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Journal of Catholic Culture



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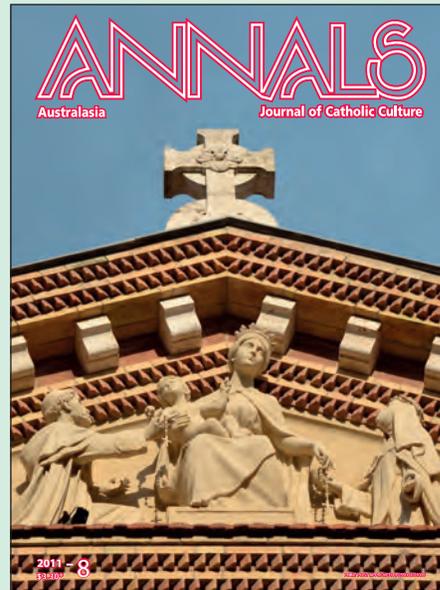
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[Sunday Readings at Mass: Year A/weekday readings: Year I]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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Front Cover: Section of the façade of the chapel of *Domus Australia*, the first Pilgrim Centre for Australians in Rome. *Domus Australia* was blessed and opened by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, on the 19th of October [see our editorial in this issue of *Annals*]. Our front cover shows a segment of the façade of the Chapel, with the cross surmounting the gable. The inside section of the Pediment [called the Tympanum] has sculptures depicting Our Lady and the child Jesus, St Dominic and St Catherine of Sienna. St Dominic is holding his rosary up to our Lady and our Lord, and St Catherine is receiving a rosary from our Lady's hands.

Back Cover: The sanctuary of the Chapel dedicated to our Lady of the Rosary and St Peter Chanel in *Domus Australia*, Rome. The Tabernacle was made in Spain and designed by Father Charles Portelli, Parish Priest of Keilor Downs, Victoria. The statues in the front of the altar are of our Lord, in the centre, with St Peter on his right, and St Paul on his left.

Cover Photos: Paul Stenhouse

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GIVE us the grace to see what we have to do, and the strength to do it.

- From *The Roman Missal*, Collect at Mass for Week I of the Year.

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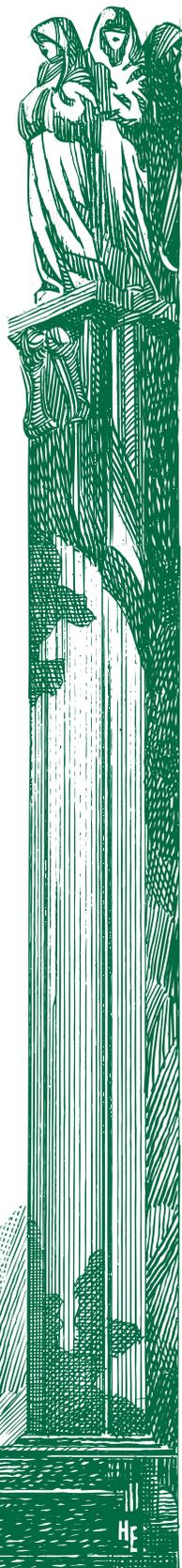
n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

ONLY ONE



HERE is one Church
exactly as there is
one universe;
and no wise man
will wander about
looking for another'

— G. K. Chesterton, Blackfriars, March 1923
quoted A L Maycock [ed] *The Man who was
Orthodox*, 1963, p.183. See *The Catholic
Church and Conversion*, New York, 1926.
Chesterton became a Catholic in 1922.



'A Little Corner of Australia in Ancient Rome' - Pope Benedict XVI

DOMUS AUSTRALIA

By Paul Stenhouse, MSC



ON WEDNESDAY October 19, Pope Benedict XVI solemnly opened and blessed *Domus Australia* – ‘Australia House’

– the first Hospice for Australians on pilgrimage *ad limina Apostolorum* – ‘to the thresholds of the tombs of the Apostles’ – in Rome.

The use of the phrase ‘*ad limina Apostolorum*’ to describe pilgrimages to the tombs of the Apostles Peter and

Paul in Rome dates at least from the time of Pope Damasus, AD 366-384.

These days it refers particularly to the quinquennial or five-yearly pilgrimage of Catholic bishops around the world to the successor of St Peter, to deliver an account of their stewardship, and to receive the blessing of the Holy Father.

But the phrase applies equally to all who come to Rome not as tourists but as pilgrims, to honour the Apostles Peter and Paul and the See of Peter, and to reaffirm and deepen their faith.

The new Centre – on the site of a former seminary of the Italian Province of the Marist Fathers built in the late nineteenth century – offers modern accommodation, conference and restaurant facilities, as well as daily Mass in English in a beautifully restored Chapel.

It was justly described by Pope Benedict as ‘a little corner of Australia’. Australian art and Catholic history and culture greet the visitor at every turn – especially in the Chapel which is adorned with paintings by Australian artist Paul Newton of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, and well-known Australian Catholic pioneers: Caroline Chisholm, Father John Thierry, St Mary of the Cross and Archbishop Polding.

Domus Australia is only seven or eight minutes walk from Stazione Termini, the main railway and bus station of Rome, and a few minutes away from the Aurelian Wall – built between AD 271 and 275 by the Emperors Aurelius and Probus – and from the Porta Pia which was designed by Michaelangelo and completed in 1565, the year after the artist’s death.

Red-letter day

This was a red-letter day for Australian Catholics, and for all Australians. The Honourable Tim Fischer, Australia’s Ambassador to the Holy See, was present and had supported the idea of the Centre from the outset. He noted that all Australians – not just Catholics – would be welcomed at *Domus Australia*.

George Cardinal Pell, Archbishop of Sydney – the driving force behind the project – was supported by the Conference of Australian Bishops, and especially by the Archbishops of Melbourne and Perth, and the Bishop of Lismore.

In his address to the Holy Father Cardinal Pell affirmed that ‘solidarity



View of Via Cernaia 14b — Domus Australia — with its Australian, Italian and Papal flags.

in the college of bishops between the Australian bishops with and under the successor of St Peter, remains rock-solid today.

Thirty-six Australian bishops – in Rome for their *ad limina* visit – were present for the solemn opening and blessing by the Pope, and they also attended the consecration of the altar by Cardinal Pell on the preceding Monday, October 17.

The term ‘red-letter day’ is especially appropriate for such a Catholic occasion. It is an early mediaeval Catholic expression referring to Solemnities of the Lord, and Feasts of Saints in the Roman Missal and the Divine Office. These were always marked in red or purple ink as pioneer printer William Caxton explained in 1490.¹

It was also a ‘red-letter day’ for the local people living and working around *Domus Australia* in the *Via Cernaia*. They lined the streets to welcome the Holy Father, and to express their satisfaction that a much loved Chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary and St Peter Chanel had been restored, and that pilgrims would be coming to their district.

Provision for Australian pilgrims to Rome has been long overdue. Daily Mass in English, an opportunity for the Sacrament of reconciliation in English and access to conveniently situated accommodation and other facilities catering for the needs of non Italian-speaking pilgrims ensure that a visit to the Eternal City will be spiritually uplifting as well as more enjoyable.

Pilgrims to Rome

That Christian pilgrims had been coming to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles from as early as the time of St Irenaeus of Lyons [AD 130-200] is conjectured from his writings.

We know from graffiti scratched on walls in the Catacomb of St Sebastian on the *Via Appia*, that sometime between AD 260-340, Cyriacus, Irene, Iohannes, Agape, Venerius, Saturnius, Asclepios, Parthenius, Adgytorius, Ursinius and hundreds of other pilgrims invoked the intercession of Sts Peter and Paul for themselves and their families, living and dead, and left their names behind to prove it.²

Domus Australia is the last in a long line of distinguished national centres



George Cardinal Pell delivering his address of welcome to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XVI

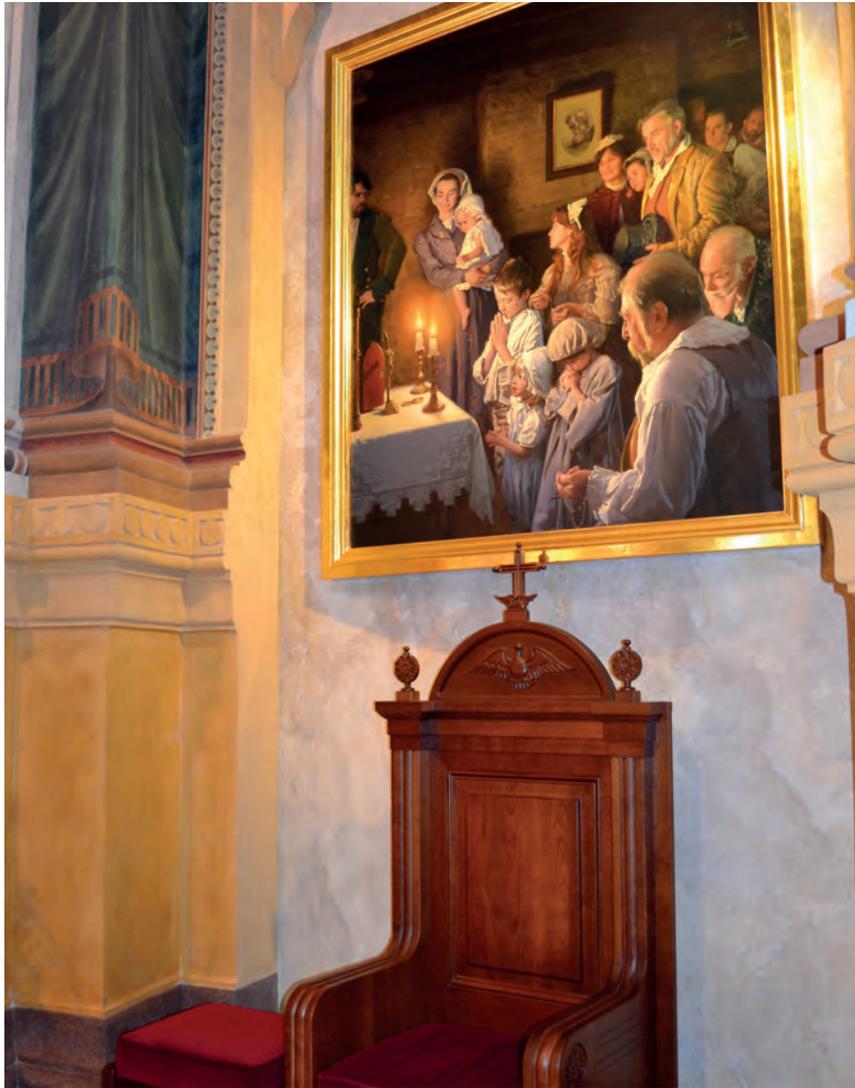
to be established in Rome, the Eternal City known in ancient times as *Caput Mundi* [Leader of the World], *Domina Gentium* [Mistress of the Nations] and *Regina Urbium* [Queen of Cities].³

It was, however, as the burial place of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and especially of St Peter, that Rome was renowned throughout the ancient Christian world. And the Church of Rome, under its bishop, the successor of St Peter in the See was equally renowned as ‘Mother and Root of the Catholic Church,’ [*Ecclesiae Catholicae matricem et radicem*] to use the well-known phrase of St Cyprian of Carthage.⁴

Pilgrim Centres and Saxon Pilgrims

In 4th century Rome a foreign community, with its compounds and hospices, was known as a *Schola* – from which we derive our English word ‘school’. In Roman times, however, *Schola* often meant simply ‘a place’ or ‘a group of people of similar interests’. Curiously, as Tertullian tells us, *Schola Bestiarum* [‘a place for wild animals’] was another name for an Amphitheatre.⁵

From the 7th century onwards there were *Scholae* of Greeks, Franks,⁶ Longobards,⁷ Frisians⁸ and Saxons⁹ in Rome.



Painting by Paul Newton of the Davis Household at Church Hill, Sydney. Davis obtained land in *The Rocks* in 1809, and in the early years of the colony, when there was no resident priest in Sydney, his home became a centre of Catholic prayer as the Blessed Sacrament had been left by the priest in the Davis home.

Many of these evolved over time into national Seminaries and Colleges of the Armenians, Ethiopians, Ruthenians [Ukrainians], Belgians, Poles, Illyrians [Croations, Slovenians, Bosnians and Albanians], Hungarians, Bohemians, Spaniards, German, French, English, Scots, Irish, Greek, Lebanese [Maronites], North Americans, Canadians and Latin-Americans.

Australian Catholics of English background come from a long line of faithful who wended their way as pilgrims to Rome.

In 689 Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome as a pilgrim to be baptised, and died there.

His successor, King Ina, after renouncing his kingdom, went as pilgrim, together with his wife Ethelburga, to Rome in 720. Ina is said

to have set up the Saxon quarter [*Schola Saxonum*] in Rome near St Peter's.

Conrad, king of the Mercians, and Offa, son of Segeric king of the East Saxons, went Rome in 709, renounced their kingdoms and lived there as monks. Both died there. Offa and Conrad were buried with Caedwalla in old St Peter's.

St Richard, king of the West Saxons, was making a pilgrimage *ad limina Apostolorum* to Rome with his two sons when he died at Lucca in 722.

Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria, gave his kingdom to Eadbert in 758, and went as a pilgrim to Rome, becoming a monk at St Peter's tomb.

In 853 Ethelwulf sent his little son Alfred, aged five, to Rome, where he was confirmed and anointed king by Pope St Leo IV. Ethelwulf rebuilt the English

hospice [*Schola Saxonum*] which had been destroyed by fire.

Imperial Rome

Domus Australia's location also conjures up memories of Imperial Rome.

The site it occupies once formed part of the Campus of the Cohorts of the Praetorian Guard comprising, in all, about 10,000 men. The Cohorts used to be scattered around the city but the Emperor Tiberius [BC 42-AD 37] allowed himself to be induced by Lucius Aelius Seianus, an ambitious villain whom he trusted implicitly, to bring them together into one immense barracks where they quickly became conscious of their numerical strength, and eventually were to exercise malign power in making and unmaking emperors.

About eight minutes walk from the Centre is the old *Porta Nomentana* in the Aurelian Wall. Through this gate sometime in May AD 68 – his face covered with a handkerchief – Nero rode at midnight helter-skelter out of the city to a villa of a freedman of his on the *Via Nomentana*. His horse shied and the handkerchief fell from his face. The Praetorian Guard at the Gate recognised him but let him pass. He was eventually pursued, and killed. He was 18 when he became Emperor, and was 32 years old when he died by his own hand. The Apostles Peter and Paul were martyred under Nero.

Remains of the foundations of a first century Roman building, part of a street paved with stone in herringbone pattern and remains of a first century sewer and pipes were discovered when constructing the new buildings. They are protected and well displayed in the inner cortile of *Domus Australia*.

About 60,000 Australians visit Rome each year. Those who are privileged to stay at *Domus Australia* will return home enriched by the experience.

1. In his Preface to his *Enedos* [a paraphrase of Virgil's *Aeneid*] xxii, 33.
2. Jean Chéini, Henri Branthomme, *Les Chemins de Dieu*, Hachette, Paris, 1982, p.97.
3. *Rome, Profile of a City, 512-1508*, by Richard Krautheimer Princeton University Press, 2000, p.144.
4. Ep. xlviii.
5. Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus, died AD 195, *Apol.* 35.
6. Germanic tribes that would later evolve into France and Germany.
7. Germanic tribes of Scandanavian origin.
8. Tribes from north-west Holland, Germany and Denmark.
9. A confederation of Old Germanic tribes. Their modern-day descendants are generally considered ethnic Germans, Dutch, or English.

*The modernist creed of inevitable evolution and progress
seemed to have an insuperable flaw in it*

AT WAR WITH A DELUSION

by Giles Auty



WAS 28 at the time of my first visit to Spain, a country for which I have since learned a deep-rooted affection. In retrospect I cannot but marvel at how little I knew then of any wider world.

My conversion to Rome the previous year, 1962, had certainly helped clarify my thinking - for example through ceasing to view the political and religious history of Europe any longer from an exclusively British point of view.

In my professional life as an artist, however, I still found myself tugged this way and that by conflicting theories.

The received wisdom of that time was that an artist living then 'must' try to make modern art - whatever that might be - in much the same way that 'modern' people 'must' live in modern homes, served by state-of-the-art labour-saving devices. Not to do so could well be thought of as 'reactionary'.

What I began to sense then but could not yet articulate fully was the extent to which rhetorical use of language was coming to influence our lives not just in obvious fields such as advertising and politics but also now through art.

I was not destined to begin writing art criticism regularly for more than a decade but what I began to realise was the dangerous extent to which rhetorical use of language had already come to rule contemporary art theory and practice. Slogans already formed an inadequate substitute for considered thought in the minds of many of the younger artists I knew, with the effect that most thought and spoke almost entirely in clichés: "nobody should try to put the clock back" etc.etc.

A depressingly high number of visual artists continue to suffer from the same affliction to this day.

Just one of those clichés was the one I came to look on later on as 'the temporal imperative': in other words an extension of the determinist doctrine that people are somehow compelled to behave in certain ways at given moments of history. But if artists really were so coerced would not that be a total contradiction of one of the central claims of modernism: that it encourages total freedom of thought and practice?

What I describe here is typical of the kind of paradox which troubled me during the evolutionary stages of my thinking about art. However, in common with most people, the greatest barrier to my attainment of greater understanding of art at that stage of my career was simply lack of knowledge. Far too much of my appreciation of painting and sculpture was derived from reading rather than from first-hand acquaintance with the works themselves. At that stage I had seen in the flesh only a small proportion of the works which I imagined wrongly that I

'knew'. Indeed, much of my first-hand knowledge of art was derived in those days from only a few collections - most notably those of the National Gallery in London, the Tate Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum.

I suspect that the foregoing provided at least part of the reason why a first visit to the great museum known as the Prado while staying in Madrid had such an overwhelming effect on me. But that was not the sole explanation for what subsequently took place.

Until that moment, at least, I continued to entertain vague notions of being some kind of 'modern' person, thinker and artist. After the beginning of 1963, however, I no longer felt able to wear any such comforting cloak of contemporary being.

One effect of my series of visits to the Prado was to cause me to view the basic notions of artistic time and fashion in a radically different way. Indeed I look back on that now as the true beginning of my artistic education.

One Law for All

DURING A VISIT to Australia in August, British-based anti-Sharia law campaigner Maryam Namazie said Australia should learn from Britain's mistake in extending a form of legal recognition to tribunals that use Sharia law, not British law, to decide disputes. Ms Namazie's organisation, *One Law for All*, produced a report last year that outlines how the British Arbitration Act has permitted Sharia tribunals to make rulings based on principles that displace the normal law.

The rulings of Sharia arbitrators can be registered with Britain's civil courts and then enforced as if they are judgments of mainstream courts, the report says.

