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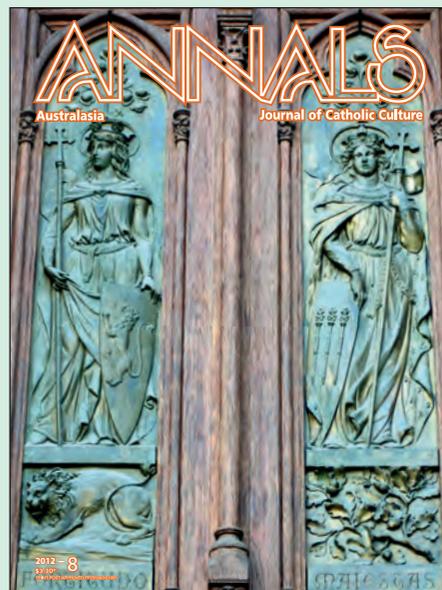
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[Sunday Readings at Mass: Year B/weekday readings: Year II]

Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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- 3 **The Treasury of St Peter's**
EDITORIAL
- 6 **Sokolka and the Eucharistic Mystery**
WANDA SKOWRONSKA
- 10 **Solving Life Questions and the 'Old Faith'**
REVIEW BY JUDE P. DOUGHERTY
- 13 **The end of Irish Catholicism?**
MAOLSHEACHLANN O CEALLAIGH
- 18 **Syria in Extremis: Drawing a line in the Sand**
PAUL STENHOUSE MSC
- 26 **A Whole World Away**
GILES AUTY
- 29 **Anglicanism at a Crossroads**
FRANCIS MARSDEN
- 36 **Broomsticks and Academic Gowns**
REVIEW BY IAN MACDONALD
- 38 **The Reality of the Old West**
SUSAN REIBEL MOORE



Front Cover: Section of the doorway of the nineteenth century neo-Gothic Church of St Vincent de Paul in the centre of Marseille. This beautiful church dominates the top of the Canebière, Marseille's main thoroughfare whose name comes from canebe, the hemp grown in the port area that was used to make ships' rigging (British sailors referred to it as the 'can o' beer'). The Bronze of the church doors represents the virtues. Our cover depicts [on the left] Fortitude, and [on the right] Majesty. Fortitude was represented by the lion. Our Catholic ancestors thought the lion slept with its eyes open, and hence was a symbol of vigilance and bravery. The symbol of Majesty [Maiestas] is the acorn, fruit of the majestic oak.

Cover Photo: Paul Stenhouse

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JESUS SAID:

'This Is My Body;
This Is My Blood.
We Believe In Him;
Let Us Also Believe
His Words.

- St Caudentius of Brescia,
died c.410 AD, Treatise 2,
Roman Breviary, Reading
for Thursday of Week 5 in
Easter tide.

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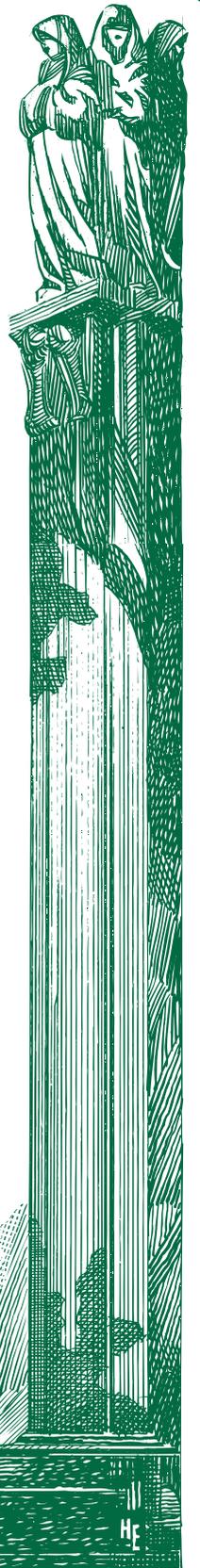
n the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

**Do N'T
UNDERESTIMATE
Th E GIANTS**



DUARRY the granite rock
with razors, or moor the
vessel with a thread of silk;
then you may hope, with
such keen and delicate
instruments as human knowledge
and human reason, to contend
against those giants: the passion
and pride of man.

– Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, *The Idea of a
University*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976, pp.110-111.





o GENTLE JESUS, BE o UR LIGH T

SWEET Saviour, bless us e'er we go,
Thy word into our minds instil,
And make our lukewarm hearts to glow
With lowly love and fervent will.
Through life's long day and death's dark night,
O gentle Jesus, be our light.

THE DAY is done, its hours have run,
And thou hast taken count of all,
The scanty triumphs grace hath won,
The broken vow, the frequent fall.
Through life's long day and death's dark night,
O gentle Jesus, be our light.

FOR ALL we love, the poor, the sad,
The sinful,— unto thee we call;
O let thy mercy make us glad;
Thou art our Jesus and our All.
Through life's long day and death's dark night,
O gentle Jesus, be our light.

- Father Frederick Wiliam Faber 1814-1863, friend of Samuel Coleridge and Blessed John Henry Newman. He was received into the Catholic Church in 1845. He was one of the founders of the London Oratory.

Render to God the things that are Gods

THE TREASURY OF ST PETER'S

By Paul Stenhouse, MSC



WHEN THE emperor Constantine sealed the remains of St Peter in a sarcophagus

which he placed under the high altar of the basilica that he erected over the site of the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles, he also placed a cross of pure gold, weighing one-hundred-and-fifty pounds, on the lid of the sarcophagus.¹

In the spring of 1594 while Giacomo della Porta was levelling the floor of the old basilica and removing at the same time the foundations of the Canopy that Pope Julius II had erected over the altar, the floor collapsed. Through the opening he saw what no one had seen since the time of Sergius II – the grave of St Peter and the golden cross of Constantine. When Pope Clement VIII heard of the discovery, he descended to the Confession [the open space in front of the altar] accompanied by Cardinals Bellarmine, Antoniano and Sfondrato and with the aid of a torch that Giacomo della Porta lowered through the broken pavement saw the cross inscribed with the names of Constantine and Helena.² According to contemporary accounts³ of this amazing happening, the Pope ordered that the opening be closed immediately.

Regrettably we can't say what happened to the golden cross of Constantine. It is, to the best of our knowledge, not in the Treasury of St Peter's nor in the Vatican Museum. It could have been melted down in 1797 when Napoleon held Rome and the Pope to ransom, demanding 20 million francs in cash from the Pope.

Treasury or Museum?

Speak of the Treasury of St Peter's to most people who have had the privilege

of visiting the Basilica built over the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles on the Vatican Hill, and they will generally think you mean the Vatican Museum.

Some may also jump to conclusions about the 'treasure' in the treasury: imagining vast quantities of gold and silver. There are gold and silver objects there, of course, but their value consists principally in their age or their association with well-known people in the past, rather than from the intrinsic worth of the material from which they are made.

Between the time when Constantine and Pope Sylvester built the first Basilica in 324, and the Muslim invasions and sackings of the Basilicas of Sts Peter and Paul in 846 AD, the Basilica had been given many priceless gifts in honour of St Peter. These were not personal gifts to the Pope at the time, nor were they given to the Church in general: they were sent to the Shrine of the Prince of the Apostles as testimonies of love and honour by numerous emperors, kings, princes and well-to-do Catholic people.

Almost all the accumulated treasures of over four hundred years were stolen by Muslim pirates in the

time of Pope Sergius VI. Lanciani estimates that they seized more than 3,000 kg of gold and more than 30,000 kg of silver from the two basilicas. It all sank in the sea around Sicily when the Muslim fleet was hit by a terrible storm as they were returning to north Africa. They perished and the treasure went to the bottom of the sea with them.

Treasury of St Peter's

The 'Treasury' of St Peter's is not, however, the Vatican Museum. These days the Treasury, which is accessed through the door that leads to the sacristy of St Peter's close to the left transept of the Basilica displays the few things that survived those Muslim raids, the terrible sacking of Rome in 1527 by the Lutheran troops of Charles V, and the numerous other occasions when Rome was sacked – including the depredations of the triumphant Sardinian army that occupied Rome in 1870.

Most of the other exhibits are gifts to various Popes and to the Shrine of St Peter over the past 200 years.

You can see a relic of the true cross in a beautiful silver-gilt cross, a gift to

The Sackings of Rome

ROME WAS seized, sacked [and sometimes burnt], in 387 BC by the Gauls under Brennus; by Nero in 64 BC; by Alaric the Hun in 410 AD; by Genseric the Vandal in 455; by Odoacer the German Arian in 467; by Byzantine emperor Justinian's general Belisarius, and by the Ostrogoths in 536; by the Goths in 538; by Totila and his Goths in 546 and 548; by the Byzantine exarch Isaac from Ravenna in 640; by the Byzantine emperor Constans II in 663; by the Lombards in 750; by the Muslims in 846 and 886; by Arnulf and his Germans in 896; by Robert Guiscard and his French in 1084; by the army of German and Austrian Lutherans under Charles V in 1527; by Napoleon in 1797; and by the Italian forces in 1870.

— Thomas Huntley, 'The Sackings of Rome,' See *Annals* 2000/1 pp.25 ff. For lists of the sackings of Rome see, inter alia, Francesco Gligora and Biagia Catanzaro, *Storia dei Papi*, 2 vols, Panda edizioni, 1989, vol. 2, p.777.

The Survival of Ancient Rome

CRITICS FORGET how many times Rome was sacked, not to mention how many times it suffered earthquakes and destructive fires and famine. Cyril Pearl, the great Australian journalist and social historian was fond of remarking that instead of complaining about the ruins of Rome, and its apparent architectural hotch-potch, visitors should be amazed and grateful that so much has been preserved from past generations despite the numerous sackings of the city, and the thefts of its treasures that have gone on for millennia.

They should be thankful that Roman authorities don't think like a visitor from Sydney whom I showed around Rome in the seventies. As we walked around the Roman Forum, now largely in ruins, he remarked in all seriousness, 'What a waste. Why don't they level all these ruins and build flats?'

The fact that, speaking broadly, from the death of Constantine in 337 until 554, it was the Bishops of Rome, the Popes, who were *de facto* responsible for the material as well as the spiritual well-being of the city undoubtedly played an important part in this extraordinary physical survival of the Eternal City.

After 554 - the so-called *Pragmatic Sanction of Justinian* - they were *de iure* responsible. The continuity of this temporal authority exercised by successive bishops of Rome, baneful as it may have been in other respects, guaranteed, in practical terms, that Rome's pre-Italian, republican, imperial, early Christian, mediaeval and renaissance past was, at least in principle, protected and respected.

— Thomas Huntley, 'The Sackings of Rome,' See *Annals Australasia* 1/2000 pp.25 ff.

the Pope from the Byzantine Emperor Justinus II. As soon as you enter the Treasury you will see the cock in gilt-bronze that used to stand on a column in the old basilica as a reminder of Peter's denial of our Lord.

A precious survivor is the Dalmatic of St Leo, the vestment worn by Charlemagne on Christmas Day 800 AD when Pope Leo II crowned him Emperor in old St Peter's. The Holy Roman Emperors used to wear it while serving the Pope's Mass at their coronations. There are various ancient illustrated Missals and Antiphonaries, as well as a plethora of exquisite gilt and silver candelabra.

Usually when people, for whatever reason, makes passing jibes at the alleged 'wealth' of the 'Vatican' they are not thinking so much of the Treasury [its existence seems to have escaped them] but of the exhibits in the Vatican Museum set in the most beautiful surroundings of the Papal buildings.

Vatican Palaces and museum

Pope Symmachus [498-514 AD] built the first Papal residence at the Vatican and succeeding Popes over fifteen hundred years have added to it until it became what it is today: the largest palace in the world, 1151 feet long with eight grand staircases, twenty courtyards and more than 11,000 rooms of different sizes.

In their zeal to attack the Papacy, however, critics ignore the fact that most of the priceless works of art in St Peter's and in the Vatican Museum



— by Michaelangelo, Raffaele, Bernini, Signorelli, Botticelli, Pinturicchio and others too numerous to mention here — are frescoes or stucco work that would be destroyed in the act of stripping them from their bases, or melting them down.

Michaelangelo's incomparable paintings on the ceiling and wall of the chapel built by Pope Sixtus IV in 1473 would be lost forever, to the benefit of nobody, if the mentality of modern barbarians were to prevail.

Moveable objects that could be disposed of would lie in secular museums the property of corporations or private individuals accessible only to the privileged few — rather than being, as they all are now, part of the *Patrimony of St Peter*: a treasure that belongs to Catholics of all centuries, and accessible to all persons of good will.

Cynicism, not genuine concern

It is straining our credulity to expect us to believe that suggestions about selling the treasures of the Vatican, however ingenuously couched, are not more cynical than their proponents admit. Such proposals appear to stem more from a desire to strip the Papacy of its significance, and of the visible signs of its 2000 year-long history, than from a genuine concern for the poor.

Cynics who indulge in this brand of 'No Popery' are not unlike the mother with the dead child in the familiar story of Solomon and the prostitutes, who was determined that if she couldn't have the child of the other woman then she would rather that it be killed. Like Martin Luther [who made himself Pope and set up his Vatican in Germany] if they can't be Pope, then let there be no Pope. If they can't make the decisions about Faith and Morals, then let no decisions be made.

This attitude was foreign to the minds and hearts of the countless donors some of whose gifts to the Shrine of St Peter over sixteen-hundred years by some miracle survived its countless sackings and can still be admired by those who visit the Treasury of St Peter's.

1. *Liber Pontificalis*, quoted Rudolfo Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, Houghton, Mifflin & Co, Boston and New York, 1892, p.149.
2. *ibid.* p.150.
3. *ibid.*

CoNSUmERISm AND CATHo LIC So CIAL TEACH ING



S ALLAN BLOOM wrote in *The Closing of the American Mind*, 'There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative.' Nevertheless, I draw students out by asking 'How can one really achieve a positive sense of self-esteem?' In the discussion that follows, we examine what Paul Vitz has to say about esteem:

Self-esteem should be understood as a response, not as a cause. *It is primarily an emotional response to what we have done, and to what others have done to us.... Try to acquire self-esteem and you will fail-but do good to others and accomplish something for yourself, and you will have the self-esteem you need.*

By encouraging students to ask the right questions, more students start to see the fallacies that are at the root of marketing tactics which promote consumerism.

Contemporary Marketing suggests a range of products and services that will enable consumers to meet their need for self-actualization. One of these (the non-profit project) is authentic; the others are not:

Companies specializing in exotic adventure or educational trips aim to satisfy consumers' need for self-actualization. Not-for-profit organizations that invite paying volunteers to assist in such projects as archaeological digs or building homes for the needy appeal to these needs as well. MasterCard's well-known 'priceless' ads often feature the satisfaction of self-actualization needs.

The text expands this by suggesting that firms meet consumers' self-actualization needs with products and services including, 'Education, cultural events, sports hobbies, luxury goods, technology, travel,' using appeals like 'Is it in you?' (Gatorade); 'Turning goals into accomplishments' (DePaul University); 'Reach higher' (Lincoln cars); and 'You are now free to move about the country' (Southwest Airlines).

Services that involve some kinds of education can truly help a person realize more of their potential, but taking an exotic adventure or having a credit card to help you achieve 'priceless' moments (by buying something) are sham appeals for self-actualization. Pope John Paul provides a counterpoint to the secular view in *Centesimus Annus*:

It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being,' and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself. It is therefore necessary to create lifestyles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments.

Students are assigned to read this entire section (n. 36) for the next class. To start our discussion I explain how, in the past, even people from developed economies struggled to meet basic needs (still true in developing economies) and that today the problem in developed economies is not so much about meeting basic needs but rather more about a demand for quality, ultimately the quality of life in general. I then read the following passage from *Centesimus Annus*:

The manner in which new needs arise and are defined is always marked by a more or less appropriate concept of the human person and of the person's true good. A given culture reveals its overall understanding of life through the choices it makes in production and consumption. It is here that the phenomenon of consumerism arises. In singling out new needs and new means to meet them, one must be guided by a comprehensive picture of the person which respects all the dimensions of his being and which subordinates his material and instinctive dimensions to his interior and spiritual ones. If, on the contrary, a direct appeal is made to human instincts-while ignoring in various ways the reality of the person as intelligent and free-then consumer attitudes and lifestyles can be created which are objectively improper and often damaging to the person's physical and spiritual health.

At this point, a few heads will nod, a few others will scoff or laugh; nevertheless, I am hopeful that a grain of truth has been planted in students' minds that may help them become better consumers and perhaps advance society someday.

— Excerpt from Jeff Rankin, 'Marketing Education in the Light of Catholic Social Teaching,'
The Catholic Social Science Review 17(2012) pp 123-133.

Extraordinary Events in a Little Polish Town.

So Kół KA AND Th E EUCh ARISTIC mYSTERY

By Wanda Skowronska

DURING A RECENT visit to Poland, as I sat in the bus full of pilgrims heading to a town called Sokółka, north east of Warsaw I wondered where on earth I was going. I had been told it was a place *'you must see'*. It was not easy getting up at 5am but I made it, in the pre-dawn darkness, to the Warsaw bus station and clambered on for the four hour journey. When not snoozing, I joined the pilgrims, in my Australian accented Polish, in alternating decades of the rosary with Blessed John Paul II's favourite song 'Barka'.

The bus full of singing pilgrims wound its way past pine trees and small towns outlined in the mist. Of all the little known towns of Poland, I reflected, Sokółka (pronounced Sokooka) might rank as the most unknown. And yet in this place, I was informed, mysterious, extraordinary things had taken place. It was connected with a Eucharistic host which had been dropped one day during the distribution of Communion during Mass.

What had happened in Sokółka (pop.19,000) had spread throughout Poland like wildfire but is only now reaching beyond its borders. On October 12, 2008, Father Jacek

Ingielewicz was saying Mass there in church of St Anthony of Padua. On this typical morning 200 people were present at the 8.00 am Mass. When Father Jacek was distributing Communion, one host fell to the ground. Fr Jacek solemnly placed the host in a 'vasculum' a small silver liturgical vessel, then added water and put it in a sacristy safe. This was according to Church procedure. A host which falls on the ground cannot be given out. According to common

the water. Moreover, in the middle of the host what looked like a blood stain had appeared. 'I was shocked and I did not know what to think of this' Fr Stanislaw said, adding 'my hands were shaking when I locked the safe. I could hardly begin to speak'.¹ He showed the undissolved host to Fr Jacek, both very moved by what they saw.

The parish priest decided to inform Archbishop Edward Ozorowski, the metropolitan of the nearby city Białystok (pop. 300,000) who was coming to St Anthony's soon for his regular parish visit. When the archbishop came, he was shown the host which was taken out and placed on a white corporal which symbolises Jesus' burial shroud. On inspection, a blood stain and also something akin to an organic substance had appeared on it. Fr Jacek said it was similar to the kind of tissue 'many of us analysed in our biology classes,' adding 'to this day I tremble when I recall it'.²

As soon as he had inspected the host, the archbishop called together a special church commission to investigate the matter and in particular, to rule out that there had been no interference with the host.

On January 5, 2009, he invited two highly respected medical specialists, both Professors of Medicine at Białystok University - Maria Elizabeth Sobaniec-Łotowska and Stanisław Sulkowski - to perform an analysis of a small section of the unusual host. Both had worked in the field of histopathology for over 30 years.



Church of St Anthony of Padua, Sokółka, Poland

liturgical understanding, once the host is dissolved it is no longer the Body of Christ.

Father Jacek told his parish priest about the accident but the parish priest, Father Stanislaw Gnidziejko, did not check the vasculum until 2 weeks later. On opening the sacristy safe Fr Stanislaw saw that the host had not dissolved in

They were handed the material to be analysed by Father Andrzej Kakareko, the Chancellor of the Metropolitan Curia of Białystok. Neither specialist knew what it was.

