* deformation.

### The Church's Understanding

The Church condemns both the false materialism of Pelagianism and the false spiritualism of Manichæism. The Church says that the spiritual can be in harmony with the material, because the material can be spiritual, because God became man, as was proclaimed by all Seven Universal Councils, especially by the Fourth Council of Chalcedon.

The danger for Orthodox, especially in Western countries, is that in losing the Tradition, which alone balances extremes, they lose Holy Orthodoxy. God forbid, but whole communities could fall into the Pelagian tendency. This would be seen in shortened services, the refusal to fast and in general a complete lack of ascetic discipline. All this is would be the result of imitating Protestantism and modern, Protestantised Roman Catholicism, for example in giving communion to all.

If a parish priest suffered from such Pelagian delusions, then the whole parish could follow him. Equally, whole monastic sketes could fall into the Manichæan tendency. This could be seen in spiritualism, Gnosticism, intellectualism, in, for instance, the refusal to hold services or else, at the opposite extreme, in fanatical zeal.

May God keep us in the Tradition of Holy Church, avoiding all extremes.

*Fr Andrew*

## From The Righteous ABBOT ÆLFRIC OF EYNHAM

2 July: St Swithin of Winchester, The Wonderworker

**I**N the days of the noble King Edgar<sup>1</sup>, when by the grace of God the Christian Faith was prospering in the English nation, God, by many miracles, revealed St Swithin<sup>2</sup>, showing him to be illustrious. His deeds were not known until God revealed them, neither have we found any books describing how the bishop lived in this world before he went to Christ. Such was the carelessness of those who knew him on earth that they did not write down his works and conversation for future generations who did not know his power. Nevertheless, God brought his life to light through clear miracles and wondrous signs.

This Swithin was Bishop of Winchester, that is, Bishop over Hampshire, a blessed servant of God (there were eight bishops between him and St Ethelwold<sup>3</sup>). Now as we have already said, nothing of his life is known to us, except that he was buried in his see to the west of the church. Afterwards he was covered up until his miracles revealed his blessedness with God.

Three years before the Saint was brought into the church out of the stone coffin that now stands in the new building, the venerable Swithin appeared in his vestments in a vision to a certain devout blacksmith, saying: 'Do you know a priest called Eadsige, whom Bishop Ethelwold drove out of the old monastery with the other priests for misconduct?'<sup>4</sup>. The blacksmith answered the venerable Swithin: 'I knew him a long time ago,



master, but he left and I'm not sure where he lives now'. The holy man spoke to the old blacksmith again: 'In fact he now lives in Winchelcombe. I beg you in the name of Christ to tell him my errand at once. Bishop Swithin orders him to go to Bishop Ethelwold and tell him that he must open my grave himself and take my bones inside the church. It has been vouchsafed to him that I should be made known to men in his time'.

The smith said: 'O master, Eadsige won't believe my words'. The bishop replied: 'Let him go to my grave and pull a ring out of my coffin. If the ring gives way at the first tug then he'll know that I really have sent you to him. If the ring won't come out at his unaided tug, then he shouldn't believe anything you say. Afterwards tell him too that he must make amends for his deeds and conduct according to his Lord's will and hasten single-mindedly to eternal life. Tell everyone that as soon as they open my grave, they'll find such a valuable treasure that their precious gold will be worthless in comparison'.



King Eadgar, offering the charter for the New Minster at Winchester to Christ



An icon of St Swithin from the retroquire at Winchester Cathedral, by the hand of Sergei Fyodoroff

St Swithin vanished from the smith's sight. The smith did not dare tell anyone about the vision, not wishing to be looked on as an untruthful messenger. So the holy man spoke to him again and then a third time, severely reprimanding him because he would not obey his orders. However, at last the smith went to Swithin's burial-place. Though frightened, he took hold of a ring in the coffin lid, crying out to God and saying: 'O Lord God, Maker of all creatures, grant that I, a sinful man, may pull this ring out of the lid, if he who spoke to me in a dream three times lies inside'.

At this, to his great surprise, he pulled the iron ring out of the stone as easily as if it had been in sand. Then he put it back in the same hole and pressed it down with his foot, so that again it was stuck so hard that no-one could pull it out. The awe-stricken smith left and met a servant of Eadsige in the market-place. He told him exactly what Swithin had asked him to do and pleaded with him to tell Eadsige. The servant said that he would tell his master, but he dared not say

anything until he was sure that it would be wrong to hide the saint's request from his master any longer.

So he told Eadsige what Swithin had asked him. At the time Eadsige used to avoid Bishop Ethelwold and all the monks in the minster, because the Bishop had ejected him. He refused to obey the saint's command, even though St Ethelwold was related to him by blood. However, within two years he went to that same monastery to become a monk there through the grace of God and stayed there until he departed this life. Blessed is Almighty God Who humbles the proud, exalts the humble to high estate, corrects the sinful and always preserves the good who hope in Him, for He is the Saviour.

Another time there was a certain poor man who had a terrible humpback and he was contorted with pain as a result of the large hump. A dream clearly revealed to him that he would regain his health at Swithin's grave and recover from his crippled state. He got up in the morning, greatly rejoicing, and crept to Winchester on his two crutches. He sought out the saint just as he had been told, praying for his health on bended knee. At this he was healed by the holy bishop so that afterwards you could not even see where the hump that had oppressed him up till then had been. At the time the monks did not know about the great saint and they supposed that some other saint had healed the man. However, the man said that Swithin had healed him, since he himself clearly knew about the matter.

A certain man suffered from a very serious illness so that he could only open his eyes with difficulty and could hardly utter a word, but lay tormented like that, despairing of his life. All his friends wanted to carry him to St Judoc<sup>4</sup> in the new minster so that he could restore his health. However, someone told them that it would be better for them to take the sick man to the old minster to Swithin's grave. This they did. That night they kept vigil at the grave with him, praying to Almighty God to restore the sick man to health through Saint Swithin.

The infirm man also kept vigil until dawn and then he fell asleep. It seemed to them all that the venerable grave was rocking. It seemed to the sick man as if some one were dragging one of his shoes off his foot, when suddenly he woke up. He had been healed by St Swithin. Although they looked for the shoe very carefully, no-one was ever able to find it. So they returned home with the man who

had been healed. Before St Swithin was exhumed, eight sick men were healed miraculously at the holy grave by the power of God.

After these signs King Edgar wanted the holy man's body to be exhumed and told the venerable Bishop Ethelwold to translate his relics in great solemnity. Bishop Ethelwold solemnly took up the saint's relics with abbots and monks, singing hymns, into St Peter's church. There he remains in honour and works miracles.

Four sick men were healed there by the holy man within three days and within five months there were few days when at least three sick people were not healed, sometimes five or six, seven or eight, ten or twelve, sixteen or eighteen. In the space of ten days two hundred men were healed and so many within twelve months that no-one could count them. The burial-ground lay filled with crippled folk so that people could hardly get inside the minster. They were all healed so miraculously within a few days that you could not even find five unsound men in the great crowd.

In those days there lived on the Isle of Wight three women, two of whom had been blind for nine years and the third had never seen the sun's light. With some difficulty they obtained a guide, a dumb boy. They went to the saint, spent a night in vigil there and were healed – the three blind women and the dumb guide. The boy told the sacristan that he had never been able to speak before and asked for the monks to sing the service of thanksgiving.

About the same time a certain bondswoman was caught and was sentenced to be flogged for some minor fault. She lay in custody waiting to be severely flogged in the morning. The whole night she kept awake and weeping cried out to St Swithin to help her a poor wretch and deliver her from the cruel stripes through God. Just as they began sing matins at dawn, the fetters suddenly fell from round her feet. She ran to the church to the blessed saint with her hands bound, as the saint had willed. Her master came after her, loosed her hands and freed her at once out of honour for Saint Swithin.

A certain noble had long been lying paralysed and bedridden for many years. He said that he wanted to go to Winchester even if in a horse-litter and pray for healing. While he was saying this to his servants and friends, he was healed. Nevertheless, he made his way to the holy saint on foot,



foremost in the company during the whole journey and ardently thanked the saint for his recovery.

Twenty-five men, afflicted in different ways, went to the saint, pleading for their health. Some were blind, some were halt, some deaf and some dumb. They all were healed in one day through the saint's intercession and went back home.

In England there was a certain noble who had many possessions, who suddenly went blind. He travelled to Rome, desiring to pray for healing from the holy Apostles. He lived in Rome for four full years, but was not healed. Then he heard of St Swithin and what miracles the saint had worked since the noble had been in Rome. He made great haste to return to his own country, went to the holy man and was healed. He went home with perfect eyesight.

Another man was also blind for seven full years. He had a guide who took him everywhere. One day he went out, as he often did. The guide got angry, left the blind man and ran away. The blind man did not know how he could get home, but cried to God from his inmost heart, saying with anguish: 'O Thou, mighty Lord of men and angels, look on my misery. I cannot see and my wicked guide has abandoned me. Have pity on me, Lord, through the great Swithin and give me sight through the saint's virtues'. Again he cried out the same thing, saying to the saint 'O thou gentle bishop, who many miracles often come from through the living God, I beg thee, master, to intercede for me with the mighty Saviour. I believe that He will certainly grant thee thy petition'. At this he was healed and recovered his sight. He who a little while before had been led by another, went home alone, rejoicing and without a guide. His family thanked God greatly for this.

The venerable and blessed bishop Ethelwold, who in those days was Bishop of Winchester, ordered all the monks in the monastery to go in procession to church. They were to praise the virtues of the saint in hymns and so magnify God for the great saint, whenever any sick person was healed. At once they did so. They sang the service of thanksgiving until they all started to hate getting up so often, sometimes three or four times a night, to sing it. They wanted to sleep. Finally, they all stopped singing because the bishop was busy with the king and thought they were continually singing the service of thanksgiving.