Ms Namazie blames the liberal media in Britain and the British government for tolerating a form of "legal pluralism" that deprives individual Muslims of some of the rights enjoyed by other Britons.

"When you look at Sharia's advancement, it restricts the rights and freedoms of Muslims first and foremost and therefore it is actually to the detriment of Muslims if it advances," Ms Namazie says.

— Chris Merrit, *The Australian*, October 7, 2011, 'Local Islamists draw on British success in bid for Sharia law'.

Europe's Debt to Christianity

NO DOUBT European civilization, even when secularized, still retains the mark of its spiritual origins. The new social ideals and secular forms of cultures themselves represent partial and one-sided survivals of the Christian social tradition. Nevertheless, the spiritual forces that owe their existence to Christianity have turned against it and have become the centres of anti-Christian revolt. Nationalism owes to Christianity its high and almost mystical conception of the nation as a spiritual unity—a sacred community for which the individual will gladly sacrifice his life; yet, divorced from Christianity, this conception becomes a principle of hatred and destruction. Liberalism and democracy owe to Christianity their humanitarian idealism and their faith in progress; yet this idealization of humanity has become a substitute for the Christian faith in a divine order, and has made it possible to regard secular civilization as man's final end. Socialism derives from both Christianity and Judaism its passion for social justice, and for the rights of the poor and the disinherited; yet this passion has become the driving force or the Communist attack on Christianity, and the basis of a social atheism which leaves no room for human rights and spiritual freedom.

— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, p. xxi.

Regrettably, however, the consequences of such insights tend to prove more beneficial to the quality of one's thinking than to the quality of one's life. By their nature they are more likely to isolate us than otherwise.

Until 1963 I had tended to accept, somewhat thoughtlessly I admit, the very widespread view that contemporary artistic practice was somehow simply our present-day 'equivalent' of that of the major historic eras which preceded it. Thus, however different it might be in its appearance, this notion maintained that the art of Mark Rothko, say, or of Jackson Pollock — two artists who were venerated especially back in 1963 — was simply our contemporary 'equivalent' of the art of masters of the past such as Velazquez and Goya. But a major stumbling-block here was that it resolutely refused to look or to seem 'equivalent'.

Whatever complex excuses one might make for it, the art of such as Rothko and Pollock continued not just to look inferior but also to seem extraordinarily limited in its scope when compared with that of Velazquez and Goya and with that of a whole host of even earlier great masters. How, for example, could an artist with Rothko's working methods even begin to comment on the horrors of human conflict in the way Goya had done so forcefully in his unforgettable series of etchings *The Disasters of War*?

Clearly, colour alone which was - for a wholly abstract artist such as Rothko

— a sole effective vehicle of feeling, was inherently incapable of articulating any comparable weight of metaphysical horror.

To put it briefly, the modernist creed of inevitable evolution and progress seemed to have an insuperable flaw in it which could not be dispensed with easily or at all.

But could it then be that the writings of, say, Clement Greenberg and Patrick Heron — two critics who wielded immense influence in 1963 on either side of the Atlantic — were based on fundamental fallacies? And what about their great armies of followers and fellow travellers who largely dominated official thinking and practice in the arts of the Western world at that time?

Even in terms of numbers alone, surely not all of them could simply be deluded?

If my dilemma seems quaint or even laughable today, it certainly did not seem so at the time. Indeed to think thus would be to discount the degree of influence exerted by modernist thinkers of that era, not least in controlling professional opportunity of all kinds. If dissenting voices did exist they were certainly very seldom heard.

It was extraordinarily cold in Madrid at the time of my visit and the welcoming warmth of the galleries of the Prado may well have been one of the factors which drew me back there late one afternoon as the light began to fade in the streets outside.

The galleries themselves were entirely physically deserted yet I felt a strange sense of presence as though the dead artists whose works graced the walls had summoned me back there to some kind of posthumous parliament.

"If you listen attentively enough, you will learn something of great value" a deep, echoing voice seemed to say almost audibly.

What I grasped in the next moment or moments remains hard to describe.

Suddenly I understood that the 300 years which had passed since the death of Velazquez represented a mere blink of the cosmic eye. As a consequence I no longer felt myself to be part of the art history of any particular age but of all ages and realised simultaneously what a privilege that was.

Most of us are far too obsessed with our own time and are inclined to dignify it all too often with an excessive and undeserved importance.

Modernism in art had attempted to make a clean break with the past and to impose a new and radical set of values on the rest of us. Yet the great oversight it made was essentially this: great art of all kinds and of all eras is essentially timeless. What it tells us about the human condition never becomes any less relevant or true.

In ceasing to regard myself any longer as a modernist or as someone landlocked by the 20th century or by any of its obsessions I felt utterly liberated suddenly as well as free to make art in future in whatever way I chose.

Unless guns are held to their heads all artists who live outside totalitarian regimes are similarly free.

Unfortunate circumstances such as the latter aside, any compulsion to work in this manner or that is *for all artists of all kinds and at all times* completely illusory.

The demon of supposed artistic progress and evolution is, in fact, merely a cunning disguise for the even less reputable demon of artistic fashion.

GILES AUTY was born in the UK and trained privately as a painter. He worked professionally as an artist for 20 years. Publication of his *The Art of Self Deception* swung his career towards criticism. He was art critic for *The Spectator* from 1984 to 1995. He continues to devote himself to his original love — painting. He is a regular contributor to *Annals*.



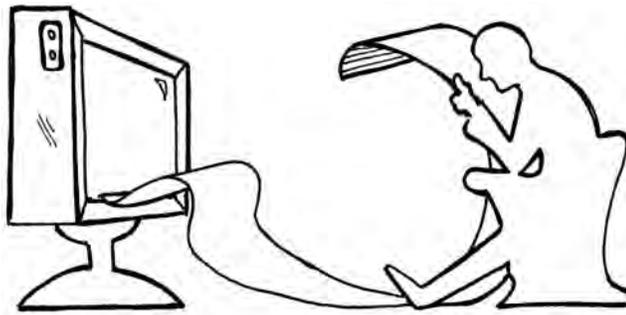
HE NEURO-PHYSIOLOGIST Oliver Sachs wrote of a man who was blind but who insisted

he was not, that he could see perfectly well, and this despite the fact he would regularly bump into the furniture. It's rather similar to the anorexic woman who looks in the mirror and insists that what she sees is a fat blimp. I imagine we all have at some time or another been 'in denial'; we all have claimed that darkness is light.

But what is even stranger is when a whole society is blind to what is most obvious; when it is blind to the very thing that is, at one and the same time, necessary for the society's functioning and also a direct contradiction to what that society ostensibly values. *Our* society is case in point, every day children everywhere are pumped full of self-esteem and told that they are valuable for being just who they are. Not only children of course, there are workshops, books, magazine articles, DVDs, and even tweets that tell us that we are so very precious just by reason that we exist! And yet if you are on the wrong side of the womb, namely in it, then you are not so precious and can be killed if the mother or father (if he is around) so decide. The ostensible message of our society is life is precious, but beneath the surface the message is quite the reverse; only some life is precious and some life can be sacrificed to serve those who were allowed to be born. As we live in a consumer society it is felt that abortion is necessary to preserve the right of women to choose (as well as to ensure there's space and food enough for those of us allowed to live). And choice is sacred in a consumer and free-market economy.

There is a blind spot which is necessary if our society is to continue to function in the way it is comfortable with, and sometimes this blind spot can be traced in the daily papers. One day in particular stands out for me, it was a Saturday and I was reading that weekend's *Sydney Morning Herald* (of 16/10/10). There were three stories on different pages but if you put them together then the myopia began to lift, something was seen that usually is not seen, namely the desire *not to see*.

The first story was about some doctors and scientists who wanted to make cloned human embryos so they had something to experiment upon, a process that required the use of



COMFORTABLE BLINDNESS

By ROBERT TILLEY

Cannold who we were told is an 'ethicist'.

The third story was about a journalist, Antonio Salas, who has spent time interviewing terrorists in order to understand what it is that makes them able to kill innocent people. "I wanted to know," he is quoted as saying, "what goes through the mind of a person who is capable of killing for an ideology." How ironic that all he needed to do was to read the paper he was featured in!

But our ethicists might object, observing the strictest ethical standards of course, and argue that killing the unborn and using their remains to aid our experiments to help our health is not the same as what terrorists do. And with that we must agree, for one practice is legal and the other illegal. Also terrorists are remarkably wasteful; perhaps if they didn't totally blow us up but left enough bits of us to be useful to science and medicine then their actions would not be so bad. I guess the other difference is that our society accepts the killing of people as long as they are in the womb, so if terrorists confined themselves to the unborn then they would, at least, be civilised. After all, it's a bit much killing us when we're no longer in the womb!

If you feel this is in bad taste and insist that abortion is not expressive of an ideology that allows us to treat others as less than human - then you might think about what Jesus said in *John 9:41*, the passage concerning those who were blind to their being blind, something to the effect that their sin remained.



ROBERT TILLEY has a Ph.D from the University of Sydney. He currently lectures in Adult Education on Philosophy, Theology and History of Ideas. He also lectures in Greek and Biblical Studies at The Catholic Institute of Sydney [CIS] and in literature and theology at Aquinas Academy.

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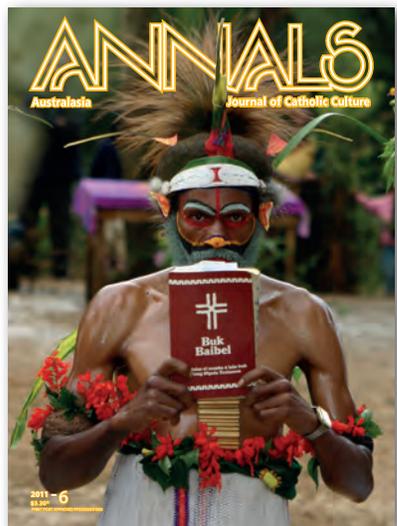
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'CREATIVE CHAOS' AND THE FATE OF MINORITIES IN SYRIA

By Paul Stenhouse, MSC



ON AUGUST 18 last, Barack Obama reportedly declared that calls for dialogue and reform by Bashar al-Assad, son of the former dictator Hafiz al-Assad, rang hollow; and that for the sake of the Syrian people the time had come for him to step aside.

On September 15, American citizens were advised by their government to leave Syria. An earlier advice, urging all British nationals to leave, remains in force.

This is a dramatic *volte face* on the part of the US and the West. In January 1991 when the US under George Bush Snr. launched *Desert Storm* against Saddam Hussein from bases in Saudi Arabia, Syria was one of the thirty states invited to take part in the campaign on the side of the US and her allies. An estimated 100,000 Iraqi soldiers died in that short war that was, according to the Bush publicity machine, designed to 'restore democracy' to Kuwait.

After the terrorist attacks on America by al-Qaeda on September 11, 2001 another US administration – led by George Bush Jnr. – was to wage a second war against Iraq in March 2003, again, allegedly, to bring democracy: this time to the Iraqis.

AL-JAZEERA'S Arabic and English channels have been more than happy to provide coverage of demonstrations in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen and Syria – all countries where Sunni Islamists are hankering to take power – but they generally ignore unrest in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia where Shi'a majorities protest against Sunni and Wahhabi rule. Some commentators are finally wondering whether George W. Bush would have moved against Saddam Hussein 'if he knew then what we know now'. The following article recommends that the US and the West ponder well that question and stop trying to topple the Assad regime in Syria.

So far the allied forces have succeeded in destabilising the region, handing the country effectively over to Iranian influence and majority Shiite control, and exposing the Christian and other minority groups to violent and ongoing recriminations. More than one million Christians fled to neighbouring Arab countries or to the West.

What the media have dubbed an Arab Spring but which some have called an *Arab Hell*, or an *Arab Winter*, commenced in earnest on December 18, 2010, in Tunisia.

Robert Fisk's quip, 'If it can happen in the holiday destination Tunisia, it can happen anywhere, can't it?' should have warned neighbouring Arab states that a game was being played out, and all bets were off.

Fisk added: 'the chances of a series of working democracies emerging from the chaos of the Middle East stand at around zero per cent'. This should have given the US and the West grounds for hesitating before they did any more damage by their meddling – in the name of 'democracy' – in countries whose politico-religious culture they seem not to understand.

For Tunisia the Arab Spring led predictably to a Summer of Hate. Radicals firebombed and bullied their way into power with demonstrations outside a synagogue, the murder of a Catholic priest, riots to impose the hijab, skyrocketing crime and the settling of real and imaginary scores. An Islamist victory in recent polls should have rung warning bells in Washington and should have given the U.S. administration second thoughts about further destabilising the region by calling for immediate regime change in Syria.

The subsequent fall of Mubarak, has given rise to uncertainty, especially on the part of Egypt's Copts, about the democracy that was to replace him.



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The Obama administration has good reason to doubt the wisdom of what in 2005 Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called a policy of 'creative chaos'; and the wisdom of what, in 2006, she called the 'birth pangs of a New Middle East'. She was referring to the hundreds of Lebanese dead, and the more than half a million Lebanese refugees resulting from the Israeli war against Hizbollah.

Libya is in chaos and Gaddafi has been killed; Yemen is in turmoil; Bahrain has shown its more brutal face, and the 'New Middle East' seems like a sick joke. TIME described Condoleezza Rice's comment about 'creative chaos' as 'Diplomatic Disneyland'. 'Nightmare on

Elm Street' would have been closer to the truth. At least for the religious and ethnic minorities living in these regions.

Hafiz al-Assad, the former Syrian dictator, is dead. His son Bashar, as the Patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox reminded me, 'is not his father'.

It is true that promised reforms were initially slow in coming. The Sunni Mufti of Syria, Muhammad Badr Din Hassoun told me in Damascus in late September that it was 'the Old Guard' that was opposed to change, and the new President had to move slowly.

How could Assad do otherwise? He assumed office in 2000 and then 9/11/2001 changed everything. This was followed by the US invasion of Iraq in

2003, and Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 2006. But he is moving. Nobody in Damascus or in Hama with whom I spoke contradicted this judgement.

The momentum in countries affected by the Arab Spring has, in most cases, shifted from youthful demonstrators and idealistic liberals to the military, security forces, and armed militias allied with Islamist and Salafist groups.

A meeting of Syrian Opposition Parties in Istanbul on October 2 bore this out. It was attended by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, of the Muslim Brotherhood, well-known for his support for suicide bombers, and acts of terrorism.

Adnan al-Aroor, a Syrian cleric described by the TV station *al-Arabiya* as 'a moderate Sunni ... [a proponent of] peaceful and non-violent' rebellion, has reportedly incited his Syrian Muslim supporters to 'tear apart, chop up and feed to the dogs' anyone who supports the current government – clearly referring to Sunni supporters of Assad, and the Alawites and other minorities including Christians

Media demands for the Syrian Regime to fall, regardless, seemingly, of the consequences, are shrill and incessant. Religious and ethnic minorities – Alawites, Druze, Christians, Jews and Kurds among them – must wonder at the agenda behind Nicholas Sarkozy's vehement 'Assad is finished'. Yet the media agree with him: 'It's in the West's interests,' we are told, 'for Assad to go'.

Nobody with the best interests of Syria and the region at heart would call for him to go before the Constitutional and Electoral reforms he flagged have become law and have been tested.

The Syrian Mufti has paid a high personal price for his tolerance and moderation. His son Sariah Hassoun was assassinated on October 2 – only a few days after his father and I met in Damascus.

This cowardly act delivers a grim warning to the Sunni community for refusing to resort to violence to bring down Bashar al-Assad and his Alawite regime.

Arabic and Western media and the International community should think again before they unleash any more dogs of war.

Western thinker believes that we have entered a period of cultural decline

BARBARIANS WITHIN

by George Cardinal Pell



ABBI JONATHAN SACKS is the outstanding religious leader in Britain today. Not surprisingly his small piece on the

September 11 anniversary was thought provoking.

He began by pointing out that some saw the 2001 terrorist attack as marking the end of an epoch. The Cold War with Communism was over and the new war with radical violent Islam had begun.

Others believed that terrorist attacks don't change the bases of power, except perhaps by provoking an over-reaction.

Robert McNamara, USA Secretary of Defence to President J.F. Kennedy, claimed that the first rule in politics is to understand the psychology of your enemy. Why then did al-Qa'ida attack the West? Sacks claims that Bin Laden believed the U.S.A. was past its prime, overripe and ready to fall off its tree.

The collapse of the Communist world in 1989 was not due to free market economics or the superiority of liberal democracy, according to Bin Laden. He believed Russia collapsed because their humiliating retreat from Afghanistan set in motion a series of destructive internal crises.

For him, 1989 did not see the triumph of the West, but the end of an

era dominated by the twin superpowers of U.S.A. and Russia. For him America too was radically weakened by internal cultural pressures and social disintegration.

Sacks loves our Western way of life, but believes the Islamist terrorists are correct in sensing weakness. Important Western thinkers also believe we have entered a period of cultural decline. The barbarians are not all outside.

He produces much evidence. No longer is there widespread agreement, especially in the media and universities, on theories of right and wrong, as the culture wars demonstrate.

The family is disintegrating, and some actively encourage this. Financial institutions have collapsed, personal debt has increased radically. The American economy is limping, burdened with a debt of trillions of dollars. Some European countries are worse.

More fundamentally, honour, loyalty and integrity are downgraded or rejected. "Me" takes precedence over "we" and pleasure over tomorrow's sustainability. According to Sacks, the most important enemy is not radical Islam but "unsustainable self-indulgence".

Our energy and courage should not be directed primarily to foreign wars, but to renewing our morality and institutions, strengthening families and communities, standards in public life, ethical codes.

Our enemies recognize this central weakness. Therefore the challenge for the Western world is to renew the moral disciplines of freedom.

Can it be done?

Mediaeval Doctor of Civil and Canon Law

[JUD - Doctor utriusque Juris]

WHEN HE had arrived at the place of the *conventus*, or public examination, the candidate gave a speech and then read a thesis on some point of law which he defended against opponents chosen from among the student body, thus acting as a doctor in a university disputation. When this was finished, he was again presented to the archdeacon by his "promoter" (his presenting doctor). The archdeacon then gave a short talk praising the candidate and immediately licensed him in canon or civil law, or in both, to teach that field of knowledge by the authority of the Pope and in the name of the Holy Trinity. He was then invested with the insignia of his office, the presenting doctor giving him a book and the master's blessing, which was essential to the act. The candidate then seated himself on the magisterial chair, the *cathedra*, and a biretta was placed upon his head and a golden ring upon his finger. The ring seems to have signified either his equality with the knights or his espousal to science. Finally, the presenting doctor gave him "the paternal benediction and the kiss of peace in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." After these ceremonies were over, if the student were not too poor, there was a procession through the city, a "triumph" of the new doctor, whose cavalcade was preceded at Bologna by three university pipers and four trumpeters.