Both investigators separately came to the same conclusion. The material they had been handed was actually living *human heart muscle* tissue. Professor Sulkowski stated that the it had ‘many typical bio-morphological indicators of heart-muscle tissue’ and in particular noted ‘damage to fibres of the tissue’ and ‘the phenomenon of fragmentation. Such damage is visible as tiny ruptures.’³ Professor Sulkowski added:

Such changes can be observed only in living fibres and they show evidence of rapid spasms of the heart muscle in the period just before death.⁴

Professor Sobianiec-Lotowska came to the same conclusion: that it was living heart muscle tissue. In retrospect, but what particularly puzzled her was that the tissue had remained living, an ‘incredible phenomenon’. As she explained:

For a long time, the host remained submerged in water and then even remained longer on the corporal and therefore the tissue, which appears on the Host should have undergone the process of “asphyxia” [dying out] but we did not observe any such changes during our tests....according to the current state of knowledge in biology, we cannot explain this phenomenon scientifically.⁵

She was also very puzzled by the union of the heart tissue with the consecrated host, stating that:

This extraordinary phenomenon of inter-absorption of the heart muscle tissue with the communion host, observed under the microscope and also via transmission by electron microscopes proves to me that there could not have been any human interference with the sample.⁶

When he obtained the results of the tests, the Archbishop also informed the Papal Nuncio in Warsaw and the matter was referred to Rome for consideration. In September 2009, the public learned about the report and news spread rapidly. People started to come to Sokółka from every direction including Belarus and Lithuania.

While Poland has had many miraculous events in its history, there had not been a ‘Eucharistic miracle’



akin to that of Lanciano in Italy where the host shows living visible human tissue on it. Of course each Eucharist is a miracle, where the substance of the host is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. However, this is a Mystery, and it is extremely rare that there is visible evidence of this.

In Sokółka itself, the townspeople were amazed that their town could be ‘chosen’ for such a miracle. Apart from the sensation, however, the response was an immediate strengthening of devotion to the Eucharist. People came to the church to pray for broken

families, for children leaving the faith, for healing and for easing financial burdens. They were surprised to see the media all over the town.⁷

Not all observers of the events commented positively. Poland’s Rationalist Society expressed concern, declaring that if living heart tissue had been found, then a murder had been committed somewhere and a search for the body should begin immediately. They even took the matter to Sokółka’s public prosecutor, Analtoly Pawluczuk, who after duly considering the matter, declared that there was no evidence of any murder having been committed in the town.

On October 2, 2011, the day I travelled to Sokółka – a large open air Mass and procession had been organised and tour buses were coming from every direction. Archbishop Ozorowski, having officially declared that the visible tissue on the host was truly miraculous, was to say Mass and



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A view of the immense crowd attending the open air mass

then lead the solemn procession to St Anthony's church, placing the host, now in a monstrance, in a side chapel for veneration. By the time the pilgrim bus entered Sokółka and we reached the 'Roundabout of the Siberian Exiles' and the park adjacent to the church where the Mass was to take place, large crowds had already arrived.

Amongst the people present were representatives from the local Russian Orthodox church and imams from the local Mosque. Sokółka inhabitants speak of the peaceful co-existence of the Catholic, Russian Orthodox and Tartar Muslim communities in the town. The Tartar Muslims [of Turkic origin] arrived in the fourteenth century and have lived in peace there ever since, even allowing girls to attend the local co-educational schools. The Russians came centuries before in times of Russian occupation and have also lived there in peace. All the representatives showed respect for the Catholic community's joy and reverence at the events.

On this day, every Catholic priest was treated like a film star and people lined up to speak, to ask questions, to share in that 'supernatural excitement' that accompanies such manifestations of heaven on earth. I even saw a young priest with pictures of the host literally running across the park as hundreds of eager pursuers stretched out their hands for a picture. The young priest reached higher ground and then handed out his cards to the enthusiastic queue.

The crowd of over a quarter of a million people were whisper quiet during Mass. Young Polish scouts in khaki uniform were on hand to



Polish Girl Guides gave water to those feeling the heat

give water to those feeling faint. The 'Knights of Christ the King' wore their red cloaks. Church organisations brought their banners and flags. The procession after Mass followed the colourful flower-strewn path on which the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace and our Saviour, was carried in solemn dignity past crowds on bended knee. What was clearly evident was the profound awe for Christ's *invisible* presence in the Eucharist as well as the visible presence of the human/divine heart tissue.

The Archbishop said in his homily that we cannot know the mind of God. Why did God allow such a visible sign of His presence in unknown Sokółka? Was it to lead us to deeper reflection? Was it that He was especially welcomed here? Was it that the belief in the Eucharist is threatened in our world?

Through this event, the Archbishop said, perhaps God wanted to tell us clearly - 'Look, here I am' - in every Communion host at Mass everywhere in

the world. Sokółka is a reminder of the extraordinary reality that Christ, 'speaks' to us through this living heart tissue. In the end one lifetime is not enough to grasp the meaning of the merciful love unveiled in the 'miracle of Sokółka', a love forever seeking our response.

WANDA SKOWRONSKA is a registered psychologist who works as a counsellor in inner city schools in Sydney. She has recently been awarded a PhD in Psychology/Theology at Melbourne's John-Paul II Institute. She has done voluntary work for the Catholic pro life organisation Family Life International, and is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

1. Agnieszka Kaszuba *Cud w Sokolce* (Poland, Alex Springer, 2009), 20. This book has first hand interviews with witnesses including one with the Archbishop of Białystok. Details of the events are taken from this source.
2. *Ibid* 21.
3. Adam Białous, 'We Saw a Heart in the Communion Host from Sokółka,' *Nasz Dziennik*, Saturday-Sunday, December 12-13, 2009, No. 291. This is an extended interview conducted by A. Białous with Professor Sobaniec-Łotowska and Professor Sulkowski. Translated from the original Polish by Janusz Tydda.
4. *Ibid*.
5. *Ibid*.
6. *Ibid*.
7. Agnieszka Kaszuba, *op.cit.*, 42.

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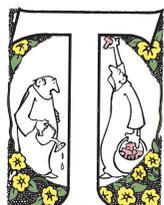
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‘Having rejected the authority of the Roman Church, Protestants shared no institutions or authorities in common to which they could turn to resolve disputes among themselves.’

SO LIVING LIFE QUESTIONS, AND THE ‘OLD FAITH’

By Jude P. Dougherty



HIS IS a remarkably erudite treatise, in the author’s words, ‘intended for anyone who wants to understand how Europe and North

America came to be as they are.’ Three hundred and eighty seven pages of text are complemented with another one hundred and eighty-seven pages of notes, including a thirty-two page index.

In a Hegelian manner, Brad Gregory finds that every idea is connected to some other, and furthermore that every idea has its own history. No one is likely to deny that ideas have consequences or is likely to deny that what happened centuries ago may profoundly influence the lives we live. *The Unintended Reformation* is a profound and timely volume, rewarding for the insight, indeed for the wisdom, the author brings to his material.

Recognizing the difficulty of tracing strands of thought with precision, Gregory, in a frontispiece quotes Jacques Maritain to the effect that ‘It is not easy to disentangle remote causation any more than it is to tell at a river’s mouth which waters come from which glaciers and which tributaries.’

Gregory is convinced that Western modernity continues to be influenced by the Reformation. His thesis begins as such:

‘On the eve of the Reformation Latin Christianity had achieved a comprehensive, sacramental world view based on truth claims about God’s actions in history, centered on the Incarnation, life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Intellectual life was vibrant, if sometimes contentious, variously institutionalized not only in universities but also in

Gregory, Brad S. *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012, pp. 574.

monasteries, at princely courts, and among participants in the religious Republic of Letters The failure of medieval Christendom derived not from defensible doctrinal positions but rather from the pervasive, long-standing, and undeniable failure of so many Christians, including members of the clergy both high and low, to live by the Church’s own prescriptions and exhortations based on its truth claims.’

In short, Churchmen failed to practice what they preached. As a result, ‘communities were hampered in their capacity to foster habituation into the virtues on which individual good, the common good, and eternal salvation depended.’

In Gregory’s judgment the Reformation succeeded in the sense that it provided an alternative way of

grounding Christian answers to Life Questions and thus provided a basis for living a Christian life, ideologically and socially separate from the Catholic Church.

The unintended consequence created by the Reformation was the problem of how to know what true Christianity is. Scripture alone was not a solution. An open-ended range of rival truth claims followed exegetical interpretation. Exegetical disagreements were translated into doctrinal disagreements that were in turn expressed in socio-moral division and political contestation.

‘Having rejected the authority of the Roman Church, Protestants shared no institutions or authorities in common to which they could turn to resolve disputes among themselves.’ Throughout the book, intended or not, Gregory highlights the importance of religious communities in the formation of those virtues without which there can be no civil community.

‘Western modernity was forged in the context of the unintended persistence of Christian pluralism and the failure of confessional rulers to achieve their goals.’ Once a distinction was made, as occurred in the Dutch Republic of the late 16th century, between public and private life, that is, when the private became separated from the political and economic order, conflict across confessional lines was relegated to the private sphere.

‘Dutch Christians preferred prosperity to religio-political hostilities.’ A politically protected individual right to freedom of religious belief and practice within the state’s law solved the European problem of confessional coercion, but it also destroyed social cohesion.



'A centrally important paradoxical characteristic of modern liberalism is that it does not prescribe what citizens should believe, how they should live, or what they should care about.' Modern liberalism nonetheless depends for social cohesion and political vitality of the regimes it informs on something it did not create, on traditionally shared beliefs, and values. Absent the cohesion provided by tradition, states are forced to become more legalistic and coercive in order to secure stability and security.

Gregory finds that modernity is failing partly because of the naturalistic assumptions of academic life. 'Reason alone in modern philosophy has proven no more capable than scripture alone in discerning or devising consensual persuasive answers to Life Questions There is no shared, substantive common good, nor are there any realistic prospects for devising one.'

Given liberalism's politically protected formal ethics of rights, secularism is impotent when it comes to resolving any of the many contested moral or political issues that emerge in the social order.

'Modern philosophies replicate in a rationalist key the unintended, open-ended, apparently irresolvable pluralism of Protestantism.'

Gregory finds 'nothing remotely resembling agreement or convergence among contemporary philosophies about what is true, what the discipline's starting point or assumptions ought to be.'

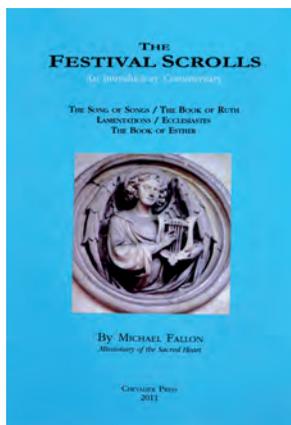
Since the 17th century modern philosophy has sought universal, rationally demonstrated truth but has produced instead an open-ended welter of arbitrary truth claims. In short, modern philosophy has failed. Ever expanding technological capacities afforded by scientific advances are set within an increasingly rancorous culture of moral disagreement and rudderless political direction.

The failure of modern philosophy to provide a convincing rational substitute for religion with respect to Life Questions is in part due to the exclusion of alternative religious claims and metaphysical assumptions in the academic world. 'Intellectually sophisticated expressions of religious world views exist today within Western pluralism,' but they have been banished from secular research universities.

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By Father Michael Fallon, MSC

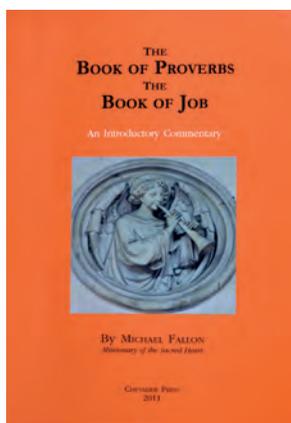
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Theology, the philosophy of religion, and non-sceptical biblical scholarship find no place in the secular academy.

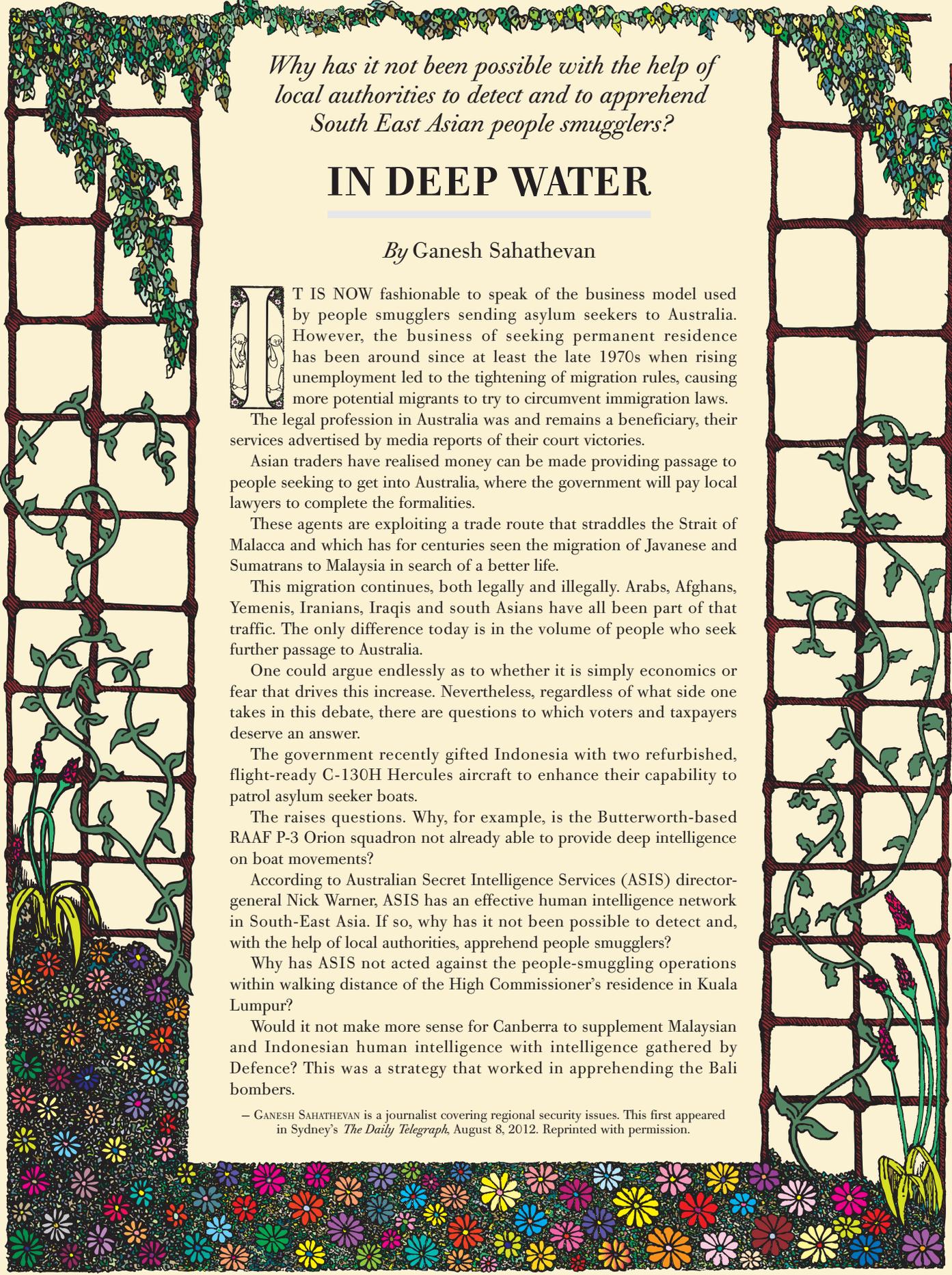
One consequence is that 'most scholars and scientists are notably lacking in theological sophistication and self awareness of their own metaphysics and beliefs.'

Gregory is not optimistic that change is likely in the near future. 'Unsecularizing the academy would require, of course, an intellectual openness on the part of scholars and scientists sufficient to end the long standing modern charade in which

naturalism has been assumed to be demonstrated, evident, self-evident, ideologically neutral, or something arrived at on the bases of impartial inquiry.'

Anyone interested in how the actual past has made the real present will value this carefully researched and timely volume. The book is a research tool in itself.

PROFESSOR JUDE P. 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.



Why has it not been possible with the help of local authorities to detect and to apprehend South East Asian people smugglers?

IN DEEP WATER

By Ganesh Sahathevan

IT IS NOW fashionable to speak of the business model used by people smugglers sending asylum seekers to Australia. However, the business of seeking permanent residence has been around since at least the late 1970s when rising unemployment led to the tightening of migration rules, causing more potential migrants to try to circumvent immigration laws.

The legal profession in Australia was and remains a beneficiary, their services advertised by media reports of their court victories.

Asian traders have realised money can be made providing passage to people seeking to get into Australia, where the government will pay local lawyers to complete the formalities.

These agents are exploiting a trade route that straddles the Strait of Malacca and which has for centuries seen the migration of Javanese and Sumatrans to Malaysia in search of a better life.

This migration continues, both legally and illegally. Arabs, Afghans, Yemenis, Iranians, Iraqis and south Asians have all been part of that traffic. The only difference today is in the volume of people who seek further passage to Australia.

One could argue endlessly as to whether it is simply economics or fear that drives this increase. Nevertheless, regardless of what side one takes in this debate, there are questions to which voters and taxpayers deserve an answer.

The government recently gifted Indonesia with two refurbished, flight-ready C-130H Hercules aircraft to enhance their capability to patrol asylum seeker boats.

The raises questions. Why, for example, is the Butterworth-based RAAF P-3 Orion squadron not already able to provide deep intelligence on boat movements?

According to Australian Secret Intelligence Services (ASIS) director-general Nick Warner, ASIS has an effective human intelligence network in South-East Asia. If so, why has it not been possible to detect and, with the help of local authorities, apprehend people smugglers?

Why has ASIS not acted against the people-smuggling operations within walking distance of the High Commissioner's residence in Kuala Lumpur?

Would it not make more sense for Canberra to supplement Malaysian and Indonesian human intelligence with intelligence gathered by Defence? This was a strategy that worked in apprehending the Bali bombers.

— GANESH SAHATHEVAN is a journalist covering regional security issues. This first appeared in Sydney's *The Daily Telegraph*, August 8, 2012. Reprinted with permission.

BOOK REVIEW

*It's hard to see the faith of our fathers going the way of the Irish Elk any time soon.
But will Catholicism survive as a social and cultural force on this island?*

THE END OF IRISH CATHOLICISM?

By Maolsheachlann O Ceallaigh



THE FIRST THING that occurs to me about The End of Irish Catholicism? is that the question in the title is never really answered.

The book is more diagnostic than prophetic in nature. Perhaps this is inevitable. I, for one, have no predictions to make about the future of Irish Catholicism. Of course, as long as there are any practicing Catholics on this island, there will still be an Irish Catholicism of some sort – and, with such a huge majority having declared themselves Catholic on the recent census, it's hard to see the faith of our fathers going the way of the Irish Elk any time soon.

But will Catholicism survive as a social and cultural force on this island?

It only takes a look around most Sunday or weekday Mass congregations to feel very bleak about this. All too often there are empty pews, and the smattering of worshippers are mostly in their sixties or seventies or beyond. Our priests, too, are mostly well into their twilight years. A decade or two more, and what will become of those congregations? Will church after church have to be sold off? Will Catholics get used to making long treks to the nearest Mass? When journalists in that future Ireland talk about “the church” – if they talk about any church, that is – will it still be assumed that they mean the Catholic church?

