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# ANNALS AUSTRALASIA

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Australia's Oldest Catholic Magazine

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- 3 **Just Look !**  
GUEST EDITORIAL
- 9 **The Patrician Brothers in Australia**  
KEVIN HILFERTY
- 22 **The 'Golden Age' of Harun al-Rashid**  
PAUL STENHOUSE
- 31 **The Seven Great 'O' Antiphons**  
HAL ENGLISH, JOHN COLBORNE-VEEL,  
PAUL STENHOUSE
- 35 **Defenceless Europe**  
JUDE DOUGHERTY
- 39 **Why don't the English?**  
PAUL COLEMAN
- 44 **Pondering Progress**  
GILES AUTY
- 46 **The Mystery of the Brevity of Life**  
KIT CUNNINGHAM
- 48 **The Two Cultures**  
ROGER SANDALL



*Front Cover:* The 'Magi from the east' who arrived in Jerusalem searching 'for the child who is born to be king of the Jews'. St Matthew's gospel [21-12] tells us the story: how they had 'seen the rising of his star in the east, and had come 'to pay him homage'. They followed the star till it 'stopped over the place where the child lay'. They 'saw the child Jesus with Mary his Mother, and bowed to the ground in homage to him; then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh'. Beyond stating that they were 'Magi' [most probably priests from Persia] St Matthew doesn't tell us how many of them there, nor their names. Catholic tradition varies. Usually they are represented as three in number, and in the Latin Church since the seventh century the names given to them are Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

*Back Cover:* Beautiful sculpture of the Holy Family: Our Lady, St Joseph and the child Jesus. Ideal as gifts for Christmas or Birthdays, or as school prizes, or on the occasion of the blessing of homes or work places. Manufactured from volcanic ash deposited by the devastating 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines they may be hung on a wall. *Chevalier Press* has a limited number of these 26 cm by 12 cm plaques of the Holy Family. Price: \$25, including postage anywhere in Australia, and GST.

Front Cover Artwork: © Bradi Barth

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“Our lips  
are the  
doors of the  
Temple of  
Christ.”

—St John Chrysostom,  
Catechesis, 3,13-19

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

## A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

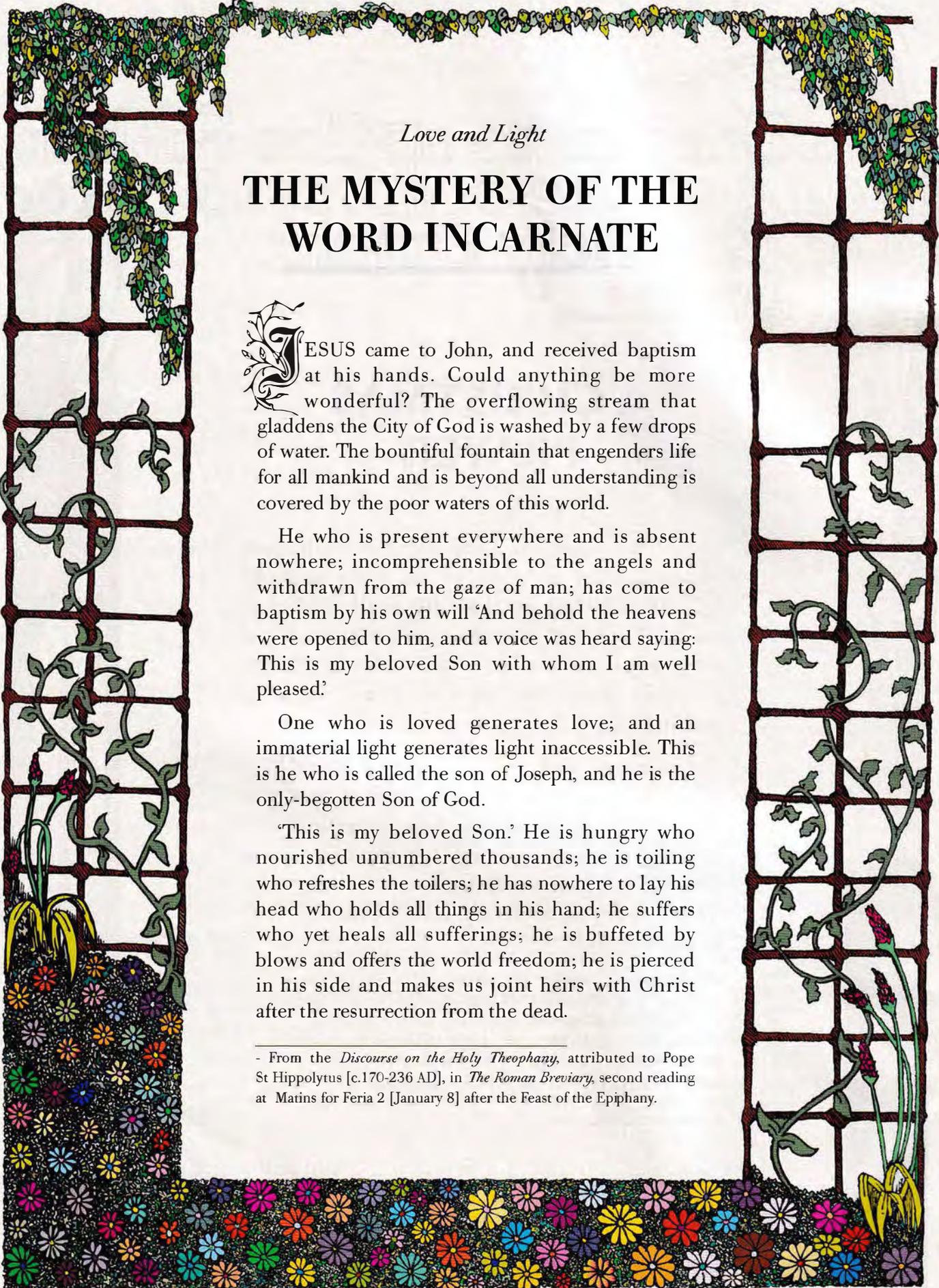


LOOK upon us, Lord; hear us, enlighten us, show yourself to us. Give yourself to us that it may be well with us, for without you it goes so ill for us. Have pity upon our efforts and our strivings towards you, for we can avail nothing without you.

Teach me to seek you, and reveal yourself to me as I seek, because I can neither seek you if you do not teach me how, nor find you unless you reveal yourself. Let me seek you in desiring you; let me desire you in seeking you; let me find you in loving you; let me love you in finding you.