Behold then, St Swithin himself came in a vision, wondrously adorned, to a certain good

man, and said: 'Now go to the Old Minster and tell the monks that God much dislikes their murmuring and sloth, for they see God's miracles among them every day and yet they will not praise Christ in hymns, just as the bishop ordered them'. Say that if they will not sing the hymn, the miracles will stop at once, but if sing the thanksgiving service for each miracle, whenever the sick are healed, then so many miracles will be worked among them that no-one will be able to remember having seen such miracles anywhere. The man woke up from his pleasant sleep and greatly lamented that he could not see or any longer enjoy the bright light which he had seen around Swithin. Nevertheless, he got up, immediately went to Bishop Ethelwold and told him all this. At this Ethelwold immediately sent for the monks of the King's court and ordered them to sing the service of thanksgiving, just as he had appointed. He who neglected it would receive a strict penance of fasting for seven days continuously. Since then the monks have always observed this custom, as we ourselves have very often seen and many a time sung the hymns with them.

A certain man had had his eyes put out and his ears cut off. The blood ran into his head so that he could not hear. For seven months he was blind and deaf until he went in faith to St Swithin, seeking out his bones. He prayed to the saint to hear his petition and at least grant him his hearing back, because he did not believe that he would ever again see. Then a miracle of God was worked on the man through Swithin's intercession. He saw clearly with perfect eyes and he was also granted to hear well, he who formerly had neither eyes nor hearing. Nevertheless, let it be known that that we must not pray to God's Saints as to God Himself, because He alone is God and above all things. However, we should indeed ask the saints to intercede for us with the God Who rules over all and Who is their Lord, that He may help us.

Once some men were keeping vigil by a corpse, as is customary<sup>5</sup>. There was a foolish man, making unseemly jokes, who said to the men in jest that he was Swithin. 'You can know that I really am Swithin who works miracles. I want you to bring your tapers to me, bow down in front of me and I will grant you what you want'. He blasphemed for a long time with foolish words until he fell silenced, as if he were lifeless. They took him home to bed straightway. He lay like that a long time, despairing of his life. At last his family carried the man to Saint Swithin. He confessed his foolish



words that he had presumptuously spoken and begged his forgiveness. At this he was healed so that he went home with his family, his health restored.

We should also know that men are unwise when they foolishly jest at corpses and jest in licentiousness. In fact they should grieve for the dead, dread the coming of death for themselves and earnestly pray for the departed soul without any foolishness. Some men also most unrighteously drink the whole night at wakes, blaspheming God with wanton speech. In fact no beer-drinking is seemly at a wake, but rather holy prayers are fitting.

Once there came to the saint a hundred and twenty men, variously afflicted with many diseases and they were all miraculously healed within three weeks. They went back home, thanking Almighty God and the venerable Swithin.

A certain noble's servant suddenly fell off his horse so that his arm and left leg were broken. He was so crushed that they straightway thought that he who had previously been very dear to his lord would soon die right in front of them. The lord greatly lamented his servant and implored the Almighty from his inmost heart to help the man through the great Swithin. He also cried out to Swithin, saying and lamenting: 'O thou holy Swithin, pray to the Saviour to grant life to this sick servant. If He does this through thee, I will be the more faithful to the living God the rest of my life'. The servant got up, healed by St Swithin. The lord rejoiced at this and praised God with faith.

A certain old noble on the Isle of Wight was also afflicted and had been bedridden for some nine years. He could not leave his bed unless he was carried. In a dream he saw two shining saints who ordered him to run quickly with them. The sick man said: 'How can I run with you when I have not got up from this bed without help for nine years now?' The saint said: 'If you come with us now, you will go to a place where you will recover your health'. The man was very glad and wanted to go with them, but he could not go with them.

So they flew through the air, carrying the sick man until they came to a lonely field, flowering brightly. In the field there stood a church of shining gold and precious stones. St Swithin stood before the altar in shining liturgical vestments, as if he were about to do the liturgy. Swithin straightaway said to the sick man: 'I tell you, brother, that from now on you mustn't do evil to anyone, nor curse

anyone, nor speak evil of anyone, nor be malicious, nor consent to murder, nor plot with wicked robbers and thieves, nor join in evil deeds, but rather help the needy with your own goods as best you can and then you will be healed by the power of God'.

The sick man reflected that he did not wish to do evil, except to those who before had done him evil, and that he wished to do good to those who before had done him good. But St Swithin knew how his heart reasoned and gladly said to him: 'Brother, I tell you, do not, as you think, harm anyone, even if he harms you. Imitate your Lord, Who would not curse those who put Him to death and ordered His disciples to pray for their enemies. In the same way the Apostle Paul says to all Christians: 'If your enemy hungers, feed him, or if he thirsts, give him to drink'.

The bedridden man spoke to the bishop again: 'O master, tell me what manner of man are you since you can so discern men's hearts?' St Swithin answered: 'I am he who is now newly come', as if to say, 'I have just recently been revealed'. The bedridden man spoke to the bishop again: 'What is your name?' The saint answered him: 'If you go to Winchester, you will find out my name'. Immediately the man was taken back to his bed, woke up and told his wife all about the vision that he had had.

His wife told him that it was Swithin who had instructed him in holy teaching and whom he had seen so glorious in the church. She said to her husband: 'Now it would be very good if could be carried to the church and you prayed to the saint to heal you through his holy virtues'. Straightaway they carried him from his bed to a church on the Isle of Wight. At once he was healed by Almighty God because of Swithin's virtues.

He who before was borne on a bier to church walked home healed. Soon after he went to Winchester and told the venerable Bishop Ethelwold how he had been healed through St Swithin. A foreign monk called Landferth wrote down the story in Latin. Now we should know that we should not at all trust too much in dreams, because they are not all from God. True, some dreams are from God, just as we read in books, but some are from the devil for deceit. They try to pervert the soul, but his fantasies cannot harm good people, if they cross themselves and commend themselves to God<sup>6</sup>. The dreams that come from God are pleasant and those which are frightening come from the devil. God Himself

forbade us to obey dreams in case the devil should have power to bewitch us.

A certain man in Winchester was angry with his servant for some carelessness and put him in fetters. He sat there for a long time in his hated bonds until he stole out, hopping with the help of his staff, and sought Saint Swithun with lamentation. The bolt at once shot out of the fetter and the servant got up, freed by the saint.

We cannot write, nor tell of all the miracles that the holy man Swithun worked by the power of God in the sight of the people. These were both among prisoners and among the sick, to show people that they themselves may earn the kingdom of heaven through good works, just like Swithun who now shines through his miracles<sup>7</sup>. Both walls of the old church were all hung round from one end to the other with crutches and the stools of cripples who had been healed there. Even so could they not put up half of them.

Such signs proclaim that Christ is Almighty God, Who revealed His Saint by such good deeds, although the Jews who were deceived by the devil will not believe in the living Christ until Antichrist is destroyed by God. Then the wretched and all who remain at the end of this world will submit with faith to Christ and those of old who before refused to believe will perish.

So now we have spoken briefly of Swithun. We say that that time was truly blessed and pleasant in England. King Edgar encouraged the Christian Faith and built many monasteries. His kingdom went on in peace and no fleet was heard of, except that of the people who ruled the land. One day all the kings of the Cymry<sup>8</sup> and the Scots in this island, eight kings in all, came to Edgar and accepted his rule. Moreover, such miracles were worked

through Saint Swithun, as we have said before, and all our lives miracles often happened there.

At that time there were also worthy bishops, Archbishop Dunstan the resolute, Ethelwold the venerable and others like them, but Dunstan and Ethelwold were chosen by God. They, most all, urged people to do God's will and encouraged everything good to please God, as the miracles which God works through them testify.

1. King Edgar (in Old English Eadgar) 'the Peaceful' (943-975) was a great-grandson of King Alfred the Great. He was considered to be a good King and his rule a time of peace, security and prosperity. He repented for sexual incontinence in his youth and after his repose came to be venerated locally as a saint. During his reign thirty monasteries were established, particularly by St Dunstan (909-988) and St Ethelwold.
2. The original Old English form is 'Swithun', but here we use the more familiar form 'Swithun'.
3. St Ethelwold (in Old English Æthelwold), 'Father of Monks' (c.910-984), was Bishop of Winchester. This was then the de facto Capital of England, since it was the main city of the House of Wessex, whose kings had reconquered and reunited England. St Ethelwold was notable for driving out married priests who were occupying monasteries. They used monastic moneys and lands to keep their families, to the scandal of the Church.
4. St Judoc (✙ c.688) was a Breton saint. Relics of this noble hermit were brought to Winchester in c.902 by Breton refugees fleeing from the Vikings. Bretons were always welcomed in England and the relics were famed for miracles.
5. As is still the practice today.
6. Here we see the traditional Orthodox attitude to dreams and the use of the sign of the cross.
7. Obviously from the context we understand that good works alone do not bring salvation. Good works are the result of Faith, which is in its turn the result of the mercy of God, which alone brings salvation.
8. The Welsh. This event occurred in 973 on the River Dee at Chester. In an act of homage eight kings (some say only six) rowed King Edgar from his palace to St John's Church in Chester, while King Edgar, symbolically, steered.

## A PILGRIMAGE TO THE SAINTS OF CANTERBURY

Arranged by Eadmund for the Russian Orthodox Parish of the holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke, worshipping at St Luke's Church, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9JH

THE weather was bright and sunny when the little group of pilgrims met Fr David at midday, the sixth hour, on Saturday 3rd July (20 June according to the Englisic Calendar) in the Westgate Gardens at Canterbury for a picnic lunch. Hunger and thirst having been assuaged, they listened while Eadmund read some biographical notes to them about Sts Dunstan and Alphege

(Ælfheah), as there would not be an opportunity while they were going round the Cathedral.