But it's not all doom and gloom – in fact, the state of the Church in Ireland seems quite contradictory in many ways. Though many congregations are scanty – and it has to be remembered that I am writing from a Dublin perspective, and the situation in rural areas is very different – at other times, churches are packed. St. Teresa's Church in Clarendon Street is often full for Mass, even on weekdays, and there is always a

The End of Irish Catholicism? D. Vincent Twomey SVD, Veritas Publications, 2003

queue for confessions. The Archbishop of Dublin drew a crowd when he came to UCD to celebrate Ash Wednesday Mass this year. The Veritas Catholic shop in Abbey Street seems to do a booming trade. Younger Catholics tend to be more orthodox, and the decline in vocations seems to have levelled off.

The End of Irish Catholicism? attempts to describe how we got where we are now, and to suggest possible measures towards revival.

At the beginning of the book, Dr. Twomey addresses a topic of particular interest to me – the link between patriotism and religion, nation and faith. He says, “growing up in the Ireland of the 1940s and 1950s, I was certainly aware that part of our self-identity as Irish Catholics was to see ourselves as Christian Jews, God's chosen people, materially weak but spiritually strong, spread diaspora-like throughout the world, ever loyal to the faith of our fathers.” He then describes this notion of chosen-ness as being “of dubious theological value”, and points out that “the New Israel is not any particular race but is made up of Jews and gentiles, that is, people from all races and nations now united in one faith...”

However, a Christian is not obliged to renounce national feeling, and Dr. Twomey quotes Solzhenitsyn: “Nations are [part of] the wealth of mankind, its collective personalities; the very least of them wears its own special colours and bears within itself a special aspect of divine intention.” And the author is himself rather critical of the modern Irish attitude to nationhood: “The very concept of nation, not to mention nationality, seems to have vanished from public discourse, not least due to the ‘Troubles’ in the North – we now refer rather disparagingly to ‘this island’. In addition, national identity is difficult to reconcile with the vague cosmopolitanism of our new mid-Atlantic identity.”

One thing I really like about this book is that Dr. Twomey resists the temptation to caricature the Irish Catholicism of the twentieth century. It has become rather fashionable to do this – to find the seeds of our current spiritual “recession” in the devotional “Celtic Tiger” of previous generations. I think this is too simple. It is true that the faith of our fathers (and mothers) – or, more accurately, of our great-

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Dodge the Stones

AUTHORS may also advantageously remember that we live in hurried times, and enjoy scanty leisure for reading, and that of necessity the greater fraction of that leisure belongs to the dead. Merely a nodding acquaintance with Shakespeare is not maintained without a considerable expenditure of time. The volumes with which every man of ordinary literary taste would wish to be familiar can only be numbered by thousands. We must therefore be allowed time, and there is always plenty. Every good poem, novel, play, at once joins and becomes part and parcel, of the permanent stock of English literature, and some time or another will be read and criticised. It is quite safe. Every author of spirit repudiates with lofty scorn the notion that he writes in obedience to any mandate from the public. It is the wretched, degraded politician whose talk is of mandates; authors know nothing of mandates, they have missions. But if so, they must be content to bide their time. If a town does turn out to meet a missionary, it is usually not with loud applause, but with sharp stones.

— Augustine Birrell, *Authors and Critics, Collected Essays*,
Elliot Stock, London, 1902, vol.2, p.340.

grandfathers and great-grandmothers – was often quite naive and ritualistic, focused on popular devotions such as First Fridays and sacramentals like the Miraculous Medal. We often hear that the faith of the Irish had become so complacent and unthinking that it crumbled at the first tides of secularism.

I don't really go along with these criticisms. I think every generation has to answer for itself. Perhaps lots of people went to Mass in the forties, fifties and sixties because it was the done thing. But I am sure that thousands, tens of thousands, went out of genuine religious fervour. Nor is a devotion to sacramentals, pilgrimage and popular devotions a bad thing.

A more plausible explanation for Ireland's crisis of faith comes with Dr. Twomey's description of the post-Vatican II atmosphere. Suddenly, everything seemed to be up in the air. "Things were permitted, like attending services in a Protestant church, which up to then had been strictly forbidden under all kinds of dire penalties...few have pondered the effect it must have had on the majority of priests, many of whom, up to relatively recently, controlled all the strings. The ground had been taken from under them."

An intriguing theory that Dr. Twomey puts forward is that Irish Catholicism had rather more in common with English puritanism

than we like to think. Ireland, in comparison with Catholic countries on the continent, had little concept of sacral time and space, of religious festivity, of the cult of saints and martyrs. Dr. Twomey instead posits that traditional Irish Catholicism focused on an intensely moralistic, anti-sensual, anti-sexual piety that he describes as "angelism". This is also a familiar argument from John Waters.

I'm not sure what to make of this, either. Irish Christianity has always had an ascetic, rather sombre flavour to it. In this it is much like Russian Christianity. This seems to me a matter more of tone than of doctrine. Ireland never seemed to fit into the spirit of Belloc's couplet:

Wherever the Catholic sun doth shine
There's always laughter and good red
wine.



Edward Feser, the Thomistic philosopher, has pointed out that attempting to distil a spirit of Catholic culture is contrary to the very catholicity and universality of our Church – that Catholicism embraces and consecrates all that is good in every culture. Ireland has its unique gifts and temptations, just as continental forms of Catholicism have their own.

Dr. Twomey calls for a rediscovery of Catholic festivity and community celebration. I wonder about this. My own guess is that religious joy overflows into festivity, and not the other way around. I don't think people come for the parties and stay for the prayer, but vice versa. Of course, Dr. Twomey is not making such a claim himself, but I suspect that this mentality exists elsewhere.

One powerful argument that Dr. Twomey makes is for the recovery of contemplative life: "In Ireland over the past two centuries, most religious orders were engaged in some form of apostolic work, or, as they are called today, active ministries, such as teaching, nursing, or missionary activities abroad. There was always a core of strict contemplatives, men and women, and indeed most active orders (especially of women) had, before the Council, evolved into semi-contemplative orders with strict enclosure. The initial implementation of the decrees of the Council by the active congregations resulted in the gradual removal of the contemplative dimension almost entirely....good and necessary though these social concerns are, one may well ask: should they be the main focus of our attention for those consecrated by vows to the religious life? Or should men and women religious perhaps be more concerned with testifying to 'mankind's yearning for its heavenly home', as the Council put it?"

I think this is right on the money. As Tennyson wrote, "more things are wrought in prayer than this world dreams of", and the story of Mary and Martha should be a permanent reminder to Christians that we are forever tempted to value bustle and activity over the "direct line" to our Creator. It seems to me that nothing is more radically counter-cultural and (in the best sense) subversive than prayer.

Making it a priority is, in itself, an act of renewal, an affirmation of Christian identity.

Besides this, I believe that our culture thirsts for prayer more than for social workers. We can see this in the endless flood of prayer requests that the Poor Clares receive. I see it, also, whenever I visit the UCD church, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom. This small (but handsome) church rarely seems to attract more than a handful of worshippers outside Mass times, and is often to be found empty. But the book of prayer intentions by the door seems to be written in almost every day, and usually several times a day. Turning these poignant pages, I always feel I am seeing a different Ireland from the one we see on television and in the media – an Ireland of sleepless nights and silent rooms and unquenchable spiritual yearning.

Dr. Twomey's book was written in 2003, and I wonder if the author himself would now consider the

proposals in his chapter "Beyond Church vs. State" to be at all plausible. "Perhaps, also, the time has come...to consider working towards a concordat between the Catholic Church and the Republic of Ireland that would define more clearly, and anchor in international law, the relationship (and so the authentic separation) between Church and State". The tide now seems to be running in the opposite direction. Dr. Twomey deplores a comment by a recent Minister for Justice "that he would accord the Church's canon law the same status as the rules governing a golf club". Even that seems benign now.

Rather than seeking greater institutional relations between Church and State – even relations that emphasise Church/State separation – it seems wiser, at this point in time, for the Church to regard the hand of Caesar with suspicion. The Church authorities in Ireland surely made the right decision in not seeking any public funding for the International

Eucharistic Congress this year – as evinced when one texter to a recent radio show, in the wake of the latest anti-Church frenzy in the media, wondered whether the taxpayer was paying for this event and suggested that, if so, such funding should be removed.

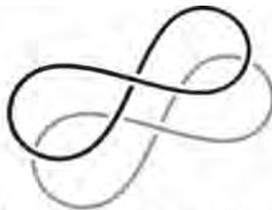
Dr. Twomey complains of a fatalistic attitude amongst Catholic and, especially, religious orders in Ireland, as though secularisation was some inevitable law of history. This is certainly a strong temptation. We live in a culture in which deterministic thinking has almost become a second nature to us (even while we are encouraged, by the fashion and entertainment and advertising industries, to assert our individual freedom ever more aggressively – and ever more superficially).

When it comes to the future of Catholicism in Ireland, and our attitude towards it, the two great temptations remain – as always – presumption and despair. We hear the note of despair when Catholics of the liberal stamp suggest that the Church has to reformulate its doctrine according to the spirit of the age. But perhaps we hear it also in the most stubbornly traditionalist Catholics, who seem to see the Church as nothing but a sign of contradiction, and a bulwark against every manifestation of modernism.

As for the note of presumption, I think we hear that whenever any sign of "green shoots" are hailed as a new Spring-time of the Church. Not only is this presumptuous, it is foolish. We can only cry "revival" so often before we lose all credibility, like the ageing Marxist who always believes the Revolution is just around the corner. We should give thanks for every welcome development, while firmly resisting the temptation to make too much of it.

Our Lord has told us not to be afraid, that he will be with us even to the end of the age, that he who perseveres to the end shall be saved, that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church. That is all we can know, and it's enough. What the future holds for our own era and nation, we cannot know.

In a final appendix, Dr. Twomey welcomes the phenomenon of a greater lay interest in theology, and calls for



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greater academic study of the subject in Ireland. Here I must simply defer to his authority, while admitting a personal scepticism. I once lodged, very briefly, with a gay philosophy PhD student who taught (I can't remember if it was theology or philosophy) in a well-known institute of Irish theology. His living room walls were bedecked with rather erotic drawings of nude men. The philosophers he tended to cite were Heidegger and Nietzsche and other figures who are hardly within the bounds of Catholic orthodoxy. When I think of lay theological studies in Ireland today, I think of him. Perhaps that is unfair.

My own guess is that, if all Irish Catholics knew their Catechism, that would be an extraordinary advance in faith formation. It seems to me – especially flicking through the pages of *The Irish Catholic* – that Irish Catholicism will certainly not perish for the want of seminars, courses, book launches and magazines.

But doubtless I am wrong to be so cynical. As Dr. Twomey says, "Once people begin to think about their faith, they will in time search for, and find, the truth." Or as Chesterton put it, if every human being lived to be a thousand years old, everybody would end up either a Catholic or a stark nihilist. The problem with dissidents who call for a "debate" in the Church is that they don't realise the debate has been going on for centuries, and has in fact already reached conclusions on most of the topics they consider to be unaddressed.

The End of Irish Catholicism? gives suggestions rather than answers, and it's hard to see how it could give easy answers to such vexing questions. I wonder how Dr. Twomey would have written the book today, and if he would have substantially altered any of the arguments and proposals he makes.

When it comes to Irish Catholicism today, I think even the most bullish secularist would have to admit – to quote the title of a perennial favourite on Donncha O'Dulaing's radio show *Faillte Isteach* – "There's Life in the Old Dog Yet".

MAOLSHEACHLANN O CEALLAIGH is the founder of the CK Chesterton Society of Ireland and is a revert to the Catholic faith from atheism. He currently resides in Dublin Ireland. To learn more about Maolsheachlann's work with the CK Chesterton Society of Ireland please visit their website.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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PRAISE, BUT NOT WORSHIP

by Christopher Smith



THE FIRST TIME I ever went to a Life Teen Mass I was sixteen years old. The parish that had the Life Teen Mass was not mine, but I went anyway. Everyone had been telling me that there were lots of people my age, who were serious about their faith, and that it would be a Spirit-filled time. Some of my friends were going to be there, too, so what could be better?

But as soon as the Mass started, I felt like I had stepped into a no-man's land suspended between Catholicism and some vague form of Protestantism that I as a convert had never seen before. It wasn't that the music was strange to me. I grew up with contemporary Christian music around the house and listened to it on the radio (when I wasn't listening to classical music or Latin dance music). So I knew the songs. The church was full of high schoolers and Baby Boomers and they all seemed to know and love each other.

But as the Mass unfolded, I kept noticing things that I knew very well were not in the rubrics, those pesky little red directions in the Missal that tell us how to celebrate the Mass properly. The Life Teen coordinators had decided that they would modify the Mass to make it fit whatever they deemed necessary to get the kids involved. And so there was dancing, hand-holding, and music that had nothing to do with the actual texts of the Mass.

But then, it was time for the Eucharistic Prayer. The celebrant invited all the kids to come around the altar. As the church was quite full, this was rather cumbersome and also pointless. But everyone stood up and made their way as through a mosh pit (I am showing my age, now!) to get closer to the altar. I stayed behind in the last pew. And of course, the celebrant thought that I was too shy to come up and so he encouraged me, from the altar, to join the kids. I had had enough, and so I yelled from the back pew, "No, sorry, Father, I'm a Catholic, I don't do that kind of thing," and pulled out a rosary and knelt to pray it as I watched the Eucharistic Prayer degenerate into something eerily similar to the ecstatic cults we had studied about in Ancient Greek History.

Not only did I never go back to a Life Teen Mass, I started the next Sunday to go to the Orthodox Church. There I felt like I was worshipping God and not having earnest adults try and fail to make religion relevant to me by assuming I was too young or stupid to understand real worship. It was fifteen years before I had to participate in anything similar again. By this time, I was a priest and I had been asked to preside over a Holy Hour for young people. The youth minister in this particular parish was very sensitive to the fact that Praise and Worship was not my thing, and she warned me ahead of time.

As I knelt there in front of the Blessed Sacrament, I realized something. The same people were doing the music who were doing it fifteen years before. It was the same music, the same songs that I made fun of when I was the age of the kids who were in the pews behind me. How relevant is that? But this time the kids who were there just seemed bored. I asked them afterwards what they thought of it, and one young man said, "Well, that was ok, I guess. When are we having another Latin Mass, Father?"

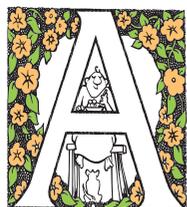
Of all of my friends from high school who were Life Teeners, not one of them is a practicing Catholic anymore. Will the kids today who are raised on a diet of Praise and Worship continue to practice the Faith when they are no longer of that age middle-aged people in the Church want to cater to? I don't know. But my experience has brought me to reflect on why Praise and Worship Music is not appropriate for the liturgy.

— Father Christopher Smith, PhD, STD is administrator of Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Taylors, South Carolina. He was received into the Catholic Church at the age of 13 and graduated from Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia.

Why the West should be wary of supporting the FSA and Islamist fighters in Syria

DRAWING A LINE IN THE SAND

By Paul Stenhouse



AS I WRITE, Syria is in grave danger of imploding. Middle East analysts agree, finally, that the presence of a powerful *Salafi* strand among Syria's rebels is undeniable. Hopes are fading for a speedy end to the wholesale killing, destruction and chaos which has been endorsed and supported by a naïve West as well as a cynical and self-interested coalition of Gulf States – among others. The point of no return may soon be reached. Al-Qaeda leader al-Zawahiri has called on Muslims to support jihad in Syria – implying, with the *Salafiyun*, that the Alawite regime and its supporters are non-Muslim and apostate.¹

Yet nothing is as it appears.

The proximate cause of Syria's social and political turmoil was the regime's doing too little too late to quell anger and violence that erupted when security

forces on March 15, 2011 rounded up children for painting anti-regime graffiti in Dara'a in the south of Syria and allegedly treated them brutally.

When some thousands gathered to protest, the security forces opened fire and killed four people. That the situation was mishandled is undeniable; and that the tenor of the protests and the nature of the violence has changed over the past seventeen months since those deplorable events, is also undeniable.

What started in Dara'a as legitimate demands for an end to corruption, the lifting of the Emergency Law,² respect for property rights, release of political prisoners, a multi-Party State and reform of the Constitution, has metamorphosed into a Trojan war horse of quite a different colour.

The remote and yet more significant cause of the violence that is threatening to engulf Syria as I write, is without doubt the sectarian [Sunni/Shi'a] tsunami that followed in the wake of the US invasion of Iraq.



Aleppo: a once beautiful city in ruins

By February 4, 2011, a week before the fall of Hosni Mubarak, and almost six weeks before the events at Dara'a, a new *facebook* page – only a week old – called 'The Syrian Revolution 2011,' already had 15,000 fans. This was taken as a sign by some that Assad's regime would be the next to fall.³ Its appearance ought to have raised questions: who was manipulating whom?

I should like to think that in some remote pre-electronic and social media

world, serious minded people would try to play the age-old game of 'Identify the bad guys' were they to see – as we see daily on the screens of our TVs or computers, iphones or ipads – the line-up of the usual Middle Eastern suspects as the 'civil war' in Syria pursues its deadly course.

But, of course, there's no point to that game any more. We have been assured by almost all domestic and foreign media that the various factions that comprise the Free Syrian Army [FSA], and Islamist fighters from Saudi

Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Algeria, Pakistan, Kuwait, Yemen, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Chechnya, Mauritania, the U.K., France and Lebanon are the *good* guys – along with assorted other foreign Islamist mercenaries fighting the Syrian army.

Syria's regional neighbours – all Sunni and from near and far – have gathered inside its sovereign territory

or along its borders, with support from the U.S., the U.K., and France. And they are accompanied by the usual compliant media pack.

Allegedly they are there to help the Sunni population who, we are told, want the Assad regime and Alawite and Ba'ath Party influence brought to an end by no matter what means or at what cost.

But do they? Are these hypothetical Syrian Sunnis – whose alleged cause their Islamist neighbours claim to

have embraced so warmly – prepared to see their families, their homes, their livelihood and their country destroyed in order to achieve this goal?

More than most other Middle Eastern countries, Syria is a country of nuances. Yet to judge by the often hysterical rhetoric of western media and politicians, and rebel *takfir* fighters both Syrian and foreign, the bloody revolution tearing Syria apart is an open and shut case of justice finally being done.

The Mufti of Syria – Sheikh Ahmad Badr ad-Din Hassun – disagrees. A Sunni Muslim, and a Naqshbendi Sufi, he has consistently pleaded with the rebels not to drive the country into civil war and chaos in the name of freedom and democracy. His refusal to condone the violence of the rebels cost him the life of his young son who was murdered – shot to death on his way to University in Aleppo – only a week after I interviewed the Mufti in October last year.

Bloggers hiding behind anonymity deride and insult the Mufti and Sufis generally, saying that they are in league with *taghut* – a Qur’anic word that means ‘idols,’ ‘demons’ or whatever is worshipped instead of God. These days the word is used to describe corrupt officials and leaders. But the Qur’anic connotations are not lost on anyone.⁴

The demands of the *takfir* fighters – otherwise known as *salifiyun* – from whom the *Taliban* have been cloned – are unattainable.

The Takfir, violent Salafist extremists ... came out of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Takfirs are not bound by the usual religious constraints. ... Takfirs, who have significantly influenced al Qaeda, believe that any means [are] justifi[ed by] the end, that even other Muslims can be killed in the cause, that this society is heathen and they are the force to destroy it.⁵

They want a return to the era of Muhammad in the 7th century, to live under nomadic tribal customs and strict enforcement of the Shar‘ia without any pretence of offering democracy in a Syria post-Assad.