– St Anselm of Canterbury [1033-1109 AD] from his *Proslogion* [written 1078-9], chapter 1. Quoted in *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for Friday in the first week of Advent. Anselm was from Aosta in Italy, a Benedictine monk, and Prior of Canterbury Monastery. He was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in 1093. He attended the Council held in Rome in 1099, supported Popes Urban II and Paschal II against the King, and enforced clerical celibacy.





*Love and Light*

## THE MYSTERY OF THE WORD INCARNATE

**J**ESUS came to John, and received baptism at his hands. Could anything be more wonderful? The overflowing stream that gladdens the City of God is washed by a few drops of water. The bountiful fountain that engenders life for all mankind and is beyond all understanding is covered by the poor waters of this world.

He who is present everywhere and is absent nowhere; incomprehensible to the angels and withdrawn from the gaze of man; has come to baptism by his own will 'And behold the heavens were opened to him, and a voice was heard saying: This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.'

One who is loved generates love; and an immaterial light generates light inaccessible. This is he who is called the son of Joseph, and he is the only-begotten Son of God.

'This is my beloved Son.' He is hungry who nourished unnumbered thousands; he is toiling who refreshes the toilers; he has nowhere to lay his head who holds all things in his hand; he suffers who yet heals all sufferings; he is buffeted by blows and offers the world freedom; he is pierced in his side and makes us joint heirs with Christ after the resurrection from the dead.

---

- From the *Discourse on the Holy Theophany*, attributed to Pope St Hippolytus [c.170-236 AD], in *The Roman Breviary*, second reading at Matins for Feria 2 [January 8] after the Feast of the Epiphany.

*Cardinal Egan Compares Abortion Crimes to those of Hitler and Stalin.*

## JUST LOOK

By Edward Cardinal Egan  
Archbishop of New York



CTOBER 27, 2008 (LifeSiteNews.com) - The picture on this page is an untouched photograph of a being that has been within its mother for 20 weeks. Please do me the favor of looking at it carefully.

Have you any doubt that it is a human being?

If you do not have any such doubt, have you any doubt that it is an innocent human being?

If you have no doubt about this either, have you any doubt that the authorities in a civilized society are duty-bound to protect this innocent human being if anyone were to wish to kill it?

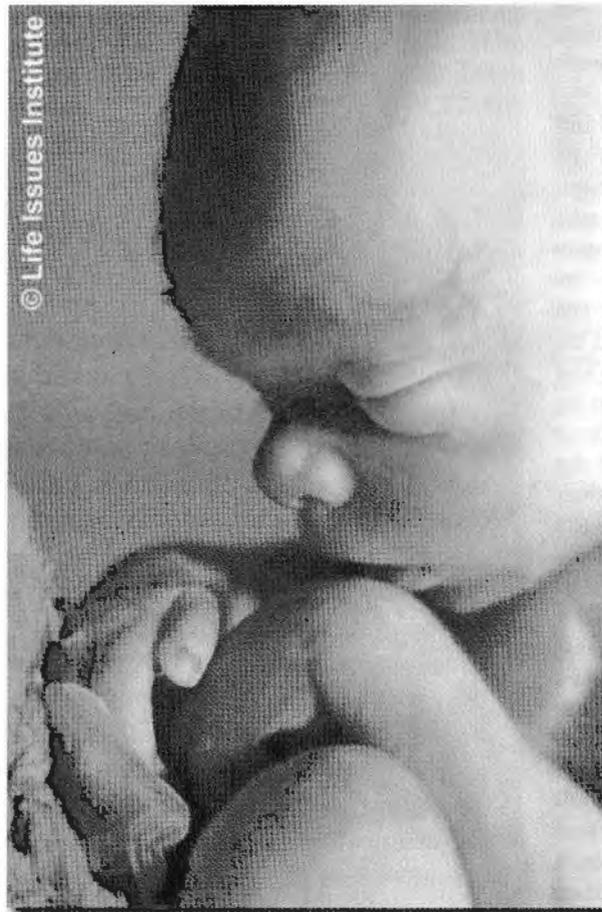
If your answer to this last query is negative, that is, if you have no doubt that the authorities in a civilized society would be duty-bound to protect this innocent human being if someone were to wish to kill it, I would suggest—even insist—that there is not a lot more to be said about the issue of abortion in our society. It is wrong, and it cannot—must not—be tolerated.

But you might protest that all of this is too easy. Why, you might inquire, have I not delved into the opinion of philosophers and theologians about the matter? And even worse: Why have I not raised the usual questions about what a “human being” is, what a “person” is, what it means to be “living,” and such? People who write books and articles about abortion always concern

themselves with these kinds of things. Even the justices of the Supreme Court who gave us “Roe v. Wade” address them. Why do I neglect philosophers and theologians? Why do I not get into defining “human being,” defining “person,” defining “living,” and the rest? Because, I respond, I am sound of mind and endowed with a fine set of eyes,

to kill it or, if you prefer, someone who “chooses” to kill it. In brief: I looked, and I know what I saw.

But what about the being that has been in its mother for only 15 weeks or only 10? Have you photographs of that too? Yes, I do. However, I hardly think it necessary to show them. For if we agree that the being in the photograph printed on this page is an innocent human being, you have no choice but to admit that it may not be legitimately killed even before 20 weeks unless you can indicate with scientific proof the point in the development of the being before which it was other than an innocent human being and, therefore, available to be legitimately killed. Nor have Aristotle, Aquinas or even the most brilliant embryologists of our era or any other era been able to do so. If there is a time when something less than a human being in a mother morphs into a human being, it is not a time that anyone has ever been able to identify, though many have made guesses. However, guesses are of no help. A man with a shotgun who decides to shoot a being that he believes may be a human being is properly hauled before a judge. And, hopefully, the judge in question knows what a “human being” is and what the implications of someone’s wishing to kill it



into which I do not believe it is well to cast sand. I looked at the photograph, and I have no doubt about what I saw and what are the duties of a civilized society if what I saw is in danger of being killed by someone who wishes

are. The word “incarceration” comes to mind.

However, we must not stop here. The matter becomes even clearer and simpler if you obtain from the National Geographic Society two extraordinary

DVDs. One is entitled “In the Womb” and illustrates in color and in motion the development of one innocent human being within its mother. The other is entitled “In the Womb—Multiples” and in color and motion shows the development of two innocent human beings—twin boys—within their mother. If you have ever allowed yourself to wonder, for example, what “living” means, these two DVDs will be a great help. The one innocent human being squirms about, waves its arms, sucks its thumb, smiles broadly and even yawns; and the two innocent human beings do all of that and more: They fight each other. One gives his brother a kick, and the other responds with a sock to the jaw. If you can convince yourself that these beings are something other than living and innocent human beings, something, for example, such as “mere clusters of tissues,” you have a problem far more basic than merely not appreciating the wrongness of abortion. And that problem is—forgive me—self-deceit in a most extreme form.