— *The Mediaeval University*, L.J.Daly, SJ, Sheed & Ward 1961 pp.143-144]

This comment first appeared in *The Sunday Telegraph*, Sydney, September 18, 2011

The remarkable tale of two Egyptian converts to Christianity

A GREAT ESCAPE

By Peter Day



ABOUT TWO YEARS ago, a 56-year-old Egyptian named Maher El-Gohary and his 15-year-old daughter, Dina, applied at the Australian embassy in Cairo for refuge in Australia. The couple, who had made public their conversion from Islam to Christianity, were known by human rights observers around the world to be at daily risk of death at the hands of Muslim fanatics. Their case had been reported in a US State Department report on Egypt and in other NGO reports. International media such as the Guardian, the Los Angeles Times, and TV channels in the US and Europe, had also run stories referring to their plight.

But when Maher El-Gohary lodged an offshore application for asylum in Australia, he was rebuffed. Australian officials in Cairo refused to grant him even an interview, stating in a curt letter of rejection that he didn't meet the 'criteria' for a refugee visa to Australia. Recently however, Maher and Dina El-Gohary have made it to the West and to freedom.

This is their story.

Maher El-Gohary converted to Christianity many years ago and was subsequently received into the Coptic Orthodox Church (an ancient church to which nearly all Egyptian Christians – about 10 per cent of the population – belong). Under Egyptian law, a Muslim woman is not permitted to marry a non-Muslim husband, or to remain married to a husband who leaves Islam. El-Gohary and his wife, who remained a Muslim, separated and divorced after his conversion. Maher's daughter Dina followed her father as a Christian believer.

In any predominantly Muslim country, conversions from Islam to Christianity are fraught with danger. But the risks

for the El-Goharys were even greater than usual. This was because they had not only converted away from Islam to Christianity, but also because they subsequently sought through the legal system to have their national ID cards changed to reflect their changed religious affiliation.

To appreciate the significance of this, a little background is in order. Egyptian ID cards, which must be carried by all citizens of 16 years or older, identify the bearers as either Muslims or Christians. Because of the personal risks that are involved for an Egyptian who leaves Islam for any reason, the usual practice for converts to Christianity is simply to leave their ID cards unchanged and to practise their new faith covertly. (There is no provision for an Egyptian to just leave a gap or an 'n/a' notation on the card.) But this can result in intolerable personal predicaments.

In the El-Goharys' case, if Dina's card remained unchanged, it would have meant that as a supposedly Muslim woman, she would only have been permitted to marry a Muslim man. It would also have meant that any children she bore would, under the law, have to be brought up as Muslims.

The Egyptian state vigorously opposed the El-Goharys' application for a change in their ID cards. Lawyers for the state argued in court that allowing people to change their public religious affiliation from Muslim to Christian would be 'a threat to societal order'. El Gohary, on the other hand, said that he was acting not only for his daughter's future, but also as a point of principle to establish the right to freedom of religious belief for all Egyptians. Amid national furore, the state won the case – the El-Goharys' requests for ID card changes were rejected.

For their audacity in challenging the system, the El-Goharys now faced a terrible punishment. Numerous fatwas were issued against them by Muslim sheikhs. Because of the media coverage given to the case, their names and faces were well-known. Whenever they ventured onto the streets, they could be recognised by people who sought to do them harm. (According to a recent Pew Research Center poll, about 80 percent

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of Muslim Egyptians believe that people who leave Islam – ‘apostates’ – should be executed.) Now on the run, they were forced to move every month or so between ‘safe houses’ provided by a network of Coptic friends on whom they also relied for the basic necessities of life.

The El-Goharys were caught in a vortex of random terror, at constant risk on the streets of Egyptian cities from neighbours or even casual passers-by who might recognise them. In one broad-daylight incident, Dina had acid thrown over her clothing. In another, her father was fortunate to escape with neck wounds from a street attack by men armed with knives. (It seems they had had tried to behead him.)

It seemed only a matter of time and their luck would run out. There also seemed to be no escape: when they attempted to leave the country by air, Egyptian security authorities stopped them at Cairo airport. To make sure they couldn’t leave, the Egyptian authorities even confiscated Maher El-Gohary’s passport. No reasons were given.

It was at his time, in late 2009, that Maher El-Gohary had some Egyptian friends living in Sydney quietly lodge an offshore refugee visa application on his behalf with the Australian immigration authorities. This was forwarded from the Sydney processing centre to Australian officials at the embassy in Cairo. After a seemingly interminable wait, in mid-2010 the decision came through. It was a terrible letdown.

In a letter to El-Gohary dated 20 July, Ian J. Simpson, First Secretary (Immigration) – Principal Migration Officer at the Australian Embassy, Cairo, wrote: ‘I am not satisfied that there are compelling reasons for giving special consideration to granting you a visa, having regard to particular factors in the criteria.’ An attached pro forma page gave four ‘criteria not met by you for each of the subclasses’. These ‘criteria’ were given as follows:

‘(a) the degree of persecution to which the applicant is subject in the applicant’s home country; and

‘(b) the extent of the applicant’s connection with Australia; and

‘(c) whether or not there is any suitable country available, other than Australia, that can provide for the applicant’s settlement and protection from persecution; and

Al-Azhar in Egypt favours pluralism?

IN A RECENT document considered as ‘historic’ by many, Ahmad al-Tayeb, the Grand Imam of the Islamic University of al-Azhar, has declared that Islamic law does not require a state to be directed by religious leaders, and that Islam will help Egypt become a pluralist society, tolerant of religious minorities. However, this position favourable to pluralism and secularism taken by the grand Imam and by the Muslim Brothers, has a hollow ring to it. Many see it as a ploy. ... They stress that al-Tayeb has always supported article 2 of the Constitution that stipulates that Sharia is the principal source of law, and they stress that these overtures contradict the teachings and the historical role of the Islamic University, which is to defend Sharia and Islamic religious principles. Up till now, the majority of Egyptians seem not to want an Islamic state. Many doubt the good faith, and the new moderate image of al-Azhar and the Muslim Brothers, who are capable of making a radical U-turn after the September elections.

— Paul Stenhouse. See ‘Egypt: le masque et le visage du Grand Imam d’Al-Azhar,’ *Correspondance Européenne* n.239, August 31, 2011.

‘(d) the capacity of the Australian community to provide for the resettlement of persons such as the applicant in Australia.’

There was no indication as to where exactly the El-Goharys had fallen short of the requirements. Mr Simpson would only say that the decision was final (or, in the jargon of the bureaucracy, ‘Merits review of this decision is not available...’). El-Gohary would not even be given an interview.

The immigration agent who had lodged the Sydney application on El-Gohary’s behalf was outraged. The agent observed that he was not a ‘boat arrival’, nor was he ‘a person who comfortably arrived in Australia by plane and then applied for a protection visa.’ Rather, he was ‘a person who trusted the Australian immigration system to forward his genuine and serious claims.’ Evidently, such trust was misplaced.

Then history intervened. Amid the chaos of the January 25 movement that succeeded in bringing down Mubarak, Maher and Dina El-Gohary decided to risk another visit to the airport. With the security services in disarray, they managed to talk their way onto a plane to Syria – the only country in the world to which an Egyptian may travel without a visa.

Rapidly running out of money, isolated and increasingly desperate in a foreign land that is hardly less hostile to Christian converts than his own, El-Gohary approached the American embassy in Damascus. Receiving no encouragement there, he next tried the Vatican embassy. Here he was advised

to try the French. That advice proved well-founded. The French Embassy in Damascus issued the couple short-term visas for France on the same day, reportedly as a result of the direct intervention of the French ambassador. ‘I really appreciate what the French ambassador did for us,’ El-Gohary later told one reporter. ‘The French saved us.’

Through the good offices of a Coptic group in the UK, once they were in France the El-Goharys were able to find temporary accommodation with a Coptic resident there. Penniless and in strange surrounds, they now must work out their uncertain future. Even in the West, they can never feel entirely safe. But at least they are relatively free.

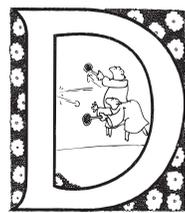
What of the Australian part in the El-Gohary story? When it comes to refugees, Australia is rightly proud of its reputation as one of the world’s most generous nations. But it is a curious generosity that sometimes seems deliberately intent on benefiting the most importunate rather than the most deserving. In any case, there is something profoundly wrong with a system in which asylum is reflexively refused, without recourse, to Christians who are well-known to be terribly persecuted and who apply for refuge from offshore, in good faith, according to the book. But then, we all know that, don’t we?

PETER DAY is a regular contributor to *The Spectator* magazine and a former New York and Washington correspondent for *The Australian* newspaper. His articles have also appeared in numerous other major publications, including *Quadrant* in Australia and the *National Interest* and *Weekly Standard* in the United States.

For his piece on Waugh, Hitchens chooses to cite the former's anti-Americanism, ignoring his travel writing with its warm and vivid description of the USA, including the enduring faith of African-American Catholics.

HITCHENS RIDES AGAIN

Reviewed by James Murray



DOOR-STOPPER compendium (788 pages) into which Christopher Hitchens has tipped his files of reviews, essays and commentary from publications including *Vanity Fair*, *Atlantic Monthly* and the electronic *Slate*.

Herculean is the word though this is not to suggest a connection with the main product of the Augean stables. Hitchens is too cute a writer for that, witness his dismissal of GK Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc as dated. By so doing he seeks to dodge the truth: it is he who is dated, his articulate atheism being of the kind that Chesterton and Belloc saw off in their contemporaries such as George Bernard Shaw and HG Wells.

Hitchens' summary dismissal of Chesterton and Belloc surprises; both were of old Fleet Street, for which Hitchens professes nostalgia.

Additionally Belloc, in *Survivals and New Arrivals*, forecast the revival of aggressive Islam; Chesterton's *The Flying Inn* described an England almost completely dominated by such an Islam. Hitchens – his bravest stand – named it Islamo-fascism though it is nearer to Islamo-Trotskyism, the latter being his own political brand.

His early left-wing activism makes it intriguing that at no point in his compendium (nor in his memoir *Hitch-22*) does Hitchens make any reference to the papal encyclicals from *Rerum Novarum* (1891) to *Centesimus Annus* (1991). He prefers it seems to canvass scandal rather than discuss social justice.

What might be called disparaging admiration is a Hitchens trademark. He is not a WASP – White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, he is a WASPA – White Anglo-Saxon Proclaimed Athiest – a

Arguably, Christopher Hitchens, Allen & Unwin, pp 788, rrp \$32.95

WASPA whose sting is constantly ready, a drinker who prefers to chase his wine with vinegar.

He writes of Evelyn Waugh as having had a 'touch of war'. Some touch. Some war. At the onset of World War II, Waugh, volunteered and served with the Royal Marines at a time when the unit was reasserting its capability for amphibious warfare.

He took part in the Crete campaign, in the North African Operation Torch and parachuted (with Randolph Churchill) into what was then Yugoslavia. Hacks write with their market in mind. For his piece on Waugh, Hitchens chooses to cite the former's anti-Americanism, ignoring his travel writing with its warm and vivid description of the USA, including the enduring faith of African-American Catholics.

At one point Hitchens refers to Waugh's failure even to acknowledge America. This after writing that Waugh knew the postwar world was divided between two great powers. Is he suggesting that Waugh and his readers

were not aware that one of these was the US, the other the Soviet Union?

Hitchens covers the trouble PG Wodehouse got into for broadcasting while interned by the Germans during World War II. He does not say that Evelyn Waugh was among the writers who helped Wodehouse resolve the matter.

Of Wodehouse, Hitchens also writes that he soon became aware that the United States was where writers could earn more money. This is what Hitchens himself realised.

In London, Oxbridge hacks of his calibre are ten a penny (okay, ten for 100 guineas); in New York, Washington and Los Angeles they could aspire to dollar-a-word status. And like Wodehouse, nicknamed Plum, Hitchens to American ears is an English toff, a genus Americans have loved at least since PG Woodhouse helped found a cricket club in 1920s Hollywood.

As noted the compendium is a doorstopper; if Hitchens had added his contributions to *The New Statesman* and other Fleet Street journals, the publishers would have needed to supply a free lectern with every copy.

What Hitchens, and his publishers, required was a scholar such as Donat Gallagher who created a portable treasure by editing *Evelyn Waugh, A Little Order: A Selection from his Journalism*.

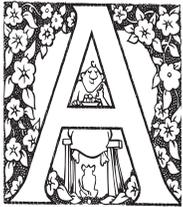
Nonetheless given Hitchens' precarious health, it is to be hoped his compendium stops death's door closing; despite his denials, he is a pilgrim writer whose first name carries what he denies; on occasions, his wit may exceed his wisdom yet with many another wordsmith he could share the punning epitaph Hilaire Belloc penned for himself: 'His sins were scarlet but his books were read.'



Not all is bleak in the ongoing Demographic Winter

DEMOGRAPHY : THE HIDDEN HAND OF HISTORY.

By Wanda Skowronska



AFTER THE break-up of the Soviet Union, one of the most pressing issues facing Russia has been its dramatic population decline.

At a Moscow Demographic Summit held in June 2011, social scientists from around the world – from Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and non-religious backgrounds – met and discussed the implications of this current demographic implosion.

Participants were greeted by Archbishop Paul Pezzi, Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, the Chief Rabbi of Russia Berl Lazar and Mufti Huzin who all gave their blessings to the conference which was held at the Russian State Social University. Participants heard that the Russian population decreases by three quarters of a million each year and Russian leaders are desperately trying to avert this ongoing shrinkage. What is the point of devising new domestic and foreign policies if the number of people with the nation are disappearing?

Steve Mosher, Catholic social scientist and head of the American based Population Research Institute spoke with several demographers at the summit.

One of them was Russian Alexey Komonov [a fluent English speaker] who explained that the current demographic crisis has its roots in Lenin's policies at the outset of the Russian revolution. Russia was the first country in the world to legalise abortion in 1920 and during the Soviet era abortion became common.

Lenin declared the family to be a bourgeois institution and Komonov pointed to a Soviet era monument

of the revolution, where men and women lunge forward in heroic style, never looking at each other. Nor are there any children in this barren depiction of a communist paradise. In the indescribable darkness of the Soviet era, many families lived in tiny apartments or had to share accommodation with other families. It was not only economic deprivation but a general psychological degradation which led to a lack of hope in any future.

People devalued themselves and hence devalued any new life coming into the materialistic and repressive Soviet system. In the post-Soviet era,

with its new middle class and numerous millionaires [many of whom are old Soviet officials] the rate of abortion is still high.

On current estimates, there are on average 7 abortions for each Russian woman each year and over the past 20 years there have been well over 80 million abortions.

That means that instead of having a population of 140 million now Russia might have had one of 220 million.¹

While Russia has abundant resources, especially in Siberia, Komonov explained that 'without people nothing happens.' In addition, more people are moving to the cities from country areas – in recent years about one million people have moved to the environs of Moscow. This also has enormous and far-reaching implications for Russia's social and political future.

Perhaps a short anecdote from the past can bring one aspect of this reality home. During the eighteenth century, Jakob Fries, a Swiss escapee from debt who joined the Imperial Russian army after learning Russian and becoming a doctor [after a year's training] in Moscow, went on a long expedition with the army which took him across Siberia and to the Chinese border.

He kept a diary of his travels which was later published as *A Siberian Journey: The Journal of Jakob Fries 1774-1776*.² When the army reached a certain part of the border Fries entered the Chinese city of Maimatschin where there stood a sign announcing 'Here ends the Russian domain' and which on the other side facing China stated 'Here begins the Chinese empire.'

Fries describes the strict rules which governed commerce and travel between the Russian and Chinese sides of the borders – a bell was rung at night

Passing the Time

THE REGION of speculation is the region of opinion, and a hazy, lazy, delightful region it is; good to talk in, good to smoke in, peopled with pleasant fancies and charming ideas, strange analogies and killing jests. How quickly the time passes there ! how well it seems spent ! The Philistines are all outside; everyone is reasonable and tolerant, and good-tempered; you think and scheme and talk, and look at everything in a hundred ways and from all possible points of view; and it is not till the company breaks up and the lights are blown out, and you are left alone with silence, that the doubt occurs to you, What is the good of it all?

— Augustine Birrell, *Collected Essays and Addresses*, London, J.M. Dent & Sons, vol. 3, p.10.

Islamic Tolerance

IN FACT, of course, Muslims did recognize certain important divisions among the generalized mass of unbelievers. One of them was between those who possessed and those who did not possess revealed religions. For atheists or for polytheists the choice was clear – Islam or death. For Jews and Christians, possessors of what were regarded as revealed religions based on authentic though superseded revelations, the choice included a third term – Islam, death, or submission. Submission involved the payment of tribute and the acceptance of Muslim supremacy. Death might be commuted to slavery. Those who submitted, according to Muslim law and practice, could be accorded the tolerance and protection of the Muslim state. The resulting relationship was regulated by a pact called, in Arabic, the *dhimma*. Those benefiting from it were known as *ahl al-dhimma*, people of the pact, or more briefly as *dhimmis*. This was the term commonly applied to Jews, Christians, and some others who became subjects of the Muslim state. Under the rules of the *dhimma* they were permitted to practise their own religions, maintain their own places of worship and, in many ways, run their own affairs, provided they gave unequivocal recognition to the primacy of Islam and the supremacy of the Muslims. This recognition was expressed through a series of restrictions imposed by the holy law on the *dhimmis*, affecting the clothes they might wear, the beasts they might ride, the arms they might bear, and similar matters. Most of these disabilities had a social and symbolic rather than a tangible and practical character. The only real economic burden imposed on unbelievers was fiscal. They had to pay higher taxes, a system inherited from the previous empires of Iran and Byzantium. Above all, they had to pay the poll tax known as *jizya*, levied on every adult male non-Muslim.

— *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*, Bernard Lewis, W.W.Norton & Company, New York, 1982, pp.63,64.

announcing that all must return to their respective sides of the border.³ There was friendly commerce between the border towns and Fries was regaled with hospitality by inhabitants of Russian and Chinese border towns who bought each others' products, the Russians especially enjoying Chinese tea.

In the twenty-first century, however, if Russians are increasingly leaving remote country areas as the border towns are in, one can ask how secure are the borders?

At several points along the border there are stories already circulating that Chinese have already begun to cultivate crops in the rich soils of abandoned Russian towns.

While China itself does not have child-friendly policies, it has a population seven times greater than Russia's. If Russian depopulation of remote areas continues, what foreign policy implication does this have?

In the meantime, Vladimir Putin has attempted to introduce child friendly policies in Russia, with a grim awareness of the looming demographic winter. There are lower taxation rates

for parents and a baby bonus of approximately \$9,000 [AUD].