No wonder Mustafa al-Sheikh, head of the Free Syrian Army’s Supreme Military Council warned about the possible consequences of al-Qaeda and Salafi involvement in Syria:

‘They are getting bigger and bigger. And day-to-day they have more powerful positions inside the country. The situation is very dangerous.’⁶

There are lessons to be learned from the Iraq-Iran war [1980-1988]. Both sides exhausted themselves waging a brothers’ war that led to hundreds of thousands of dead and wounded and ended in a humiliating defeat for Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini.

One of the reasons for this war’s dragging on for eight years and ending in a Pyrrhic victory for Iraq, gives the lie

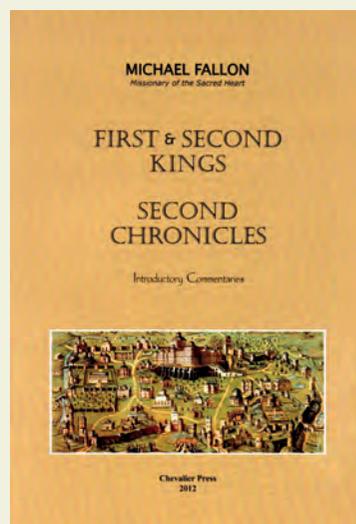
to the often repeated *assumption* that all Syrian Sunnis, and the Sunni majority in the Syrian army, are in favour of toppling the Alawite/Shiite Assad regime by force.

The reason to which I refer is the *loyalty* of the Arabs of Khuzestan – a province in the southwest of Iran, adjacent to the Persian Gulf and to Iraq’s Basra Province – to Tehran. This Province is where 90% of Iran’s oil is located.

Iraq’s Saddam Hussein was *sure* that he could rely on his fellow Arabs’

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Another view of Aleppo: fear and uncertainty on the streets

rebelling against the revolutionary government of Ayatollah Khomeini. He was wrong. Two months after the invasion the Iraqi offensive had to be halted, and by 1981 Saddam's soldiers were in retreat.⁷

Another reason that sets the received wisdom about Syria on its head, is the fact that Ayatollah Khomeini for his part also underestimated the patriotic loyalty of the Iraqi Shia population to Iraq – or more significantly, perhaps, overestimated the depth of their fellow-feeling for him personally, and for Shia Iran.

The Ayatollah refused Saddam Hussein's overtures for peace, and decided to take the war to Baghdad.

When Iranian soldiers reached Basra, the largest city of the Shia Arabs of southern Iraq, they presumed that their co-religionists would side with them against Saddam Hussein.

The opposite proved to be the case. The Iranian siege of Basra collapsed when the Shia garrison, and the Shia population proved loyal to Iraq and refused to join in an assault on Baghdad.⁸

It was misleading to generalise about Iranian Arabs' unqualified dislike for Iran; or about Iraqi Shia Arabs' unqualified dislike for Sunni dominated Iraq.

It is also misleading to assume that Syria's Sunni population will allow the country to slide into total chaos in order to bring hope and peace to its

people by ousting Bashar al-Assad and his Alawite regime by force.

Revolutions and coups thrive on war, as fire thrives on oxygen. And, second only to war, they thrive on media exposure.

There is a point when media coverage, especially audio-visual coverage of coups, suicide bombings, ethnic slaughter, demonstrations that lead to random acts of rage and violence, massacres of unarmed civilians – the list of bloody carnage seemingly is endless – ceases to be coverage of legitimate 'news,' and becomes complicit in the horror.

Who today among the myriad shrill voices calling for the fall of Assad at no matter how high a cost in Syrian blood and destruction of Syrian cities and towns, remembers Ahmad Chalabi, and the extraordinary media coverage given to claims of WMD in Saddam Hussein's Iraq?

In the years leading up to 2003, exiled Iraqis were strident in their calls for regime change in Iraq, and removal of Saddam Hussein. Ahmad Chalabi, was head of the *Iraqi National Congress* – an association of Iraqi exiles.

'... we did find ... that there were people within the CIA -- CIA officers -- who suspected that Iranian intelligence was trying to influence the US government and public opinion here through the Iraqi National Congress, a group of exiles run by Ahmed Chalabi who very publicly wanted an invasion of Iraq.

There was a fellow who worked for them, in charge of their information and collection program -- they were supposed to get defectors to talk to the US government and the media telling all these horrible stories of Saddam's connections to Al Qaeda and his WMD programs -- and the person running that was actually suspected within the CIA of being connected to Iranian intelligence. I remember asking one of these guys, 'Well this is kind of hard to imagine! So what did you do when you had these suspicions that the INC might have been in the position to be used by Iranian intelligence?' And he said, 'Well, not much. You can't fight City Hall!' Meaning that because the INC as so supported by the White House and the Pentagon, no one would care to listen to their suspicions.⁹

Finding someone in the White House or the Pentagon to listen is still, evidently, a problem.

Mitt Romney's vote-catching speech to the Virginian Military Institute in Lexington a few days ago would suggest that he has forgotten the role of those expat Iraqis in the lead up to the 2003 war on Saddam Hussein misnamed 'Operation Iraqi Freedom'. The following excerpt regarding Syria begs more questions than it answers:

'In Syria I'll work with our partners to identify and organize those members of the opposition who share our values and then ensure they obtain the arms they need to defeat Assad's tanks helicopters and fighter jets.'¹⁰

Syrian expats and exiles who belong to the *Syrian Support Group* [SSG] based in Washington, successfully lobbying the U.S. for support of the revolution, assure the U.S., as Chalabi assured the U.S., that they have right and truth on their side.

They say that the FSA comprises ordinary Syrians 'who want to stop the killing and go back to their normal lives and to their villages'. They also say that the FSA leaders are willing to work under a civilian government and that they are 'opposed to another dictatorial regime,' and that they will work to uphold 'democratic practices' and freedom.¹¹

Remember Ahmad Chalabi.

The U.S. seems to have forgotten him. It has been more than just a benevolent source of non-lethal humanitarian aid to the FSA *et al.*

George Friedman, in a recent unconvincing attempt to point to an 'Emerging Doctrine of the United States' in the Middle East, comments:

'The United States wanted Iran blocked, and that meant the displacement of the al-Assad regime. It did not mean Washington wanted to intervene militarily, except possibly through aid and training – potentially delivered by U.S. special operations forces – a lighter intervention than others advocated.'¹²

'Lighter intervention' by the U.S. in Syria – a comparatively poor Middle Eastern country mourning its more than 30,000 dead and probably around half a million displaced and the wholesale destruction of infrastructure, dwellings, businesses and historical sites over the past seventeen months – has a hollow ring to it.

Especially as the successful worldwide anti-Assad and anti-Alawite campaign is now admitted not to have been primarily because of revulsion at the alleged crimes of the Ba'ath Party or the Assad family but – if George Friedman got it right – 'to block Iran.'

One can only pray that moderate and sane voices will prevail before the point of no return has been reached in yet another thoroughly unwise and destructive war fought this time, if you can believe media reports, in the name of democracy and freedom for Syria.

1. In a video, in February 2012. See 'Tentative Jihad: Syria's Fundamentalist Opposition,' International Crisis Group, *Middle East Report* N°131, October 12, 2012.

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2. Rescinded on April 21, 2011.

3. Aryn Baker, 'Syria is not Egypt, but might it one day be Tunisia?' *Time world*, February 4, 2011

4. See PKPolitics Discuss <http://pkpolitics.com/discuss/topic/free-syrian-army-fsa-seeking-help-from-israel>

5. 'Al Qaeda's New Front,' *Frontline* <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/front/etc/script.html>

6. 'Syrian rebel leader Mustafa al-Sheikh says victory against Assad not in sight,' Mike Giglio, *The Daily Beast* July 26, 2012.

7. Robert Bauer, *The Devil We Know*, Crown Publishers, New York, 2008, p.98.

8. Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival*, W.W.Norton & Company, New York, 2006, p.141.

9. David Corn, speaking in "Hubris" Cherrypicking intelligence, burying dissent, influence of Iranian intelligence, the President with an agenda, government experts who didn't speak up - A detailed review of questionable evidence and faulty intelligence used to plan, market, and defend the U.S. invasion of Iraq. *The Scribe*, http://prairieviewweather.typepad.com/the_scribe/2006/09/9706_npr_michae.html

10. The New York Times, October 8, 2012

11. 'Free Syrian Army fighters aren't extremists or 'al-Qaeda' types group's DC fundraiser insists' *The Times of Israel*, September 29, 2012.

12. 'The Emerging Doctrine of the United States,' *Geopolitical Weekly*/Stratfor October 9, 2012.

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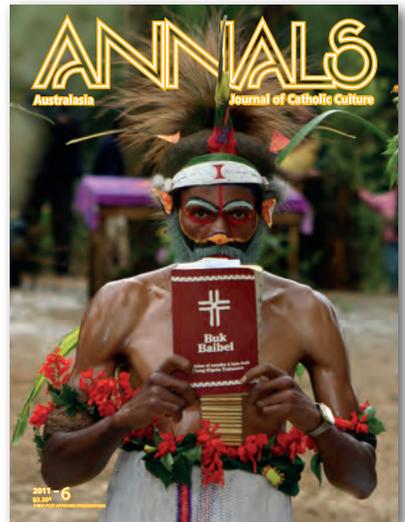
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A human being is not made for the processing of data, but for wisdom

To SEE oNCE moRE ThE STARS

By Anthony Esolen



SHOULD LIKE to introduce Stratford Caldecott's wonderful and much needed book with an anecdote, followed by a brief survey of the wasteland.

A few years ago I was at a book sale, at a local library in Canada. I hadn't found anything I liked, so a young girl came up to me to ask if she could help. She was a worker at the library, and was about to enter the most esteemed college in eastern Canada. 'What are you interested in?' she asked.

That was a hard question for me to answer, since we didn't really speak the same language. I could have said, 'Perceptive works in philosophy and theology,' or 'Great European novels,' but I don't think that would have advanced the conversation.

I finally said that I was a college professor, and when she asked me what I taught, I mentioned Dante and the *Divine Comedy*. 'I don't mean any disrespect for your favourite author,' she said, smiling, 'but I've never heard of him.'

I could multiply this anecdote many times over. From what my freshmen now tell me, public schools in the United States have virtually abandoned the study of literature written before 1900, and their neglect of poetry in general is more thoroughgoing still. Some few of them have read perhaps a sonnet by John Donne, typically 'Death, Be Not Proud,' or a piece of the prologue of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

Sometimes there's a play by Shakespeare, a *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet*, taught, of course, without any reference to the Christian faith that formed the world wherein Shakespeare and his audience found their home.

It's not as if their place were taken by the quintessentially American mythographers and poets. Hawthorne

Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education by Stratford Caldecott, Tacoma, WA: Angelico Press, 2012

rarely makes it into the room; Melville and Longfellow more rarely still.

Huckleberry Finn has fallen victim to political sensitivities, despite Twain's heroic championing of the goodness and wisdom of the slave, Jim.

Robert Frost is forgotten, even in New England. James Fenimore Cooper is forgotten, even in New York. I am informed by my British colleagues that if I entertain some quaint notion that Wordsworth and Coleridge are remembered in England, I am seriously mistaken.

And yet somehow that neglect isn't the worst of it. When I find out what they do read, I'm struck by what can

only be described as a perverse refusal to assign literature of any real beauty.

There are the political novels, the exploration of what is ugly and tawdry in the modern world, and books assigned to 'open' the mind by exposing it to a favourite perversion, with a dash of obscenity or pornography to season the dish. The same faults may be found in the forgetting of history, and the turn towards the ephemera of current events; or in the neglect of the logic of language, grammar, for the benefit of self-expression, preferably of the daintily crude variety. I am tempted to conclude that there are only two things wrong with our schools: what they don't teach our children, and what they do.

That is where the criticism of our schools usually begins and ends. I don't wish to deny the validity of that criticism; it is scandalous that children in England will not know who Thomas Becket was, or that children in America will not know what happened at Yorktown. But as Stratford Caldecott so beautifully shows in his much-needed work, we suffer the consequences of a more fundamental error still.

We do not know what or how to teach children, because we do not know what a child is, and we do not know what a child is, because we do not know what man is – and Him from whom and for whom man is.

How decisive for the Christian educator, or for any educator of good will, is the revelation that man is made in the image and likeness of the three-Personed God?

That is like asking what difference it will make to us if we keep in mind that a human being is made not for the processing of data, but for wisdom; not for the utilitarian satisfaction of appetite, but for love; not for the domination of nature, but for



Weaknesses of Democracy

LEFT TO THEMSELVES, modern democratic institutions are apt to become the tools of sordid and selfish interests. In fact the more elaborate is the machinery designed to safeguard the rights of the electorate, the more opportunities are afforded to the astute and unscrupulous party manager to manipulate the system for his own ends. This is what has done so much to discredit parliamentary government on the Continent, while in the United States the absence of political leadership has been responsible for the reign of the political boss and the immunity of the political criminal. But it is no use waiting for the appearance of a political Messiah who will solve all our difficulties the magic of his personality. A nation usually gets the leaders that it deserves, and so long as it is dominated by party spirit and class interests it must expect to be governed by professional politicians or demagogues.

— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, pp.40-41.

participation in it; not for the autonomy of an isolated self, but for communion.

It is no accident that Caldecott has structured his plan for a true education upon the three ways of the mediaeval *Trivium*, which themselves reflect the three primary axes of being, revealed by God: of knowing, that is to say giving; of being known, that is to say receiving; and of the loving gift.

As Dante puts it:

O Light that dwell within Thyself
alone,
who alone know Thyself, are
known,
and smile with Love
upon the Knowing and the Known!

If we did keep these things in mind, I doubt very much that we would trammel children up in great warehouses, built for the efficient delivery of services of quite dubious value.

But more than that, we would desire to bring children into the garden of created being, and thought, and expression. Caldecott reminds us that for the mediaeval schoolmen, as for Plato, education was essentially musical, an education in the cosmos or lovely order that surrounds us and bears us up. Thus when we teach our youngest children by means of rhymes and songs, we do so not merely because rhymes and songs are actually effective mnemonic devices. We do so because we wish to form their souls by memory: we wish to bring them up as rememberers, as persons, born,

as Caldecott points out, in certain localities, among certain people, who bear a certain history, and who claim our love and loyalty.

The memory, too, gives the child both the strength and the armour he needs for what comes next, and that is thought itself – strength to search for truth, and armour against easy and plausible falsehoods. I often hear well-meaning people say that they do not teach children what to think, but how to think. What they mean is that they reward genuine thought, rather than thoughtless repetition of what the teacher has said. Yet this way of looking at things is wholly inadequate, because it does not originate in truth, nor does it have truth as its ardent aim.

Consider an analogy. Suppose an art teacher should say, 'I do not teach my students *what* to draw, but *how* to draw.' Yet one cannot proceed one step in drawing without the *what*.

The *what* and the *how* are inextricably bound. That is the case too for the relationship between memory and thought. Yes, there are rules of logic, which Caldecott, wise Socratic as he is, duly emphasizes. But he knows also that reason itself is far more than the nominally correct use of deductive rules. It involves the whole mind and its apprehension of the what outside: grass, and dogs, and rivers, and justice, and love. So the study of how to think is also a deepening of one's first memories, or one's first encounters with truth.

Or we might put it another way, and say that the Son reveals to us the Father, and that the Son does only what He sees the Father do.

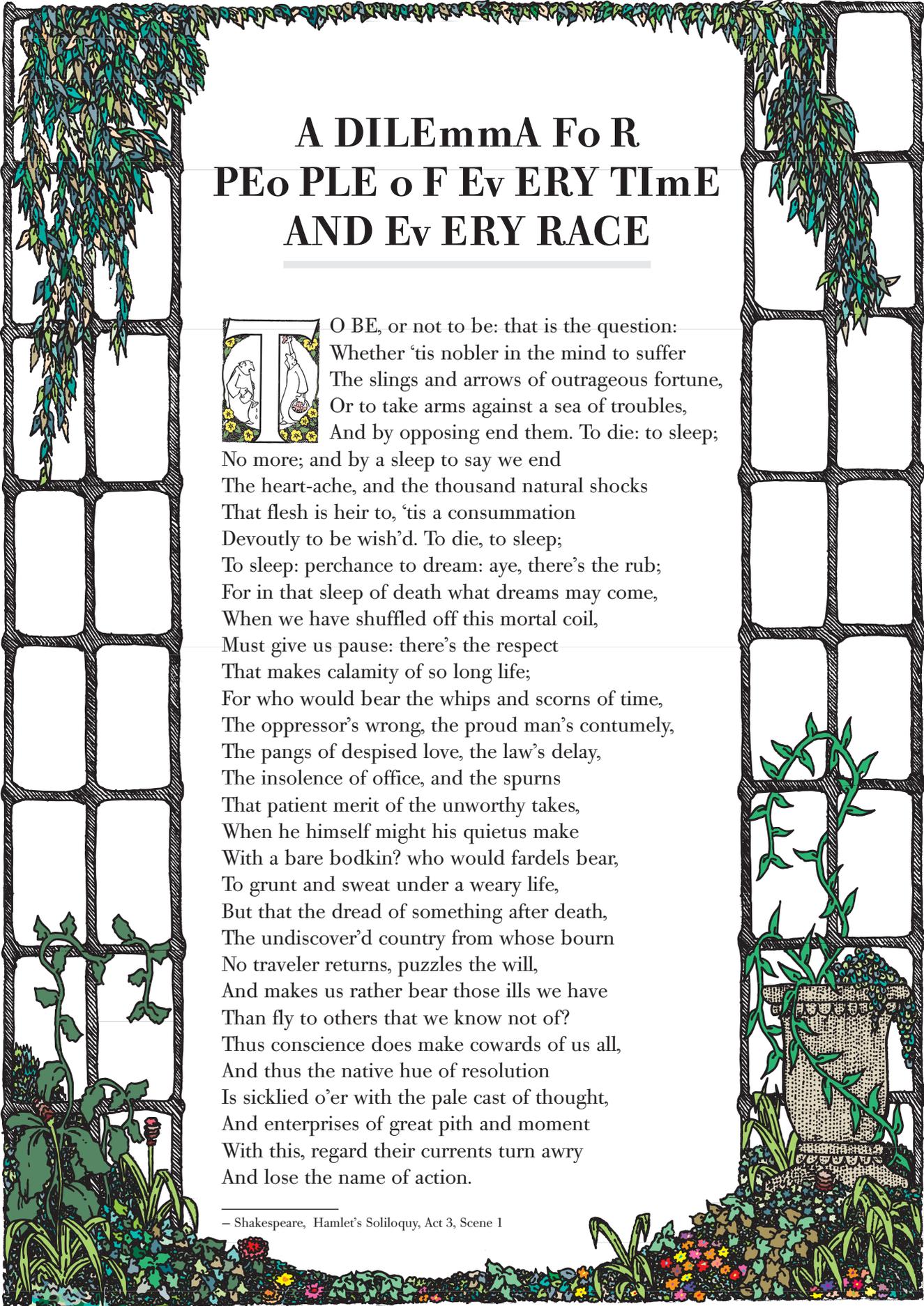
Yet what good would all this be to us, if we were to put the lamp under a bushel basket, or retire, guru-like, into the mountains, in calm separation from the lot of our fellow men?

Thus Caldecott completes his art of education with Speaking: with the Spirit. He recalls for us the 'ruah' or the 'breath of God,' stirring upon the waters of creation; it is that same breath that inspired, literally in-breathed, the apostles at Pentecost. Only then could these very ordinary men go forth, in courage, to preach the good news of Jesus Christ. The Lord who made the mute to speak, made the disciples to preach.

The art of rhetoric, the third course of the *Trivium*, is not for political gain, as the Sophists of ancient Greece once boasted that they could teach young men to sway the democratic assemblies whichever way they would. *It is for the attractive showing of truth*: it wins for truth with eloquence, and beauty, and the love-born wish to bring others into communion with those who see that truth.