Adolf Hitler convinced himself and his subjects that Jews and homosexuals were other than human beings. Joseph Stalin did the same as regards Cossacks and Russian aristocrats. And this despite the fact that Hitler and his subjects had seen both Jews and homosexuals with their own eyes, and Stalin and his subjects had seen both Cossacks and Russian aristocrats with theirs. Happily, there are few today who would hesitate to condemn in the roundest terms the self-deceit of Hitler, Stalin or even their subjects to the extent that the subjects could have done something to end the madness and protect living, innocent human beings.

It is high time to stop pretending that we do not know what this nation of ours is allowing—and approving—with the killing each year of more than 1,600,000 innocent human beings within their mothers. We know full well that to kill what is clearly seen to be an innocent human being or what cannot be proved to be other than an innocent human being is as wrong as wrong gets. Nor can we honorably cover our shame (1) by appealing to the thoughts of Aristotle or Aquinas on the subject, inasmuch as we are all well aware that their understanding of matters embryological was hopelessly mistaken, (2) by



suggesting that “killing” and “choosing to kill” are somehow distinct ethically, morally or criminally, (3) by feigning ignorance of the meaning of “human being,” “person,” “living,” and such, (4) by maintaining that among the acts covered by the right to privacy is the act of killing an innocent human being, and (5) by claiming that the being within the mother is “part” of the mother, so as to sustain the oft-repeated slogan that a mother may kill or authorize the killing of the being within her “because she is free to do as she wishes with her own body.”

One day, please God, when the stranglehold on public opinion in the United States has been released by the extremists for whom abortion is the centre of their political and moral life, our nation will, in my judgment, look back on what we have been doing to innocent human beings within their mothers as a crime no less heinous than what was approved by the Supreme Court in the “Dred Scott Case” in the 19th century, and no less heinous than what was perpetrated by Hitler and Stalin in the 20th. There is nothing at all complicated about the utter wrongness of abortion, and making it all seem complicated mitigates that wrongness not at all. On the contrary, it intensifies it.

Do me a favor. Look at the photograph again. Look and decide with honesty and decency what the Lord expects of you and me as the horror of “legalized” abortion continues to erode the honor of our nation. Look, and do not absolve yourself if you refuse to act.

## Babies left to die

**S**TUDENTS FOR LIFE of America (SFLA) has released [October 31, 2008] a new undercover video of a nurse at a New Jersey Planned Parenthood facility describing how an abortion would be performed on a 22 week-old unborn child and admitting that some babies survive such abortions. “It does happen,” the nurse said. The video evidence suggests that the practice of allowing babies who survive abortions to die without care continues. The SFLA video also criticizes Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama for opposing a state Born Alive Infants Protection Act while an Illinois lawmaker. Obama argued that the bill would violate *Roe v. Wade*, was medically unnecessary, and would burden “the original decision of the woman and the physician to induce labor and perform an abortion.” Kristan Hawkins, SFLA Executive Director, commented on the video: “I was absolutely stunned when the Planned Parenthood nurse revealed that allowing a baby to die after being born alive is a common practice for abortionists. It begs the question of why a presidential candidate will not support human rights protections for babies born alive during an abortion procedure. This is outright infanticide, and a candidate for President defends it!”

- Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=14203>

## LETTERS



### The poor get poorer

The great global economic crisis of 2008 was not caused by plague, drought, shortage of essential items, war or climate change.

These are tangibles – touchables, if you like. What did cause the crisis

was an intangible, negative, alien element – erosion of confidence, breeding highly infectious fear amid the crash of falling dominoes. How did that erosion happen? By stomping on the delicate balances of morality and trust needed to make the world's economy work efficiently.

Who is to blame? Unrestrained, unscrupulous, greedy, financial buccaneers, most of whom enjoy high status in men's eyes; have reaped personal harvests beyond the dreams of avarice; subscribe to the laissez faire, (leave well alone) economic theories;

Nor are the buccaneers sharing the pain. That role has passed (as always) to ordinary folk – people rocked by job loss, or slashed pension or plunging share values.

Into their lives has crept an invisible thief. They cannot see or feel him, but he has the power to lift hard-earned wealth from their wallets, their bank accounts, their share portfolios and other vouchers saved for purchases in the great global super market. A thief, in other words, empowered to pull down living standards and crush reasonable hopes and expectations. Yet at no stage have the victims consented to having their economic destiny yoked to the predators, these financial medicine men, as they sell and seek unearned money

If a pickpocket consistently offended he would be off the street for months or even years. If a negligent doctor allowed a person to walk at large with a highly infectious disease that doctor could

face criminal charges. In our lives we are constrained on every hand by rules to safeguard both the individual, the common good, the State and the nation. And we break those rules at our peril.

Today, the economic system is so sick it has required medication to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars – a gigantic outflow that is beyond calculation. So what punishment is appropriate for top CEOs, and their boards – the people, that is, who have presided over the collapse from buoyant health of the world-wide economic system? Apparently very little beyond a nasty Press and a slap on the wrist and, in places, a limit on looting for severance payouts from the corporate wreckage.

Gisborne Vic 3437 MICHAEL O'CONNOR AM

### The Church Christ founded

In reference to the article "The Church Christ Founded" by Dr. Frank Mobbs. August edition. I think it is the Church hierarchy itself that had caused the confusion by the wording of the Vatican II document "Lumen Gentium".

If they truly believe that the Catholic Church and the Church founded by Jesus Christ are one and the same then

## Image-based Existence

There are over 42 million American adults, 20 percent of whom hold high school diplomas, who cannot read, as well as the 50 million who read at a fourth- or fifth-grade level. Nearly a third of the nation's population is illiterate or barely literate. And their numbers are growing by an estimated 2 million a year. But even those who are supposedly literate retreat in huge numbers into this image-based existence. A third of high school graduates, along with 42 percent of college graduates, never read a book after they finish school. Eighty percent of the families in the United States last year did not buy a book.

– 'America the Illiterate,' By Chris Hedges, *Information Clearing House*, 16 November 2008

it doesn't make sense to say that one subsists in the other. It is akin to saying that the Harbour Bridge subsists in the Harbour Bridge!

Baulkham Hills, Sydney 2153 (Mrs.) ANN ODELLO

[It is true that the Catholic Church and the Church founded by Christ are one and the same, but sceptics may deny this because more than 2000 years have intervened between the birth of Christ and our time. The term 'subsists' was used for the same reason that our correspondent's analogy needs some fine tuning. To be faithful to what the Council Fathers were grappling with she would need to say that the 'Harbour Bridge opened in 1932 subsists in the Harbour Bridge existing in 2008,' despite certain differences, so that someone who attended the opening in 1932 would recognize the Bridge as the same one.