The pilgrims had to wait for a while anyway, as the ordination service that was in progress in the Cathedral would not be finished until about half-past one. As they walked to the Cathedral they found a long queue, stretching right across the Buttermarket and halfway up Mercery Lane. Totally



Above: An early wall-painting in Canterbury Cathedral depicting the life of St Eustace

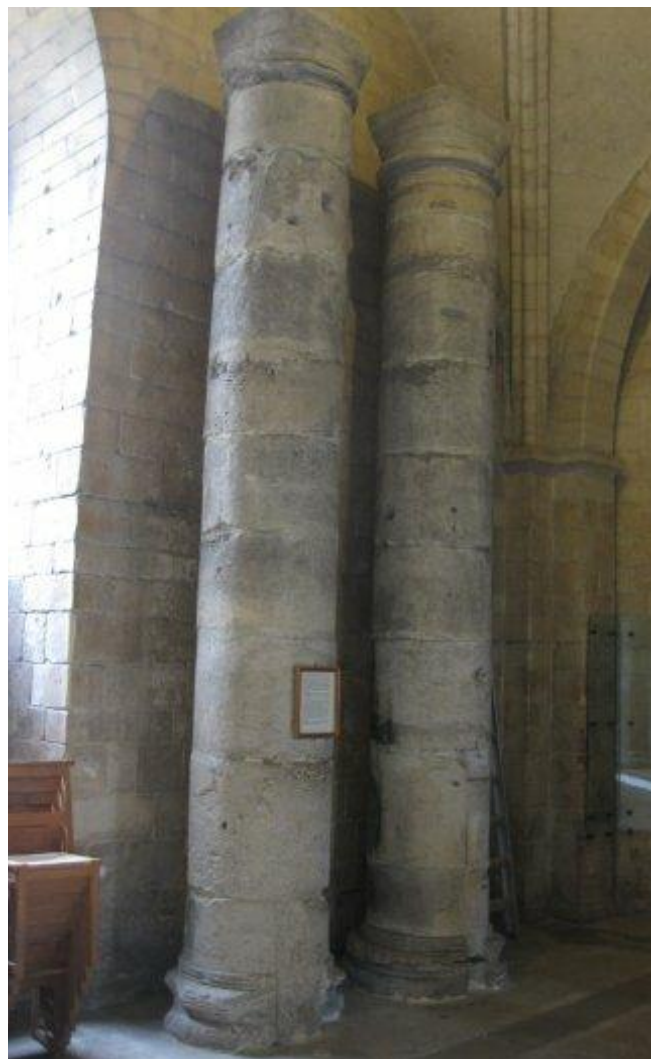
Below: A modern stone marking the position of the Tomb of St Dunstan



unabashed, Father David directed them onward, and they reached the gates to find that there was a separate entrance on the left for pilgrimages, which they were allowed to pass through, although they were not officially booked in. They called at the Welcome Centre to pay their dues.

Entrance to the Cathedral having been won, they proceeded along the north wall towards the high altar, stopping on the way to admire a C14th fresco of the life of St Eustace, which has been revealed among the dusty and pompous monuments cluttering the walls. The pilgrims had been told that the shrines of St Dunstan and St Alphege, demolished in the 'Reformation' (Deformation), had been on the south and north sides of the high altar respectively, and were still marked by carved stones in the floor. They were completely unable to find them, however, as there was a high, blanked out, chantry tomb blocking their view at that point. Also some of them thought that the High Altar might have been moved subsequent to the writing of the account about the stones.

Undaunted, they walked around the back of the altar and down the south side, to see if a better view could be had from there. Then John



The Roman columns in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral that once supported the chancel arch of the church of St Mary, Reculver





In the church of SS Peter & Paul, Eadmund reads the lives of the Saints of Canterbury ...

Harwood, peering over the top of a table-tomb, spotted a 'D' in the floor, and by dint of hoisting themselves up and also peering over the tomb the pilgrims were able to see the whole name – Dunstan. They were then able to see the position of Alphege's incised slab on the other side. The whole area was roped off, so there was no opportunity for any closer veneration, but John sang the troparion to St Dunstan quietly from that vantage point.

The pilgrims then went down into the crypt, and had a look round there, seeing the columns from Reculver church and finding some interesting items in the treasury. When they finally emerged from the crypt and left the Cathedral they walked through the precincts to leave by the Cweningate, following in St Bertha's (Beorhte's) footsteps. The Cathedral site used to be the palace of the High King St Ethelbert (Æthelberht) and St Bertha followed this exact route each day to the service at St Martin's church. However the pilgrims did not repeat last year's visit to St Martin's, but dodged the traffic (a dangerous undertaking, this) to walk up the centre of Lady Wootton's Green and admired the two statues of St Ethelbert and Queen Bertha, hurrying towards each other with the news of St Augustine's long awaited arrival.

The pilgrims then walked on past the once mighty gates of St Augustine's Abbey that still gaze across towards the Cathedral in mediæval splendour, to reach the new entrance to the Abbey complex on its south side, just round the corner in Longport. The Abbey seemed to offer peace and quiet after the throng of other visitors in the Cathedral. They told the lady at the desk that they were on pilgrimage, and she was pleased to allow them to pass through into the grounds without



... and then Father David and the pilgrims sing the molieben

charge. They walked straight to the church of St Peter and St Paul, whose foundations were revealed by archaeology in the early years of the twentieth century after the earlier demolition of the Norman Abbey (the 'Reformation' did accomplish some good after all). The expected peace did not immediately materialize, however, for as they passed by they heard some loud singing and talking coming over the wall from what is now the King's School annexe site.

Some of the original tombs of the saints have been uncovered, and positions of several of them are marked, although others are permanently hidden beneath the massive Norman sleeper wall. The harsh sound of the loudhailer from beyond the wall of King's School happily ceased as Eadmund stood by each tomb and read notes on the lives of the saints who had once been buried there, and then Fr David started a service of intercession (molieben) to ask for their prayers and those of all the other saints of Canterbury who had not been specifically mentioned. John again sung the troparion to St Dunstan at the appropriate places.

Many of the Saints of Canterbury were forgotten by the people when the Normans caused them to be wiped out of the calendars, both of the Cathedral and of what subsequently became St Augustine's Abbey. The loudhailer was heard again as they were packing up, so they were thankful for the blessed quiet while they were singing the service. The day, which had also blessed them with glorious sunshine and a light breeze, was turning to a golden evening, as the pilgrims now said farewell and departed their separate ways.



# THE CELTS AND ROME: A MILLENNIUM OF ORTHODOXY

## Introduction: Early Contacts

FROM very early times the Roman Popes had been regarded with respect as bishops of the only Apostolic See in the West and their advice had been sought and given. They held a primacy of honour and Western Churches could even submit disputed cases to Rome for jurisdiction. Yet though the Popes were recognised as successors of Peter, the commission to bind and to loose had been granted not only to Peter, but also to all the apostles.

The bishops as a body were successors of the Apostles, with responsibility for the Church, and each Local Church enjoyed a high degree of local autonomy. Only a Council of Bishops could overrule any individual bishop's decision. Thus St Cyprian stressed the unity of the Church, a unity which was founded on the Holy Spirit given on the day of Pentecost equally to all the apostles.

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It is against this Patristic background of Apostolic and Conciliar theology that we must see the attitudes of all Local Western Metropolitan Churches to the Roman Papacy in the first millennium. This includes the relations between the Celts and Rome, reviewed in this article, and those between the English and Rome, reviewed in the previous article. (We remind readers that the word 'papacy' itself is first recorded in 1047 – the word simply did not exist before).

## First Contacts

Although there were surely Christians in Roman Britain, that is among Romanised Celts, in the first century, we have no historical records of their visits, only firm Orthodox traditions. As regards Rome itself, the first contact between the Celts and the Papacy was the mission of St Palladius to Ireland in the fifth century. He was believed to have been the deacon of St Germanus of Auxerre, who had visited what is now England in the fifth

century in order to defeat Pelagianism. St Palladius, made bishop, was sent to Ireland in 431 by Pope (later St) Celestine I († 432). It is thought that he worked briefly in Wicklow on the southeast coast of Ireland, but without success. That was to come slightly later through the mission of the Romano-British St Patrick, trained in Gaul, whose base was in the north of Ireland, in Armagh. There is a tradition that St Palladius went from Ireland to what is now the Aberdeen area of Scotland.

Nevertheless, it is notable that Bishop Palladius was sent as first bishop to 'the Irish who believe in Christ'. This indicates that there were already Christians in Ireland, perhaps influenced by Christians from the heavily Romanised region of what is now south Wales, where there had been the two martyrs Sts Julius and Aaron. Or there may have been contacts with Gaul, perhaps through trade. It is said that Bishop Palladius brought with him relics of Sts Peter and Paul and Sts Stephen and Laurence. These were treasured in Armagh 200–300 years later.

Overall, however, it is clear that the conversion of Ireland was not due in any way to Rome directly. As a Roman Catholic writer put it

'In organisation and way of life the Irish monks closely resembled their Egyptian prototypes. They rivalled the monks of the desert in the rigour of their discipline and the asceticism of their life. Their monasteries were not great buildings like the later Benedictine abbeys, but consisted of groups of huts and small oratories, like the Egyptian *laura*, and were surrounded by a rath or earthwork. Moreover, they preserved the oriental idea of the eremitical life as the culmination and goal of the monastic state. In Ireland, however, this ideal assumed a peculiar form that is not found elsewhere. It was common for monks to devote themselves to a life of voluntary exile and pilgrimage. The case recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (s.a. 891) of the three monks "who stole away from Ireland in a boat without any oars because they would live in a state of pilgrimage for the love of God, they reeked not where," is typical of this development. It led to a movement of travel and exploration, which is reflected in a legendary form in the adventures of

St Brendan the Navigator. When the Vikings first discovered Iceland they found that the Irish "papas" had been there before them, and every island of the northern seas had its colony of ascetics. The informants of Dicuil, the Carolingian geographer, had even sailed beyond Iceland and reached the frozen Arctic seas ...

It is easy to understand what an influence this movement must have exercised on the peasants. It was essentially rural, avoiding the towns, and seeking the wildest regions of forest and mountain. Far more than the preaching of bishop and priest from the distant city, the presence of these colonies of black-robed ascetics must have impressed the peasant mind with the sense of a new power that was stronger than the nature spirits of the old peasant religion ...