This is an education in reality – the reality of the world, and of persons. It involves, in memory, the child's appropriation of realities; in thinking, the older child's exploration of those realities; in speaking, the youth's sharing of those realities with others, in a community. It is an education that penetrates the heart and the mind with light. After so long a journey into the depths of the drab and the dispirited, it is as if we were beckoned by this wise and happy man to ascend with him at last, and see, once more, the stars.

ANTHONY ESOLEN. Foreword, from *Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education* by Stratford Caldecott, Tacoma, WA: Angelico Press, 2012, pp. 3-6. STRATFORD CALDECOTT is the editor of the English edition of *Magnificat*, and editor of *Second Spring and Humanum* (for the John Paul II Institute in Washington, DC). He is Director of the Centre for Faith & Culture in Oxford, England (for the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts in New Hampshire). A Fellow of St. Benet's Hall, Oxford, he is the author also of *Beauty for Truth's Sake: On the Re-enchantment of Education, The Seven Sacraments: Entering the Mysteries of God, Secret Fire: The Spiritual Vision of J.R.R. Tolkien, Catholic Social Teaching, The Power of the Ring: The Spiritual Vision Behind the Lord of the Rings, and Beyond the Prosaic: Renewing the Liturgical Movement*.



A DILEMMA FOR PEOPLE OF EVERY TIME AND EVERY RACE



TO BE, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: aye, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this, regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.

— Shakespeare, Hamlet's Soliloquy, Act 3, Scene 1

Too many people confuse merely wanting to be a leader with the much more important matter of fitness for that purpose

A W H o L E W o R L D A W A Y

By Giles Auty



AS THE centenary of the commencement of the First World War begins to loom on the horizon, it may be salutary sometimes to remind ourselves just how much our world has changed since that distant-seeming date.

Recently an English MP Douglas Carswell, writing in Britain's *The Sunday Telegraph*, penned the following words: "Until August 1914 an Englishman could pass through life and hardly notice the existence of the state. Government left the adult citizen alone". He was quoting from the historian AJP Taylor.

Many people, I have come to realise, tend to regard all matters and times past as unenlightened yet the former state of affairs which AJP Taylor describes sounds to me close to idyllic.

Today governments at all levels interfere wilfully with our lives altogether too much not just here in Britain but just as noticeably in Australia.

For instance, some years ago when taking my large but amiable dog to the extensive outdoor area of a cafe in the Blue Mountains which I had patronised regularly for years I was told that dogs had suddenly been banned from the gardens because of a new local council decree. However when I finally went back to the cafe in question a year or so later I learned that this particular decree had subsequently been reversed. One could not help wondering who had thought up this irritating and unnecessary piece of legislation in the first place.

The example I cite seems petty I agree, yet government at all levels has become unpleasantly accustomed by now to interfering with all too many aspects of our lives. What makes the whole thing worse is that we are asked to pay heavily now not just for officialdom itself but for the kind of officiousness I have just recounted.

Mr. Carswell has calculated that in Britain today nearly half of an average

by the fact that Western governments have lived beyond the ability of the rest of us to pay for them. Like the fantasist who pays for a lifestyle he cannot afford with credit cards, we have funded our big government model with borrowing...in Greece, Spain and Portugal interest payments on such debt now grow faster than the debt can be paid back".

Since returning to England I have enjoyed easy access for the first time in years to the area where I was born and grew up. My maternal grandfather conducted his business as a timber merchant there.

Like many men of his day he fathered a large family of which my mother was the second youngest. Of his three sons of military age, two lost their lives in the First World War while the third 'merely' lost a lung. His remaining son, who became a naval officer, was torpedoed twice in the Second World War and survived narrowly each time after many hours in the water.

In the era before cars became common, my grandfather habitually rose at dawn and cycled extraordinary distances on one of the primitive machines available at the time to collect orders for the timber business. I have

recently driven some of the routine routes he took and marvel at his physical toughness and energy.

However, perhaps as a result of his exertions, my grandfather enjoyed a remarkably long life, playing 18 holes of golf on foot on his ninetieth birthday. Coming from a non-conformist Cornish background he attended chapel rather



Tsar Nicholas II and King George V in 1913

person's wages end up via direct and indirect taxes in the pockets of the government. How and why has this extraordinary state of affairs come about?

He further goes on: "The global financial crisis is not a global crisis. It is a Western crisis, one ultimately caused

than church but I do not think this affected his well-known sense of honesty and integrity in any way.

In retrospect, I believe he reacted to the conditions of his time with courage, stoicism, initiative and a good deal of that frequently forgotten virtue: commonsense.

What on earth would he have made of life as it seems to be today?

In the Western world we now live with 'big' government almost everywhere and for those of us connected to Europe we now have to bear the additional strain of trying to conform to 'Euro' laws which often make little or no sense to British people.

I personally dislike 'big' government on principle but, even discounting that, believe all too many of the decisions reached today by such governments are largely misguided. Too often we create new laws while failing to foresee their future implications. Usually this is because fashionable ideology rather than wisdom and experience has become the driving force behind such legislation. In spite of an inflated public sector in Britain, much of the advice civil service 'experts' provide seems to me pusillanimous or pathetic. Conviction, in a word, is in very short supply.

Nowadays increasing numbers of us are forced to wonder where vital qualities such as leadership have gone. Sadly, too many people confuse merely wanting to be a leader with the much more important matter of fitness for that purpose.

Perhaps one of the sort of questions we should ask ourselves today is this: "If my country were suddenly faced with the threat of war, or any other imminent crisis, how would our currently elected leaders cope?"

For example, could Britain have at least limped to victory in the Second World War with David Cameron at the helm rather than Sir Winston Churchill?

Churchill had first-hand experience of military combat at least – plus an overwhelming sense of personal destiny.

I recently visited Chartwell, the latter's country retreat, and stood quietly for some minutes in the study where Churchill wrote and re-wrote his famous wartime speeches. A strong sense of calm and purpose still permeates Chartwell – possibly as a

legacy of Churchill's abiding love of the place. I also had not known before that Churchill personally helped to build the high brick walls of the kitchen gardens there. The stamp of his unmistakable authority lies everywhere.

By contrast Cameron is a modern – or post-modern – politician who first converted the undoubted excellence of his education at Eton and Oxford somewhat disappointingly into a career in public relations.

The latter, I suggest, deals largely with appearances rather than substance. To me, Cameron is thus at best a plausible and ambitious politician rather than a convincing one. Unsurprisingly he is also a fan of fashionable-seeming causes such as renewable energy – think wind turbines in their hundreds – and gay marriage but I sense these enthusiasms could easily return one day to haunt him.

The Real Force

WHILE the City of God is stronger than it appears to be, the city of man is weaker. The forces that appear to make human civilization so irresistible — its wealth, its economic organization, and its military power — are essentially hollow, and crumble to dust as soon as the human purpose that animates them loses its strength. The real forces that rule the world are spiritual ones, and every empire and civilization waits for the hour when the sentence of the watchers goes forth and its kingdom is numbered and finished. The spirit of life goes out of its social traditions and institutions and a new age is begun. Thus from age to age the divine purpose towards the human race is carried on, and even the civilization which appears to resist that purpose is the unwilling servant of a power that it does not recognize.

— Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1935, p.152

Backing apparent fashion in politics, no less than in the creative arts, is always a dangerous game yet today it is a game that attracts such unlikely candidates as Anglican and even Catholic bishops.

A former colleague from my days at *The Spectator*, Damian Thompson, now writes a religious affairs column full of acerbic wit each Saturday in Britain's *The Daily Telegraph*.

Under the heading 'A Day of Judgment for Liberal Bishops' here are some of the telling comments he made in the edition of 13 October:

"Those youngsters who once went to church out of obligation are now spending Sunday mornings at the supermarket or the gym (body worship is a flourishing faith). That means the young people in the pews are true believers who really want to be there. If you're a go-ahead bishop, vicar or diocesan bureaucrat, this is a scary development. You've spent your career reducing the hard truths of Christ's teaching – such as the inevitability of the Last Judgement – to carbon-neutral platitudes. Suddenly the 20-year olds in your flock are saying: no thanks we'll take the hard truths...Young Catholics take their cue now from the traditionalist Pope Benedict XVI, rather than from dreary bishops who only occasionally wake from their slumbers to mutter something about renewable energy...

In Australia, as I learned to my cost, anyone expressing approval for any of the great traditions of the past is apt to find himself marginalised and finally banished from the mainstream press. So for me, at least, it is heartening to see praise for tradition in the pages of Britain's most popular broadsheet. Britain, to its credit, seems capable of accommodating a broad spectrum of intelligent opinion.

To me, Pope Benedict XVI and his predecessor Pope John Paul II are two of the truly great leaders – and heroes – of the past half century. David Cameron – and other would-be national and international influences – could learn a very great deal from their wise example.

CILES 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*.

SYRIA – THE DOGS OF WAR FINALLY IN FOCUS



FIGHTING CONTINUES in Aleppo. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reports that more intense skirmishes have been confirmed in the districts of Char, Tarqi al-bab, Hanunu, Bustane al-Qasr and Salaheddin. While the Syrian army is winning back territory occupied by rebels, incidents and strategies are emerging which are damaging freedom and human rights, in particular those of the weakest and of the young, and which reveal a targeted strategy.

Many new facts are coming to light as rebels are captured and their documents examined. From the information acquired a confused picture is building up, which seems to be following a plan devised and financed from outside Syria. Boys from 14 to 16 years old are being recruited by the rebels to transport and conceal explosives, for a payment of 1000 Syrian lire paid in two instalments, before and after their cooperation. Muslim and also Catholic boys are involved. Many families in the occupied zone have taken refuge in public buildings and state schools in Aleppo. Women and children have been very generously assisted by humanitarian organisations. From their accounts it is becoming clearer how the idea is spreading that this is a holy war.

Tens of thousands of mercenaries paid in dollars (\$2660), equipped with sophisticated weapons and dazzled by the rewards promised to martyrs, are heading for Aleppo. Rebels are abducting prominent people – eminent physicians, scientists or managers – killing them or demanding exorbitant ransoms. Public services have been disrupted to create greater difficulties for the people and heighten the sense of unease. Senior officials have been bribed to go over to the opposition. This has brought terrorist links into the open as there have been operations which have attacked the country's symbols of life, history, civilisation and security ... not just the looting of the citizens' homes.

The state has chosen a military solution; these days Aleppo is at the centre of international attention. Many of the rebels who have fallen in the fighting are non-Syrians, from both Arab and non-Arab countries ... Many families who thought that their sons were involved in work contracts in neighbouring countries are finding, after a period of no news, that their names are on the lists of rebels killed in Syria.

It is becoming clear that there is a plan to make Syria into an Islamic state, as part of a global project involving the entire region. The conspiracy continues to spread false information aimed at raising world opinion against Syria. Those on the ground know that what is happening in Syria is not the result of conflict between religious traditions.

The new shoots of freedom – of what has perhaps prematurely been called 'the Arab Spring' – are beginning to wither. Once again those paying the price are poor people who are being deprived of everything, including freedom and life.

Source: ANS [Salesian News Service] August 13, 2012.

Theological consequences will follow the dwindling of Anglican identity

ANGLICANISM AT A CROSSROADS

by Francis Marsden



ROWAN WILLIAMS is stepping down as Archbishop of Canterbury at the age of only 62, eight years before the mandatory retirement age of 70 for Anglican clergy. Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, will doubtless be a more congenial post for him. 'Garde ta foy' is the college motto. 'Keep your faith.' He's had a rough time. Who can blame him?

His has been an impossible task, trying to square the circle. On the one hand there are Anglicans who hold to a Biblical view of male-only priesthood and episcopacy, and on the other those who insist that equality and gender issues demand women's ordination to both.

In sexual morality, some Anglicans hold to a Biblical view of sex within marriage only, while others assert that being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered is a gift from God which any person has the right to express fully in a loving sexual relationship. And every rainbow colour of opinion in between.

Rowan's problem is that of trying to hold together a worldwide federation of Anglican churches, without the charism of Peter. To accomplish a Petrine-like task without the graces promised to Peter is simply impossible.

Having spent years criticising him, most commentators now seem genuinely sorry that he is moving on. Of course, at times he speaks in tortuous circumlocutions so obscure that no-one is certain what he means, but this is a disability imbued by academe. No one can doubt that he is a good and sincere man, a poet and deeply spiritual.

Commentary from the USA is different: 'No, the interesting news about the looming resignation is how little attention anyone appears to be

paying to it. The Church of England just doesn't seem to matter all that much, fading from the world's stage only slightly more slowly than the British Empire that planted it across the globe.

'Theological consequences will follow the dwindling of Anglican identity – the claim, ever since Queen Elizabeth I, that the Church of England represents the great middle way between Protestantism and Catholicism. Ecclesiological consequences, as well, will follow the end of Anglican unity: the disappearance of a coherent, worldwide denomination, led by the archbishop of Canterbury, for those who hold a certain moderate form of Christian belief?' (Joseph Bottum in the *Weekly Standard*).

Alternatively, a negative assessment from the Anglican Primate of Nigeria: 'Rowan Williams took over the leadership of the Anglican Communion in 2002 when it was a happy family.

Fruitful Failures

WHISTLER USED to make many rapid studies of a sitter; it did not matter if he tore up twenty portraits. But it would matter if he looked up twenty times, and each time saw a new person sitting placidly for his portrait. So it does not matter (comparatively speaking) how often humanity fails to imitate its ideal; for then all its old failures are fruitful. But it does frightfully matter how often humanity changes its ideal; for then all its old failures are fruitless.

— G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, The Bodley Head, London, 1908, p.181

Unfortunately, he is leaving behind a Communion in tatters: highly polarised, bitterly factionalised, with issues of revisionist interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and human sexuality as stumbling blocks to oneness, evangelism and mission all around the Anglican world. (Archbishop Nicholas D Okoh)

Whoever succeeds Rowan may preside over the final split between the radical liberal Episcopalian churches of North America, and the flourishing African churches, which have no truck with homosexual relationships or gay clergy. Will the sun finally set on the Anglican communion as a worldwide unity?

Naturally the press is speculating about his possible successors: John Sentamu of York, Richard Chartres of London, Graham James of Norwich, and Nicholas Baines of Bradford. It's an undemocratic process in which the Prime Minister – who may be an atheist, and Mr Cameron is certainly a pragmatist – has the final say. No comparison with a Conclave of Cardinals to elect the Pope.

One traditionally-minded Catholic friend uncharitably pointed out that there are unlikely to be any outstanding characters in the running for the archbishop's job.

Anyone, he said, who was morally, spiritually and intellectually outstanding would have become a Catholic a long time ago. Anglican theology was faulty at its roots, and anyone who couldn't see through the charade of having the head of State (God bless her) as Supreme Governor of the Church of England – separated from the Church universal – must be blind.

Rather a harsh judgement, I thought, but it does hold a grain of truth. Unfortunately, due to the sins and indifference of many Catholics, the Church's holiness and truth do not radiate forth as they should.

Continental and Americans do find it laughable to have the Head of State as also the head of the Church. Can you imagine Barack Obama as head of the United Church of America, or Nicolas Sarkozy as Gouverneur Suprême de l'Église de France? Or Pontius Pilate organising the liturgy in Palestine, and the Emperor Nero deciding Church doctrine in Rome?

It may well fall to the new archbishop to crown Charles III as the new King. Will he make so convincing a 'Supreme Governor' of the Church as his mother?

Anglican theology was always a political compromise lacking intellectual coherence. From 1558, Queen Elizabeth I tried to steer a *via media* between Catholic 'Popery' and Calvinistic Puritanism. Doctrinal variants were allowed so long as they didn't reject royal control of the Church in favour of the Pope, or Presbyterianism. So long as you acknowledged Bessie as Top Dog in matters spiritual as well as temporal, she wasn't going to make windows into your soul and have you hanged, drawn and quartered.

The 39 Articles are a study in ambiguity, permitting various theological opinions under one form of words.

This careful settlement broke down in the 17th century under increasing Puritan pressure. The tensions came to a head in the English Civil War and the beheading of King Charles I by Oliver Cromwell. So much for rule by divine right and the monarch as head of the Church.

After 15 years, the English were bored with joyless living under the virtuous Cromwellian Taliban, and restored the monarchy with Charles II. His Catholic son James II produced a Catholic heir, so the solid Protestant boyars betrayed him, invited in a Dutch usurper and christened their treason the 'Glorious Revolution'.

Thereafter, religious enthusiasm and attachment to definite doctrines were frowned upon as the route back to Naseby battlefield. Good breeding, manners and a deist scepticism were the attributes of an English gentleman, along with an aversion to horrid 'Popery'.

For God surely was an honorary Englishman, and the Empire was the

Beware the seven devils

THERE HAS been a revolt against Christian morality and where there has not been a return to Christian mysticism, it has been a return of the mysticism without Christianity. Mysticism itself has returned, with all its moons and twilights, its talismans and spells. Mysticism itself has returned and brought with it seven devils worse than itself.

— G.K.Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*,
Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd
[undated] p.150

incarnation of His virtues. He had blessed this sceptred isle with the mission of civilizing the heathen world.

At least within England and Wales, Anglicanism still remains impressive, where she wears the medieval garments of Catholicism, her ancient cathedrals and churches.

However, if Rowan Williams' successor proclaims himself the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury, Catholics should object. More accurately, he will be the 34th Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury. *The line of 71 Catholic archbishops came to an end with the death of Cardinal Reginald Pole in 1558.*

The arms of Canterbury diocese still show the pallium bestowed by the Pope upon Metropolitan archbishops in communion with the Pope. No Anglican archbishop has ever worn a pallium, because communion with Rome was broken in 1559.

The Anglican archbishops hold a similar *title* and occupy the old *cathedral*, but their credo is quite different from that of St Augustine, St Theodore, St Dunstan, St Anselm, St Edmund Rich, St Thomas Becket and other saintly Catholic incumbents.

Rome never recognised as valid in the Catholic sense the episcopal ordination of Matthew Parker, appointed by Elizabeth I in 1559.

None of the Catholic bishops she wanted to do so agreed to take part in Parker's ordination. They were all deprived of their sees, and imprisoned

or fled abroad, with the exception of Kitchen of Llandaff, who took the oath of supremacy.

The four who took part in Parker's ordination at a private ceremony in Lambeth Palace on December 17, 1559, were William Barlow, John Scory, Miles Coverdale and John Hodgeskins.

Of the four, only Hodgeskins certainly had Catholic orders, and Barlow doubtfully. The key point is that they used the invalid Edwardine Ordinal, not the old Catholic rites. This Protestant form of ordination was composed by Cranmer and his associates and introduced in 1550. It consists of a commissioning service for the preaching of the Gospel. Every reference to priesthood and the sacrifice of the Mass was cut out.

As early as 1554, when Queen Mary restored communion with Rome and restored Catholic practice, Rome drew a distinction. Priests who had received Holy Orders according to the Catholic rite, under Henry VIII – whether in his Catholic phase or after he had broken with Rome – were accepted as genuine Catholic priests. They were simply absolved if necessary from the sin of schism.