It may help to compare a more ancient bridge, say the Milvian Bridge built in Rome in the 2nd century BC – in 109 – by Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, with the same bridge today. The Milvian bridge still exists, and is recognizable as such. Many changes and developments have necessarily taken place over the past 2108 years which have enabled it to come down to us in the 21st century without substantially altering it: it still fulfils the function for which it was built, and it is still called the Pons Milvius.

In the 1960s, the Council Fathers were confronting complex issues in the Catholic Church's long life over almost two millennia, and taking into account certain historical and theological issues including the development of doctrine which have enabled the same Church to come down to us, despite superficial changes, and disunity caused by schism and heresy, substantially unaltered. Ed. *Annals*]

### Quotable

I love your eminently quotable magazine. Long may it disturb those who do not relish it.

Mornington Victoria 3931

SHEILA WRIGHT

### Greenie Commentariat

May I compliment Wanda Skowronska on her article 'The Greenie Commentariat' in the 2008/4 issue of *Annals*. I found it informative and a timely warning on attempts to use well meaning religious people to further the cause of what is basically paganism.

Leopold Victoria 3224

FRANK COLYER

(Readers' comments are welcomed, not just on material that appears in *Annals*, but on issues that concern the Catholic and the wider community. Please keep your letters short. They may be edited if too long. Always print your full name and address, and include a daytime phone or fax number or e-mail address at which you can be reached. Editor: *Annals*).

Part I: A Long Walk from Cassidy's Creek

DON

By Don Gallagher



ON was curled up in bed, waiting for his mother to come and kiss him goodnight. He could hear the old man raving on in the kitchen, "He's hopeless. He'll never do any good. He's got no go! You didn't help by labelling him with that damn stupid name - Donald! What an insult to ould Ireland! Why don't you dress him in kilts?"

"And you", replied his father "wanted to call him Patrick... Patrick! God help him. What hope would a Paddy Geoghegan have of getting a job these days? Have you seen that sign on the woollen mill's wall? 'Casual Help Wanted - No Catholics need apply.'"

"Whoever wrote that has written well," said the old man, "for the same is written on the gates of hell. Credit the lad with a bit of gumption, he'd get a job if he'd any go in him. But, you gave him a crook start in life with that 'Donald'. I've always said it was an insult to ould Ireland, and no good will come of it."

Then his mother came and closed the bedroom door.

"Don't listen to those old windbags in the kitchen", she said.

"Get to sleep, you've got a big day tomorrow - your first day at school."

"You'll come with me?" he whispered.

"Of course," she promised.

Next morning they climbed the hill together. It was over a mile to the Sisters of Mercy school next to the church. Don dragged his feet and pulled hard on his mother's hand. "Hurry," she said, "we don't want to be late."

That was exactly what he *did* want - so late that it would all be

We hope that *Annals* readers who enjoyed the adventures and wisdom of Joe Meagher in our long-running series *Pilgrim People* by Father Max Barrett CSSR will find that *Don* has much to say to them about growing up, and growing up Catholic. *Ed.*

over when they got there and he could come home again with his mother.

As they got closer to the school building, they heard a woman's voice from one of the classrooms, "Who made the world?" Instantly, a chorus of young voices shouted, "God made the world."

A pity He didn't make it a bit nicer, Don thought - without any schools.

Sister Andrea met them at the classroom door. His mother apologised for being late, explaining that it was a long walk from Cassidy's Creek.

"This is my boy Don, it's his first day at school."

"Oh, what a lovely name, and what a fine-looking young man," said Sister Andrea.

As they talked Don peered through the door and paled at the sight of all those strangely quiet children. There seemed to be hundreds of them

(Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2). He gripped his mother's hand tighter.

Then Sister Andrea showed him to a seat near the door, he looked out and could see his mother crossing the playground and then the street.

On the corner she turned and stood looking back at the school. Don was staring after her with tears in his eyes. He was in despair and he felt hopelessly alone.

Don made no friends at school. He cried a lot! At lunch-time he stood at a distance watching his classmates playing games with the curate, Father Daly; or he would stand, staring across the road at Paddy Nolan's Blacksmith Shop where his father worked.

The blacksmith shop had a big wide open door and looked very dark inside - he wondered what his father did in there.

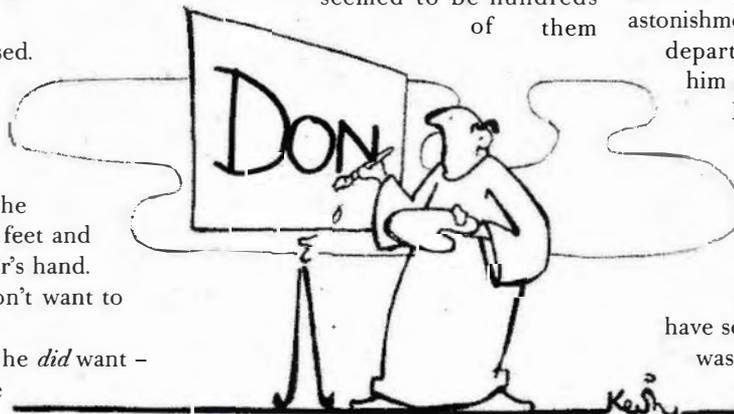
One day Sister Andrea frightened him with the news of the coming of the School Inspector. "He will ask you questions," she told the class, "and if you know the answers hold your hand up high and speak up loudly. Don't be frightened, he won't bite."

Don told his mother about this terrible biting inspector. He didn't want to be anywhere near him.

"Don't worry about the nasty old inspector," she said, "the day he comes I'll keep you at home with me." This she was pleased to do. But, to her astonishment, the day after the inspector departed, Sister Andrea promoted him to Grade 1.

Don's mother remonstrated with Sister, "He's got no brains," she said, "he can't spell CAT, or even his own lovely name ... he cries all day."

"Oh," said Sister, "You should have seen him the day the inspector was here. His little hand was first up." A clear case, the



mother thought, of mistaken identity, but, she didn't want to embarrass Sister Andrea by telling her that he wasn't even there that day so she talked her into keeping him a bit longer in Kindergarten.