It is true that the Celtic monastic ideal was that of the desert: they loved the forest or, better still, uninhabited and inaccessible islands, like Skellig Michael, one of the most impressive of monastic sites, just as the Eastern monks to-day still choose Mount Athos or the Meteora'.

*(From The Making of Europe by Christopher Dawson, pp. 199-201).*

This Egyptian link has only recently been emphasised by the 2006 discovery in a peat bog of an early Irish Gospel-book with an Egyptian binding.

This situation is exactly the opposite situation to England, which had depended on the Roman mission of St Augustine. Similarly the conversion of other Celtic peoples, in what is now Wales and in Roman Britain in general, including in south-west Scotland through St Ninian, was due to the spontaneous spread of the Faith among Romanised inhabitants, certainly from the early fourth century on. As for the conversion of Scotland, this was due almost uniquely to St Columba in his spiritual centre at Iona, which he founded only in about 563. And this mission, as we know, was responsible for the conversion of northern England from Lindisfarne, and also went even to parts of southern England.

### St Gildas

The second stage of what we know of attitudes of the Celtic Christian world to the central Church

authority in Western Europe comes in the mid-sixth century with St Gildas in Wales. This ascetic had a view of the Church as compromised by worldliness, rich, influential but secular. In it, the priesthood was bought by the wealthy from native princes and clergy lived a very secular life, on the earlier model of Gaul with its Gallo-Roman villas. St Gildas represented then the ascetic St Martin († 397), whose wild and hairy appearance had shocked the Roman gentlemen who had populated the ranks of the episcopate in Gaul at his time.

Of the roles of the successors of the Apostles, St Gildas had this to say:

'... When the Lord asked whom the disciples thought him to be, Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God". And the Lord for such a confession said: "Blessed art thou, Simon bar Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven". Thus Peter, taught by the Father, rightly confesses Christ; but you (i.e. the priests of Britain), instructed by your father the devil, iniquitously deny the Saviour by evil deeds. To the true priest it is said: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church". You, however, are likened "unto a foolish man who built his house upon sand" ... To Peter and his successors the Lord says: "And unto thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven"; but to you: "I know you not, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity ...". To every holy priest it is also promised: "And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven." But how do you loose anything so that it shall be loosed in heaven also, when because of crimes, you are severed from heaven and fettered by bands of monstrous sins ...'.

Thus, St Gildas was very much aware of the divine powers granted to all the true successors of the apostles, bishops and priests. The whole episcopal order exercises spiritual authority in the Church and inherits the power that Christ first granted to Peter. Gildas lays particular emphasis on the importance of a pure life in those who hold episcopal office and fiercely attacks the sin of simony. It is likely that anyone educated in the Gildasian tradition would set a very high value on purity of life, and that, in any dispute, he might be expected to appeal to the spiritual quality of the protagonists rather than to mere papal judgement.

### The Dating of Easter

The next contacts between the Papacy and the Celtic world came in the dating of Easter. Here the Irish used an older system of dating, which had been abandoned by the rest of the Church, East and West. Approximately one Easter in three among the Celts fell on a date different from that of the rest of the Church.

The problem in the British Isles was that the date of Easter became a sort of national flag. The English, who were national enemies, pagan invaders, of the Celts, had been converted directly from Rome and so kept the Roman (and universal) Easter. However, the Celts, originally through no fault of their own, kept an older and incorrect dating. They could not possibly give up this dating, as it had become a point of national honour and identity for them. The problem was compounded by the Roman attitude of St Augustine of Canterbury towards the Celts. This attitude was that of the cultivated Roman who felt that the Celts on the untamed fringes of Christendom should simply follow his superior and papal authority. The Celts, however, refused to submit.

At his famous meeting with learned Celts, Archbishop Augustine failed to rise to greet his opposite numbers. The Celts found this stern and proud. It is clear that for the Celts, a Council of seven bishops and learned men was superior in authority to a foreign bishop, even though he had papal authority. The Celts had an Orthodox reflex, but technically they were wrong, swayed by their hostility to him who had begun the conversion of their national enemy, the English – which conversion they had failed to do.

### St Columban

The next contact was between the Irish St Columban, who was working among the Franks from 591 on, and St Gregory the Great. In the first of three letters St Columban wrote to the Pope about the dating of Easter, he claimed that the Irish dating went back to Blessed Jerome of Stridon. He added that 'anyone impugning the authority of St Jerome will be a heretic or reprobate in the eyes of the Western Churches, whoever that man may be'. Here St Columban is asking the Pope for an opinion. Even the implied threat that the Irish will turn from him should he give a heretical opinion is 'in accordance with the accepted principle that a heretic cannot hold papal office'. The tone is quite independent.

In his third letter the Irish saint underlines more specifically his attitude to papal authority. He writes that the glory of Rome no longer rests on imperial might but on 'the precious relics' of Sts Peter and Paul. Papal honour is attached to the papal office, but passes away from an unworthy recipient. 'For power will be in your hands for as long as your principles remain sound; for he is the appointed key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven, who opens by true knowledge to the worthy and closes to the unworthy; otherwise, if he does the opposite, he shall be able neither to open or close'. There is here nothing contrary to Orthodox and Patristic principles.

Even the successor of St Peter, says St Columban, may not pervert the faith; if he does so, the whole Church must rise up to correct him:

'Therefore, these things (i.e. the need for sound doctrine in a Pope) are true and clearly accepted by all who think truly. Even though it is known to all and there is none ignorant of how Our Saviour bestowed the keys of the kingdom of Heaven on St Peter, and you perhaps on this account claim for yourself before all things some proud measure of greater authority and power in divine matters, you ought to know that your power will be the less in the Lord's eyes, if you even think this in your heart. This is because the unity of the faith has produced in the whole world a unity of power and privilege. In such a wise that by all men everywhere freedom should be given to the truth and the approach of error should be denied by all alike, since it was his right confession that privileged even the holy bearer of the keys, the common teacher of us all ...'.

Thus, in matters of doctrine, the Pope must be guided by the consensus of opinion within the Church. He is, as it were, the commander-in-chief, but he cannot change its law.

### The Patristic Consensus

Like St Gildas, St Columban reveals a Church in line with Patristic opinion. St Gildas stresses the divine authority of the whole episcopate, as Sts Cyprian and Augustine had done before him. St Columban recognises in doctrinal matters a power vested in the whole Church, which is superior to that of any individual Pope. Celtic churchmen of the sixth and early seventh century

recognised the Popes as leaders of their Church and successors of Peter, but they did not give up their powers of independent judgement. Therefore the Celtic clergy had refused to accept St Augustine of Canterbury, appointed by St Gregory the Great, and St Columban did not hesitate to argue with and rebuke the Popes.

Irish legislation in favour of Roman authority is however found in the seventh century in the so-called 'Armagh canon', which even claimed to go back to St Patrick's time! This was the period of the Easter controversy and the contemporary Irish Romanising party sought to impose Roman authority in disputed cases – such as that of the dating of Easter. Thus, between about 630 and 768 all the Irish and the Britons made changes in their liturgical practices and Irish canon law at least recognised Rome as a theoretical supreme court in exceptional cases. Nevertheless, the organisation of the Church among the Celts was little affected until the eleventh century.

Once the Easter controversy was settled, cases were not transferred from Ireland, Scotland or Wales to Rome, though the problems created by Celtic churchmen on the Continent were familiar to the Popes. The monastic system was already too strong for organisation of the Continental type to be imposed; none of the Celtic areas had a Metropolitan like Canterbury; no Celtic bishop went to fetch a pallium from the Pope; no money for the Papacy was collected and the Popes sent no legates to the Celts.

### Rome Becomes a Centre for Celtic Pilgrims

Like others from the West, Celtic Christians of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries also travelled to Rome, not to lay their cases before the Papal curia as in the Middle Ages, but to visit the shrines of the apostles and martyrs. To a Celtic Christian, as to all Orthodox, the body of a saint, enshrined where he had reposed, signified the 'place of his resurrection'. The saint's grave was a link with heaven.

Irish monks speak of the ministry of angels between heaven and the saint's tomb, and the poets of Derry described their enclosure as 'angel-haunted', 'full of white angels from one end to the other'. The cemeteries and tombs of the Celtic saints were sought out for the spiritual protection they could give, and Rome, with its crowd of great saints, including Peter the key-bearer, brought the gates of heaven almost within sight. So learned

clerics travelled to Rome, like the three who arrived in Cornwall and went to King Alfred's court in 891, of whom one, at least, was 'a man blossoming in the arts, learned in literature, an eminent teacher of the Irish'. The three set out for Rome, intending to go on from Rome to Jerusalem.

Sometimes such Irishmen were men of wealth, accompanied by dependants and servants, like the Irish Bishop Marcus. It was he who remained at St Gall on his way home, keeping his books and valuables, but dividing his horses, mules and 'many coins' among his servants, who had to make their way home as best they could without him. Poor pilgrims set out ad limina, like the old priest, footsore and ill, who begged help from the bishop of Liege. Princes occasionally journeyed there, as did Cyngen, King of Powys, who died in Rome in 845/6 or Dwnwallon, the Prince of Strathclyde, who visited it in 975.

Busy Church administrators sometimes retired from office and also set out for Rome, intending to seek the place of their own resurrection near the tombs of the apostles. Most of them journeyed in devotion and gained the peace which they sought, though some seem to have been disillusioned, like one famous ninth-century Irishman who found:

To go to Rome  
Is much of trouble, little of profit  
The King whom you seek here,  
Unless you bring him with you, you will  
not find.

### The Burial Place of the Saints

The Celtic Christian's idea of Rome as the burial place of the saints was the universal concept in the West at the time. It so powerful a conception that the word 'rom' in the Irish language gained a secondary meaning as a burying ground. One poet in c. 800, writing a martyrology on the feasts of the saints, comments that the tiny settlements once occupied by twos and threes are now the burial places of multitudes.