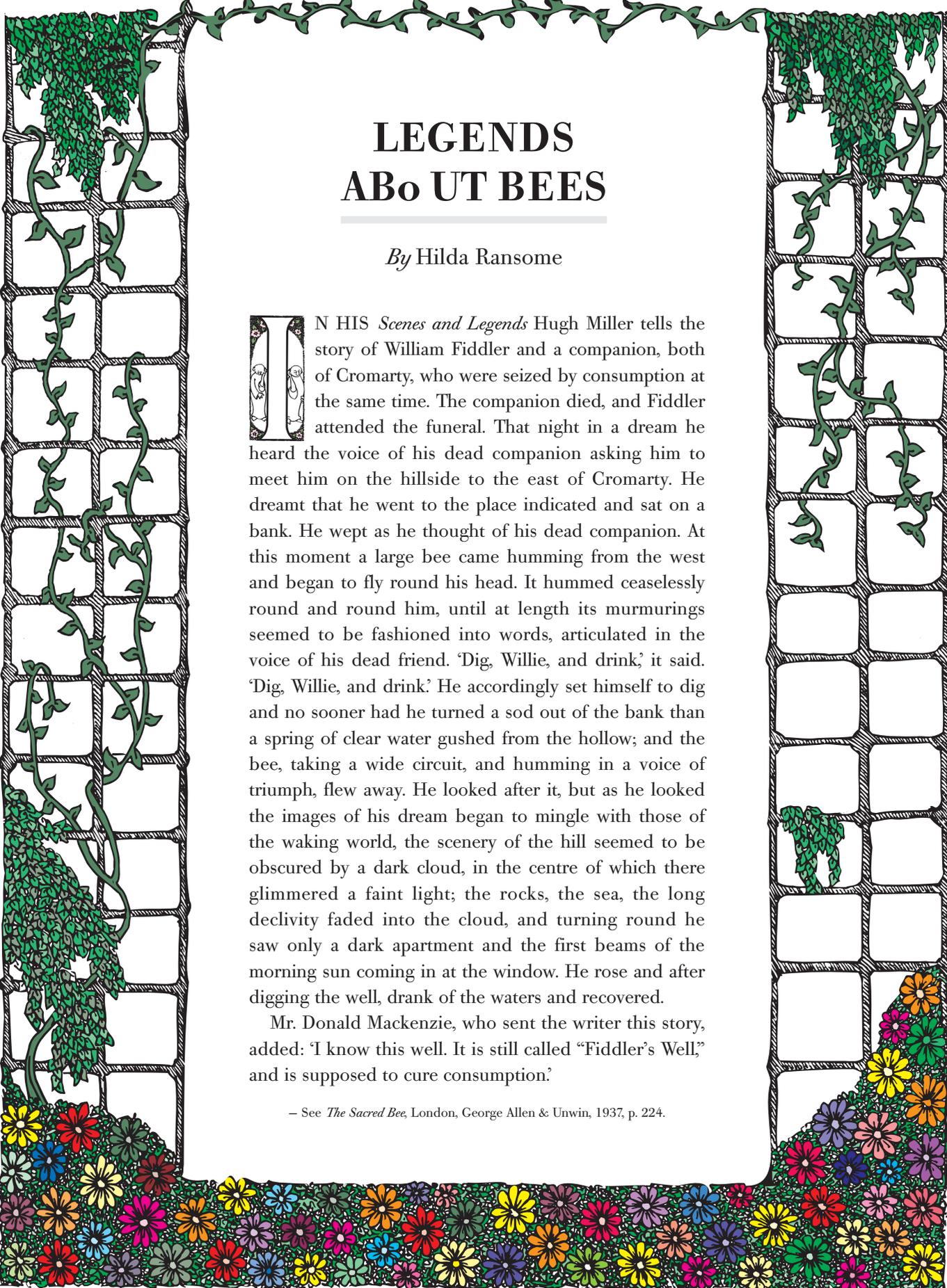
Other ministers, who had been ordained from 1550 onwards by the Edwardine Ordinal, if suitable, had to be ordained from zero. Any 'ordination' they had received was deemed null and void – both form and intention were defective.

So from a Catholic standpoint Parker's ordination was null and void. All later Anglican episcopal ordinations came through him, so his successors too were invalidly ordained.

This demonstrates that Rome's view of Anglican orders did not originate in 1896 with Pope Leo XIII and *Apostolicae Curae's* judgement of 'absolutely null and utterly void'. It has been consistent since 1554.

The formularies of the Anglican establishment distinctly deny the rank of a sacrament to holy orders. Protestant traditions do not include the doctrines of apostolic succession, the sacramental gift of holy order, and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

As a certain Dr J H Newman once wrote: 'There is surely a strong presumption that the Anglican body has not what it does not profess to have.'



LEGENDS ABOUT BEES

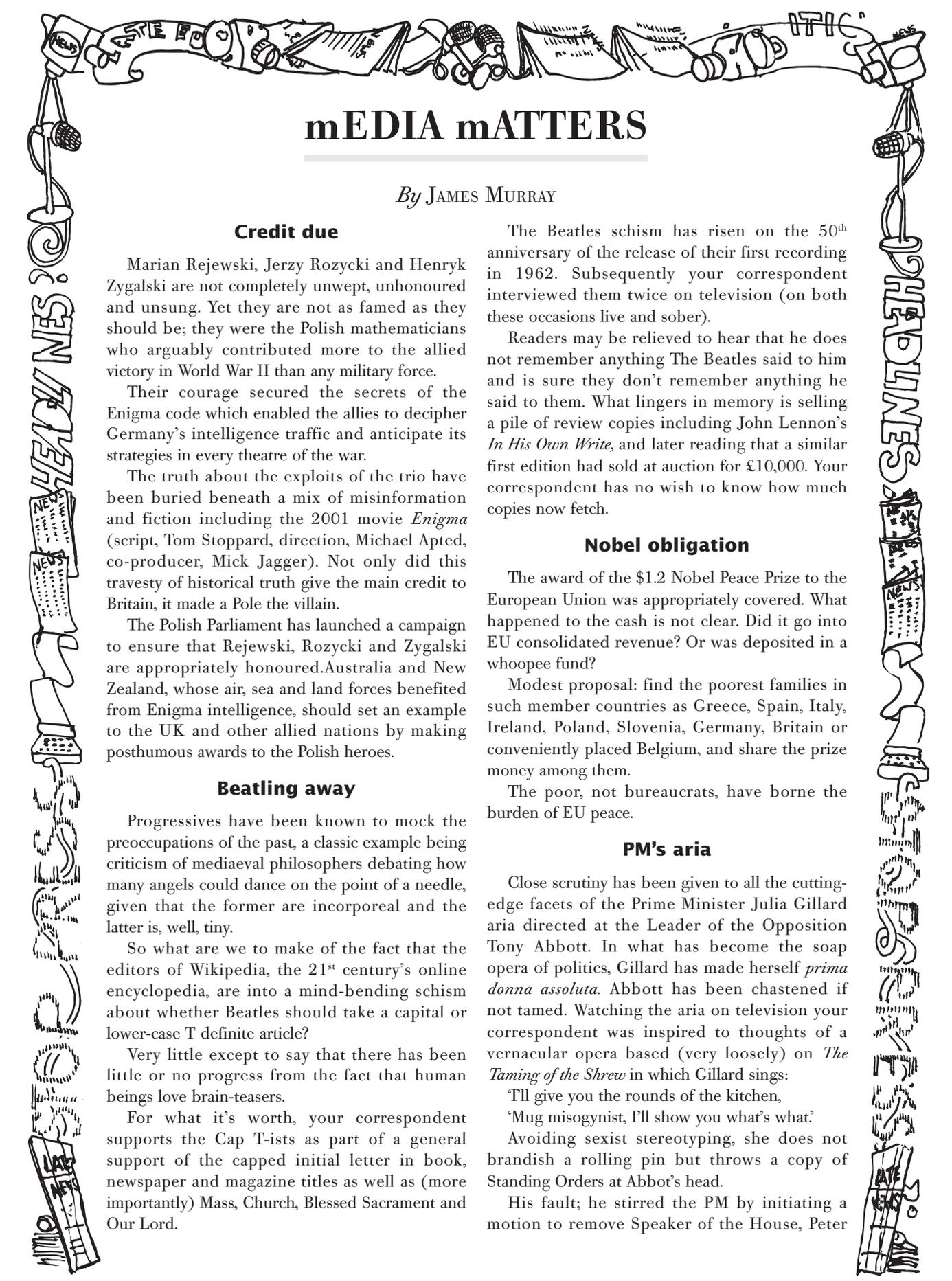
By Hilda Ransome



IN HIS *Scenes and Legends* Hugh Miller tells the story of William Fiddler and a companion, both of Cromarty, who were seized by consumption at the same time. The companion died, and Fiddler attended the funeral. That night in a dream he heard the voice of his dead companion asking him to meet him on the hillside to the east of Cromarty. He dreamt that he went to the place indicated and sat on a bank. He wept as he thought of his dead companion. At this moment a large bee came humming from the west and began to fly round his head. It hummed ceaselessly round and round him, until at length its murmurings seemed to be fashioned into words, articulated in the voice of his dead friend. 'Dig, Willie, and drink,' it said. 'Dig, Willie, and drink.' He accordingly set himself to dig and no sooner had he turned a sod out of the bank than a spring of clear water gushed from the hollow; and the bee, taking a wide circuit, and humming in a voice of triumph, flew away. He looked after it, but as he looked the images of his dream began to mingle with those of the waking world, the scenery of the hill seemed to be obscured by a dark cloud, in the centre of which there glimmered a faint light; the rocks, the sea, the long declivity faded into the cloud, and turning round he saw only a dark apartment and the first beams of the morning sun coming in at the window. He rose and after digging the well, drank of the waters and recovered.

Mr. Donald Mackenzie, who sent the writer this story, added: 'I know this well. It is still called "Fiddler's Well," and is supposed to cure consumption.'

— See *The Sacred Bee*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1937, p. 224.



mEDIA mATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

Credit due

Marian Rejewski, Jerzy Rozycki and Henryk Zygalski are not completely unwept, unhonoured and unsung. Yet they are not as famed as they should be; they were the Polish mathematicians who arguably contributed more to the allied victory in World War II than any military force.

Their courage secured the secrets of the Enigma code which enabled the allies to decipher Germany's intelligence traffic and anticipate its strategies in every theatre of the war.

The truth about the exploits of the trio have been buried beneath a mix of misinformation and fiction including the 2001 movie *Enigma* (script, Tom Stoppard, direction, Michael Apted, co-producer, Mick Jagger). Not only did this travesty of historical truth give the main credit to Britain, it made a Pole the villain.

The Polish Parliament has launched a campaign to ensure that Rejewski, Rozycki and Zygalski are appropriately honoured. Australia and New Zealand, whose air, sea and land forces benefited from Enigma intelligence, should set an example to the UK and other allied nations by making posthumous awards to the Polish heroes.

Beatling away

Progressives have been known to mock the preoccupations of the past, a classic example being criticism of mediaeval philosophers debating how many angels could dance on the point of a needle, given that the former are incorporeal and the latter is, well, tiny.

So what are we to make of the fact that the editors of Wikipedia, the 21st century's online encyclopedia, are into a mind-bending schism about whether Beatles should take a capital or lower-case T definite article?

Very little except to say that there has been little or no progress from the fact that human beings love brain-teasers.

For what it's worth, your correspondent supports the Cap T-ists as part of a general support of the capped initial letter in book, newspaper and magazine titles as well as (more importantly) Mass, Church, Blessed Sacrament and Our Lord.

The Beatles schism has risen on the 50th anniversary of the release of their first recording in 1962. Subsequently your correspondent interviewed them twice on television (on both these occasions live and sober).

Readers may be relieved to hear that he does not remember anything The Beatles said to him and is sure they don't remember anything he said to them. What lingers in memory is selling a pile of review copies including John Lennon's *In His Own Write*, and later reading that a similar first edition had sold at auction for £10,000. Your correspondent has no wish to know how much copies now fetch.

Nobel obligation

The award of the \$1.2 Nobel Peace Prize to the European Union was appropriately covered. What happened to the cash is not clear. Did it go into EU consolidated revenue? Or was deposited in a whoopee fund?

Modest proposal: find the poorest families in such member countries as Greece, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia, Germany, Britain or conveniently placed Belgium, and share the prize money among them.

The poor, not bureaucrats, have borne the burden of EU peace.

PM's aria

Close scrutiny has been given to all the cutting-edge facets of the Prime Minister Julia Gillard aria directed at the Leader of the Opposition Tony Abbott. In what has become the soap opera of politics, Gillard has made herself *prima donna assoluta*. Abbott has been chastened if not tamed. Watching the aria on television your correspondent was inspired to thoughts of a vernacular opera based (very loosely) on *The Taming of the Shrew* in which Gillard sings:

'I'll give you the rounds of the kitchen,
'Mug misogynist, I'll show you what's what'

Avoiding sexist stereotyping, she does not brandish a rolling pin but throws a copy of Standing Orders at Abbot's head.

His fault; he stirred the PM by initiating a motion to remove Speaker of the House, Peter



Slipper while a law suit was in train. In this, of course, he imitated the nation's chief law officer, Nicola Roxon, and her free-range attitude to the separation of powers demonstrated in her multiple interventions in the law-suit.

Yes, Parliament has supreme power in its guardianship of its integrity and its internal governance. But it is fair to ask whether it would have been more prudent to respect the spirit of the convention?

Onward Gillard

Such was the acclaim for the aria, locally and internationally, its main outcome was under emphasised: Julia Gillard, as predicted here, will lead Labor at the next election.

Who among her colleagues would dare incite another *coup de caucus*? Removing her would draw accusations of sexism and genderism that would again be picked by such feminist sites as Jezebel (named after King Ahab's wife, denounced by the prophet Elijah for being a proponent of Baal, god of fertility, a feminist preoccupation).

A caveat to Gillard's continuing leadership was foreshadowed in the August issue: the possibility of a Victoria police prosecution involving former Australian Works Union official Bruce Wilson for a 'reform' initiative from which substantial funds were diverted into a real estate investment. Without opening a file, Gillard, then a salaried partner at the law firm Slater Gordon, did the paperwork for the initiative.

Though a stringent test of the separation of powers, this is not a matter that will go away as was shown in a formidable follow-up by Mark Evans (Fairfax Media, Oct 13-14) in which he amplified earlier findings by Hedley Thomas of *The Australian*.

It may well be a matter of house-styles but neither Evans nor Thomas gave each other personal, printed credit for their respective stories. They should have: hacks of their high calibre are a threatened species and should support each other.

Contending Abbott

More and more Tony Abbott brings to mind the great boxer Billy Conn in his 1940s rematch with the even greater Joe Louis (had it not been for the pugilistic sexism of the period, Conn might have faced Josephine Louise).

Conn was way ahead as the final rounds came up. His seconds (and brothers) urged him to keep boxing clever and he would win on points. Conn ignored their advice and stormed out of his corner determined to knock Louis out. The record shows that Joe Louis knocked Conn out.

That other contender, Kevin Rudd? He now has the option of going for Australia's new seat on the UN Security Council. And beyond it, his dream: the UN Secretary Generalship, first Austral-European who speaks Chinese to occupy the position.

Jones the Mouth

The animus over Alan Jones's egregiously crude off-air remark about the PM's father still lingers; the insensitivity of the remark itself was intensified by the social-media response it triggered, a response that pained Jones where it really hurt: his hip-pocket nerve.

Emollient came from an odd quarter: John Laws. Scarfed and with booze glass in hand, he was interviewed by Leigh Sayles on the ABC's 7.30 Report. Sayles, as always loaded for bear, was disarmed by the insouciance with which Laws reduced the matter to performance. He neglected to mention his most apt remark, made after he himself was involved in on-air trouble, 'Sometimes I need an editor between my brain and my tongue.'

The social-media response was hailed as signalling the end of mainstream media dominance. Hi-tech break-through maybe. But on a low-tech basis the response has a long history. The Athenians called it ostracism, the word deriving from *ostrakon*, meaning a fragment of broken pottery.

On it, citizens could scratch the name of the person they wished to be removed from political discourse and exiled for a decade.

Scot free

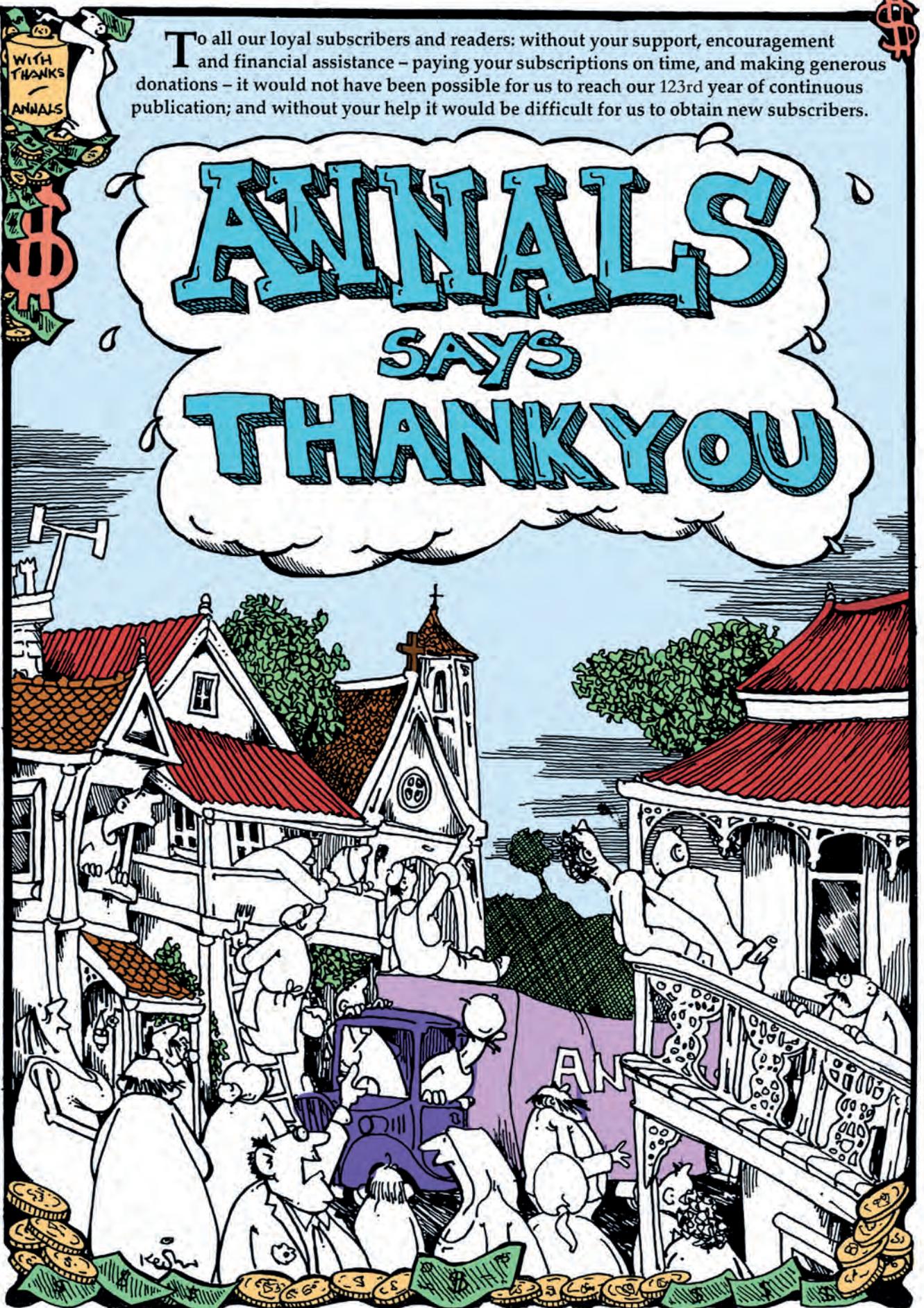
The year chosen for the referendum on Scottish independence – 2014 – coincides with the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow; it also coincides with the start of commemorations of the Great War of 1914-18.