Even this has not produced a dramatic effect. As another participant of the Moscow summit, Dr Longan, National Research Fellow from the New America Foundation observed, it is difficult to reverse such declines once they begin.

One effort to do so is based on Catholic moral teaching – that is a chain of pro-family health centres are being set up in various parts of Russia that do not refer for or do abortions and which transmit the moral teaching of the church.

In another attempt to help, a banker present at the conference from the URALSIB Corporation stated that his institution had a policy of trying to counteract the demographic crisis by lowering the rate of interest for mortgages held by couples for each child they have.

Lowering the interest by half a percent per child may not sound like much, but when it is understood that the bank has over four and a half million mortgage holders, this

represents a considerable investment by the bank.

As important as secular pro-natal policies are, it is *spiritual basis* of such initiatives that is taking on greater importance. This has been highlighted by American political scientist Eric Kaufmann, who in his recent book *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?* [2010] gives a penetrating global analysis of demographic trends around the world, calling demography 'the hidden hand of history.'⁴

Lecturing at Harvard and London University and using current demographic data, he argues that the secular 'belief system' carries with it a hidden destructive demographic time bomb. He states that since 1968 when the contraceptive pill was introduced, the world is actually becoming *more* religious not less so.

He states that while 'seculars are free to exercise their demographic preferences through contraception and abortion' – and they do – on the other hand 'those of stronger religious faith' – across all faiths – that is Catholicism, Judaism, Protestants [especially Pentecostals] and Islam – maintain higher fertility because of their understanding of marriage and family deriving from their religious faith.

That is, the more lukewarm in faith within all these religious groups and the secular groups tend to have smaller families [that is, where they had the health chances to have larger ones] and those 'strong in faith' whom Kaufmann calls 'religious fundamentalists' tend to have much larger families and are gaining in demographic advantage.

He notes the rise in Catholic and Protestant families among those who have 'strong' religious belief which will have implications for the future of the developed and developing world.

He cites as an example a smaller group like the Amish which grew from 5,000 in 1900 to quarter of a million today and who double their population now every 24 years. While the Amish may be small, there is a similar trend or rapid growth among strong believers of every faith which bucks the trend of secular demographic implosion and will show its full effects during the latter part of this century.

In spite of the fact that religious piety and fertility has declined in the

developed world among 'secularised' believers, there has been a contrary demographic rise in religious groups professing strong religious beliefs which are always associated with higher fertility.

Against this rise the secular non-religious views are doomed to lose the demographic battle against people of strong faith. Kaufmann adds that after 2020, the demographic weight of the 'religious fundamentalists of all contours' will begin 'to tip the balance in the culture wars towards the conservative side, ramping up pressure on hot-button issues such as abortion. By the end of the century, three quarters of America may be pro-life.' Evidently the pro-abortionists did not take account of the fact that their policies would lead to the extermination of the groups professing their views.

Kaufmann notes other interesting demographic trends - notably that Latino Catholics, even with some falling away, are poised to become the *dominant* group of Catholics in the US by 2050 and in fact by 2010 will be nearly a third of the entire American population!⁵

He says that, on current trends, Muslims will, by 2020, overtake Jews in the US as a voting age population and become the third largest group after the Catholics and Protestants.

In Israel, interestingly, it is the orthodox Jews, the Haredim, who do not do military service who are rising dramatically in numbers and increasingly influencing Israeli politics. They have even higher birth rates than the Palestinians of Gaza and the West Bank. Between 1968 and 1995, Kaufmann states that the fertility rates of Palestinian women have fallen from 7.5 [in 1968] to 5.3 in Gaza and 3.3 in the West Bank.⁶ The Haredim birth rate remains at around 7.9 per family. Within the Diaspora, while the birthrate among secular Jews plummets, that of orthodox Jews rises and thus the latter will become the dominant Jewish group within Britain [in 2020] and the US [in 2050].

Interestingly, Kaufmann observes that it is the demographic rise of religious groups that has provoked a vociferous response from atheists such as Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and Daniel Dennet, who simply do not like what they see.⁷

While progressive thinkers of the past two centuries have pronounced 'faith to be dead', until the 1980s 'few intellectuals predicted the rebirth of religion as a social force', noting the rise of Islam, Pentecostalism [across Latin America, Asia and Africa], Catholicism and orthodox Judaism.

Another hidden hand of demography, as American sociologist Rodney Stark explains, is the rise in the population of Chinese Christians which he estimates to be 70 million and now equal the membership of the Communist Party stating that the Chinese are not as immune to religion as might have seemed the case.⁸

Perhaps the secular family planners of the past century both in the east and west, did not realise that they would deal themselves a heavy demographic blow in promulgating their policies.

Russia's alarming current demographic decline, therefore, may have yet another 'hidden hand' to serve in history in that increasingly, out of the darkness of the Soviet years, young

people of strong faith, whatever the faith is, are opting for larger families. These families may end up saving Russia. While the secular proportions of the population decrease worldwide, Kaufmann, who professes no strong religious belief himself, and who bases his conclusions on statistical analysis, comes to a very evident conclusion. That is, it is clear to him that the 'the religious shall inherit the earth.'⁹

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro life organisation Family Life International, and is a regular contributor to Annals.

1. A video account of the conference can be found on the following site: <http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/a-dying-nation-must-see-video-lifts-veil-on-russias-abortion-crisis>
2. Walter Kirschner [Ed.], *A Siberian Journey: The Journal of Jakob Fries 1774-1776* (London: Frank Cass, 1974).
3. *Ibid.*, 134.
4. Eric Kaufmann, *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth* [London: Profile Books, 2010].
5. *Ibid.*, 91.
6. *Ibid.*, 127.
7. *Ibid.*, 1.
8. <http://www.chinaaid.org/2011/05/counting-chinas-christians.html>
9. Kaufmann, *op. cit.*, 269.

The Lamp and its Lamp-stand

THE LAMP that is set on the lamp-stand is the true light from the Father, the light that enlightens every man coming into the world, namely our Lord Jesus Christ. By becoming one of us and assuming our human nature he became and was called the lamp.

This means that he is by nature the wisdom and word of God the Father, which is faithfully and loyally preached in God's Church and which is raised up as a shining and resplendent light among the nations by a life of virtue led in accordance with the commandments, giving light to all who are in the house (by that I mean in this world).

So the divine Word says somewhere: 'Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.' Clearly he is calling himself a lamp, for while he was God by nature he became a man according to God's plan of salvation.

I think that in his wisdom the great David understood this when he called the Lord a lamp: 'Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.' For that is the sort of Saviour my Lord and God is, delivering men from the darkness of ignorance and sin, which is also why scripture calls him a lamp.

Like a lamp he has dispelled the gloom of ignorance and the darkness of sin, and in this way he alone has become the path to salvation for all men. By virtue and knowledge he brings to the Father all those who are resolved to follow him, who is the way of righteousness, by keeping the divine commandments.

The Holy Church he calls the lamp-stand, for through its preaching the word of God shines out on it and enlightens all that live in this world, as in a house, with the brightness of truth, filling the minds of all men with the knowledge of God.

— *Discourses* of St Maximus the Confessor [AD 580-662] addressed to Thelassius, 'Quaestio 63'.



A PRAYER FOR EVERY MOMENT

Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From earthborn passions set me free
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
With many a care oppressed;
Let me Thy loving servant be
And taste Thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle's strife;
In all my pain and misery
Be Thou my Health and Life.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point Thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me
When floods the tempest high;
When on doth rush the enemy,
O Savior, be Thou nigh!

Lord Jesus, think on me
That, when the flood is past,
I may th'eternal brightness see
And share Thy joy at last.

Lord Jesus, think on me
That I may sing above
To Father, Spirit, and to Thee
The strains of praise and love.

— Synesius bishop of Cyrene in Libya, 375- 430AD,
translated from Greek by Allen W. Chatfield, 1876.
Roman Breviary, Hymns for the Proper of Seasons.

Digging up some interesting history

TIME TEAM

By Kevin Hilferty



IN THE ISLE of Mull, off the west coast of Scotland, a pile of stones partly hidden by stunted grass attracted the attention of local amateur historians. They could not work out what they were, so they called in the experts from the TV series *Time Team*.

An archaeological dig revealed that the stones were from a chapel dating to the sixth or seventh century and which seems to have been built by monks from St Columba's monastery on the nearby island of Iona. St Columba was born in Donegal about 521 and died on Iona in 597. Over what we used to call the dark ages his monks brought Christianity to Scotland and northern England.

On the site, not far from the town of Tobermory, the team found a square structure with a slot for a standing cross and part of a carved stone cross. Near the chapel were the stones of a monastic house. Beneath the eastern end of the chapel they found the remains of a man in a traditional place for the grave of the founder of a monastery.

History revealed through archaeology

Time Team is a quirky and well-made British TV documentary series from Channel Four which uses archaeology to explain what happened in history.

Apart from a few excursions to Europe, the West Indies and the United States *Time Team* concentrates on sites in Britain ranging from the caves of the Neolithic people through Bronze, Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and mediaeval sites to the forgotten bunkers and gun emplacements on Shooter's Hill on the southern edge of London's suburbs, built to protect the capital from invasion

in World War II.

Other subjects have included diving for artefacts from the wreck of a Spanish Armada ship off the north-west coast of Scotland, locating the site of the first purpose-built camp to house French prisoners from the Napoleonic wars at Norman Cross in Oxfordshire and digging into a swamp in Lincolnshire for the wreckage of two American bombers which collided on their way back from a raid over Germany in 1944.

Britain's Catholic Past

Catholic viewers with a feel for history will find much to interest them in programs about former monastic or Catholic buildings confiscated or destroyed during Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries.

Currently Australian viewers have an excellent choice of *Time Team* programs. ABC 1 is broadcasting some recent series at 6 pm each weekday and a repeat program at 12.30 pm each Tuesday. These can also be seen on the ABC's useful iView service (www.abc.net.au/iView). Foxtel's History Channel is running some slightly older programs at 6.30 pm each weekday evening and shows three repeated programs on Saturday and Sunday mornings.



If you have some computer skills, you can find and view programs on www.channel4.com/history/microsites/T/timeteam/

Time Team, which began in Britain in 1994, runs to a well-ordered format. Presenter Tony Robinson is joined by experts Professor Mick Aston of Bristol University and Dr Francis Prior and field archeologist Phil Harding. A geophysical team investigates below the site's ground; then the diggers move in to see what they can find – and are restricted to three days.

One recent program was about a dig on Governor's Green in Portsmouth. This was the location of a chapel and hospital named *Domus Dei* (House of God) founded in 1215 by the Bishop of Winchester. The chapel was dedicated to St Nicholas, patron of sailors, and the hospital and its auxiliary buildings grew around it. The sick were cared for in the hospital and chapel where straw bedding was laid on the floor so patients could participate in the Mass.

The hospital also provided accommodation for pilgrims travelling to the shrine of St Swithin in Winchester and those going abroad to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. All this charitable activity came to an end when Henry seized all church property. The Governor of Portsmouth demolished the hospital buildings and built a mansion for himself on the site and he used the chapel to store weapons and ammunition.

Over succeeding centuries the military used the site for barracks and a parade ground and took over the chapel. In a German air raid on the Portsmouth naval base, bombs set fire to the chapel roof but the roofless building still stands surrounded by parkland now called Governor's Green. Beneath the park *Time Team* found evidence of the hospital buildings.

Know Thy Enemy

The chief characteristic of the modern world is the rising tide of despair. Thucydides' description of the moral effect of the plague at Athens might be applied *mutatis mutandis* to the modern world in so far as it has lost touch with religion. The rosy dawn which the secular optimism predicted is beginning to look like a stormy sun-set. In the 'nineties, H. G. Wells could write "Men are borne along through space and time regardless of themselves as if to the awakening greatness of man", but his final testament to mankind was that pathetic book, *Mind at the end of its tether*. "There is no way out or round or through the impasse. It is the end." We Catholics may be unable to arrest the world's progress to self-destruction, but at least we understand what is destroying us. We have at least the melancholy satisfaction of not being simultaneously bewildered and annihilated.

— Sir Arnold Lunn, in *Difficulties: A correspondence about the Catholic Religion between Mgr. Ronald Knox, and Sir Arnold Lunn*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1958, p.254.

Five Hundred Catholic Hospitals

The Catholic Church operated some 500 hospitals in England in medieval times and *Time Team* set out to find remains of another dedicated to St John the Evangelist in the attractive Oxfordshire town of Burford. The grandest house in Burford, The Priory, was built in 1580 on the hospital site and incorporated some of the fine stone pillars from St John's chapel. *Time Team* located traces of the hospital near the Priory while beneath the vegetable garden they found traces of Saxon buildings.

On a defence intelligence base at Chicksands, in Bedfordshire, *Time Team* searched for evidence of a Gilbertine monastery. The Gilbertines – the only exclusively English order of priests and nuns – were founded in 1131 by St Gilbert of Sempringham who organised a group of women in his Lincolnshire parish into a religious community under the Benedictine rule. In 1148 Gilbert provided chaplains for the nuns by establishing a body of canons under the Augustinian rule. The order expanded rapidly and in its foundations built men's and women's houses on either side of a central chapel. It conducted leper hospitals and orphanages but vanished from history after Henry suppressed its 24 houses.

The large chapel at Chicksands still stands and, much altered, forms the main building of the defence

establishment. Beneath the lawns and parade ground, *Time Team* located the two houses and other buildings of the Gilbertines. Under a field near Winchester, *Time Team* located the remains of the leper hospital of St Mary Magdalene, founded in the 11th century by Bishop Luhane, grandson of William the Conqueror.

Catholic Abbeys and Cathedrals

Cathedrals – existing and destroyed – have provided subjects for *Time Team*. The first St Mary's Cathedral and Benedictine abbey in Coventry was founded in 1043 on the site of a



The Annunciation: in the wall of the Catacomb of San Lorenzo. St Lawrence was martyred in 258 in the persecution of Valerian

seventh century convent by Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and his wife Godiva. This substantial building was demolished on Henry's order after the dissolution with only fragments remaining standing and most of the stonework was sold. A large parish church became the Anglican cathedral and this was destroyed in heavy German air raids on Coventry in 1940. *Time Team* was able to find considerable evidence of the size of St Mary's and its abbey before the site was used for new housing.

In the grounds (The Close) of St Mary's Cathedral at Salisbury, *Time Team* located the foundations of a 200ft. high bell tower set apart from the cathedral and built in the same manner, with thick supporting buttresses. The first Salisbury Cathedral was at Old Sarum but this was abandoned and the foundation stone of the present Gothic building was laid in 1220. It was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1250; work was completed on the cathedral tower and its towering 123m spire in 1330. The bell tower was demolished together with two private chapels at the east *end of the Cathedral*, between 1788 and 1791.

Time Team also conducted a dig in the grounds of Westminster Abbey to locate what was thought to be a demolished sacristy alongside the great building. The Benedictine Abbey and church was built on an earlier monastic site by Edward the Confessor and consecrated in 1065; Edward was buried there in 1066. Henry III demolished the eastern part of the original structure and built the present church in Gothic style after 1245.

The *Time Team* experts soon decided that what they were seeking could not be a sacristy to hold the Abbey's treasures, as this would have been within the solid stone walls of the Abbey itself. They found evidence of the long narrow L-shaped room they were seeking and a bricked-up doorway in the side of the Abbey adjacent to it. This allowed them to say that the room had been used for vesting and assembling those taking part in a liturgical procession, with the doorway tall enough to permit the cross-bearer to lead the way into the Abbey.

KEVIN HILFERTY is a regular contributor to *Annals*. He became interested in Catholic history in Britain when on the London staff of an Australian media group.

Centenary of the Catholic missionary presence on Bathurst Island, one of the Tiwi Islands off the northern coast of Australia

TIWI PEOPLE CELEBRATE

By Sister Anne Gardiner, OLSH



ON THE 3rd of June this year priests, sisters and laity celebrated the centenary of the Catholic missionary presence on Bathurst Island, one of the Tiwi Islands off the northern coast of Australia, approximately 70 kilometres from Darwin.

Many sisters who had worked with the Tiwi people on the island from the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart [OLSH], Dominican and Mercy Orders came to participate in the official ceremony. They had worked for many years in the areas of teaching, nursing, medicine and general community building.

To this day there is a Catholic presence on the island, two Catholic schools [St Mary's and Xavier College] and health clinics to serve the Tiwi people. Sister Anne Gardiner, the only OLSH sister currently on the island, works in various health and community activities on behalf of the Tiwi people.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart [MSC] were asked in 1904 to administer Bathurst island. Here enters the figure of Father – later Bishop – Gsell (1872-1960) who had such a significant influence on the Catholic missionary effort.

Born in the French province of Alsace in 1872, Gsell trained for the priesthood in France and Italy and was ordained in 1896 in Rome. Eugene Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, was a colleague. He arrived in Australia soon afterwards and following periods in Sydney and MSC missions in Papua he was appointed as Apostolic Administrator for the Catholic Church in Darwin in 1906.

He gained government approval for the establishment of a mission on



Sister Anne Gardiner, describing the arrival of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and the Daughters of our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Bathurst Island in 1911. She has spent all her missionary life serving God amongst the Tiwi people of Bathurst Island.

Bathurst Island in 1911 [hence the centenary celebrations] and lived on the island as head of the mission from that time until 1938. He was sensitive and perceptive in his approach to the

local people. The Australian Dictionary of Biography records:

He studied the intricate laws and customs of the local Aboriginals and carefully chose for his central site an area which none of them claimed. In

1912 the island was proclaimed an Aboriginal reserve, and Gsell lived and worked here, apart from a visit to Europe in 1920, until 1938. He understood Aboriginal life, spiritual values and rituals and sought the people's advancement...¹

One of the problems the early missionaries had to face was the forced marriage of younger girls to older men, the girls often having been promised at birth by their family to precarious, sometimes polygamous situations. Sparing them from unwanted marriages, Fr Gsell 'bought' some of the young girls, arranged for their education and enabled them to marry men closer to their own age with a more Christian understanding of marriage.

In 1938, as Bishop Gsell, he was moved to Darwin. During the wars years the bishop administered his diocese from Alice Springs as Darwin was under military administration from 1942-45. On retirement in 1949 he moved to the MSC monastery at Kensington, Sydney where he prepared his memoirs, published in 1956 under the title *The Bishop with One Hundred and Fifty Wives* (Angus and Robertson, London). He died in 1960.



Young Tiwi boys with traditional message sticks that they offered to Bishop Eugene Hurley at the beginning of the Mass.

During the recent centenary celebration on Bathurst Island, the original coming of Bishop Gsell was rehearsed. A canoe was made to bring John Naden [standing in for Bishop Gsell] to shore. On this same day the Patakijiyali Museum was opened into which flocked the Tiwi people and guests. The museum showed a power point display of memorable moments

in the history of the missionary groups on the island. The music played 'We're standing on the shoulders' as photos of yesteryear were presented.