A life of St Coemgen describes Glendalough as one of the 'four best "Romes" of burial in Ireland'. Bardsey Island, off the north-west coast of Wales, the burial ground of 'twenty thousand holy confessors and martyrs', was proverbially known in the twelfth century as '*Roma Britannia*'. This use of the word 'rom' clearly shows Rome's primary significance in the Celtic mind. The Pope was respected, but it was his great predecessor the Apostle Peter, with the other saints and martyrs,



who drew Celtic pilgrims to Rome. The power of the saints was (and is) far more powerful than any mere Pope.

During the eleventh century direct contacts were re-established between Ireland and the Papacy. It has been shown that pilgrimage to Rome not only maintained its hold on the mind of the clergy, but also gained an unprecedented popularity among the laity. Between 1026 and 1064 Irish or Hiberno-Norse princes set out for Rome on six known occasions. Twice they went with other native princes (1029, 1064), one went with his wife (1051) and one died there and was buried in the monastery of St Stephen.

Towards the end of the eleventh century there was even a small community of Irish pilgrims in Rome, established in a church called the Holy Trinity in contemporary sources, which may be identified as '*Sancta Trinitas Scottorum*' (of the Irish) on the Palatine Hill. Here Irish pilgrims most probably stayed. Some aimed farther east, for the Holy Land, like Domnall Deisech who died in 1060, having 'journeyed all that Christ journeyed on earth'.

#### Conclusion: After the Schism

All this changes radically after the Schism and we can see how in the second half of the century, Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) interested himself in meddling in Irish affairs. In a letter written in about 1078 addressed to 'Tordelbach, noble king of Ireland, and to the archbishops, bishops, abbots, nobles and all Christians dwelling in Ireland', he expresses the typical new papist view of power, urging the Irish to refer all disputed cases to his judgement:

'[Christ's] authority has founded Holy Church on a solid rock and He has entrusted his rights to blessed Peter ... He has also

placed His Church over all the kingdoms of this world and has subjected to her rule principalities and powers ... Wherefore the whole world owes obedience and reverence to blessed Peter and his Vicars ... Be mindful always devoutly to revere and obey the Holy Roman Church. We exhort you, as our most dear children, to practise justice ... But if any matters have arisen among you that seem to need our help, be prompt and ready to inform us of them, and, with God's help, you shall obtain what you have justly asked'.

From this time on the reformed Papacy began to extend its influence over Irish affairs and this became complete at the Synod of Kells in 1152, which was followed by the papally-sponsored invasion of Ireland by the Normans from England. Thus began a tragic occupation which has lasted, in the north of Ireland at least, to this day. As for the rest of Ireland it is still occupied by papism. Though now discredited by its paedophile and other sexual scandals, Orthodox should not rejoice, for papism is rapidly being replaced by the secularism of the European Union.

As for the Celts of Wales and Scotland, their fate has to be seen as an integral part of the papally-sponsored invasion of England in 1066. In the first half of the twelfth century, Norman bishops were implanted in castle-strewn and feudalised Wales and churches were rededicated under Norman influence, the names of the old Welsh saints being driven underground. In the north, Queen Margaret of Scotland ensured that Scotland too would be occupied and conquered by the new mentality. The end had come for the first Orthodoxy of the Celts.

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## THE TRAGIC IDEOLOGY OF CRISTOBAL COLON

'Your god seems to be partial to us. He came to the white man. We never saw him. We never even heard his voice: he gave the white man laws but he had no word for his red children, whose teeming millions filled this vast continent as the stars fill the sky. No, we are two distinct races and must always remain so. There is little in common between us. The ashes of our ancestors are sacred and

their final resting-place is hallowed ground, while you wander away from the graves of your fathers, seemingly without regret'

*Words attributed to Chief Seattle, 1854*

'Yet, rather than confront the realities of their behaviour, the master races of Europe marched forward sheathed in an impenetrable armour of intellectual self-

justification. A complex language of projection and inversion has exonerated Europeans for five centuries. These misrepresentations were a vital element not just during the initial military conquest, when they inspired European combatants with a sense of moral crusade and ensured its widest possible sanction by the home audience, but they were equally important in the ensuing centuries of political control and economic exploitation. For in order to maintain tribal peoples and their descendants at the brutal margin of European civilisation it was necessary to reassemble, almost on a daily basis, the fabric of untruths which justified their institutionalised inferiority.'

Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold,  
by Mark Cocker, p. 20

### Introduction: Who discovered America?

**W**HO discovered America? The obvious answer to this question is the former inhabitants of Siberia who crossed the Bering Straits thousands of years ago. They were the first to begin to people the Americas, sailing down the coasts of North America to the coasts of South America, moving westwards as far as Newfoundland, the Yucatan, the Caribbean and the coasts of Brazil. Until recently these native Americans were by error called 'Indians', which they most certainly did not call themselves.

More recently some have suggested that some western coastal strips of South America were first populated by Polynesians who had sailed across the Pacific. Others suggest that parts of North America were first populated by North Africans or white Europeans who sailed across the Atlantic, perhaps two or three thousand years ago. Next may have come the Irish, perhaps St Brendan in about AD 500. Certainly, around about the year 1000 Norwegian Vikings, come via Iceland and Greenland, settled in Newfoundland.

After these, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there may have come other Scandinavian settlers, fleeing the new ice age in Greenland, which was then becoming 'Whiteland' due to global cooling. Some of them may have intermarried with native Americans. Then came Chinese, who almost certainly discovered the western coasts of both North and South America in the early fifteenth century, but did not linger there.

Then there may have come Portuguese, Spanish, Breton, Irish or Icelandic fishermen, who wintered on the coasts of North America.

Finally, there came an Italian, or more exactly a Genoese, merchant-adventurer called Cristobal Colon. His name was later deformed among English-speakers into Christopher Columbus. Although he most certainly did not discover America, he did make landfall in 1492 (the year 7000 from the Creation of the world, according to the symbolic calendar in Church use) on an unknown island in the Bahamas. Later he was very probably the first contemporary European to discover what we now call South America. Colon was different from all the others who had discovered America before him, from both east and west. This was because he came with a systematic colonialist ideology of settlement and exploitation, which had been developed by the Western élite over the previous four hundred and more years. It was composed of four factors.

### Humanism

At the end of what is mistakenly called the High and Later Middle Ages, the period from about 1000 to 1500, amid the corruption and violence of the institution of what had become Roman Catholicism, in the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Black Death, famines, wars and chaos, there began in Italy the Renaissance. The word simply means 'rebirth'. The Renaissance was the rebirth of pagan knowledge, the idea that man was the criterion of everything, or humanism, as we now call it. This was the first element in Colon's ideological make-up.

Humanism was an idea of the intellectual elite that gained popularity, given the total loss of credibility and degradation of the Western European institution of Roman Catholicism. Having rejected the only known form of Christianity, which it ignorantly called 'the Church' or 'Christendom', this rebirth of pagan knowledge spread. In an age of ebbing faith, this idealisation of Western man, humanism, swept through fifteenth-century Europe. This was not only because it created a justification for those with wealth and power, but also because it provided answers, and with the authority of antiquity, to fill the vacuum of doubt and unbelief.

*De dignitate et excellentia hominis* ('On the dignity and excellence of man') was the title of an influential book by Giannozzo Manetti, published

in the 1440s, and was the simple message of the humanist vision. In the face of 'human dignity and excellence', it said that all the era's obstacles, political, intellectual and practical, would crumble<sup>1</sup>. This was also expressed by the Florentine humanist, Marsilio Ficino, in his *Theologica Platonica*, published in the early 1480s: 'The immense magnificence of our soul may clearly be seen from this: man will not be satisfied with the empire of this world, if, having conquered this one, he learns that there remains another world which he has not yet subjugated ... Thus man wishes no superior and no equal and will not permit anything to be omitted and excluded from his rule'<sup>2</sup>.

This anti-Christian and therefore anti-human ideology of humanism was that of 'Western man the imperialist'. How fitting a description it is of the age on which Europe was embarking and how apt it must have seemed to at least one former Genoese man called Colon. However, humanism does not, in its philosophical excesses, stop there: next came nothing less than 'Western man the divine'. Ficino put it simply: 'And so he strives to be as God everywhere'<sup>2</sup>. There was no blasphemy here for these writers, for it was merely the recognition of what was truly in God's Plan, the elevation of filioquist Western man, 'from whom proceeds the Holy Spirit', above all others. Leon Battista Alberti, a Renaissance man par excellence, expressed it in a hymn to man: 'To you is given a body more graceful than other animals, to you power of apt and various movements, to you most sharp and delicate senses, to you wit, reason, memory, like an immortal god'<sup>3</sup>.

In his *Oration* of 1486, for another Florentine, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the possibility for every Western man was nothing less than 'to regenerate thyself a godlike being'. A Renaissance it was indeed: the rebirth of sinful Western man (but not Western woman) as a god. Humanism was then the end-result of the Middle Ages with its genocides of Orthodox Christians, Muslims and Jews, which had already begun at the end of the eleventh century. It was the self-divinisation of the West and the justification of all its crimes, from the genocide of Non-Westerners to the ecological rape of the planet. Not that humanism tried to put forward a new morality in place of the already deformed Catholic creed, shredded by centuries of cynicism and depravity. It promoted rather an amoral pragmatism that overrode the old morality. Thus, although Machiavelli shocked some of his

compatriots with his assertions in his work *The Prince*, he was merely the most open advocate of this amoral pragmatism. According to him, what works in the here and now is what matters. After all, the West was not building the City of Heaven, but a wholly earthly one.

In his study of Renaissance Italy, the modern historian Lauro Martines points out that, all along, humanism was meant 'to provide upper-class citizens with a sense of unity and direction in their lives. And this was a consciousness oriented more frankly toward worldly ends. Sin would have to be de-emphasised and morality redefined towards a psychological consciousness that was more in keeping with worldly goals'<sup>4</sup>. Hence, by the fifteenth century, 'the demands of worldliness were absorbed and became the consciousness not only of literati, but also of the social groups at the top'<sup>4</sup>. Hence also, both 'money and authority had no more able and wheedling defence than that found in humanist encomia'<sup>4</sup>. Humanism was then merely the self-flattery and self-delusion of the Western elite, the arrogation of the powers of God to itself. According to this racist theory, later and logically adopted by Hitler, the Holy Spirit, apparently, had its source not only in a distant God, but also in the all too close Western elite.