When it comes to the vote, the exploits of Scots service personnel are unlikely to be ignored. The Austral-Scottish military historian Christopher Dawson has suggested that Scots casualties, when separated from the overall British statistics, show that Scotland had the highest per capita casualties. Your correspondent, though he has ancestors who fought with Scottish infantry units, counters that on a per capita basis Irish personnel took the heaviest casualties.

One aspect of the referendum is that it is confined to Scots-born residents of Scotland. Wise move: the vote of exiled Scots in favour of independence might well swamp the vote of those who live in Scotland and who, either way, will bear the consequences.

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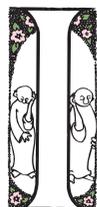
ANNALS SAYS THANK YOU



Dame Leonie Kramer is doubly a Victorian, she was born there and lived by the assiduity and discipline that marked the age of Queen Victoria, an age also marked, we can now see, by the paradox of conservative innovation

BROOMSTICKS AND ACADEMIC GOWNS

By Ian MacDonald



IN THEIR PREFACE Leonie Kramer's daughters, Jocelyn and Hilary, reflect on the intriguing nature of the title, and decide: 'There are many ways of charting one's path through life and perhaps the magical adventure of riding a broomstick is more fun than most.'

Dame Leonie chose the title when she began writing her book in 2002 after retiring from all her official roles at the University of Sydney. Her description of the prelude to her retirement is so vivid it sounds more like a fighting retreat, and inspires the notion that playwright, David Williamson, who has shown mastery of academic in-fighting, should adapt it for the stage, a notion reinforced by the author's chapter heading: 'Theatre of the Absurd'.

Not that Dame Leonie lingers. Her *Broomstick* carries her back to her happy childhood in Kew, Melbourne through her schooling at Presbyterian Ladies College where she was registered as Leonie Judith Gibson. From PLC, it was onward and upward to the University of Melbourne.

As she flies, she pays generous tribute to writers whose style has influenced her approach, particularly Hal Porter whose opening sentence of *The Watcher on the Cast-Iron Balcony*; she cites like a mantra: 'In half a century of living I have seen two corpses, two only. I do not know if this is conventional or unconventional for an Australian of my age.'

Understatement distinguishes her description of leaving Melbourne aboard the *Otranto*, outward-bound for Oxford University. But the understatement does not preclude surprise.

Who having seen her in her full academic regalia would think of her as an early backpacker or riding pillion on a BSA two-stroke motor bike behind

Broomstick: Personal Reflections of Leonie Kramer, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2012, rrp pp \$49.95.

her husband to be, the South African-born World War II veteran and medical researcher, Harry Kramer.

The memoir is replete with this kind of contrast between high table and the ordinary. As a result the author comes across as a charmer but not deferential.

While at Harvard she took her place as of right at a common table. Told by a woman colleague that this was against long-established custom, she asked her male colleagues if the information was correct; they laughed.

She did not, however, win everyone's regard. Patrick White called her 'Killer Kramer,' a nickname that betrays a

penchant for alliteration more common among deadline-beset hacks than a Nobel laureate.

Dame Leonie may well have provoked him. Certainly her chapter headed 'Patrick White's Australia' might raise his ghost to roam the rooms of his old house in Sydney's Centennial Park.

The White chapter begins: 'Much critical opinion on White's work might have been constrained by reports of his sensitivity to what critics said.'

Ten pages later we know that Kramer may be judicious but not constrained. Her chapter intros are admirable for their dry wit. Her chapter on Censorship is typical: 'The first book I asked for when I became a reader at the Bodleian Library was *Lady Chatterley's Lover* - a bizarre choice for a student about to embark on a thesis about formal satire from 1500 to 1650.'

Why DH Lawrence? 'I had read in Melbourne an expurgated version of the novel and the fuss that was caused by its proscription. Of course my curiosity was aroused, but I hadn't counted on the depth of my disappointment ... the last thing I expected was to find some of Lawrence's worst writing.'

Having distinguished between Miltonic freedom and modern licence, she sums up her position on censorship: 'I believe that great literature enriches one's experience and understanding of the world, and those who came before us. It also deals with complex moral issues. It's therefore inconsistent to argue that the portrayal of violence (especially in film), the use of sexual innuendoes (especially in advertising) and the prevalence of pornography (in both film and advertising) does not distort and diminish the understanding of those people - especially the young who are exposed to it.'



Her dry wit suffuses the intro to her chapter, 'Secret Women's Business': 'Perhaps my early experience of living in College at Melbourne University accounts for why, in later years, I came to be convinced of the frailty of men – and not only "callow youths," as they used to be called.'

Her time at the Australian Broadcasting Commission including its chairmanship encompasses the fraught (*Four Corners*) and the humorous (letters of complaint):

'Dear Sir, I wish to make the strongest possible objection to a remark made this morning on your AM programme by the announcer whose name is, I believe, Red Harrison. In speaking of the death of Mr Brezhnev, the commentator said 'little is known about him except that in common with some other tyrants he is a keen fisherman'. This must be taken as a reference to Mr Fraser, our Prime Minister...'

In fact, the reference was an in-joke about an ABC staff member.

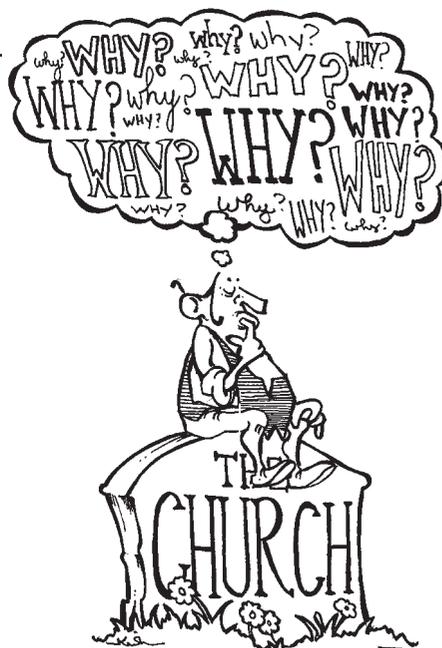
Dame Leonie was not appointed when the Commission, under the *aegis* of the Hawke Labor Government, became the Corporation, an omission she juxtaposes tellingly with the Board's defence of *The Big League* investigation by the *Four Corners* reporter Chris Masters.

Dame Leonie's daughters Jocelyn and Hilary pay tribute to the help of Professor David Fraser and Professor Barry Spurr. They note that Dame Leonie completed the work but that the progression of her dementia meant editorial work was needed before publication.

Broomstick as noted is an intriguing title; reading through the end-listed author's appointments, an alternative occurs: *Mrs Kramer's Career Management*. Reminiscent of *Mrs Beeton's Household Management*? Of course. Leonie Kramer is doubly a Victorian, she was born there and lived by the assiduity and discipline that marked the age of Queen Victoria, an age also marked, we can now see, by the paradox of conservative innovation.

Here and there in the book are references to their mother taking over kitchen duties. From her archive is it possible they can put together *Mrs Kramer's Cookbook*?

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



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Dead Man's Walk, Comanche Moon, Lonesome Dove, and Streets of Laredo

THE REALITY OF THE OLD WEST

By Susan Reibel Moore



FOR SOME YEARS, in a writing career spanning a half-century, I've respected novels written for teenagers much more than those intended for grown-ups. Even celebrated adult novelists, including major prize winners whose world views could well be called amoral, have bored me silly. So it was with some trepidation that I borrowed a recent Pulitzer Prize-winning novel for mature readers, *Lonesome Dove*, from my local library after a male Catholic teacher specialising in secondary school Maths, English, and History recommended him.

To my delight, I liked this book so much that I rapidly devoured the other three novels in the series—only to find that inveterate readers of fiction had never heard of their author, Larry McMurtry. Two of McMurtry's novels—*The Last Picture Show* and *Terms of Endearment*--were made into movies that twig memories in people over 50. Yet even Australian *litterati* don't know what is arguably the best fictional depiction of America's Old West ever written. It is not intended for children, but for adult readers with a mature understanding of good and evil.

Like all classics, the *Lonesome Dove* novels improve on re-reading. As well as being page turners with gripping and complex plots, they have style, dramatic flair, humour, and historical import. In 3000 to 4000 pages there isn't a dull sentence. Drunkenness is as commonplace as cheating at cards or gambling away the savings of a lifetime. Yet repeated episodes of fecklessness never feel gratuitous: not least because McMurtry's love of virtue is unmistakable.

On what it was like to be explorers travelling by horseback or on foot on plains without signs of life, weighed

down by unimagined dangers, no English-speaking writer familiar to me is better. The adventures of McMurtry's two heroic Texas rangers, Woodrow Call and Augustus McCrae, and their retinue—including, of course, courageous women--have a Dickensian vitality. Descriptions of Call spending untold hours listening to the chatter of Gus, or slowly moving cattle from Texas to Montana and back, never become tiresome.

Whether they are battling violent Comanches, horse thieves, bandits, natural disasters like sandstorms and drought, or conflicts within their own souls, the main characters and a host of minor figures become totally real to us. Horses are broken in or lost, buffalos are chased, fields are ploughed, and cattle are led across perilous rivers by cowboys who would much prefer to sit on mules going nowhere. *Survival*, linked with weaknesses and temptations overcome, is of course the focal issue.

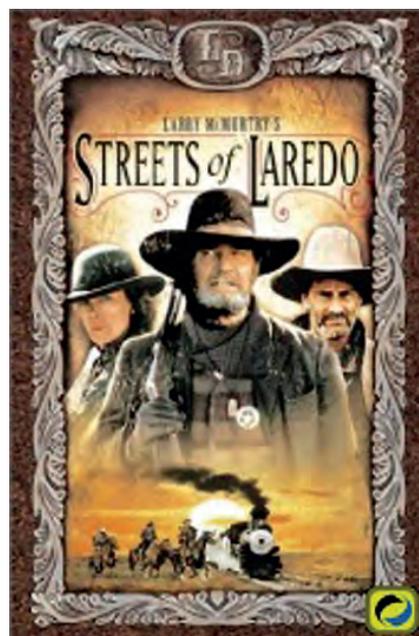
Physical ineptitude and noble feats of endurance, promiscuity or devoted

sexual fidelity, hapless wandering or the building of homesteads and settlements, and semi-conscious decisions to stay in a place or travel on to unknown terrain are played out against a backdrop of bleak grandeur. Rangers dream of home without knowing whether they will live another day. Trustworthy cowboys, farmers, and hunters count on their women to accept whatever comes. Transplanted Easterners live on a prayer in perilous settings undreamed of in their hometowns.

Nobody, ultimately, gets away with anything. Rash hangings, shootings, suicides, Indian massacres, fatal accidents, and domestic brawls are as predictable and punishing as slow advances in justice. A former sheriff finds himself killing a decent man who unwittingly finds himself in the company of killers. A feisty couple who love each other all their lives fail to marry because she won't give him what he most needs and he can't promise her a life free from his need to wander.

Over the course of four novels, lives unravel and change—sometimes, in remarkable ways, for the better. A beautiful blond whore, Lorena, becomes a devoted wife, mother, and schoolteacher. A black cook, never treated as an equal by white cowboys who owe him their lives, saves skins without expecting anything in return. A hard-working, appealing young man whose dad cannot bring himself to acknowledge him as his son, earns expressions of regard from everyone else.

What keeps inveterate readers going, even more than Larry McMurtry's portraiture, his linguistic felicity, or his mastery of narrative surprise and tension, is his wisdom. With apparent effortlessness he muses on the vagaries governing every life. Short chapters ending in death or tragic



disappointment, appearing out of the blue, are flawlessly moving. Sheer bad luck or momentary lapses in judgment suddenly ruin godly people who have previously known only fulfilling labour and devotion to others.

On diverse terrain, summarising bedrock emotions and habits, the flavour of McMurtry's reflections is inimitable:

Maria said: "I'm a woman. Nothing is mine. Not even my children". . .

"He leaves her alone because he knows if he harms her I'll do worse than cut his ear off," Billy said. "Next time I'll tie him to a stump and cut his stinkin' heart out."

Of course no one knew what Ahumado would like, or what he would do. He was the Black Vaquero. He had killed so many people that everyone had lost count. Sometimes he killed whole villages, throwing all the people in a well and letting them drown—or he might make the villagers dig a pit and bury them alive.

Mox mox did the same things to the child that he said he would do to me [a mother]. He whipped him and he poured whiskey on him, and he rubbed grease in his eyes. Then he piled brush on him and burned him.

Of course graphic descriptions faithful to brutal realities are hard on readers. It is, however, essential to Larry McMurtry's purpose not to close his eyes to the most appalling forms of wickedness. He knows how brutal men could be during his country's early years; and, like every major prose writer over the centuries, he clearly believes that history cannot be suitably captured without an unflinching insistence that the horrors must not be left out.

What gives his work a necessary balance is its depiction of simple goodness in men, women, and children. On the readiness of his most admirable female characters to transcend domestic hardship by protecting innocent youngsters and spouses regardless of the risks, and surviving villainy without being destroyed, he is particularly clear-eyed and powerful.

On Lorena's willingness to care for Jake Spoon regardless of his laziness, or Clara Forsythe's readiness to take a harlot into her home, teach her skills nobody has ever taken the trouble to impart, and give her a future, his implicitly Judao-Christian authorial presence is compelling. Perhaps

Abyss of Crime, Tyranny and De-moralisation

THE OLD MEDIAEVAL position of the Church, its complete autonomy and independence of the civil power, were matters on which loyal churchmen, of course, set the highest possible value, nor will any thoughtful man blame them for so doing. In truth, if they could have maintained that position much longer, they would have saved both the King and the nation from sinking into an abyss of crime, tyranny, and de-moralisation. But, apart from this, an old-established order, political or religious, has a perfect right to defend itself against attacks like Tyndale's by every legitimate means in its power; and it is remarkable that while the King, preparing, for Anne Boleyn's sake, to throw off the Pope, was encouraging all sorts of heresy underhand, the clergy, undaunted, were prosecuting heresy during those years of tyranny with more than ordinary rigour, just that the King might not succeed in his manifest object of destroying the authority of the Church and respect for public morality.

— James Gairdner, *Lollardy and the Reformation in England, An Historical Survey*, Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 4 vols, London 1908, vol.1, p 380. Gairdner was a Protestant historian, author of *The English Church in the sixteenth century from Henry VIII to Mary*, London, Macmillan & Co, 1904.

nothing is more moving, however, than his account of the last days of Maria Garza as she slowly walks, shoeless, away from the family home burned by her son, into a painfully short-lived freedom.

On male courage and steadfastness, it is difficult to do McMurtry's artistry justice. Single throw-away phrases define his protagonists, who often cry. Call's son Newt's sensitivity to sadness in Lorena's eyes, or Gus's reluctance ever to disappoint women, are noted without comment. The decency of men prepared to make huge sacrifices to protect the innocent is dramatised without a trace of self-pity.

To reveal the essence of Woodrow Call, Larry McMurtry stresses his obsession with hard work. A loner, he doesn't go around handing out kind words. Rather, he does what needs to be done, protecting good people and recognising the importance of others' rights and needs. He believes that the highest principle is loyalty, and he takes the view that no degree of competence can ensure survival.

Gus, in contrast, likes talk, arguments, roaming freely, and the comforts of bed. He is at his best with women: in his youth, on a picnic with his beloved Clara; much later in life, on a long journey with Lorena. Despite an approach to adversity hugely different

from Call's, his friendship with the Captain is entirely credible.

Indeed, every relationship in the series is faithful to simple truths about the daily round and bedrock human nature. Almost carelessly, McMurtry suggests that men don't like women to be 'stirred up', and that they prefer those who are 'broken'. With deep sympathy he shows Lorena's terror when she is abducted by Mox Mox and made the temporary captive of the villainous Indian, Blue Duck. He deeply respects the gentleness of Lorena's husband, Pea Eye, and his aversion to excuses.

On every page pithy observations about life, lively dialogue, and descriptions of places and states of mind have a flair and humaneness more usually linked with 19th than 20th century masters of prose. In a moment of quiet revelation, he has a minor character say that life makes everybody strange. How strange the fate of stoic, courageous, or spineless individuals can be, the series in its entirety makes admirably clear.

DR SUSAN MOORE is a literary critic and retired Teacher Educator who has taught and written about adult and children's fiction published in the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. Her most recent book is the third edition of an Aussie first, *What Should My Child Read?* (Five Senses Education) intended for parents and teachers.

The Impossible

What can be added to the horrific, reality coverage of the Christmastide 2004 tsunami, seen worldwide on television? Working from the script of Sergio G Sanchez, director Juan Antonio Bayona projects his answer with compelling force.

He opens on blank screen and the soft purr of ocean wavelets. He brings up a mighty, terrifying roar – not the tsunami breaking, but the roar of a Thai Airways jumbo jet carrying Maria (Naomi Watts) and Henry (Ewan McGregor) and their three sons Lucas, Simon and Thomas to a resort holiday.

The performances of Watts and McGregor are admirable. After the tsunami hits, however, main credit for holding the movie's agonised complexities together goes not to their star-power but to Samuel Joslin who plays Lucas, eldest of the three brothers.

The movie is based on the survival story of a Spanish couple, Maria and Quique Belon and their sons.

Juan Bayona and Sergio Sanchez burnish its truth (though some may think any number of talented Latino actors could have been cast in the leading roles).

TBA★★★★SFFV.

Trouble with the Curve

Veteran scout Gus Lobel (Clint Eastwood) is on a talent-spotting safari into the baseball bush leagues. His daughter Mickey (Amy Adams) joins him. Both are under test, he by the Atlanta Braves which has come under the influence of computer statisticians, she by her law firm where she is in line for an equity partnership.

Johnny (Justin Timberlake) is a young scout and admirer of Gus, and Pete (John Goodman) is Gus's supporter against those who want to sack him.

Predictable folk tale? Not as scripted by Randy Brown, directed by Robert Lorenz, and co-produced by Eastwood. Adams' vivacity and Timberlake's cheek are set off against Eastwood's imperturbable style which reminds us that he is the last major survivor of the old Hollywood studio system.

It had its weaknesses but its movies were skilfully crafted and followed what was known as the industry-sponsored

MOVIES

By James Murray

Hays Office after its boss Will Hays, a Presbyterian and former Postmaster General, who welcomed inputs from Catholics such as Father Daniel Lord and Joseph Breen.

Some have mocked Hays Office restrictions. Ironically in any listing of the hundred best movies, Hays movies predominate.

In a listing of the hundred best sports movies, *Trouble with the Curve* would be in there with *Pride of the Yankees*, *The Lou Gehrig Story* and the recent *Moneyball* to which it is a counter, holding to the view that instincts beats statistics.

TBA★★★★SFFV.

Save Your Legs

Director Boyd Hicklin would win a place at the comedy end of the hundred best sports movies list. He presents Edward 'Teddy' Brown who aims to play cricket for Australia. He does – by arranging for his D-Grade team to play tests against local teams in India.

Stephen Curry, extending his range, is Teddy, a fine mix of nervousness and determination which includes his courtship of an India beauty Anjali (Pallavi Sharda). Teddy's best mates, Stavros and Rick, are played by Damon Gameau and Brendan Cowell who wrote the script (and included for himself a part that Shane Warne could've played).

Occasionally the location shots of life-teeming India threaten to sink the plot. Nonetheless, the final test, against a Bollywood team, enables Hicklin and his mob to finish with appropriate



gusto. The movie does have a prophetic note. Teddy's team are fans of the great Sachin Tendulkar. Coincidentally after the movie's release, he was awarded an Order of Australia.

M★★★★SFFV.

Samsara

Five years and 25 countries went into the making of this documentary the title of which is Sanskrit for 'The Wheel of Life'. Director-cinematographer Ron Fricke and producer Mark Magidson open their work in Thailand. Loaded with 70mm film, their camera becomes a big-eye Gulliver traversing temples and churches, deserts and oceans, sky-scraper cities and mud-hut villages, production lines and garbage tips.