Outside the museum, there were six huge banners on an altar depicting the work done in the early mission days. In the nearby old church, there was also a display of photos of the MSC priests, brothers, OLSH sisters and women who worked in the mission kitchen. There were also tributes to the firsts – e.g. the first baptism etc. Afterwards many strolled over to the Frangipani Coffee shop sharing memories and hearing the planes which were still arriving from Darwin bringing guests. The stalwart Arafura Pearl from Darwin had also sailed into port.

At 10 o'clock on Wednesday, the re-enactment of the actual arrival of the bishop took place. The Tiwi people were excited and Bishop Eugene Hurley, with priests and others present went in procession to the church. Small Tiwi and French flags waved to and fro and there was a pervasive sense of joy among Tiwis and older missionaries. The singing of the Kyrie was taken up and a sea of voices entered into the celebration of the Mass.

The Bishop, Father John Mulrooney MSC and Sister Pauline OLSH all offered their sincere apology if at any time any of the clergy, brothers and sisters had ever done anything to offend the Tiwi people. After Mass, guests went to Xavier College for a memorable meal. Many also went to see the Patakijiyali



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SING A SONG OF LOVE TO THE LORD

St Augustine of Hippo

AD 354-430

'Sing to the Lord a new song; his praise is in the assembly of the saints.' – Psalm 149, vv.1,2.



WE ARE TOLD to sing to the Lord a new song. A new man knows a new song. A song is a thing of joy and, if we think more carefully about it, a thing of love. So the man who has learned to love a new life has learned to sing a new song. Therefore we need to be told the nature of this new life, for the sake of the new song. For a new man, a new song and the new testament all belong to the same kingdom. So the new man will sing a new song and belong to the new testament.

Everybody loves; the question is, what does he love? Consequently we are not told not to love, but to choose what to love. But how can we choose, unless we are first chosen? We cannot love unless we are first loved. Listen to the words of John the apostle: 'We love, because he first loved us.' If you search for the reason why a man loves God you will find no other reason at all, save that God first loved him. He gave us himself as the object of our love, and – he gave us the source of our love. If you wish to know what he gave as the source of our love, you can find a clearer explanation in the words of the apostle Paul: 'The love of God is poured out in our hearts.' Where does it come from? From ourselves? No. Where then? 'Through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.'

Since, then, we have such an assurance, let us love God by the gift of God. As Saint John himself expresses it more clearly: 'God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.' It is not enough to say: 'Love comes from God.' Which of us would dare to say what Saint John said: 'God is love'? He knew what he was saying, for he experienced this love himself.

God offers himself to us; there is no need to offer us more. He calls out to us: 'Love me and you will possess me, because you cannot love me unless you possess me.'

My brethren, my children, children of the Catholic Church, holy seeds of heaven, you who have been born again in Christ, born from above, listen to me; or rather, through me: 'Sing to the Lord a new song.' 'But I do sing,' you may reply. You sing, of course you sing, I can hear you; but make sure that your life sings the same tune as your mouth.

Sing with your voices, sing with your hearts, sing with your lips, sing with your lives. 'Sing to the Lord a new song.' Do you ask what you should sing about the one whom you love? Of course you want to sing about the one you love. Do you ask what you should sing in praise of him? Listen: 'Sing to the Lord a new song.' Are you looking for praises to sing? 'His praise is in the assembly of the saints.' The singer himself is the praise contained in the song.

Do you want to speak the praise of God? Be yourselves what you speak. If you live good lives, you are his praise.

– Sermon xxxiv, 1-3, 5-6. From the *Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for Tuesday in the Third week in Eastertide. See also Migne, *Patres Latini*, vol. xxxviii, *Sancti Aurelii Hipponensis Episcopi Opera Omnia*, tomus quintus, col.209 ff.

This is not the way science is done; it is the way products are sold.

CONSENSUS POLITICS AND JUNK SCIENCE

By Michael Crichton



AST YOUR minds back to 1960. John F. Kennedy is president, commercial jet airplanes are just appearing, the biggest university mainframes have 12K of memory. And in Green Bank, West Virginia at the new National Radio Astronomy Observatory, a young astrophysicist named Frank Drake runs a two week project called Ozma, to search for extraterrestrial signals. A signal is received, to great excitement. It turns out to be false, but the excitement remains. In 1960, Drake organizes the first *Search for Extraterrestrial intelligence* [SETI] conference, and came up with the now-famous Drake equation:

$$N = N * fp * ne * fl * fi * fc * fL$$

Where N is the number of stars in the Milky Way galaxy; fp is the fraction with planets; ne is the number of planets per star capable of supporting life; fl is the fraction of planets where life evolves; fi is the fraction where intelligent life evolves; and fc is the fraction that communicates; and fL is the fraction of the planet's life during which the communicating civilizations live.

This serious-looking equation gave SETI a serious footing as a legitimate intellectual inquiry. The problem, of course, is that none of the terms can be known, and most cannot even be estimated. The only way to work the equation is to fill in with guesses. And guesses — just so we're clear — are merely expressions of prejudice. Nor can there be 'informed guesses.' If you need to state how many planets with life choose to communicate, there is simply no way to make an informed guess. It's simply prejudice.

As a result, the Drake equation can have any value from 'billions and billions' to zero. An expression that can mean anything means nothing. Speaking precisely, the Drake equation

is literally meaningless, and has nothing to do with science. I take the hard view that science involves the creation of testable hypotheses. The Drake equation cannot be tested and therefore SETI is not science. SETI is unquestionably a religion. Faith is defined as the firm belief in something for which there is no proof. The belief that the Koran is the word of God is a matter of faith. The belief that God created the universe in seven days is a matter of faith. The belief that there are other life forms in the universe is a matter of faith. There is not a single shred of evidence for any other life forms, and in forty years of searching,

none has been discovered. There is absolutely no evidentiary reason to maintain this belief. SETI [*Search for Extraterrestrial intelligence*] is a religion. One way to chart the cooling of enthusiasm is to review popular works on the subject. In 1964, at the height of SETI enthusiasm, Walter Sullivan of the NY Times wrote an exciting book about life in the universe entitled *WE ARE NOT ALONE*. By 1995, when Paul Davis wrote a book on the same subject, he titled it *ARE WE ALONE?* (Since 1981, there have in fact been four books titled *ARE WE ALONE*.) More recently we have seen the rise of the so-called 'Rare Earth' theory which suggests that we may, in fact, be all alone. Again, there is no evidence either way.

Back in the sixties, SETI had its critics, although not among astrophysicists and astronomers. The biologists and paleontologists were harshest. George Gaylord Simpson of Harvard sneered that SETI was a 'study without a subject,' and it remains so to the present day.

But scientists in general have been indulgent toward SETI, viewing it either with bemused tolerance, or with indifference. After all, what's the big deal? It's kind of fun. If people want to look, let them. Only a curmudgeon would speak harshly of SETI. It wasn't worth the bother.

And of course it is true that untestable theories may have heuristic value. Of course extraterrestrials are a good way to teach science to kids. But that does not relieve us of the obligation to see the Drake equation clearly for what it is — pure speculation in quasi-scientific trappings.

The fact that the Drake equation was not greeted with screams of outrage-similar to the screams of outrage that greet each Creationist new claim, for example-meant that now there was a

New Age or Stone Age

POPE JOHN PAUL II warns with regard to the "return of ancient gnostic ideas under the guise of the so-called New Age: We cannot delude ourselves that this will lead toward a renewal of religion. It is only a new way of practising gnosticism — that attitude of the spirit that, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results in distorting His Word and replacing it with purely human words. Gnosticism never completely abandoned the realm of Christianity. Instead, it has always existed side by side with Christianity, sometimes taking the shape of a philosophical movement."

— *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, quoted in *Jesus Christ The Bearer of the Water of Life*, an examination of New Age theory and practices, by the Pontifical Council for Culture, and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, Rome. St Pauls Publications 2003, p.13

Science and Metaphor

HERE ARE trees and I know their gnarled surface, water and I feel its taste. These scents of grass and stars at night, certain evenings when the heart relaxes — how shall I negate this world whose power and strength I feel? Yet all the knowledge on earth will give me nothing to assure me that this world is mine. You describe it to me and you teach me to classify it. You enumerate its laws and in my thirst for knowledge I admit that they are true. You take apart its mechanism and my hope increases. At the final stage you teach me that this wondrous and multicolored universe can be reduced to the atom and that the atom itself can be reduced to the electron. ... you tell me of an invisible planetary system in which electrons gravitate around a nucleus. You explain this world to me with an image. I realize then that you have been reduced to poetry: I shall never know. Have I the time to become indignant? You have already changed theories. So that science that was to teach me everything ends up in a hypothesis, that lucidity founders in metaphor, that uncertainty is resolved in a work of art: ... you give me the choice between a description that is sure but that teaches me nothing and hypotheses that claim to teach me but that are not sure.

— Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* [1942] translated by Justin O'Brien, New York, 1955, pp.15-16.

crack in the door, a loosening of the definition of what constituted legitimate scientific procedure. And soon enough, pernicious garbage began to squeeze through the cracks.

Now let's jump ahead a decade to the 1970s, and Nuclear Winter.

In 1975, the National Academy of Sciences reported on 'Long-Term Worldwide Effects of Multiple Nuclear Weapons Detonations' but the report estimated the effect of dust from nuclear blasts to be relatively minor. In 1979, the Office of Technology Assessment issued a report on 'The Effects of Nuclear War' and stated that nuclear war could perhaps produce irreversible adverse consequences on the environment. However, because the scientific processes involved were poorly understood, the report stated it was not possible to estimate the probable magnitude of such damage.

Three years later, in 1982, the Swedish Academy of Sciences commissioned a report entitled 'The Atmosphere after a Nuclear War: Twilight at Noon,' which attempted to quantify the effect of smoke from burning forests and cities. The authors speculated that there would be so much smoke that a large cloud over the northern hemisphere would reduce incoming sunlight below the level required for photosynthesis, and that this would last for weeks or even longer.

The following year, five scientists including Richard Turco and Carl Sagan published a paper in *Science* called 'Nuclear Winter: Global Consequences of Multiple Nuclear Explosions.' This was the so-called TTAPS report, which attempted to quantify more rigorously the atmospheric effects, with the added credibility to be gained from an actual computer model of climate.

At the heart of the TTAPS undertaking was another equation, never specifically expressed, but one that could be paraphrased as follows:

$D_s = W_n W_s W_h T_f T_b P_t P_r P_e$
(The amount of tropospheric dust=# warheads x size warheads x warhead detonation height x flammability of targets x Target burn duration x Particles entering the Troposphere x Particle reflectivity x Particle endurance and so on.)

The similarity to the Drake equation is striking. As with the Drake equation, none of the variables can be determined. None at all. The TTAPS study addressed this problem in part by mapping out different wartime scenarios and assigning numbers to some of the variables, but even so, the remaining variables were — and are — simply unknowable. Nobody knows how much smoke will be generated when cities burn, creating particles of what kind, and for how long. No one knows the effect of local

weather conditions on the amount of particles that will be injected into the troposphere. No one knows how long the particles will remain in the troposphere. And so on.

And remember, this is only four years after the OTA study concluded that the underlying scientific processes were so poorly known that no estimates could be reliably made. Nevertheless, the TTAPS study not only made those estimates, but concluded they were catastrophic.

According to Sagan and his co-workers, even a limited 5,000 megaton nuclear exchange would cause a global temperature drop of more than 35 degrees Centigrade, and this change would last for three months. The greatest volcanic eruptions that we know of changed world temperatures somewhere between .5 and 2 degrees Centigrade. Ice ages changed global temperatures by 10 degrees. Here we have an estimated change three times greater than any ice age. One might expect it to be the subject of some dispute. But Sagan and his co-workers were prepared, for nuclear winter was from the outset the subject of a well-orchestrated media campaign. The first announcement of nuclear winter appeared in an article by Sagan in the Sunday supplement, *Parade*. The very next day, a highly-publicized, high-profile conference on the long-term consequences of nuclear war was held in Washington, chaired by Carl Sagan and Paul Ehrlich, the most famous and media-savvy scientists of their generation. Sagan appeared on the Johnny Carson show 40 times. Ehrlich was on 25 times. Following the conference, there were press conferences, meetings with congressmen, and so on. The formal papers in science came months later.

This is not the way science is done; it is the way products are sold.

The real nature of the conference is indicated by these artists' renderings of the effect of nuclear winter. I cannot help but quote the caption for figure 5: 'Shown here is a tranquil scene in the north woods. A beaver has just completed its dam, two black bears forage for food, a swallow-tailed butterfly flutters in the foreground, a loon swims quietly by, and a kingfisher

searches for a tasty fish.' Hard science if ever there was.

At the conference in Washington, during the question period, Ehrlich was reminded that after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, scientists were quoted as saying nothing would grow there for 75 years, but in fact melons were growing the next year. So, he was asked, how accurate were these findings now?

Ehrlich answered by saying 'I think they are extremely robust. Scientists may have made statements like that, although I cannot imagine what their basis would have been, even with the state of science at that time, but scientists are always making absurd statements, individually, in various places. What we are doing here, however, is presenting a consensus of a very large group of scientists'.

I want to pause here and talk about this notion of consensus, and the rise of what has been called consensus science. I regard consensus science as an extremely pernicious development that ought to be stopped cold in its tracks. Historically, the claim of consensus has been the first refuge of scoundrels; it is a way to avoid debate by claiming that the matter is already settled. Whenever you hear the consensus of scientists agrees on something or other, reach for your wallet, because you're being had.

Let's be clear: the work of science has nothing whatever to do with consensus. Consensus is the business of politics. Science, on the contrary, requires only one investigator who happens to be right, which means that he or she has results that are verifiable by reference to the real world. In science consensus is irrelevant. What is relevant is reproducible results. The greatest scientists in history are great precisely because they broke with the consensus.

There is no such thing as consensus science. If it's consensus, it isn't science. If it's science, it isn't consensus. Period.

In addition, let me remind you that the track record of the consensus is nothing to be proud of. Let's review a few cases.

In past centuries, the greatest killer of women was fever following childbirth. One woman in six died of this fever. In 1795, Alexander Gordon of Aberdeen suggested that the fevers were infectious processes, and he was

Indifference to God

THE ALL-POWERFUL is defeated. He is powerless. He created heaven and earth, but he cannot do anything with this creature who simply says 'No'; this child. It is hopeless; never will he succeed in winning him over. Never will he succeed in retrieving that piece of himself which has been buried in the rebel. He is not wanted. He shows us hell, and we laugh; it is an overworked threat. He offers heaven and earth, and we decline. He comes down in person; he offers himself. "He laid aside his garments" (cf. Jn 13: 4). He falls at our feet; he seizes them; he kisses them; he waters them with his tears. We thrust him aside with abhorrence, with hatred, with mockery, or, worse still, with boredom, with a yawn, with a weary and indolent gesture. It is not even worth discussing.

— Paul Caudel (1868-1955) was a Catholic poet, playwright, diplomat, and member of the French Academy.

able to cure them. The consensus said no. In 1843, Oliver Wendell Holmes claimed puerperal fever was contagious, and presented compelling evidence. The consensus said no. In 1849, Semmelweiss demonstrated that sanitary techniques virtually eliminated puerperal fever in hospitals under his management. The consensus said he was a Jew, ignored him, and dismissed him from his post. There was in fact no agreement on puerperal fever until the start of the twentieth century.

Thus the consensus took one hundred and twenty-five years to arrive at the right conclusion despite the efforts of the prominent 'sceptics' around the world, sceptics who were demeaned and ignored. And despite the constant ongoing deaths of women.

There is no shortage of other examples. In the 1920s in America, tens of thousands of people, mostly poor, were dying of a disease called pellagra. The consensus of scientists said it was infectious, and what was necessary was to find the 'pellagra germ.' The US government asked a brilliant young

investigator, Dr. Joseph Goldberger, to find the cause. Goldberger concluded that diet was the crucial factor. The consensus remained wedded to the germ theory.

Goldberger demonstrated that he could induce the disease through diet. He demonstrated that the disease was not infectious by injecting the blood of a pellagra patient into himself, and his assistant. They and other volunteers swabbed their noses with swabs from pellagra patients, and swallowed capsules containing scabs from pellagra rashes in what were called 'Goldberger's filth parties.' Nobody contracted pellagra. The consensus continued to disagree with him.

There was, in addition, a social factor – southern States disliked the idea of poor diet as the cause, because it meant that social reform was required. They continued to deny it until the 1920s. Result-despite a twentieth century epidemic, the consensus took years to see the light.

Probably every schoolchild notices that South America and Africa seem to fit together rather snugly, and Alfred Wegener proposed, in 1912, that the continents had in fact drifted apart. The consensus sneered at continental drift for fifty years. The theory was most vigorously denied by the great names of geology until 1961, when it began to seem as if the sea floors were spreading. The result: it took the consensus fifty years to acknowledge what any schoolchild sees.

And shall we go on? The examples can be multiplied endlessly. Jenner and smallpox, Pasteur and germ theory. Saccharine, margarine, repressed memory, fibre and colon cancer, hormone replacement therapy – the list of consensus errors goes on and on.

Finally, I would remind you to notice where the claim of consensus is invoked. Consensus is invoked only in situations where the science is not solid enough. Nobody says the consensus of scientists agrees that $E=mc^2$. Nobody says the consensus is that the sun is 93 million miles away. It would never occur to anyone to speak that way.

EXCERPTED as a tribute to his memory from 'Extraterrestrials cause Global Warming,' an address given at the California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, in 2003 by the late Michael Crichton, medical doctor and popular novelist.

*An invaluable Ready-Reckoner on Greens policies.
These ... do not add up to long-term viability.*

UNCLE BOB'S GREENS

By Ian MacDonald



MOST TIMELY collection; it relies on a grand old method: pamphleteering - short, sharp, plain-prose shocks to policies flamboyantly

propagated. The editor of the collection, Andrew McIntyre, uses a wide range of writers on subjects specific to their area of expertise.

By so doing, he sidesteps a difficulty in commenting on the Greens Party; it is not a conventional political party; rather it is an aggregation of candidates whose

*The Greens: Policies, Reality
and Consequences,*

Edited by Andrew McIntyre.

Connor Court Publishing rrp \$24.95

viewpoints are more or less compatible.

Smorgasbord is the widely used term, the implication being that you pick the dishes you like, hoping that the ones you don't like end up in the swill bin. The difficulty is that implicit in the Greens ethos is the nanny notion that all its policies are good for you and you should eat them all up.

Kaleidoscope may be more apt; when shaken, different aspects of Greens policies catch the eye of different, shifting voters: the Kaleidoscope Vote versus the Donkey version? Or, possibly, the Eclectic Democratic version?