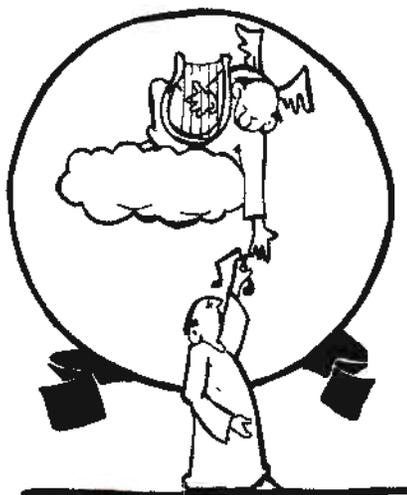
Don got to like Sister Andrea and loved getting close to her to have his pencil sharpened – he broke his pencil quite a lot!

When Don got to Grade 2, Sister Andrea prepared him for his First Communion and taught him a prayer: *"A hundred thousand welcomes into my poor little heart, sweet Jesus, a hundred thousand welcomes."* It was a prayer he understood and liked, he only wished he could say it to Sister Andrea.

After their First Communion breakfast, she sought him out especially with an envelope addressed in her beautiful big handwriting, "To Dear Don." He opened it and felt a familiar pricking behind the eyes, there was a poem with her good wishes and her signature.

"Of all the days that I shall live  
This shining day shall stand apart,  
When Jesus came from heaven on high  
To make His home within my heart..."

Don kept this card in his Mass Book all his life.



BROTHER DON GALLAGHER CFC taught in Rose Bay, Albury, Waitara, Goulburn, Balmain and Bondi Junction before moving to St Edmund's Canberra in 1967. It is perhaps as an artist that he most widely known. His paintings adorn collections throughout Australia and overseas.

'Don' is excerpted with permission from *A Story & Paintings*, by Br Don Gallagher, CFC, published by Choicez Media, Canberra 2008 RRP . Copies may be obtained from GPO Box 14, Canberra City, ACT 2601.



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## THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE



**I**T WAS long a tradition among the aged people in the neighbourhood of Bolton Priory, that not long after the dissolution of the monasteries, a white doe continued to make a pilgrimage from Rylstone over the fells of Bolton, and was constantly found in the priory churchyard, near the grave of its former owner, during divine service; after the close of which the doe returned home as regularly as the rest of the congregation. The grave was the burial-place of Emily, the only daughter of Richard Norton, of Rylstone, who was executed in the Catholic insurrection in the reign of Elizabeth. When yet a child, the young doe had been given to Emily by her brothers, and it had grown up under her endearment, making a return for her affection in its own mute gratitude. Her father and eight brothers being captured, were all executed, and their fate being told to the broken-hearted Emily, she assumed the garb of a pilgrim, and long wandered far from the scenes of her childhood, till she returned home, and was immediately recognised by the grateful doe. Upon this strange story, Wordsworth has founded his romantic poem of "The White Doe of Rylstone."

— John Timbs, *Abbeys, Castles and Ancient Halls of England and Wales*, London, Frederick Warne and Co, North, [undated] pp.178-179, quoting *The History of the Deanery of Craven*, by Dr Whitaker.

*'A time when Latin and French were taught in inner-city schools'*

## THE PATRICIAN BROTHERS IN AUSTRALIA

by KEVIN HILFERTY



ON A WARM summer day in February, 1885 Brother Malachy Michael Dwyer went swimming in the Murray River at Albury, NSW. Malachy got into difficulties and drowned. He was 20 and became the first of 53 Patrician Brothers buried in NSW and Papua New Guinea since their mission here began in 1883.

Beside him in the Pioneer Cemetery at Albury is Peter Gaynor, another Irish Patrician who had been a teacher in India before he came to Australia in the hope that the warmer and drier climate might help him overcome tuberculosis. It was not to be and he died on December 26, 1887 aged 26.

In fact, 13 of the Patricians died before they reached 30. It now seems that they brought with them from Ireland the tuberculosis that was to kill them.

A remarkable Irish visionary, Bishop Daniel Delany of Kildare and Leighlan, founded the Patricians. At the time of his birth in 1747 Ireland was a poor and oppressed country, still suffering under the Penal Laws. With the support of his parents and family, Delany at age 16 was smuggled out of Ireland and across to France to study for the priesthood. He was ordained in 1770, the year Captain Cook sailed into Botany Bay.

Disguised as a layman, he returned to Ireland to find the Church in a bad way, with widespread ignorance and a low level of practice. The young priest spent hours before the Blessed Sacrament seeking guidance and strength. He organised Sunday schools for adults and children and found it very hard to recruit and train teachers for them. But he persisted and gathered around him a group of laymen and women catechists into a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.

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*This year marks the bi-centenary of the Brothers of St Patrick (Patrician Brothers), founded in Ireland on February 2, 1808. From Ireland the Brothers spread across the world, reaching Australia in 1883. Kevin Hilferty tells the story of the Brothers' two centuries and their 125 years in Catholic education in Australia.*

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When he became a Bishop, these became the nucleus of the great communities he founded, the Bridgidine Sisters and the Patrician Brothers. The Bishop's rule of life for them was simple: devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, work and prayer, instruction and example.

In Tullow, County Carlow, in 1807 six of his women catechists began the Bridgidine Sisters, the first post-Reformation community of St Brigid.

This had been an ancient community of dedicated women of the old Celtic Church at Kildare which the Bishop had been trying to revive for 20 years.

Also at Tullow on February 2, 1808 he founded the congregation of the Patrician Brothers. The first four vocations were Patrick McMahon, Maurice Cummins, Richard Fitzpatrick and Ambrose Dawson. They took the names in religion of Brothers John Baptist, John Evangelist, Bernard and Joseph. Over the next few months they were joined by Patrick Woods (Brother Francis), Patrick Kelly (Brother Serenus) and Thomas Phelan (Brother Dominic).

On the second anniversary of their foundation, four Patricians left Tullow to start a school in Bishop Delany's hometown of Mountrath. Gradually the Brothers and the Bridgidine Sisters were invited to begin schools in other parishes across Ireland.

Their call to Australia – and their generous response – came as a result of the crisis caused by the withdrawal of government financial support for non-government schools. This meant that the schools lacked the resources to pay lay teachers a reasonable wage to support themselves and their families. So to staff their schools the bishops turned to the teaching religious congregations to supplement the existing orders and they travelled to Europe and Ireland to find sisters and brothers.

Bishops James Murray of Maitland, William Lanigan of Goulburn and Matthew Quinn of Bathurst all sought Patrician Brothers to educate their boys. The Patricians agreed to come and the first two arrived in Sydney on March 6, 1883. They were Brothers Fintan O'Neill and Dominic O'Neill (unrelated). They arrived next day in Maitland where in April they took charge of St John's School in Free Church Street. In 1884

### Civilization is a Road

CHRISTIANITY is bound to protest against any social system which claims the whole of man and sets itself up as the final end of human action, for it asserts that man's essential nature transcends all political and economic forms. Civilization is a road by which man travels, not a house for him to dwell in. His true city is elsewhere.