### Rationalism

A second, closely related reaction of Colon's era was the further development of rationalism, particularly that form which now goes by the name of 'science', which was born out of mediæval Aristotelian scholasticism. Although a very anomalous way of looking at the world, Western European rationalism, the promulgation of logical, straight-line, objective comprehension, with its apex in the scientific method, proved to be the ideal instrument for the time and place. With it, philosophers, scholars and very soon all educated (= brainwashed and spiritually dead) people, could provide a picture of the world in its smallest detail. This did away with any need to suppose a God, or gods, miracles, magic, mysticism or metaphysics. Let the old religions falter, fail and be left to syncretise, science would be the new faith.

The task of achieving the triumph of Western rationalism at the end of the Middle Ages was immense. It took a whole range of humanists, artisans, painters, surgeons and alchemists decades before it was ascendant, centuries before it was commonplace. For there were millennial habits of thought to dispel, fundamentally different views to

replace, all the vestiges of Christianity planted in the West in the first millennium to destroy. 'What they had to do was not criticise and combat faulty theories', a modern scholar of the early scientists has written, 'they had to do something different. They had to replace the framework of the intellect itself, to restate and reform its concepts, to evolve a new approach to Being, a new concept of knowledge, a new concept of science, and even to replace a pretty natural approach, that of common sense, by another which is not natural at all'<sup>5</sup>.

What they had to achieve, in short, was the desacralisation of nature. At the time, even with the best efforts of the Church, there still lingered in many places in Western Europe the common wisdom that God cared for His Creation. The task of Aristotelian rationalism, through science, was to prove that there was nothing sacred about Divine Creation, that it was nothing more than measurable combinations of chemical and mechanical properties, subject to scientific analysis, prediction, determination and manipulation.

Once desacralised, Creation could then be ruthlessly exploited according to human desire, and Western Europeans, uniquely among all cultures, could assume, in Descartes' words, that they were the 'masters and possessors of nature'. The way was open for the printing press and the gun, for the desacralisation of Christian concepts in the Reformation and so the Industrial Revolution. For once applied practically, this scientific rationalism would lead to technology. Western Europe's love of technology, its unchecked affection for the machine, distinguished it. Europe was more adept at turning technology to its own uses and turning its institutions to the service of that technology than any other society.

In the judgement of one scholar, only Europe saw fit 'to adapt the whole mode of life to the pace and capacities of the machine'<sup>6</sup>. Even those civilisations (for example, Christian Roman and the pagan Egyptian, Persian, Hindu, Chinese, Japanese, Aztec, Inca and Zimbabwean) that showed a proficiency for technical inventiveness did not evolve an abstract system of rationality to go with it, that is, what is called science. Thus they did not develop a culture of technology, a self-reinforcing way of thought that created its own purpose and momentum. From now on, Western Europe would look on all other civilisations, however advanced spiritually, as 'backward', simply because they had developed technology less, since they had realised the inherent spiritual

dangers of doing so. Such was the ignorance of spiritual realities and such was the Western definition of 'progress' that the West gave rise to its own self-justifying, but totally irrational, feelings of racial superiority over others.

## Materialism

The third reaction to the fifteenth century and its bewildering circumstances was of a piece with the first two: materialism and, in its everyday economic guise, systematic capitalism. The impulse to treasure the material here and now, the tangible, in a world of both physical uncertainty and spiritual emptiness seems normal to many in today's thoroughly fallen world, but it was relatively new for Europe then, at least in the radical and systematic way that it was expressed. The touched and seen, the rationalistically 'real' and the scientifically quantifiable slowly took on an importance that had developed only slowly since the introduction of the pagan thought of Aristotle from about 1050 on, but which now exploded.

We see it best probably in the art of the age, in the love of objects in precise detail that obsessed Dürer, for example, or da Vinci, as his notebooks attest, in the almost palpable look of material things in the anti-spiritual pragmatism of the bourgeois capitalist art of the Dutch burgher, in a Van Eyck portrait and in the complexities that fill Bosch paintings to bursting point. The artists of the time, in the words of the art historian Kenneth Clark, 'had, to a supreme degree, the power of making their thoughts visible', giving their works what he calls an 'atmosphere of liberal materialism'<sup>7</sup>. They expressed the obsession with material things.

This materialism celebrated the objects of the outward world, made 'realistic' through perspective, anatomy, foreshortening, all the skills of the Renaissance trade, in a style that stands in stark contrast to virtually all of the art of the preceding centuries since the fall of Rome. The realism of the age was materialism in paint and marble. Not that this was the first era in which the human soul coveted and strove for wealth, but it was perhaps the first in which the possession of material goods began so markedly to replace other values at the centre of ethical and religious values. All the trappings that other societies in other eras had used to disguise or deny their love of material wealth were here gradually dispensed with.



This straightforward materialism, developed over long generations with humanism and rationalism as its companions, created the essential conditions for the success of the economic system we have come to call capitalism. Other contributory elements, to be sure, had evolved by the late fifteenth century, credit, currency transfers, bills of exchange, maritime insurance, international banking and the accumulation of metals and moneys themselves, but it was materialism's cast of mind, its values, its reinterpretation of the world, that really permitted all these instruments to develop in Europe.

The likes of this materialism existed nowhere else: more materialist for sure than any other economy, more expansionist, more energetic, more linked to growth and almost everywhere without the kinds of moral inhibitions found in the world's other cultures. William Woodruff provides a summary: 'No civilization prior to the European had occasion to believe in the systematic material progress of the whole human race; no civilization placed such stress upon the quantity rather than the quality of life; no civilization drove itself so relentlessly to an ever-receding goal; no civilization was so passionately charged to replace what is with what could be; no civilization had striven as the West has done to direct the world according to its will; no civilization has known so few moments of peace and tranquillity'<sup>8</sup>.

### Nationalism

All the above 'isms' were nurtured by, and in turn nurtured, the final element of the age, which was rather slower to develop, although its beginnings had clearly been visible for centuries. This was the accretion of power we call the nation-state. The idea of the nation, still less the concept of nationalism, was insufficiently developed to provide an alternative allegiance for this age of bewilderment and despair. But all the essentials were there and it was only a matter of a few decades before they were would finally be moulded into a significant political instrument, one that found itself in harmony with the other pragmatic, accumulative, mechanistic and essentially amoral 'isms' so far mentioned.

The Renaissance humanists, scientific rationalists and capitalist materialists proved to be natural allies of the Machiavellian princes of the new state, the nationalists. The princes who understood this soonest and learned to use these alliances and manipulate their peoples won the

day in the decades to come. They took to themselves and their dynasties the elements not just of royalty, which is ancient, but far more important, of nationalism, which was new. Nationalism was a powerful instrument.

It would have been powerful, even if it had depended only on the money lending of bankers and the artillery of armies, as in large part the government of the Spanish nation-state did during its century-long ascendancy. How much more powerful when it could add the antique paganism and self-glorification of the humanists, the practical techniques and manipulations of the scientists, the treasuries of the capitalists, and was more powerful still when it found in this mesh of values all that justified its growth and ultimate consolidation. There is much that can be said about this process of European state-building. However, it is enough to know that it was a power which would spread as far as its representatives explored and settled.

To the historian Arnold Toynbee, the rise of the nation-state was the crucial phenomenon of this era: 'The major political change in Western Christendom in the course of the quarter of a millennium 1303-1563 was the transfer of power and revenue from the Papacy, and from other organs of the Western Church to local secular governments'<sup>9</sup>. Nowhere would this be more obvious than in the plunder of the monasteries of the British Isles by the typical Machiavellian Renaissance tyrant and debauchee, Henry VIII.

After Cristobal Colon the Reformation would become the clear expression, first theological and intellectual, then social and political, of the humanism, rationalism, materialism and nationalism that characterised the modern age. The Reformation was in fact only an instrument by which this age was first revealed in Europe. The pseudo-religious ideology called Protestantism not only removed the final impediments that hampered nascent capitalists elsewhere, but positively honoured credit, profit, interest and usury, holding virtuous thrift, industry, wealth and exploitation.

### Conclusion: The Tragedy of Christopher Columbus

When Christopher Columbus came to the New World, he came with humanism. This pagan ideology that had developed throughout the Middle Ages, from about 1050 on, was an exalted idea of man, that is, of Western European man (but not woman), with his humanistic, rationalistic,

materialistic and nationalistic values. His Western Europe was a culture 'seeking salvation beyond its own shores'.

For half a millennium after him, through a long process of imperialism, industrialism and imitation by 'Neo-Europes', Columbus' culture would come to prevail over most of the earth. Nowhere more so than in North America, which in 1917 took over the world. The age since 1492 has been seen as five hundred years of 'that long unbroken Crisis of the European soul' expressing 'one of the most rudimentary, childish, and primitive periods in the history of the human spirit'<sup>10</sup>. As another scholar has put it, this was the method by which 'a world millions of years in the making vanished into the voracious, insatiable maw of an alien civilization'<sup>11</sup>.

Columbus' idea was that of Mirandola, who in 1486 had written *De hominis dignitate oratio*, 'An Oration on the Dignity of Man', with its shameless humanism and celebration of the quasi-divinity of Western man. It was his position, as was that of a good many humanists of the period, that Western man (but not woman) had a right to rule over the rest of Creation, and that indeed (the Western) 'God' had specifically told Western man to be 'constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will'<sup>12</sup>. It was a message that many, particularly a certain Genoese businessman and sailor engaged in discovery and conquest, heeded.