Recent increase in the Greens vote is of negative rather than positive origin; aspects of their policies appealed to left-wingers disenchanted with the Australian Labor Party. The Liberal Party and the National Party suffered less seismic vote shifts, the overall Greens appeal showing itself both in primary and preference voting.

Did your reviewer really hear Greens founder-leader Bob Brown, at his most medical and avuncular, say that in principle he disagreed with inter-party agreements on the allocation of preferences, this while his party benefited? Give that man a Janus Award (carved from plantation timber).

The 21 topics in the collection's table of contents range from Constitution to *Science*, each being allocated an average of about 2000 words. None is without a valuable insight. A sampling:

'So the practical effect of any bill of rights is to take some decision making power... away from the elected legislators and give it to the unelected judges. That is what you are buying when you buy a bill of rights ... Certainly people professing an attachment to "democratic structures" ought to find it hard to call for this shift.'

- James Allan, *Garrick Professor of English, University of Queensland.*

'The Greens would like to end criminalisation of consensual adult sex work. The result, however, is that legalising brothels leads to an increased illegal sex trade.'

- Wendy Francis, *Queensland State Director, the Australian Christian Lobby.*

Sunlight is the best Disinfectant

THE GREEN Party [in N.Z.] has long posed as the 'party of political honesty' and of political finance transparency. Green politicians love to repeat the metaphor that 'sunlight is the best disinfectant' for political finance corruption. Yet although they have often demanded somewhat draconian transparency when it comes to the *private* finances of other parties, when it comes to their own sources of *public* finance — particularly their reliance on backdoor parliamentary state funding — the Greens prefer opaqueness and obfuscation. It should not be surprising therefore that the Green Party response to increasing public concern about the use by politicians of taxpayer resources and expenses has been worse than useless. Rather than helping 'open the books' as the party promised, the Greens have disingenuously attempted to limit public knowledge of MP expenses and parliamentary budgets. Not only has the party only provided very limited information about its use of parliamentary funding, but ... The Greens have refused to disclose the actual detail of the parliamentary expenses categories ... choosing only to give an aggregated level of spending per MP. The party gave the expenditure totals for the budgets of car travel, air travel, Wellington accommodation, and out-of-Wellington hotel accommodation for the first four months of this year. But the important detail of how the money was actually spent has held back from the public. Co-leader Metiria Turei has defended the lack of disclosure detail by claiming, 'In our view, it's the total cost that the public want to know about – how much it costs for MPs to do their work'. This is an incredibly presumptuous, arrogant and counterintuitive approach – surely voters want to be given the maximum information, and they can then decide whether to pay attention to the finer details. The Greens' approach also runs contrary to the lessons from the UK, where the devil has proved to be in the detail, confirming the public's suspicion that politicians who made arguments along the lines of Turei's were actually trying to hide the gross misuse of public funds.

— Bryce Edwards, <http://liberation.typepad.com/liberation/2009/06/a-critique-of-the-greens-political-finance-disclosure.html>

The Greens policies on population, multiculturalism and justice should be read together. Enthusiasm for diversity is coupled with the principle that population policy should be committed to bringing in yet more diversity. Integration is not mentioned. Justice in the Greens' policy demands that we do not insist on Australian values, that cultural background should mitigate sentencing, and that data on crime and ethnicity should not be collected.

- Katharine Betts, adjunct associate Professor of Sociology, Swinburne University of Technology

Not within the collection's terms of reference is a topic involving the golden oldie of pamphleteering: Whither? To be specific: Will the Greens survive Bob Brown's exit any longer than the Australian Democratic Party survived the exit of its founder-leader Don Chipp?

'Greens policy demands that we do not insist on Australian values'

Like Don Chipp, Bob Brown would leave a constellation of powerful ladies in waiting. The Chipp constellation failed for a variety of reasons too long to detail here.

Enough to suggest that the breaking point for the Democrats was the GST, that totalitarian tax which has given governments so much revenue that, enough stashed for public service superannuation, they spend like poker-machine addicts seeking the ultimate parliamentary jackpot, a majority. Plus the spoils of office.

Breaking point for the Greens? Difficult to say, given the party's kaleidoscopic policies. But there's a distinct element of nostalgic red in some of those waiting for Brown to paddle his double kayak into the carbon-obscured sunsets of Tasmania.

The Connor Court-McIntyre collection should find a place in every university (and media) library and with general readers; essentially, effectively it is an invaluable ready-reckoner on Greens policies. These, though useful in short-term barter politics, do not add up to long-term viability.

IAN MACDONALD is the pen-name of a well-known Sydney journalist.



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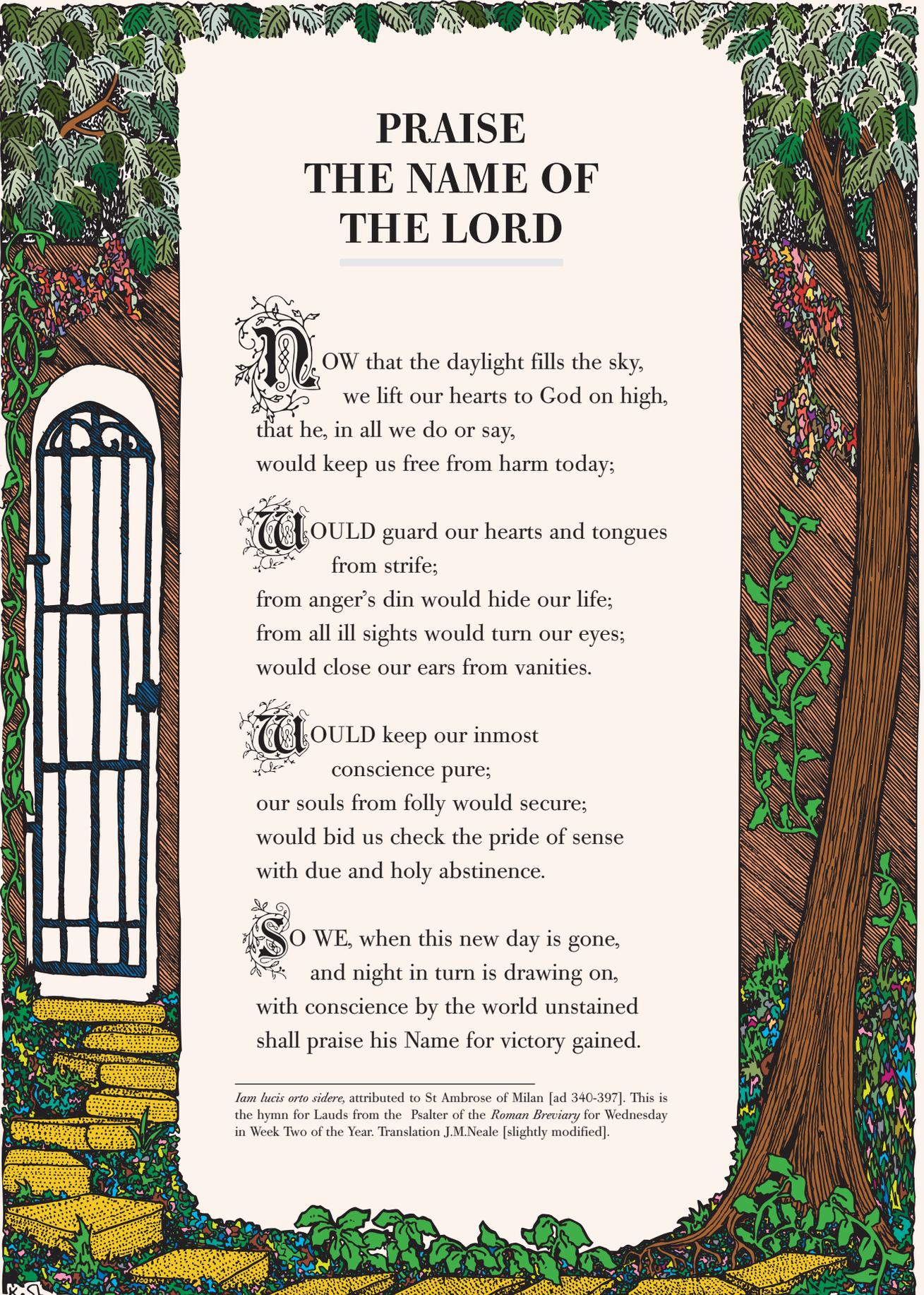
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PRAISE THE NAME OF THE LORD

NOW that the daylight fills the sky,
we lift our hearts to God on high,
that he, in all we do or say,
would keep us free from harm today;

WOULD guard our hearts and tongues
from strife;
from anger's din would hide our life;
from all ill sights would turn our eyes;
would close our ears from vanities.

WOULD keep our inmost
conscience pure;
our souls from folly would secure;
would bid us check the pride of sense
with due and holy abstinence.

SO WE, when this new day is gone,
and night in turn is drawing on,
with conscience by the world unstained
shall praise his Name for victory gained.

Iam lucis orto sidere, attributed to St Ambrose of Milan [ad 340-397]. This is the hymn for Lauds from the Psalter of the *Roman Breviary* for Wednesday in Week Two of the Year. Translation J.M.Neale [slightly modified].



MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Light on

Who wants to argue with one of the era's brightest thinkers: Tim Soutphomassane? No one sane, of course. But here goes madness.

In his column, *Ask the Philosopher* (*The Australian*, Oct 15-16) he wrote: 'Every civilisation has its definition of progress. Whether we are talking about the ancient Greeks or the Romans, or about the teachings in the Confucian or Islamic traditions, the idea that human kind could make advances in its spiritual or material condition has been a powerful animating force...'

So far so lovely. But he went on: 'In its Western incarnation progress has its modern roots in the Enlightenment.'

Neat qualification: 'modern'; it avoids the ancient Jewish contribution to progress, not least the moral code known as the Ten Commandments. It also avoids the linked Christian contribution in the mighty paradox of ten in two: love of God and love of neighbour.

By positing the Enlightenment as his starting point, Tim Soutphomassane went with one of history's great spins: before the Enlightenment all was darkness.

The Confucian tradition, incidentally, can be dated from its founder Confucius (551-479BC) and the Islamic tradition from Mohammed (570-632AD).

The Enlightenment, a group-think evolution, is harder to pinpoint. John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* (1689) is a prime text. It was flint to the tinder of Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau and to monarchs such as Prussia's Frederick II, Russia's Catherine II and Austria's Joseph II.

The Enlightenment can be summed up in what Madame de Stael wrote of Rousseau: 'He inflamed everything but discovered nothing.'

She was not talking of scientific but spiritual discoveries. Marvellous woman. Her romantic novel *Corinne* (1807) pre-dated the works of Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters, making her the matriarch of what is now called 'chicklit'.

Artfelt chat

The audience for Artscape (ABC, Oct 18) included Arts Minister Simon Crean, enhancing the launch of his National Cultural Policy and his potential as the safest replacement for Julia Gillard.

Virginia Trioli elicited lively comment from a panel and the audience. But Trioli, usually irrepressibly pertinacious, neglected to ask the question surely not taboo on the free-ranging ABC: why do those who process arts funding get more on average than artists?

An illustrative statistic has passed into folklore: at one time \$1 of subsidy to filmmakers had a bureaucratic cost of \$1.50. So what? Do the arithmetic in millions.

Surprisingly, apart from actor-author Rhys Muldoon, no major contribution came from any writer or, rarer bird, any author-

publisher. Two of the latter could have made vital contributions: first, Michael Duffy, second, Michael Wilding.

Both shared a common fate; they lost publishing houses, respectively Duffy & Snelgrove and Wild & Woolley, the common factor being the GST on books.

Wilding, emeritus professor of English, University of Sydney, makes this clear in his dry, wry and witty book *Wild & Woolley: A Publishing Memoir* (Giaramondo \$24.95).

Not all belongs to Caesar

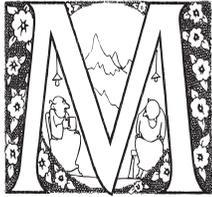
YOUR GENERATION falls heir to a culture slowly forgetting the higher things: and your task as students and soon-to-be alumni is to remind yourselves and the world that not all things belong to Caesar. As the Ancients knew so well, politics and commerce may be natural and necessary pursuits but they do not treat the human person's most noble concerns. Serious concern for philosophical and theological matters are today said to deflect us from the really important things of life. It seems that the smaller our faith in dogma, the larger our faith in dreams.

— 'All dreams are not welcome,' Father David Meconi, SJ, Address to College Students, Honours Convocation, Xavier University, Cincinnati, USA, April 17, 1999.

‘The favourite object,’ says Dr Leland, a Protestant clergyman, and dignitary of the Irish Church, ‘of the Irish Government and the English Parliament, was, the utter extermination of all the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland.’

IRELAND UNDER THE ENGLISH

By Rev. Sydney Smith [1771-1845]



MODERN princes change the uniform of regiments: Henry VIII changed the religion of kingdoms, and was determined that the belief of the Irish should undergo a radical and Protestant conversion. With what success this attempt was made, the present state of Ireland is sufficient evidence.

‘Be not dismayed,’ said Elizabeth, on hearing that O’Neil meditated some designs against her government, ‘tell my friends, if he arise, it will be to their advantage - *there will be estates for those who want.*’

Soon after this prophetic speech, Munster was destroyed by famine and the sword, and near 600,000 acres forfeited to the Crown, and distributed among Englishmen. Sir Walter Raleigh (the virtuous and good) butchered the garrison of Limerick in cold blood, after Lord Deputy Gray had selected 700 to be hanged.

There were, during the reign of Elizabeth, three invasions of Ireland by the Spaniards, produced principally by the absurd measures of this Princess for the reformation of its religion. The Catholic clergy, in consequence of these measures, abandoned their cures, the churches fell to ruin, and the people were left without any means of instruction.

Add to these circumstances the murder of M’Mahon, the imprisonment of M’Toole’s and O’Dogherty, and the kidnapping of O’Donnel - all truly Anglo-Hibernian proceedings. The execution of the laws was rendered detestable and intolerable by the queen’s officers of justice.

The spirit raised by these transactions, besides innumerable

smaller insurrections, gave rise to the great wars of Desmond and Hugh O’Neal; which, after they had worn out the ablest generals, discomfited the choicest troops, exhausted the treasure, and embarrassed the operations of Elizabeth, were determined by the destruction of these two ancient families, and by the confiscation of more than half the territorial surface of the island.

The two last years of O’Neal’s wars cost Elizabeth £140,000 per annum, though the whole revenue of England at that period fell considerably short of £500,000. Essex, after the destruction of Norris, led into Ireland an army of above 20,000 men, which was totally baffled and destroyed by Tyrone, within two years of their landing.

Such was the importance of Irish rebellions two centuries before the time in which we live. Sir G. Carew attempted to assassinate the Lurgan Earl - Mountjoy compelled the Irish rebels to massacre each other. In the course of a few months 3,000 men were

starved to death in Tyrone. Sir Arthur Chichester, Sir Richard Manson, and other commanders, saw three children feeding on the flesh of their dead mother. Such were the golden days of good Queen Bess!

By the rebellions of Dogherty in the reign of James I, six northern counties were confiscated, amounting to 500,000 acres. In the same manner, 64,000 acres were confiscated in Athlone. The whole of his confiscations amount to nearly a million acres; and if [Thomas] Leland [Protestant historian of Ireland] means plantation acres, they constitute a twelfth of the whole kingdom according to Newenham, and a tenth according to Sir W. Petty.

The most shocking and scandalous action in the reign of James, was his attack upon the whole property of the province of Connaught, which he would have effected, if he had not been bought off by a sum greater than he hoped to gain by his iniquity, besides the luxury of confiscation. The Irish, during the reign of James I, suffered under the *double* evils of a licentious soldiery, and a religious persecution.

Charles the First took a bribe of £120,000 from his Irish subjects, to grant them what in those days were called *Graces*, but in these days would be denominated the Elements of Justice. The money was paid, but the graces were never granted. One of these graces is curious enough: ‘That the [Protestant] clergy were not to be permitted to keep henceforward any private prisons of their own, but delinquents were to be committed to the public jails.’ The idea of a rector, with his own private jail full of dissenters, is the most ludicrous piece of tyranny we ever heard of.

The troops in the beginning of Charles’s reign were supported by the



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weekly fines levied upon the Catholics for non-attendance upon established worship. The [Protestant] Archbishop of Dublin went himself, at the head of a file of musketeers, to disperse a Catholic congregation in Dublin - which object he effected after a considerable skirmish with the priests. ‘

The favourite object,’ says Dr Leland, a Protestant clergyman, and dignitary of the Irish Church, ‘of the Irish Government and the English Parliament, was, *the utter extermination* of all the Catholic inhabitants of Ireland.’ The great rebellion took place in this reign, and Ireland was one scene of blood and cruelty and confiscation.

Cromwell began his career in Ireland by massacring for five days the garrison of Drogheda, to whom quarter had been promised. Two million and a half acres were confiscated. Whole towns were put up in lots and sold. The Catholics were banished from three-fourths of the kingdom, and confined to Connaught. After a certain day, every Catholic found out of Connaught was to be punished with death.

Fleetwood complains peevishly ‘that the people do *not transport readily*,’ - but adds, ‘it is *doubtless a work in which the Lord will appear*:’ Ten thousand Irish were sent as recruits to the Spanish Army.

Nothing can show more strongly the light in which the Irish were held by Cromwell, than the correspondence with Henry Cromwell, respecting the peopling of Jamaica from Ireland. Secretary Thurloe sends to Henry, the Lord Deputy in Ireland, to inform him that ‘a stock of Irish girls, and Irish young men, are wanted for the peopling of Jamaica.’ The answer of Henry Cromwell is as follows: -

‘Concerning the supply of young men, although we must use force in taking them up, *yet it being so much for their own good*, and likely to be of so great advantage to the public, it is not the least doubted but that you may have such a number of them as you may think fit to make use of on this account.

‘I shall not need repeat anything respecting the girls, not doubting to answer your expectations to the full in *that*; and I think it might be of like advantage to your affairs there, and yours here, if we should think fit to send 1,500 or 2,000 boys to the place

above mentioned. *We can well spare them* and who knows but that it may be the means of making them Englishmen, I mean rather Christians? *As for the girls*, I suppose you will make provisions of clothes, and other accommodations for them.’ Upon this, Thurloe informs Henry Cromwell that the council have voted ‘*4,000 girls, and as many boys*, to go to Jamaica.’

Every Catholic priest found in Ireland was hanged, and five pounds paid to the informer.

‘About the years 1652 and 1653,’ says Colonel Lawrence, in his *Interests of Ireland*, ‘the plague and famine had swept away whole counties, that a man might travel twenty or thirty miles and not see a living creature, either man, or beast, or bird - they being all dead, or had quitted those desolate places. Our soldiers would tell stories of the places where they saw smoke - it was so rare to see either smoke by day, or fire or candle by night.