– Christopher Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State*, London, Sheed and Ward, 1935, Introduction p.xv.



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Fintan went to Goulburn with four Brothers from Ireland to open the first Patrician school there.

Bishop Murray also obtained in 1883 the services of six Brigidine Sisters from Mountrath who made the first Brigidine foundation in Australia at Coonamble, NSW. A second foundation from Ireland was established at Echuca, Victoria in 1886 followed by further foundations at Beechworth, Wangaratta and Ararat. In time the Sisters established themselves in Sydney, Bathurst, Goulburn, Perth and Brisbane.

The bishops' pleas for teachers led to a steady stream of Patricians making the long journey across the world

from Ireland. Brother Malachy was among them, arriving in Sydney on the steamer *Liguria* on September 8, 1884 aged 19. He was from a farming family from Clonoulty, Co. Tipperary, entered the Patricians in 1881, was professed in June 1884 and sailed for Australia a month later. He spent a few months at Goulburn then went with two other Brothers to Albury to staff the new school of St Patrick's. Just 23 days later the three Brothers walked to the Murray for a swim. Malachy disappeared beneath the surface. His body was found the next day.

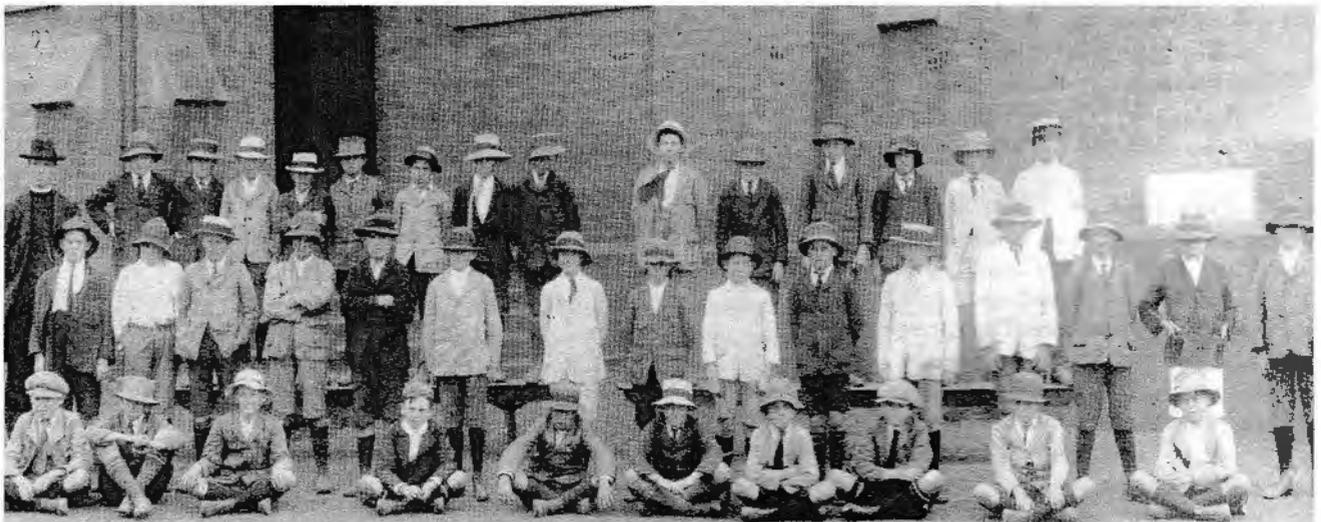
The young Brothers, like Malachy, were mostly from a rural background

and would have travelled little beyond their family farm, perhaps to the nearest market town, before joining the congregation. To leave family and friends to travel across the world to a strange country with little immediate hope of return must have been daunting.

In their first decades in Australia the Brothers served in the dioceses and towns to which the bishops had invited them, opening schools in Maitland in 1883, Goulburn and Bathurst in 1884, Albury in 1885, Armidale and Dubbo in 1889, Wagga and Orange in 1890. But they encountered difficulties in dealing with the bishops, who were mostly Irish.

Professor Patrick O'Farrell in his *The Catholic Church and Community in Australia* describes one example: "When the Patrician Brothers arrived, in Maitland in 1883, Bishop Murray refused to recognise their constitutions, which did not permit him complete control of the order. In the conflict that followed, Murray made it obvious that he regarded his authority as final, and beyond appeal – even to Rome. The Brothers did appeal but the Roman vindication did not arrive in time to prevent their departure in 1888.

"This dispute shows a consistent presumption, typical of Australian Irish bishops in their conflicts with religious orders, that Rome would support the most arrant and extreme episcopal authoritarianism, whereas the actual decisions made by Rome were usually



Brother Alphonsus J Eviston, the first Australian to join the Patricians, with pupils of the Brothers' school in Orange about 1921. He was born in Bathurst in 1877, educated there by the Brothers, entered the congregation in 1894 and spent 60 years as a Patrician. He taught in Albury, Goulburn, Holy Cross College Ryde, Redfern, Orange, Dubbo and Mt Carmel (Waterloo). His pupils at Redfern included John Joseph Cahill, a long-serving Premier of NSW.

to the contrary, decisions then ignored or circumvented by the bishops.”

The times, as well as the bishops, were against the Patricians. Severe droughts and harsh economic conditions culminating in the great crash of the nineties made many of their schools unviable, with shrinking enrolments. They did not abandon the schools and pupils but turned them over to the Christian Brothers or the De La Salle Brothers and concentrated their resources in Sydney. The Brothers' schools at Bathurst, Dubbo and Orange had been functioning well but Bishop O'Farrell of Bathurst directed the Brothers to leave in 1924.

Their school at Redfern, which was opened in 1886 and became St Vincent's Boys' High School, educated tens of thousands of boys. Holy Cross College at Ryde opened in 1891 with four day boys and four boarders. The

Brothers had formed strong links with families in country districts and many of these people began sending their sons to board at the College.

The Brothers' next schools were in working-class blue-collar parishes: at St James, Forest Lodge (Glebe) opened in 1892 and Mt Carmel (Waterloo) in 1908. The Brothers lived in their monastery at Redfern and walked each day to and from Mt Carmel and Forest Lodge. It was 30 years before the Forest Lodge community had their own monastery and in this time they must have worn out a great deal of shoe leather.

I was a pupil at St James for six years and remember my teachers with affection and respect. Brother Baptist McGrath was a veteran who had taught at most of the Patrician schools; when he was at Bathurst one of his pupils was Ben Chifley, who became Treasurer and Prime Minister of Australia. He

was a gifted teacher of French and used to insist that he and I conversed only in this language. Another teacher, Brother Norbert, was a fine Latinist and I enjoyed his lessons. It is a long time since Latin and French were taught at inner-city schools.