Having landed in the New World, Columbus was intent on only one thing – gold. Columbus' goal was not land (which is why we still do not know where exactly he landed – twelve different islands are suggested), but gold. He wanted the wealth of the fabled lands beyond the seas, of which he had the right to 'take and keep for himself the tenth part of the whole', according to official agreements with the crown. Time and again, and beginning in fact the day after he had landed, Columbus openly declared his obsession with finding gold, and his every movement from then on was bent to that purpose<sup>13</sup>. Here in him was the exaltation of Western European man, humanism, together with rationalism, materialism and the nationalism, in his case, of the Spanish flag.

The discovery of Columbus meant not the discovery of a tiny island in the Bahamas, but the beginning of the Western European conquest of the Non-European world. This was the beginning of Western Europe's Faustian ascent outside Europe, that is, its spiritual descent, for when you sell your soul, there is no profit, as Christ in the Gospel says.

It was a descent which would cost the lives of tens of millions in the Western European genocides of native peoples around the world since 1492. However, the barbaric spiritual roots of this Westernism were not in 1492, but in the eleventh century, with their Norman-led crusades and massacres in Sicily, England, Wales and Scotland and then in Scandinavia, Iberia, Ireland, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and the Holy Land<sup>14</sup>. These had already cost the lives of millions of Europeans and the destruction by the Western barbarians ('Christians') of the New Roman Christian Capital of Constantinople in 1204. 1492 was merely the extension outside Europe of a previous period of more than 400 years of Western barbarism.

According to one author, this European or Western conquest of the Non-European world after 1492 led to the deaths, above all through disease, massacre and slavery, of over fifty million native inhabitants of the Americas, Africa and Asia<sup>15</sup>. Of these the best known cases are the massacres of 'Indians', principally by Spanish '*conquistadores*' in Latin America and by British 'settlers' in North America, and of the Aborigines and the Maori in Australasia.

However, we must also include their Western sequels inside Europe, such as the colonisation and exploitation by Austro-Hungary of Slav peoples. In 1914 these were greatly amplified by the Kaiser (in the self-punishment of the European tribes, especially of Belgium, for their genocides of African tribes), even more by Mussolini and then Hitler, and still today in the barbaric atrocities of the evil high-tech weapons of Western countries, led by the USA, in the Middle East.

To these we can add the twentieth-century imitations of Western Europe in 'Neo-Europes', formed by North American Capitalism, Soviet Leninism-Stalinism, Japanese Shintoism, Chinese Maoism and the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot. Of course, these latter imitators and importers mainly carried out their genocides on their own peoples, not externally. But it amounted to the same thing. Perhaps two hundred million dead in all. Perhaps more. And today the West and all Westernised societies continue their genocides in their suicide of abortion.

1. See *The Arrogance of Humanism* by David Ehrenfeld, Oxford 1978 and *The Reenchantment of the World* by Morris Berman, Cornell 1981

2. See *Power and Imagination: City States in Renaissance Italy* by Lauro Martines, Knopf, p. 216

3. See *Civilisation* by Kenneth Clark, Harper and Row, 1969, p. 89
4. Martines, p. 205
5. 'Galileo to Plato', by Alexandre Koyre in *Journal of the History of Ideas* Vol. 18, 1957
6. *The Condition of Man* by Lewis Mumford, Harcourt, 1973, p.162
7. See *Civilisation* by Kenneth Clark, Harper and Row, 1969, pp. 101 and 106
8. *The Impact of Western Man* by William Woodruff, St Martin's 1967, p.16
9. *Mankind and Mother Earth*, A. Toynbee, Oxford 1976, p. 500
10. *A Cultural History of the Modern Age*, Knopf 1964 (1930), Vol. 1, by Egon Friedell, ch. 5
11. *Beyond Geography* by Frederick Turner, Viking 1980, p. 255
12. Martines, pp. 216-17. Did not the same Western 'God' also much more recently instruct George Bush to invade Iraq?
13. *The Conquest of Paradise, Christopher Columbus and the Columbian Legacy* by Kirkpatrick Sale, Knopf, 1990, p. 67
14. See, for example, *The Making of Europe Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950-1350* by Robert Bartlett BCA, 1993. It is clear from this and other works that 'the Europeanization of Europe' (see Chapter 11) began inside Europe, in Moravia, Sicily, England, Wales, Scotland, Hungary, Scandinavia, Iberia, southern Italy, Ireland, and all of Eastern Europe, which did not fit the Carolingian and post-Carolingian 'Frankish' see pp. 101-105) mould. The Normans were simply the SS shock troops of the eleventh century. Alternatively, see *The First European Revolution c.970-1215* by R. I. Moore, Blackwell 2000.
15. *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold*, by Mark Cocker, Cape 1998, p. 6. Subtitled 'Europe's Conflict with Tribal Peoples', a better subtitle would have been 'Europe's Tribal Conflicts with Non-European Peoples'. The Western European countries involved outside Europe were principally Spain, Portugal, Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and, under Mussolini, Italy.

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



How can we understand the commandment, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. Surely we should hate ourselves for our sins?

*C. H., Norfolk*

The rule is: 'Hate the sin, but love the sinner'. In other words, we hate the sins that we commit, not ourselves. This is because God made all things good. It is written thus in Genesis. Sin is a perversion. We must not hate material things. They do not cause sin. It is our perverted use or abuse of material sins that is evil, not the things themselves. Thus, we do not hate our stomachs, we hate greed, we do not hate money, but the love of money etc. It is clear that we must not hate material things in themselves. Otherwise, we would hate the bread and wine that make the body and blood, we would hate water for baptism, incense for censuring, icons, saints' relics and the cross (as some indeed do).

Hatred of these things is a Manichean perversion and heresy that subtly crept into the Church in the West and then developed in the Middle Ages and later, after people there had fallen away from the Church. This is why some cultivate guilt and puritanism, trying to manipulate people by making them feel guilty. All sorts of perversions have resulted from what is in fact a heresy.

Compulsory (as opposed to voluntary) priestly celibacy is such an example.



Why do Russians have onion domes on their churches, rather than ordinary domes?

*J. M., Paris*

As far as I know, the present form evolved simply as a practical way of making sure that snow fell off. You will find the same shape of dome, only smaller, on Catholic churches in Austria and southern Germany, where they also have heavy falls of snow in the winter.



Could Bede the Venerable be considered a Church Father?

*I. G., Oxford*

What a good question! In Church history the Fathers are those who came after the Apostles and the 'apostolic men' like St Clement of Rome, St Ignatius of Antioch and St Papius of Hieropolis. I think that those who come under the word 'Fathers' can be divided into three groups:

This first group are hierarchs who defended the faith in dogmas. These include: St Irenaeus of Lyons, St Cyprian of Carthage, St Athanasius the Great, St Basil the Great, St Gregory of Nyssa,

St Gregory the Theologian, St Cyril of Jerusalem, St Hilary of Poitiers, St Ambrose of Milan, St Epiphanius of Cyprus, St John Chrysostom, St Cyril of Alexandria, St Leo the Great, St Gregory the Great, St Maximus the Confessor, St John of Damascus, St Photius the Great, St Gregory Palamas and St Mark of Ephesus

Then there are the monastic or ascetic fathers. These are those whose writings are read by the faithful, for example in the anthology called the *Philokalia*. These include: St Anthony the Great, St Ephraim the Syrian, St John Cassian, Sts Barsanuphius and John, St Mark the Ascetic, St Symeon the New Theologian, St Peter of Damascus, St John of the Ladder, St Isaac of Nineveh, St Peter of Damascus, St Nilus of Thessalonika, St Gregory the Sinaite, St Dimitri of Rostov, St Tikhon of Zadonsk, St Nicodemus the Athonite, the Optina Elders, St Theophan the Recluse and St Ignatius of the Caucasus.

Of course, there can be an overlap between these two groups. Thus, the great inspirer of St Athanasius was St Anthony the Great and St Maximus wrote much ascetic work, which can be found in the *Philokalia*.

Finally, there are among the Church Fathers writers or teachers, or those who compiled from the works of others. Some of these are saints, who played a very providential role in Church history. (Some Church writers, who made mistakes, are not saints. The example of Tertullian springs to mind). These Church writers, translators or teachers include Blessed Jerome of Stridon, to whom the Latin world owed the Scriptures, Blessed Augustine of Hippo, St Isidore of Seville and St Bede the Venerable.

So the answer to your question as to whether St Bede is a Church Father must broadly speaking be 'yes'.



According to anthropologists first human race began in Africa. How do we square this with the story of the Garden of Eden, which was in Mesopotamia?

*G. S., Colchester*

When there is a contradiction between our human knowledge and the Bible, it means one of two things – or else both of them. Either our human knowledge (scientific theory) is incomplete and therefore incorrect, or our interpretation of the Bible is incorrect, or else both are incorrect.

For example, it is true that current anthropology says that the human race began in east Africa. But that is dependent on our interpretation of the fossil record (this is disputed and there is also the risk of misidentification and misinterpretation of the fossil record). This also presumes that we shall find no new fossils – which could change everything.

As regards the Bible, we have to remember that what is recorded in the early chapters of Genesis is a telescopic record. A few chapters cover thousands, perhaps even billions of our human years. Nowhere does it say where human-beings were created. It says that God created man and later planted a garden in Eden (which means 'pleasure' or 'delight') and then 'put' the man whom He had formed in it. In other words, although we know that the Garden of Eden was between the Tigris and the Euphrates (Genesis 2, 14), we do not know where God formed or created man.

How did God 'put' man in Eden? We do not know. When? We do not know. Where, exactly, was Eden? Even this we do not know. The Bible simply does not say (because it is not important). Perhaps man really was created in Africa (though according to Genesis 2, woman was created in Eden). Or perhaps God created man in Mesopotamia. We do not know. But this lack of knowledge is not what is going to prevent us from saving our souls. And that is what is important.



What is the translation of 'nous'?

*H. J., Bristol*

Spiritual understanding or spiritual perception.



Do we know when the first person became Orthodox in this country in modern times?