Their linkage is the innate spirituality of the human race as if Fricke and Magidson are working from Edmund Burke's dictum: 'Man is by his constitution a religious animal; atheism is against not only our reason but our instincts.'

Among the most impressive locations are Jerusalem, Rome and Mecca. There are no sequences involving congregations gathered to celebrate what is vainly called the New Atheism.

So impressive is Fricke and Magidson's work (which forms a triptych with *Baraka* and *Chronos*) that it inspires the thought: if much discussed extra-terrestrials were somehow to see this documentary in outer space, they would be compelled to visit Earth, a planet of wonderment and faith.

M★★★★SFFV.

The Angel's Share

On court-appointed community service in and around Glasgow, Robbie (Paul Brannigan) meets Rhino (William Ruane), Albert (Gary Maitland) and Mo (Jasmin Riggins). For them all, regular work is a dream but Robbie and his girlfriend Leonie (Sioban Reilly) have a new baby and he is intent on ensuring the child will have a better life.

The performances of Brannigan and his fellow-players have an appropriate, over-proof jauntiness.

That Robbie's solution is single malt whisky makes director Ken Loach and script writer Paul Laverty's comedy-drama as improbable as it is edgily hilarious.

The details of how Robbie achieves his aim amid connoisseurs and crooks would spoil the fun. His method does include Irn Bru, Glasgow's favourite tippie after tea, beer and whisky. Had it been more vigorously marketed Irn Bru would have broken the Coca-Cola-Pepsi-Cola axis.

Note: The dialogue contains frequent coarse language including what is usually described as basic Anglo-Saxon but which was first used by the Scots poet, and former Franciscan novice, William Dunbar (1460-1520) whose works include *The Dance of the Seven Deadly Synnis*.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

Mental

Once more writer/director PJ Hogan goes into the far reaches of suburbia. He flies on wings of deserved Hollywood success. But it's as if he'd never left Porpoise Point location of his break-through hit, *Muriel's Wedding*.

His new location is called Dolphin Heads; instead of the Heslops, he has the Moochmores to illustrate his abiding theme that everyone is scatty, no one normal.

Rebecca Gibney, overweight either from a padded suit or TV cafeteria tucker, plays Shirley, mother of a brood of five daughters. She signals breakdown with songs from *The Sound of Music* while she and a Hill's hoist twirl.

Anthony LaPaglia plays Barry her husband who is seeking re-election as mayor through chick-anery, otherwise known as womanising or possibly philogyny (antonym of misogyny).

Gibney and LaPaglia are strong

Mind-bending

CAN YOU read this? Olny 55 plepoe out of 100 can. I cdnuolt blveiee that I cluod aulaclyt uesdnatnrd what I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aocdrnig to a rscheearcher at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it dseno't mtaetr in what oerdr the ltteres in a word are, the olny iproamtnt tihng is that the frsit and last ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can still raed it whotuit a pboerlm. This is bcuseaethe huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the word as a wlohe. Azanmig huh?

players yet they are no match for Toni Collette. She plays Shaz who becomes nanny to the Moochmore brood, and grabs the part so ferociously that she does not simply chew the scenery she crunches the family house.

Shaz is also caught up in a sub-plot with her estranged partner, a shark hunter, played by Liev Schreiber in a style that would give local actor John Jarratt grounds for a case of alienation of his outback hard-man *persona*.

Totally implausible except that it is inspired by Hogan's own family. He does include a quick glimpse of an image of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. Is he suggesting that Catholicism strengthened the Moochmore family's life? It did the life of the Von Trapp

family when confronted with Naziism, a strength Hogan acknowledges when he brings the Moochmores together to sing *Edelweis* from the musical. Fair enough. But surely PJ Hogan hasn't forgotten, *Faith of Our Fathers?*

MA15+★★★NFFV

Seven Psychopaths

This title is the only element Hollywood writer Marty Faranan (Colin Farrell) has completed in a screenplay, presumably not on spec since he lives in palatial digs.

Marty is blocked until his pal Billy (Sam Rockwell) interrupts creatively, sending Marty into a zone where his fiction fuses with explosive facts: Billy's fellow poochnapper Hans (Christopher Walken) steals Bonny the beloved shitzu of mobster Charlie Costello (Woody Harrelson) whose mistress Angela (Olga Kurylenko) is also toying with Billy while Marty is having trouble who Kaya (Abbie Cornish), the homicidal Zachariah (Tom Waits) and other characters fictional and real.

The formidable ensemble plays to the limits of its talent. Writer/director Martin McDonagh avoids the cliché of having Marty roll paper into a typewriter, pull it out and crumple it up. Marty is serious. He scrawls his work on a notepad using a blunt pencil.

Indeed McDonagh does not so much avoid clichés as turn them on their heads, including the multiple clichés of filmed violence. He has named Terrence (*Badlands*) Malick and Sam (*Wild Bunch*) Peckinpah among his influences. During a climactic stand-off sequence this reviewer was reminded of another



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possible influence: Abraham Polonsky's *Tell Them Willie Boy is Here*.

When the colours in the Rubik's (O'Rubik's?) Cube of McDonagh's plot align it is apparent that he has completed a couple of tricks: satirising screen violence while exploiting it, and in a dark shaft finding a spiritual motherlode indicated by the crucifix.

MA15+★★★NFFV.

Perks of Being a Wallflower

Not another high-school movie? Affirmative. But although there are pom-pom girls and football matches, classroom scenes and wild parties (more of the latter than the former), director Stephen Chbosky focuses on a shy-guy freshman Charlie (Logan Lerman) and his wish to be accepted.

In this, he is aided by Sam (Emily Watson, saying bye-bye to Harry Potter) and Patrick (Ezra Miller). Paul Rudd enters as a teacher of English who encourages Charlie in his ambition to be a writer.

Chbosky, who also wrote the script based on his novel, establishes that Charlie is from a Catholic family who say grace before meals, go to Sunday Mass and receive the Eucharist.

Fine, dandy and no hint of condescension to suburbia.

But Chbosky cuts from Charlie receiving the Eucharist to a shot of him taking a tab of LSD. This, of course, is to recall the lapsed Catholic and pseudo-guru Dr Timothy Leary who in the Sixties preached LSD as secular sacrament not a psychotic risk.

Does Charlie achieve acceptance? Natch – through playing the lead in *The Rocky Horror Show*. He, Sam and Patrick end as loving friends under the new paradigm espoused by Hollywood: boy meets girl whose best friend is homosexual. And they all live happily after in sequels. When Harry met Sally back in 1989, things weren't quite so complicated.

TBA★★★NFFV.

Shadow Dancer

Working from Tom Braddy's novel and script, director James Marsh constructs a thriller about the Irish troubles of the 1990s. Mac (Clive Owen) is an MI5 agent, member of a team which arrests Collette McVeigh (Andrea Riseborough) on a bombing

Official Classifications key

G: for general exhibition;
PG: parental guidance
recommended for
persons under 15 years;
M 15+: recommended for
mature audiences 15 years and
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R 18+: Restricted to adults,
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Annals supplementary advice

SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing;
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operation in London's underground rail system.

Mac offers her a choice: jail and separation from her son or freedom if on her return to Belfast she spies on her hardliner brothers Gerry (Aidan Gillen) and Connor (Domhnall Gleeson). Uneasy work because Kevin (David Wilmot), the local IRA chieftain, suspects Collette of double-dealing.

Owen and Riseborough bring a tortured conviction to their roles. Gillian Anderson, a much underestimated talent, plays Mac's boss, Kate, who is adhering to different rules.

Here Bradbury and Marsh could have clarified the confusing, operational rivalries between MI5, operating in Northern Ireland, and MI6, operating in the Republic of Ireland, a confusion that adds to the 1922 border's being the most ridiculous ever drawn on a map, and many were when imperial red ink was in plentiful supply.

The benchmark for such movies was set by John Ford's *The Informer* (1935) starring Victor McLaglen based on the novel by Liam O'Flaherty (ex-Irish Guards), a benchmark matched only by director Carol Reed's *Odd Man Out* (1947), starring James Mason and co-scripted by RC Sherriff, author of *Journey's End*.

M★★★NFFV.

The Sweeney

Apart from the title (based on the rhyming slang Sweeney Todd – Flying

Squad), this foul-mouthed, brutal thriller has little in common with the television series, starring John Saw as Jack Regan and Denis Waterman as his off-sider (George Carter).

Directors/co-writers Nick Love and John Hodges replace the TV duo with Ray Winstone and Ben Drew. The latter's performance is controlled but Winstone swaggers perilously close to caricature of the Cockney hard nut he has played so often.

Love and Hodges do salvage another element from the TV series: the Regan slogan, 'You're nicked.'

They should be.

MA15+★★NFFV

The Wedding Party

Yet another suburban comedy in which there is more than a hint of condescending caricature. This prompts the question: why do so many local filmmakers have such a down on suburbia? Surely not because they are inner-city residents who believe that living on Coffee Bean Hill makes them superior beings?

Add to the condescension a large dollop of imitation of earlier comedies about immigrant marriages of convenience, such as *Russian Doll* and *Green Card*.

Steve (Josh Lawson) a gambler, agrees to marry Ana (Isabel Lucas) who needs Australian citizenship. He does this, uncaring of the hurt to his girlfriend Jacqui (Kestie Morassi), and in ignorance of Ana's tough boyfriend Vlad (Nikolai Nikolaeff).

If only director Amanda Jane had left it there. But her story, scripted by Christine Bartlett, complicates matters beyond plausibility by casting talented players such as Nadine Garner, Essie Davis, Heather Mitchell, Rhonda Burchmore, Steve Bisley and Adam Zwar as stereotypical, suburban nongs who if not hung-over have a sexual hang-up.

As a wedding priest of nondescript denomination, Bill Hunter, due to general release delays makes what is effectively his last appearance; it is not his finest monument.

Truth to tell, Hunter did not have one; a great character actor, no one ever wrote a defining part for him (See reference to Victor McLaglen and *The Informer* above).

MA15+★★NFFV.

Help Keep Christianity Alive in the Land of Christ's Birth

Moved by the desperate plight of Christians in the Holy Land and throughout the Middle East, the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has been supporting the country's beleaguered Christian population.

Sadly, due to ongoing violence and oppression, the proportion of Christians in the Holy Land has plummeted from 20 percent to as little as 1.4 percent in the last 40 years.

Please help us to sustain the 'living stones' - the faithful themselves - who walk the lands Christ knew so well, otherwise Christianity worldwide runs the risk of losing this first-hand witness and the Holy Places simply becoming museums for tourists to visit.

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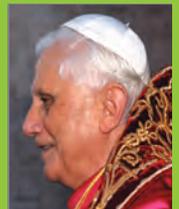
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Annals

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Made of olive wood from the Holy Land, this delightful little crib scene is powerfully evocative of Christ's birthplace.

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Aid to the Church in Need a Catholic charity dependent on the Holy See, providing pastoral relief to needy and oppressed Churches

This is the time for everybody to come together and unite against the new breed of extremists, who can turn out to be more dangerous than those of the past who relied on improvised explosive devices for destabilising Myanmar, Bangladesh and India.

THE ISLAMIC PSY-JIHAD

By Bahukutumbi Raman



WHAT WE have been seeing since May, 2012, is a proxy jihad through the Internet and modern means of communications such as the cellphone and ipad being waged by a new generation of IT-savvy jihadis still unidentified.

It started in the Rakhine State of Myanmar following violent clashes between some Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims whom Myanmar looks upon as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. The clashes resulted in about 80 fatalities from both communities and the internal displacement of a large number of Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims.

Following these clashes, a group of as yet unidentified Islamic elements, possibly based in the Myanmar-Bangladesh-India region, started a vicious campaign through the Internet

and the new social media sites for the demonization of the Myanmar Government and for promoting Islamic solidarity.

President Thein Sein of Myanmar was reported to have told a delegation of the OIC that visited Myanmar last week that through the Internet and its social media sites these elements circulated highly exaggerated reports of what they called a genocide of Muslims in Myanmar with the help of morphed pictures of violent incidents in other countries not related to Myanmar.

This Psy-jihad was meant to destabilise not only the Rakhine State of Myanmar, but also the Sheikh Hasina Government of Bangladesh, which has refused to allow the Rohingyas to enter Bangladesh and to use it as a rear base for their destabilisation operations in Myanmar.

One noticed a similar Psy-jihad being waged in India through the Internet and its social media sites

by a group of unidentified Muslim extremists after the outbreak of violent clashes between some Bodos and illegal immigrants from Bangladesh in Kokrajhar and other Bodo areas of Assam last month.

These elements used the Internet and its social media sites for the dissemination of exaggerated accounts of the violence in Assam and for re-circulating the fabricated Psy-jihad material produced by or on behalf of the Rohingyas of the Rakhine State.

These sought to inflame the passions of impressionable Muslims in different parts of India during Ramadan. It resulted in incidents of shocking violence and vandalism by some Muslims during and after a public meeting held in the Azad Maidan of Mumbai on August 5, 2012, to protest against the violent incidents in the Assam State of India and in the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

Some Muslims incited to violence by the Psy-jihad material and the highly emotional speeches attacked police men, including women members of the police, vandalised a memorial in homage of the Unknown Indian Soldier, attacked sections of the media and burnt down some media vehicles.

While the anger of such incited Muslim extremist mobs against the police is nothing unusual, its anger against the media was. Its rage against sections of the media was due to the fact that, in its view, the media did not give sufficient publicity to the Psy-jihad material produced by or on behalf of the Rohingyas.

After the Mumbai incidents which have been condemned by many leaders of the Muslim community, these unidentified elements have been directing their Psy-jihad against people

Assad's Goal for Syria

ON JANUARY 31, 2011, in a lengthy interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, Bashar al-Assad was asked about his priorities. 'When I became President,' he said, 'it was the economy, because wherever you go you have poverty and the situation is getting worse and worse day by day. We have had five years of drought and this is the fifth year when we do not have enough water. ... But, [then came] September 11, which was one year after I became President; and then, at the beginning of 2002, you had the invasion of Afghanistan; then later on the invasion of Iraq, and then the whole chaos and extremism that has been created by this wrong policy. My first priority became stability even before food. How can you stabilise your country, how can you [protect] your country from extremists, how can you fight terrorism [when] you have sleeper cells everywhere in this region? Reform in politics is important but it is not as important and urgent as the people waking up every day and they want to eat, to have good health, to send their children to good schools. That is what they want. I want to feel safe in my own country. That is my goal.'

from the North-East, who have been working in Pune and certain cities of South India like Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai in order to create feelings of insecurity in their minds and make them go back to the North-East.

There is an underlying message in this new phase of the Psy-jihad directed at people from the North-East living and working in South India and Pune. That is: "If the Government does not regularise the illegal immigration of Bangladeshis into the North-East, we will not allow people from the North-East to migrate to work in other parts of India." One has to note that the Psy-jihad directed at the people from the North-East is not based on their religion. Many of them are Christians and not Hindus. It is based on their right to migrate to other parts of India.

As a result of the feelings of insecurity created in the minds of people from the North-East in South India, many have already left for their homes, creating the danger of a fresh wave of communal violence when the displaced people of the North-East reach their homes with their tales of how they were intimidated resulting in their decision to come back home.

During the last 20 years the mental divide between the people of the North-East and those in the rest of India, that had given rise to different insurgencies, had disappeared. The insurgencies started losing public support and a large number of youngsters from the North-East had started identifying themselves with the rest of India. Many of them migrated to other parts of India in search of jobs. They were welcomed by people in other parts of India. A process of natural integration between the people of the North-East and other parts of India began.

In the Psy-jihad directed against the people from the North-east, one sees the beginning of an insidious attempt to re-create the mental divide and drive a new wedge.

Unfortunately, one does not have the impression that our intelligence agencies and police have been able to keep pace with the evolution of the Psy-jihad being waged through the Internet, mobile phones and ipads. One does not see signs of any coherent and co-ordinated attempt to counter

Christina's Story

CHRISTINA was born and raised in Karlomin, a Catholic village in Kesui island, and lived with her parents and seven brothers and sisters, in-laws, nieces and nephews. Catholics, Protestants and Muslims used to live peacefully before the Laskar Jihad came to the island. After her uncle and a Catholic youth were killed, she and her family, along with hundreds of other Christians fled into the mountains. On the fourth day ... some of their Muslim neighbours found them and told them that they had to become Muslims, otherwise they couldn't protect them from the Laskar Jihad. ' ... we finally decided to follow the Muslims to their village and do whatever they told us to do in order to save our lives. We're fully aware that refusing to do so would only get us all killed. The Muslim representatives told us to go straight to a mosque in Kampung Baru village so that when the jihad arrived they would think that we had already become Muslims. ... When we all entered the mosque, the habib (Islamic preacher) asked us whether we really wanted to be Muslims. I felt miserable. The habib then told us to say the Al Fatiha prayer (chanted when a person adopts Islam) three times. I did not remember any of the words at all because I did not say it. I just opened my mouth but in my heart I said my own Catholic prayers. The Muslim crowd inside and outside the mosque yelled and waved their machetes, spears. We all cried. I felt mixed up, scared. I told my mum, who sat beside me, "Why do we have to go through all of this?... it's coercion. I can't do this. But what else can I do. We would only be killed if we refused it, wouldn't we?" Meanwhile, the crowd in the mosque searched our bags, they took out the Bibles, Rosary necklaces and small statues of Mary, which were torn and broken to pieces and burnt outside the mosque. ... All of us, men and women, old and young, even infants and pregnant women, were circumcised.'

- Source: *Christina's Story*, by Lindsay Murdoch, *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 21, 2001.

and neutralise it, identify the elements behind this Psy-jihad and act against them firmly under the laws of the land.

In addition to neutralising this Psy-jihad, it is important to initiate urgent measures to restore the sense of security of the people from the North-East by interacting with them continuously and vigorously and by providing them additional protection. The civil society too has an important

role in this matter. This is the time to further strengthen our bonds of solidarity with them and reassure them that the civil society will stand by them.

All political parties should resist the urge, which could prove suicidal for the nation, to exploit these developments for their partisan advantage. This is the time for everybody to come together and unite against the new breed of extremists, who can turn out to be more dangerous than those of the past who relied on improvised explosive devices for destabilising us.



The writer is Additional Secretary (ret'd), Cabinet Secretariat, Govt. of India, New Delhi, and, presently, Director, Institute For Topical Studies, Chennai, and Associate of the Chennai Centre For China Studies. E-mail: seventyone2@gmail.com Twitter @SORBONNE75). This is an update of a paper titled "From Internet To Islamnet" that I had presented at an international conference at Bali, Indonesia, in October, 2005. Available at <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers16%5Cpaper1584.html>.

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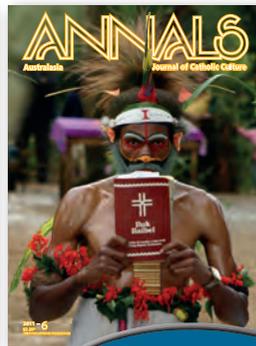
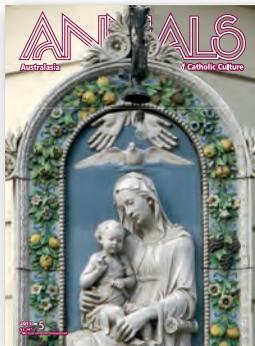
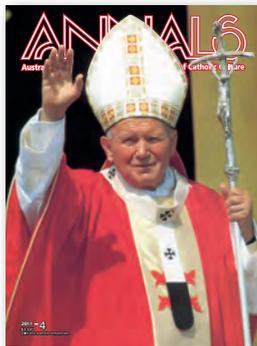
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