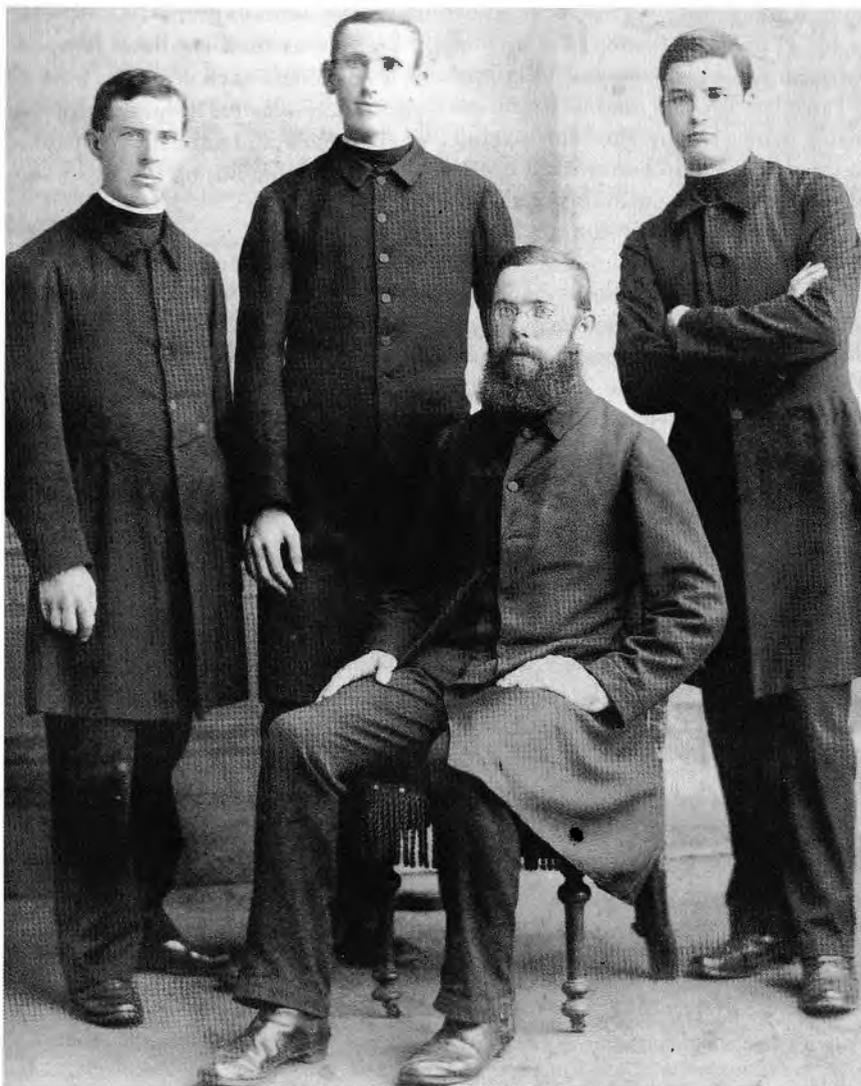
Two world wars and the great depression of the thirties stalled the development of new schools. But in 1942 the Brothers agreed to take over a new school in the then semi-rural suburb of Granville. With population growth, this became a high school and is now the co-educational Delany College.

The post-war development of Sydney's west and the impact of migration led to requests from the Sydney Archdiocese to the Brothers to take on more responsibilities. They responded as they had to the country bishops in 1883. They began regional Patrician Brothers' Colleges at Blacktown in 1952, Fairfield in 1953, Liverpool (All Saints Catholic Boys' College) in 1954 and in 1981 John Paul II Senior High at Marayong; after amalgamation with Holy Family High School this is now St Andrew's College.

The reforms to secondary education (the Wyndham Scheme) and the need for teachers in the west meant the end of the inner city schools. Redfern closed in 1962, Mt Carmel in 1963, and Forest Lodge in 1967.

In 1968 the Brothers responded to a request from Bishop Ignatius Doggett of Aitape, Papua New Guinea, and sent Brothers Charles Barry and Gabriel McCluskie to teach at the co-educational St Ignatius High School, a boarding school and at that time the only high school in the West Sepik region. By 1970 Brother Charles was principal and there were four Patricians on the staff. In 1977 Charles was asked to begin another secondary boarding school in the bush. He and Brother Michael Vella with the help of their staff, students and the local people built the school from scratch. By 1981 St Francis High School, Nuka, was fully functional.

The Brothers began fostering young Papua New Guineans to become Patricians in 1987 and have established a formation house at Aitape under the direction of Brothers Thomas Rice and Paul O'Keeffe with the support of Vicar-



The Goulburn community of the Patrician Brothers in 1887. From left to right: Brothers Anselm Casey, Louis Carroll, Fintan O'Neill and Dominic Bourke.



A group of school leaders at Patrician Brothers' College, Fairfield NSW

General Brother Peter Ryan. There are five professed Papua New Guinea Patricians.

In 1995 the Patricians established a community on Thursday Island with the Brothers involving themselves in the local Catholic primary school and in parish work. After 11 years the Brothers were no longer able to maintain a presence in the island and so withdrew at the end of 2005.

The Brothers marked their bi-centenary with special events across the world. Locally these were organised by committees under the guidance of the Provincial, Brother Aegnus Kavanagh fsp (who devotes half his time to being a consultant for the Catholic Education Office at Parramatta).

The first of these was on November 18, 2007 when the Brothers spread out across NSW and at Aitape to pray at the graves of the 53 Patricians who have died since 1885. In January a pilgrimage group visited South India and in June another group toured Ireland. On St Patrick's Day there was a Mass at the State Sports Centre, Homebush, for more than 5000 pupils of Patrician schools and on April 30 there was a grand concert.

The pioneer Brothers could not have imagined the enrolments at the Patrician schools at Ryde and in Western Sydney of more than a thousand pupils at Blacktown and an average of 700 at the

other schools.

In a link to Bishop Delany, at Patrician Brothers' College, Blacktown, a Patrician Brother and a Brigidine Sister work side by side ministering to the spiritual and educational needs of their charges, continuing with the mission given to their congregations 200 years ago.

All the Patrician schools have lay principals and predominantly lay staff but retain a strong Patrician ethic. This is helped by the presence of retired Brothers who still live on or

near the school grounds and after a lifetime as teachers have accepted new challenges such as parish work as pastoral associates, hospital or prison chaplaincies and ministry to people with disabilities. Bishop Delany's vision lives on.