In this manner did the Irish live and die under Cromwell, suffering by the sword, famine, pestilence and persecution, beholding the confiscation of a kingdom and the banishment of a race.

‘So that there perished (says Sir W. Petty) in the year 1641, 650,000 human beings, whose blood somebody must atone for to God and the King!’

In the reign of Charles II, by the Act of Settlement, four million and a half of acres were for ever taken from

the Irish. ‘This country,’ says the Earl of Essex, Lord Lieutenant in 1675, ‘has been perpetually rent and torn since his Majesty’s restoration. I can compare it to nothing better than the flinging the reward on the death of a deer among the pack of hounds - where everyone pulls and tears where he can for himself.’

All wool grown in Ireland was, by Act of Parliament, compelled to be sold to England; and Irish cattle were excluded from England. The English, however, were pleased to except 30,000 head of cattle, sent as a gift from Ireland to the sufferers in the great fire! - and the first day of the Sessions, after this act of munificence, the Parliament passed fresh acts of exclusion against the productions of that country.

By the Articles of Limerick the Irish were promised the free exercise of their religion; but from that period to the year 1788 every year produced some fresh penalty against that religion - some liberty was abridged, some right impaired, or some suffering increased.

By acts in King William’s reign² they were prevented from being solicitors. No Catholic was allowed to marry a Protestant, and any Catholic who sent his son to Catholic countries for education was to forfeit all his lands. In the reign of Queen Anne any son of a Catholic who chose to turn Protestant got possession of the father’s estate. No Papist was allowed to purchase freehold property, or to take a lease for more than thirty years.

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Secularisation of Religion

THE PERMEATION of European civilization by Christianity was never complete, and in proportion as the Church became embodied in the social order it tended itself to become secularized and to be absorbed by the world.

Consequently, when the State became once more conscious of its power, and attempted to vindicate its sovereignty over the whole of social life, it was supported not only by the politician and the business man, but by the religious reformer who wished to restore the spiritual liberty of the Church and to free it from secular influences.

Religion gradually retreated into man's inner life, and left social and economic life to the State and to a civilization which grew steadily more secularized.

A man's debt to religion was paid by an hour or two in church on Sundays, and the rest of the week was devoted to the real business of life—above all, the making of money.

Such a division of life into two compartments—and very unequal ones at that—was not the Christian solution, nor could it be permanently successful.

If religion loses its hold on social life, it eventually loses its hold on life altogether. And this is what has happened in the case of modern Europe.

The new secularized civilization is not content to dominate the outer world and to leave man's inner life to religion; it claims the whole man.

Once more Christianity is faced, as it was at the beginning, with the challenge of a world which will accept no appeal from its judgment, and which recognizes no higher power than its own will.

Indeed it would almost seem as though the prospect to-day was even darker than it was at the beginning.

— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, p. xx.

If a Protestant dies intestate, the estate is to go to the next *Protestant* heir, though all to the tenth generation should be Catholic. In the same manner, if a Catholic dies intestate, his estate is to go to the next Protestant.

No Papist is to dwell in Limerick or Galway. No Papist is to take an annuity for life. The widow of a Papist turning Protestant to have a portion of the chattels of deceased in spite of any will. Every Papist teaching schools to be presented as a regular Popish convict. Prices of catching Catholic priests from 5s. to £10, according to rank. Papists are

to answer all questions respecting other Papists, or to be committed to jail for twelve months.

No trust to be undertaken for Papists. No Papist to be on Grand Juries. Some notion may be formed of the spirit of those times from an order of the House of Commons, 'that the Serjeant at Arms should take into custody all Papists that should presume to come into the gallery!' (Commons' Journal, vol. iii, fol. 976).

During this reign the English Parliament legislated as absolutely for Ireland as they do now for Rutlandshire

- an evil not to be complained of if they had done it as justly. In the reign of George I the horses of Papists were seized for the militia, and rode by Protestants; towards which the Catholics paid double, and were compelled to find Protestant substitutes. They were prohibited from voting at vestries, or being high or petty constables.

An act of the English Parliament in this reign opens as follows: - 'Whereas attempts have been lately made to shake off the subjection of Ireland to the Imperial Crown of these realms, be it enacted,' etc etc. In the reign of George II four-sixths of the population were cut off from the right of voting at elections by the necessity under which they were placed of taking the oath of supremacy. Barristers and solicitors marrying Catholics are exposed to all the penalties of Catholics.

Persons robbed by privateers during a war with a Catholic State are to be indemnified by a levy on the Catholic inhabitants of the neighbourhood. All marriages between Catholics and Protestants are annulled. All Popish priests celebrating them are to be hanged.

'This system' (says Arthur Young) 'has no other tendency than that of driving out of the kingdom all the personal wealth of the Catholics, and extinguishing their industry within it! and the face of the country, every object which presents itself to travellers, tells him how effectually this has been done.'" - *Young's Tour of Ireland, vol ii, p.48.*

Such is the history of Ireland.

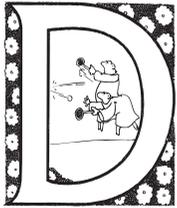
SYDNEY SMITH, 1771-1845, English Protestant clergyman, and wit. From his review of 'Memoirs of Captain Rock,' in the *Edinburgh Review*, October 1824. See *Essays by Sydney Smith* [reprinted from the *Edinburgh Review*] George Routledge and Sons, London, [undated] pp. 426 ff.

1. There are not a few of the best and most humane Englishmen of the present day, who, when under the influence of fear or anger, would think it no great crime to put to death people whose names begin with O or Mac. The violent death of Smith, Green, or Thomson, would throw the neighbourhood into convulsions, and the regular forms would be adhered to - but little would be really thought of the death of anybody called O'Dogherty or O'Toole.
2. "Among the persons most puzzled and perplexed by the two opposite Royal claims on their allegiance, were the clergymen of the Established Church; who having first prayed for King James as their lawful sovereign, as soon as William was proclaimed took to praying for him; but again, on the success of the Jacobite forces in the north, very prudently prayed for King James once more, till the arrival of Schomberg, when, as far as his quarters reached, they returned to praying for King William again."

In search of the 'hard evidence'

MUHAMMAD AND THE QUR'AN

By Jude P. Dougherty



DONNER MAKES the case that a proper understanding of Islam requires that it be examined in its beginnings against the background of

religious trends that prevailed in the Near East in late antiquity, that is, from the third to the seventh century. He admits that the task is a challenge to the professional historian. Throughout his treatment of the origins of Islam he finds it necessary to distinguish between the “traditional narratives” and the hard evidence available to the historian. The traditional narratives he uses sparingly and with caution. The most important source of information about the early Community of Believers, he holds, is the Qur’an itself.

The early followers of Mohammad thought of themselves as a “Community of Believers,” open to all who believed in the oneness of God and in righteous living. Donner refers to its early years as its ecumenical period when Jews and Christians (Monophysites, probably) could be found among its members. It was later tradition, about a century after Muhammad’s time that his followers began to identify themselves as Muslims, i.e., as those who submit. The Qur’an, as a written document was not available to the early Believers. It did not yet exist. Donner finds that the revelations which comprise the Qur’an did not take the form of a written book until about twenty years after the Prophet’s death. It was then that the scattered written and unwritten parts of the revelations were collected by an editorial committee and compiled in definite written form.

The Qur’an in addressing people whom it calls “Believers” sets out their basic commitments. They believed, first of all, in the oneness of God, in a strict monotheism. They are mindful

Donner, Fred M. *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010. pp. xviii + 280. (Cloth) \$25.95.

and obedient to God’s will, a God who created all things and gave us life. They believed that on the Day of Judgment, the last day, the whole of mankind will be brought before God and in a final judgment consigned either to paradise or to the torments of hell. Most beliefs flowed from the centrality of the belief that God is one, not Trinitarian. Believers also held that God uses angels to intervene in mundane affairs when it is His will that they do so. Satan is recognized as a fallen angel. Sin requires atonement. Theft, adultery, infanticide, bearing false witness, and disobeying the Prophet are proscribed. Someone guilty of sin was enjoined to pray or offer a *zakat*, a fine or payment

in exchange for Muhammad’s prayer that the sinner might be purified.

Mere intellectual acceptance of these key doctrines is not enough. One also has to live properly. One is obliged to help the less fortunate and must engage in regular prayer. Ritual prayer is prescribed for the two ends of the day. The mandate prescribing five clearly defined times for prayer occurred a century after Muhammad’s death. Jihad is also an integral part of Islamic belief. It is an activist commitment to work in the cause of God. Donner finds its source in Qur’an 8.65, where the Prophet instructs Believers to fight against unbelief and even to “make great slaughter in the earth” in the struggle against unbelievers. Chapter nine of the Qur’an begins with a passage ordering the Believers to capture and to kill unbelievers by every means, but then, Donner notes, it pulls back rather abruptly and commands that unbelievers be allowed to go unharmed

Fight till we are martyred or victorious

THE JIHAAD of Islam is to secure complete freedom for every man throughout the world by releasing him from servitude to other human beings so that he may serve his God, who is one and who has no associates. This is in itself a sufficient reason for Jihaad. These were the only reasons in the hearts of Muslim warriors. If they had been asked the question ‘Why are you fighting?’ none would have answered, ‘My country is in danger; I am fighting for its defence’ or ‘The Persians and the Romans have come upon us,’ or, ‘We want to extend our dominion and want more spoils.’ They would have answered the same as Rabati bin ‘Amer, Huzaifa bin Muhsin and Mughira bin Shtuba answered the Persian general Rustum when he asked them one by one during three successive days preceding the battle of Qadisiyyah, ‘For what purpose have you come?’ Their answer was the same: ‘God has sent us to bring anyone who wishes from servitude to men into the service of God alone ...’. If anyone accepts this way of life, we turn back and give his country back to him. But we fight with those who resist until we are martyred or become victorious.’

— Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones: the Mein Kampf of the Muslim Brothers of whom Sayyid Qutb was one of the Founders*

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– Editor, *Annals*

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if they repent or if they ask the Believers for protection. Protection required the payment of a special tax, *dhimma*.

The story of Islam as Donner constructs it begins with Muhammad's consolidation of political power over Medina, his justification of raiding parties, his conquest and occupation of Mecca and the town of Ta'if in western Arabia, and his organized military expeditions in the north against Tabuk. Once he achieved sufficient power he dispensed with the policy of making alliances with pagan tribes, something previously necessary in his struggle with Mecca. He announced a new policy of non-cooperation with polytheists; they were to be attacked and forced to acknowledge God's oneness. By the end of Muhammad's life, the Believers were not merely a religion with an emphasis on God but a militant pietistic movement bent on aggressively searching out and destroying what its members considered practices odious to God. Following the death of Muhammad the Islamic conquests lasted, with various interruptions, for roughly a century and carried the Believers as far as Spain and India.

The expansion of the Community of Believers and the struggle for leadership occupies the greater part of this volume and concludes with Donner's account of the emergence of Islam under the Umayyads. Donner reminds his readers that the Qur'an provides no direct information on the expansionist movement. Here, he says, one must rely on the traditional narratives, which, as a professional historian, he finds "very problematic." Given the clarity of his prose, one may hope that he plans a second volume carrying the story forward. Like Ignaz Goldziher's classic work, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, written a century ago, this book has the ring of truth where so many of the volumes recently published by university presses seem partisan or merely apologetic works. A not insignificant merit of *Muhammad and the Believers* is the appendix, wherein Donner provides his notes and an extensive guide for further reading.

PROFESSOR JUDE DOUGHERTY is Dean Emeritus of the Philosophy Faculty, Catholic University of America, Editor, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and General Editor, *Series Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Washington, D.C.

Don't Be Afraid of the Dark

Black horses pulling a black coach, driven by a black-garbed driver, hurtle through the night. Ahead are wrought-iron gates and beyond them a dark mansion of Gothic aspect. Obviously we are in Dracula movie country, somewhere between a Hollywood backlot and Burnham Beeches, Buckinghamshire, location of so many woody scenes in Hammer horror movies.

Well, no. We are in Australia disguised as Rhode Island. Cut from the wrought-iron gates to a jumbo jet aboard which Sally (Bailee Madison) draws black whirls on white paper to amuse herself and indicate she is a troubled child.

Cut again to her father Alex (Guy Pearce) and girl friend Kim (Katie Holmes) waiting to greet her at Tullamarine Airport and we are in Guillermo del Toro land. Although the movie was directed by Troy Nixey (a specialist in comic books), Del Toro produced and co-wrote the script. His fingerprints are on every frame.

In quick order, the original owner of the mansion Emerson Blackwood played by Gary McDonald is killed (after murdering a maid): He is followed by the handyman played by Jack Thompson.

The mansion, it becomes clear, is not suffering dry-rot or white ants; it is infested by age-old creatures disturbed by Alex and Kim's zealous renovations.

Screws tighten actually and metaphorically. Which of the renovators will share the fate of McDonald and Thompson? Surely the mansion must be climactically destroyed? Too valuable. The creatures? Dissimilar to cockroaches they still have their ability to survive. A suspicious hump on their backs may indicate a hidden key for winding them up. With his co-writer Matthew Robbins, Del Toro may be tempted to wind them up for a sequel. The temptation should be resisted.

TBA ★★★NFFV

Autoluminescent

Directors Richard Lowenstein and Lynn-Maree Milburn prove with this bio-documentary that it is not necessary to have foreknowledge of a subject to be enthralled. Their subject is Rowland S Howard, a composer- singer-guitarist.

Some may ask who? Nick Cave, no mean performer himself, has the answer:

MOVIES

By James Murray

'Rowland was Australia's most gifted and uncompromising guitarist.'

The Cave view is shared by others who loved, knew or worked with Howard, driving force of the outfit, *The Birthday Party* (post-punk rock for the cognoscenti) and saw him die young in 2009. They include Wim Wenders, Henry Rollins, Thurston Moore, Barry Adamson and Mick Harvey

Yes it has its dull moments. But it has the overall look of a cult classic of the genre.

M★★★NFFV

The Cup

Is based on the true story of Damien Oliver who won the 2002 Melbourne Cup in a tribute to his brother Jason, killed in a racing accident. Around this episode director Simon Wincer and his co-writer Eric O'Keefe have created a thriller of international reach. It pays due reference to Arabia as provider of the founding bloodlines of all the world's thoroughbred racing stock and Ireland as the sustainer of some of the best of it.

Brendan Gleeson is the Irish trainer Dermot Weld and as his offside, Tom Burlinson turns his *Man From Snowy River* character into an Irishman of leprechaun charm. Bill Hunter is Bart

Cummings (who has one task left: winning a Melbourne Cup while carrying the nag).

Both Gleeson and Hunter are formidable screen-fillers. As Damien Oliver, Stephen Curry, all nervy tension, creates space for himself, aided by the underplaying of Daniel MacPherson as Jason.

In sport, hat-tricks are a measure of superlative achievement. With *The Cup*, Simon Wincer has gone one better than his hat-trick: *Phar Lap*, *The Light Horsemen* and his greatest work: the television series *Lonesome Dove*.

PG★★★★SFFV

Karigurashi no Arrietty

(Arrietty the Borrower)

Utterly charming Japanese anime movie in which director Hiromasa Yonebayashi and his team of artists introduces us to a family of tiny people who live in the cracks and basement of a family home, borrowing what they need from the house's family.

Their needs are so small that a single lump of sugar suffices. Acquiring it, however, involves an expedition that for them is the equivalent of climbing Mount Fuji.

The intrepid daughter of the family is Arrietty (enthralingly voiced by Saorise Ronan). Her sword is a pin. She is spotted by a sickly boy Sho (voiced by Tom Holland). From their friendship come shifts in every sense. The movie is based on Mary Norton's *The Borrowers*. Some may find it is also reminiscent of the TH White classic *Mistress Masham's Repose*. Either way unmissable.

PG★★★★SFFV

The Hunter

In murky circumstances suggesting a mafia hit, M is put under contract. It emerges, as he proceeds into the Tasmanian wilderness, that his employer is a pharmaceutical company eager to profit from material in the genes of the Tasmanian tiger. But first, to paraphrase Mrs Beeton's *Household Management*, catch your tiger.

As M, William Dafoe displays a looming cragginess like Cradle Mountain and a lean and hungry air which matches that of the tiger he seeks. Two children Sass Armstrong (Morgana Davies) and her brother Bike (Finn Woodcock)

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befriend him when he arrives to lodge at their wilderness shack.

Their mother Lucy (Frances O'Connor) is initially out of it in sedated mourning for her husband, a zoologist lost in the wilderness. Sam Neill, doing unshaven shifty, is the family patriarch.

Director Daniel Netheim and cinematographer Robert Humphreys work from Alice Addison's script based on Julia Leigh's novel. They make a dark, tight thriller using aspects of Tasmania which make it one of the world's most spectacular film locations.

Would an Australian have been more impressive in the part? Possibly. William McInnes comes to mind. Or Aaron Pedersen. And Sam Neill arguably has at least as much international box office appeal as Dafoe.

But the latter's sombre loneliness breaking before the charm of the children is compelling. Does he catch his tiger? Let's just say that, unlike Mrs Beeton with a hare, he does not skin it before juggling it.

Quibble: M's equipment includes a high-powered sniper rifle. There is no room for it in his backpack. Sometimes he walks with it slung. Sometimes he carries it. Other times, it simply vanishes.

M★★★★NFFV

Warrior

Sibling rivalry can manifest itself as mildly as a childish tiff over toys. Director Gavin O'Connor's version is wilder. He mixes *Rocky* and *Raging Bull*, adds a touch of all-in-wrestling plus pub brawling and serves it hot and gory in an Atlantic City cyclone wire cage.

Vernacularly this is 'cage-fighting', also described for marketing purposes as Mixed Martial Arts in a way similar to describing trans-fat as healthy.

Tom Hardy and Joel Edgerton play the siblings, Tom and Brendan, the first an Iraq-veteran marine, absent without leave, the second a physics teacher trying hold his mortgage together.

The prize for which they fight with other exponents is a winner-take-all \$5 million. Nick Nolte, life cast for the part, is their estranged father, once an alcoholic now on a wagon that takes him to church on Sundays. Ultimately, the movie, while presenting reconciliation, pushes brutality to the point of boredom.

M★★★★NFFV

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The Three Musketeers

Take your pick 2D or 3D, it is still vintage Alexandre Dumas that's been produced as much as Beaujolais. Director Paul Anderson takes charge of the joie de swashbuckling. Nor is he afraid of in-period nepotism. He casts his wife Milla Jovovich is as the vixen of the piece, Milady de Winter. Jovovich does her as a kind of Jemima Bond, outfoxing that great scene stealer, Christoph Waltz, playing Cardinal Richelieu.