*R. T., Colchester*

Until recently I would have said in the late 18th century with Frederick North (1766–1827), son of the former Prime Minister Lord North. He was received into the Orthodox Church in Corfu (Kerkyra). He was later elected a Member of Parliament, served as Governor-General of Ceylon and became the fifth Earl of Guildford. In England itself there was the case of Stephen Hatherly (see *Orthodox England* 4, 3) who joined the Orthodox Church, probably in 1854.

However, thanks to the research of Misha Sami (see the *Souroz* journal, No 104), it seems that the honour must go to Elizabeth Burton in London on 15 August 1724. Her Greek husband,



Bartholomew Cassano, was later ordained priest in London and celebrated in Greek and in English. He received a dozen English families into the Church, including in 1731 a Robert Wright, his wife Elizabeth and their children. Fr Bartholomew died in 1746.



Were all four Gospels originally written in Greek?

*A. P., Felixstowe*

In the life of St Dimitrios, Archbishop of Alexandria, it says that the mission he sent to India saw there the original of St Matthew's Gospel written in Aramaic. What we have now is therefore a translation, as is confirmed by scholars. However, it seems that the other Gospels were all originally written in Greek.



Why is confession so important in the Orthodox Churches?

*A. R., Woodbridge*

Because confession ensures that we make some spiritual progress. How can we make progress if we have no confession, receive no advice and, above all, have no repentance and receive no absolution for the sins that we have committed? I think the real question is why is confession not so important outside the Orthodox Churches



What is the difference between nationalism and patriotism?

*A. D., Moscow*

Patriotism is the love of that part of the world where by God's will we were born, that is, love of God's creation. Nationalism is an artificial, human invention, for nations are manmade. It is another word for worldliness



How do you distinguish between someone who is Orthodox from someone who still has a convert mentality?

*F. L., New England*

There are many ways. One way is by asking them if they think if apart from the Sunday morning liturgy Orthodoxy has any importance. You will find that converts from a Non-Orthodox background tend to think that Orthodoxy is limited to a God-slot on Sunday mornings, that it does not cover our whole life and that services apart from the eucharist are not important

This stems from a Protestant view of the world, which limits 'salvation' to an hour or two on

Sunday mornings, when we should apparently feel good about ourselves (this is pride), and to the idea that no preparation for the liturgy is necessary (fasting, daily prayers, vigil service). In reality, Orthodox Christianity, the Church, is a way of life, or else it is nothing. As we pray at the little litany: 'Let us commend our whole life unto Christ our God'.



Why is it that there are various ecumenical societies, whose members seem to admire Orthodoxy and yet they do not actually join the Orthodox Church?

*M. F., London*

Orthodox admiration societies exist. But admiration is like being in love – not actually being married. Marriage is life. A lot of people who believe that they are 'in love', marry and quickly get divorced. They are in love with an illusion, not with life. So it is with the Church. I am always very sceptical about visitors who come to church and just admire the 'singing' or the 'incense'. They have understood nothing about the nature of real Christianity and the Church of Christ

Basically, the reason for this phenomenon is the same as that for the phenomenon of people who go on holiday abroad, say to France, love it, and then, when the opportunity comes, go and live there but hate it, returning to England very quickly. In other words, such people confuse tourism and immigration.

In a sense, it is better that such admiring 'spiritual tourists' and 'adventurers' do not join the Orthodox Church. They will not become Orthodox, because their knowledge of the Church is illusory. That is why it is so important that people who wish to join the Church unlearn (all their illusions) first. I have seen so many tragic cases of Anglicans in particular who have been allowed to join the Orthodox Church, when they should not have been. They last for a short time and then always lapse back. A flame burns intensely for a short time and then, as the paper fuel is expended, the flame goes out. Only cold ashes remain. They were never ready, never prepared. Let them admire from the outside, they do not want to take on the Cross of actually living in the Church, living in Christ. As Fr Sophrony (Sakharov) used to say to Anglicans: 'The Church hurts'.



# BOOK REVIEW

*The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000* by Chris Wickham,  
Allen Lane 2009, 651 pages, £35.

**T**HIS is not an easy read and the faint-hearted should abstain – this is an intensely academic book written by an Oxford professor. However, it is one of the first books on this period of history to be truly Europe-wide in its scope and it does contain interesting insights and comparisons. Written by a purely secular author, these prove the Orthodox point on this period of the birth of Roman Catholicism, namely that after this period it was the West, and not the East, that gave up its inheritance of Orthodox Christianity and deviated from the Church.

We may quote as examples its evidence that the West became very regionalised and provincialised in this period (p. 911). The West was so fragmented (p. 176) that 'a structured western church focused on Rome did not in any serious way develop until after the end of the period covered by this book' (i.e. the year 1000). This nicely rejects the myth of the existence of a 'Western Church', so fondly put forward by the ecumaniacs with their 'two lungs' myth. The provincial West depended spiritually on its inheritance from the advanced 'East', that is from the Church founded in Jerusalem, and the true, spiritual glory of the West lasted only as long as it was faithful to Orthodoxy.

In this context the author points out how little Western Christian beliefs changed between 750 and 1000 (p. 201–02). On p. 522 he makes it clear, if it were not clear enough already that '(these) shifts make the eleventh century political world structurally different from the tenth, at least in the parts of Europe where they occurred'. The author is here referring to the process of 'the feudal revolution' which led to the Western Schism of 1054, processes which occurred seldom before 1000, but often by 1050 (p. 522).

Another interesting point concerns the militarisation of some Western clergy, especially of some bishops, which so horrified Orthodox Christians when they saw Western clergy carrying and using arms in the First Crusade at the end of the eleventh century. On p. 184–5 examples of this secularisation of the Church are given from as early as the seventh century, although the practice only become more common under the Carolingians in the eighth century, a practice vigorously opposed by as St Boniface who saw it as it was: blatant corruption. As we know, after the very secular

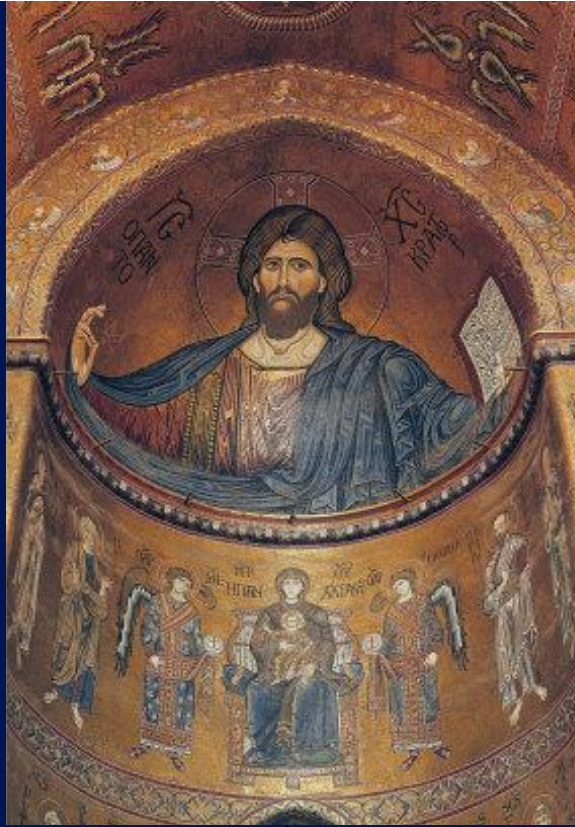


Carolingians, militarised clergy became widespread again only in the eleventh century, especially under the warlike Normans, who were the first crusaders in Sicily and then England. From here it was only one step to the Templars and the Teutonic Knights.

Another good point that the author makes is the uniqueness of the achievement of Alfred the Great and England, which 'marks out its trajectory as separate from that in any of the Carolingian successor states' (p. 470–71). We also understand here why feudalism never began in England, but was imported here from Normandy in 1066, lock, stock and barrel, together with the whole Establishment class system.

As regards the processes which led to the Western Schism of 1054, the author writes that 'there was nothing inevitable about that feudal revolution'. In other words, the West could have repented at any time before 1054 and returned to full-blooded Orthodox Christian civilisation. 1054 was simply a wrong choice. Nevertheless, in his concluding words, the author says 'Ending with a fundamental shift in the concepts of political power (i.e. in 1000), even if only in a few parts of Europe, does not seem unreasonable. The inheritance of Rome (i.e. Orthodoxy Christianity – reviewer's note), in those regions at least, lasted right up to 1000; but after that its shadow faded away' (p. 564). The shadow, or rather light, of Orthodoxy did indeed fade away from the West after 1000 and it has been fading away ever since, ever more rapidly.

On a down side, readers may be irritated by this book's obvious anti-Christian, or rather a-Christian, nature and by the usual ethnocentric and politically correct prejudices of Oxford academia and academics in general. For example, on p. 256, freely acknowledging that the Roman Empire with its capital in New Rome/Constantinople never called itself Byzantine but Roman, the author, a historian!, goes ahead and calls it 'Byzantine' because it is 'convenient'. Nevertheless, it is always refreshing to read secular writers who confirm Orthodox belief despite themselves. Although costing £35, the impoverished can still borrow it from their local library, as the reviewer did.



## I HOLD THE UNIVERSE. I COUNT THE STARS.

*From 'A Woman in Hospital' by Fay Inchfawn (1880-1978)*

I know ... I know ... I know.  
 For I am God. I am the Saviour, He  
 Who made you what you are; and I can see ...  
 I know the anguish and the helplessness.  
 I know the fears that toss you to and fro.  
 And how you wrestle, weariful,  
 With hosts of little strings that pull  
 About your heart, and tear it so.  
 I know ...

I know.  
 And I am waiting here to help and bless  
 Lay down your head. Lay down your hopelessness  
 And let Me speak.  
 You are so weary, child, you are so weak.  
 But let us reason out  
 The darkness and the doubt  
 This torturing fear that tosses you about  
 I hold the universe. I count the stars  
 And out of shortened lives I build the ages ...

Have you forgotten, My child, that I,  
 The Infinite, the Limitless, laid down  
 The method of existence that I knew,  
 And took on Me a nature just like you?  
 I laboured day by day  
 In the same dogged way ...