The musketeers: Porthos, Athos and Aramis are played by Ray Stevenson, Matthew McFadyen and Luke Evans. D'Artagnan? He is played by Logan Lerman like a fish out of an American high-school aquarium. Mads Mikkelsen with rakish eye-patch comes on as their enemy Rochford and Orlando Bloom does a turn as the bejewelled Anglo plotter Buckingham.

In this gallery difficult to pick the stand-out player.

The Dumas original is not a formal French garden. This adaptation by Andrew Davies is a wilderness and includes anachronistic props which it would be unfair to describe.

Fair to say that enough of them are left undestroyed to make a prediction of vintage sequel. But don't forget a soupcon of suspicion for the history; it's less authentic than *Carry on up the Loire* (Perhaps the French should apply an appellation controlee to their history as they do to their Beaujolais).

M★★★★SFFV

The Whistleblower

Kathryn Bolkovac, an American cop, opted for attachment to an UN-contracted peacekeeping force in former Yugoslavia. There she found that members of the force engaged in what they were supposed to prevent: sex trafficking.

From this tangled thread director Larysa Kondracki weaves a movie of unremitting horror. Mixed with the horror is pity for women drawn by offers of decent work and wages into a situation where they are exploited by those contracted to give them aid and comfort.

Rachel Weisz plays Bolkova with a stalwart grace. Kondracki keeps her from cliché heroics. No supercop karate chops. No gunplay. This is a lone honest cop doing it by the book. But the books have been rewritten by criminals.

As often happens to movies which have adopted a quasi-documentary approach, the format is inadequate to the full reality of the material. End captions make it clear that Kathryn Bolkovac, the whistleblower, has not been able to get work in her field. Nor have the UN contractors involved been brought to justice.

This is not a movie of distant relevance. Brave reporters on both *The Australian* and Fairfax Media have exposed sex trafficking in local brothels, legally rated by elected councils and financially supported by banks to the profit of their shareholders and executives, both including fathers and mothers of daughters.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

Spy Kids: All the Time in the World

Director Robert Rodriguez's new take on his franchise has sets that look as if they'd kept the Swiss watch industry on overtime. In addition the movie is in 4D, the fourth dimension being aroma (cinaroma?) controlled by a hand held card, its printed numbers keyed to numbers on the screen.

Your reviewer did not test this. His junior assistants did. They reported that everything smelled of strawberries. Could someone have mixed up the cards for a re-make of Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries*?

PG★★★★SFFV

Abduction

Title unrelated to the core of the plot. Indeed as director John Singleton (no relation of the local advertising genius) drives the plot through a spaghetti junction of complications, there are sequences where he seems to be imitating Rodriguez and making Spy Teens.

Singleton's casting supports this. Taylor (*Twilight*) Lautner plays the abducted hero, Nathan. His parents are Kevin and Mara (Jason Isaacs and Maria Bello), he tough, she fair. Nathan is close to them yet has a sense of alienation.

A high school project with his friend Karen (Lilly Collins) opens up a past involving the CIA and mayhem. The thriller becomes a wilderness, not of mirrors, but computer screens. There are moments of inadvertent hilarity caused by Singleton's losing the plot. Hopefully he will find it before starting on the predicted sequel

M★★★NFFV

Crazy Stupid Love

Is a slow motion pratfall to disaster for the master comedian Steve Carrell. He plays Cal Weaver, a nice guy who is told abruptly by his wife Emily that she has cheated on him with a colleague (Kevin Bacon, wishing he weren't trapped in his name game of co-acting with everyone).

As Emily, Julianne Moore, born to play Deirdre of the Sorrows, is similarly uneasy. Ryan Gosling is Jacob Palmer, a cocktail-bar, pick-up artist, who assists Cal to re-woo his wife.

Europe and the Faith

NO PHRASE by a Catholic has been more excoriated than that of Hilaire Belloc: "Europe is the faith and the faith is Europe." (1924) Yet what John Paul II and Benedict XVI say about the origins and meaning of Europe, in contrast to the denials of the European Union, suggests that the faith did found Europe. The faith is the origin of Europe as a coherent unity of various non-civilized tribes seeking to live together in one Church and one Empire, yet retaining their own customs and boundaries. David Goldman's book, *It's Not the End of the World: It's Just the End of You*, put it this way: "Hilaire Belloc's famous quip – 'Europe is the faith and the faith is Europe' – is precisely correct." ... Europe's unity was hammered out in thought from the Fathers of the Church to Aquinas.

— Father James Schall, 'Belloc's Infamous Phrase,' in *The Catholic Thing*, October 18, 2011

Emma Stone, does what she can, and it's beguiling, to add subtlety. There's a subplot cross-linking Cal, his son Robbie (Jonah Bobo) and the family baby-sitter Jessica (Analeigh Tipton).

Dan Fogelman's script has decent aspirations. But like many a modern scriptwriter he seems to believe that cartloads of nastiness will help the moral

medicine go down. The movie is directed by Glenn Ficarra and John Requa. Two heads better than one? Not here.

M★★NFFV

Monte Carlo

Takes the biscuit (irresistible pun). It's a scrumptious comedy in which a charming, all-American teenager Grace on holiday in Paris is mistaken for an obnoxious English heiress Cordelia Winthrop Scott. Selena Gomez does both parts with marvellous aplomb supported by Leighton Meester as her half-sister, Meg. Their best friend Emma is played by Katie Cassidy who steals all the scenes not nailed down.

Loaded up with Louis Vuitton luggage belonging to Cordelia, the trio are jet-whisked to the small but perfectly formed principality of Monaco ruled by the Grimaldi family who, with admirable frankness for royalty, admit their ancestors were once pirates.

In Monaco, Grace finds herself scheduled to take part in a fund raiser for Save the Children. Will she make it or will Cordelia intervene and prevent her auctioning a Bulgari necklace scintillating enough to raise the ghost of Elizabeth Taylor.

Director Thomas Bezucha shuffles the usual Franco-Anglo-American clichés to great effect. He includes a wild card: Meg falls in love with a très dinkum Aussie (Luke Bracey *ex-Home and Away*) Ideal children's party fare.

PG★★★SFFV

Contagion

Director/cinematographer Steven Soderbergh takes his mult-strand



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narrative technique into the pandemic genre and creates a viral horror story worthy of the late Dr Michael (*The Andromeda Strain*) Crichton.

Soderbergh brings together a splendid cast: Gwyneth Paltrow and Matt Damon are the American couple, one immune, one initially infected by a virus, designated MEV1. Laurence Fishburne is Dr Cheever of the US Center For Disease Control. His colleagues are played by Kate Winslet, Marion Cottillard, Jennifer Ehle and Elliott Gould.

Jude Law, complete with prosthetic snaggle teeth, is a maverick blogger (is there any other kind?) seeking to scare up a drug company conspiracy.

Be warned; Soderbergh does not adhere to Hollywood mortality protocols: some of his stars die. The final-twist clue is in the opening sequence subtitled Day 2.

Intriguingly Australia is seen on global map spreads so often you begin to think the twist – a cure – is going to be in Melbourne’s Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, or Sydney’s St Vincent’s – your reviewer’s hospital of choice. When it comes in a flashback to Day 1 the twist is set in China yet reminiscent of Australian fauna.

Australia figures neither in the action nor in the global spread of contagion. Surely this could not be connected to rumours that Soderbergh was not best pleased with his reception when he visited Australia last year?

This is a thriller for those who enjoy hypochondria, especially those who do not wash their hands.

MA★★★NFFV

Norwegian Wood

On one level a high-school romance, its retro title derived from a Beatle hit. But it’s set in Japan. So, no comprehensive high jinks in Liverpool. And no American prom queens, pom-pom cheerleaders, and football jocks.

Instead it’s angst time as Watanabe (Ken’ichi Matsuyama), the narrator, and his friend Kizuki (Kengo Kora) move from high school to university in Tokyo where they interact with Naoka (Rinko Kichuki) who is more Kizuki’s friend while Watanabe engages with other girls Midori (Kiko Mizuhara) and Keiko (Reika Kirishima).

It’s beautifully realised by cinematographer Mar Lee Ping-bing under the direction of Tran Anh Hung (born Vietnam, educated France). The movie’s visual tone is that of a Japanese woodcut. Beautiful. Gray rain needling down on gray figures in a gray landscape. But such woodcuts are by their nature minimalist. At more than two hours *Norwegian Wood* is, aptly enough, suicidally overlong.

MA15+★★★NFFV

The Change Up

Dave Lockwood (Jason Bateman) and Mitch Planko (Ryan Reynolds) are classroom mates who have drifted apart. Dave is a family man and rising lawyer; Mitch is a lay-about who has gone to pot and fallen into porn-movies.

They get together for a re-union beer, urinate in a public fountain and – hey-presto! – find themselves in an identity-switch movie, a sub-genre originating in the 19th century japery of *Vice-Versa* (by Fanstee Anstey, pseudonym of Thomas Anstey Guthrie).

Director David Dobkin abetted by writers Jon Lucas and Scott Moore stir in FBYF (Farrelly Brothers Yuck Factor) by way of many ruderies.

MA15+★★★NFFV

Johnny English Reborn

Third of Rowan Atkinson’s spoofs of the James Bond movies; it works only intermittently, director Oliver Parker’s difficulty being that the Bond franchise itself has degenerated into self-parody.

Overall it’s a stale English muffin palatable when Atkinson draws on his great comic creation, Mr Bean. Worth sampling for the opening sequence in which Atkinson goes through training as a fighting Buddhist monk and for a rooftop chase sequence where the baddie goes helter-skelter and English does not.

There’s also scene of lese majeste at Buckingham Palace which may well amuse the inhabitants of that pile floating majestically on what was once marshland.

Gillian Anderson plays M, boss of MI7, privatised (or, more exactly, Japanned under the brand name Toshiba). Rosamond Pike plays the behavioural psychologist, who alters English’s behaviour for a possible further rebirth..

PG★★★SFFV

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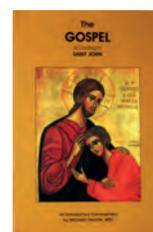
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The Holy Father's concern for the Christian presence in the Holy Land and Middle East led him to call on the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) to prioritise support for a Church that is "threatened in its very existence". Benedict's XVI's plea for the faithful in the Middle East follows an upsurge of anti-Christian fundamentalism, which has helped cause a mass exodus from the region.

Among the places worst affected is the Holy Land, where the number of Christians has dwindled to barely 150,000. Over the past 60 years, the percentage of Christians in Bethlehem has plummeted from 85% of the population to only 12%. In Jerusalem the figure has fallen from 20% to just 1.1%. What would Christmas Day at the birthplace of Christ be like if the faithful were no longer there to gather, worship and celebrate?

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'... a film from Hollywood that respects the Catholic Church whether the film-makers believe in faith and the Church or not.'

THE RITE

By Peter Malone, MSC



FOR ALMOST forty years, since *The Exorcist* was first released in 1973, demonic possession and exorcisms have been in the forefront of films which combine horror with the life of the Catholic Church. *The Exorcist* led to three sequels and, in recent years, two prequels. A 1976 case in Germany was the basis for *Requiem* as well as for *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*. And there have been quite a number of minor and exploitation films.

This is the movie setting for *The Rite*

However, a significant part of the context for *The Rite* is the introduction of a course in Rome, well publicised and sometimes sensationalised by the media, for instructing exorcists. Interviews with some of the exorcists, especially in Italy, have been published. Several books have been written. The screenplay for *The Rite* is derived from a documentary book by Matt Baggio.

It should be said that *The Rite* is particularly Catholic-friendly. Catholic audiences who are getting older would be more at home with the film, especially the first part. Younger Catholics could be intrigued by the information given and follow through. Christian believers will find the film interesting. Believers in the transcendent would be open to the events and the interpretations. Rationalists and sceptics would dismiss and have dismissed the story as ecclesiastical mumbo jumbo and superstition: a variation on themes for horror movies.

The question arises about the reality of demonic possession and the rituals for exorcising demons. Apart from the movies, this is not part of the experience

of the vast, vast majority of Catholics, who have never met an exorcist nor anyone who has been possessed.

The film makes a reasonable case for possession (without any explicit reference to Gospel stories or Jesus' own casting out of devils). It offers some plausible enough scenarios (though they are in Italian settings, more emotional than in Anglo-Saxon, Celtic settings) and shows the rituals, the unpredictable nature of demonic behaviour, the energy demanded of the

exorcist in praying and confronting evil.

The Rite has strong credentials. The director is Swedish Mikael Hafstrom (whose credits include the thriller *1408* and the Swedish film, *Evil*, about a malevolent schoolboy). The writer is Michael Petroni who did the screenplay for *The Chronicles of Narnia, Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. It is 'inspired by' (not based on) material from a book on possession, exorcism and the story of Fr Gary Thomas, *The Rite: The Making of a Modern Exorcist*, by American Italy-based investigative writer, Matt Baggio.

Fr Gary Thomas is parish priest of Sacred Heart, Saratoga, diocese of San Jose, who, when he went on sabbatical, was asked by his bishop to attend the exorcism course in Rome. He did not have a crisis of faith (as his fictional counterpart in the film does). He was appointed exorcist for his diocese and works with a team of psychologists, psychiatrists and other priests. He says that most of those who approach him suffer from mental illness rather than possession. He sees his work as a healing ministry of the Church. [Googling Matt Baggio leads to information about the book. Googling Fr Gary Thomas will bring up the video (about.com) of the premiere of *The Rite*, a talk with Anthony Hopkins and a helpful interview with Gary Thomas.]

Even while the Warner Bros logo is still on screen, we hear a voice ask 'Do you believe in sin?'. Then follows something unusual for a commercial film, a papal quotation. It is from John Paul II about St Michael casting Satan down to hell, something which must continue today. Part of the reason for Catholics being at home with the film, is that in the early sequences we see crucifixes, rosary beads, statues of the Sacred Heart, Mary, St Thérèse and a recurring picture of a Guardian Angel.

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The martyrdom of Friar John Forest

The film is in two parts, each asking for a different response from the audience. The first part focuses more on theory, arguments *pro* and *con* possession; the second shows cases, which move the action into a more melodramatic phase.

The first part is more 'reasonable'. A young man, Michael Kovaks (Colin O'Donogue), helping his father in his mortician's business, decides to get away from home, receives a scholarship and goes to a seminary. At the time of his diaconate, he has doubts about his personal faith and asks to leave. When his seminary director slips in ice and causes a car to swerve and hit a girl on a bike, Michael, the young seminarian, is asked by the dying girl for absolution. He prays over her, very movingly. His superior (warning him that were he to leave he would forfeit his scholarship and would have to repay it – money and the American Church!) sends him to Rome for the course in Exorcism.

The scenes in the course, delivered by a Dominican, present the questions and queries an audience might have about possession and exorcism. Psychological arguments about mental illness are put forward and whether psychotic behaviour could be confused with possession. A figure (open to query) is given: half a million possessions reported to the Vatican each year and 'orders sent down' that there should be an exorcist in every diocese. The statistic at the end of the film mentions that, in fact, there are only fifteen exorcists in the US. There is also talk of there being, just as with angels, a *hierarchy* of demons. The exorcist needs to elicit the name of the demon who fears being named.

Michael is sent by Fr Xavier, the lecturer (Ciaran Hinds), to visit an old Welsh Jesuit who lives out of Rome, a former doctor, who has performed many exorcisms, Fr Lukas. Anthony Hopkins, giving an intelligent and generally restrained performance, is Fr Lukas. He invites Michael to observe and participate in examinations of the possessed (a pregnant 16-year-old girl who had been raped by her father, a young boy who has mule prints on his back and torso, both of whom know secrets about Michael). Michael talks things over with a young woman (Alice Braga), a journalist who is doing the

A GREAT IMAGE in North Wales, called Darvell Gadarn, to which pilgrimages had been made... was brought up to London in the spring [of 1538] to be burned in Smithfield. In the same fire that consumed the image was burned an Observant [Franciscan] Friar named John Forest, who had once been confessor to Katharine of Aragon. His constancy in obedience to papal authority had given way for a time under the trial of severe imprisonment; but afterwards, having been set free, on resuming his functions as a confessor, he felt compelled by the questions addressed to him to return to his old spiritual allegiance. He was convened before Cranmer at Lambeth on May 8, [1538] when he is said to have abjured as heresies certain doctrines that he had taught, consisting mainly of a recognition of the Church of Rome as the Church Catholic, of papal pardons, and of priestly power to remit the pains of purgatory to the penitent. But he refused the penance enjoined on him to be done at St. Paul's on the following Sunday, and maintained his old beliefs once more. On May 22 he was hung by a chain over the burning mass of Darvell Gadarn until he died. At his martyrdom Bishop Latimer preached a sermon to persuade him again to recant, but he declared that an angel from heaven could not persuade him then.

— James Gairdner, *The English Church in the sixteenth century from Henry VIII to Mary*, London, Macmillan & Co, 1904, p.200. Gairdner, a Scottish Protestant historian, was a public servant working in the Records Office for more than 50 years.

course, researching a feature article.

The second part of the film may not appeal so much and could give audiences a fright. As might be guessed, the exorcist is open and vulnerable to demonic attacks. Fr Lukas himself is taken over by a demon, giving Anthony Hopkins some heightened histrionic moments. This is the challenge for Michael who has just received news that his father has died and has experienced hallucinations, including a phone call from his father. The possessed Fr Lukas uses this knowledge – quite diabolical in its destructive insinuations – to torment both Michael and the journalist about their lives and their families. [Choosing not to believe in the Devil won't protect you from him, says Fr Lukas.]

As might be expected, this is the test for Michael, to perform the ritual despite his doubts and to recover the gift of faith. He is challenged to believe in the devil and then believe in God

[symbolised by the crucifix on his rosary beads that he had bent back in unbelief at his mother's funeral and which he now bends back to normal].

Given the recent crises in the American Church concerning priesthood, *The Rite* is remarkably respectful of priesthood and vocational choices.

The question, 'Do you believe in sin?' is repeated at the end of the film.

But there is a very pleasing line spoken by the healed Fr Lukas. He had already suggested an image of God's presence to doubters: 'God's fingernail' touching them; and he said to Michael after his exertions: 'Faith becomes you'.

Not everyone will want to watch a film about possession. But, it is interesting to see a film from Hollywood that respects the Catholic Church whether the film-makers actually believe in faith and the Church or not.

FATHER PETER MALONE MSC reviewed movies for *Annals Australia* from 1968 to 1998. He also edited *Compass*, a theological Journal, from 1971 to 1998. He was president of the Catholic Church's World Association for Communication, SIGNIS, and a member of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, from 1999 until 2006. He now lives and works in Melbourne. He saw *The Rite* at the recent Berlin Film Festival, and this review has been taken with permission from the SIGNIS website.