Sydney journalist and regular *Annals Australasia* contributor KEVIN HILFERTY has always been grateful to the Patrician Brothers for teaching him Latin, which taught him grammar and to use English with economy and precision, and French, which in later life enabled him to learn other languages.

## Target the Rhetoric, or Suffer the Consequences

**H**USAIN now calls for outlawing rhetoric that paves the way for violence, saying that such a ban would empower moderate Muslims to root out radicals, even though it would also restrict civil rights in a way that would worry many Britons and Australians.

"It can't be acceptable in modern Britain that people go around saying that we are working towards a jihadi (holy war) State in the Middle East that will ultimately turn on the West," he says.

"It's not even 'ultimately'. It's from day one. If you read the literature they keep for their private meetings, its aim is to attack the West, destroy Israel and to kill non-Muslims and Muslims who oppose us.

— 'The enemy within': *The Australian*, June 16, 2007. Ed Husain was a soldier in the army of Islamist extremism. He explains to Peter Wilson, *The Australian's* Europe correspondent, why he walked away.

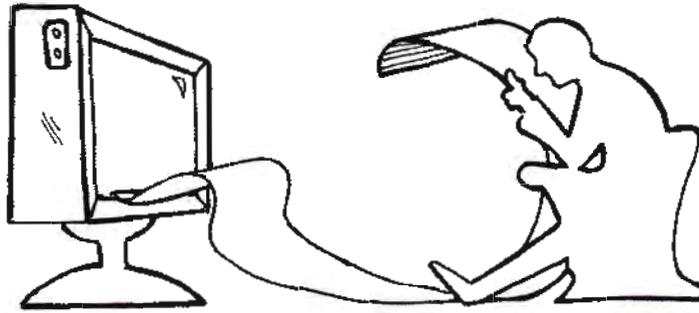


FOLLOWING in the footsteps of Dr Who, you go back in time to the place where Jesus is being born, and there you strike up a conversation with some idle by-stander. The circumstances are poor as are the parents of the baby. But in this, there is little to arrest the attention of the by-stander, many people are poor, even poorer, at least the baby has a manger.

'You know what will happen to that boy?' you begin. 'He'll lead the life of a back-wood-unknown till he's thirty, then he'll lead some men and end up crucified by the Romans.' 'Don't tell me,' interrupts the by-stander. 'he'll have a few hundred disciples, they'll take up arms, and go down fighting. Predictable.' 'No,' you reply, 'he'll have far fewer followers and they'll desert him. He'll die alone.' 'A loser, eh?' 'No,' you reply, and then you'll tell him the facts upon which all agree.

'Who do you think billions of people will remember two thousand years hence? Augustus? Herod? the High Priests? Some will have heard of Augustus, fewer of Herod, and fewer still the High Priests, but *everyone* will know his name.' 'Is that right,' says the by-stander bemused.

'Some will claim he was divine, some that he was just a good man, some that it would have been better he had not been born, and some that he never in fact existed. But like it or not, the world will date itself by this his birth, although there will be many who will want this practice to cease. Many will die for him and many others will help them do so. Whole empires will be built on his name, and whole empires will try to destroy his name. It won't matter if people make fun of the name of Augustus or Herod, for no one will care. But in two thousand years time people will make fun of this man and others will oppose them. Down through history both civilised nations and primitive tribes will be divided over this man's name. Family and friends will be at odds with each other. In order to explain his fame there will be all sorts of fantastic theories, both scholarly and mad. Some will say he became famous because his name became linked to the Roman Empire.' The by-stander interrupts, 'But he will be crucified, and as far as I know no one who was crucified ever became a hero to the Empire.'



## JUST THE FACTS

By ROBERT TILLEY

time they convinced lots of Jews that he was the fulfillment of all their Messianic promises and much more besides. Not only that the giants of Greek philosophy, Plato and Aristotle, will have their philosophies tied to systems that will serve this man's name.'

The by-stander snorted, 'If you told me his revolution was successful and he liberated Palestine and overthrew Rome, maybe, but even then what you're saying is a bit too much.'

'Oh but there's more. Whole philosophies will be thought up in order to replace him, in order to get the world to forget him. They'll all fail. He will be praised by some of the greatest philosophers and writers, by pacifists and warriors, and there will be great developments in the arts on account of his name. But there will also be writers and artists, pacifists and warriors, who will mock and slander him.' 'That's it?' 'No, much more. The major pagan and Jewish festivals will be adapted to celebrate his name and life. Others will say that's a bad thing and try to reclaim these festivals. He will unite Jews and Gentiles together in worship of him, while other Jews and Gentiles will revile him. Billions will say that this very moment is the most significant moment in earth's history. That on *this* birth the earth will turn, for good or for bad.'

'If so then he would have to be divine,' says the by-stander, 'but this is not the way a god comes into the world.'

'But if what I'm saying is true?'

'Then I would be mad not to worship him.'

'And if I tell you that what I've said is just the facts?'

'Then I would say you are a liar.'

Nevertheless, these are just the facts, but many will still not worship him.



ROBERT TILLEY is a regular contributor to *Annals*.

*Most children have more eye contact with TV characters than with their own parents.*

## THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE

By Tony Evans



THE BALLOON GAME, popular among students of an earlier time, imagined debaters representing historic figures or objects, or events, crowded into the gondola of a hot-air balloon. When the balloon is supposedly caught in a stone one of the debaters – the least convincing in the defence of his subject – was jettisoned to lighten the load and so save the balloon from crashing to the ground with the loss of all the others.

If you, intelligent reader, found yourself in a balloon debate as a representative of one of the great technological inventions of the last hundred or so years, which invention would you pray earnestly *not* to have to defend so that you would avoid being the luckless one chosen to be thrown overboard?

For this writer the answer is simple. I would tremble with fear and believe the debate lost before it began, if I were chosen to defend television. With all their faults, their weaknesses and occasional misuse I could put up a reasonably convincing case for motor cars, telephones, aeroplanes, radio, washing machines and yes, even computers; but I would find it impossible to defend television. I might as well jump overboard before the debate began.

Television as an invention is about eighty years old; as a mass medium whose development in England and elsewhere was delayed owing to World War II, it is less than sixty years old. There is no doubting the high ideals held for the post-war television service. It was closely regulated, and standards were strictly enforced; hours of transmission were limited.

Programming in the late sixties and early seventies in Britain is generally

recognised as a golden age when the best contemporary writers and talent were drawn to the medium, and drama and comedy for example, were rarely afterwards surpassed and are still remembered nostalgically today. Few of us at the time, enjoying the good programmes as we did, recognised that there was ‘a ghost in the machine’ – the seeds of corruption that lay at the heart of the technological marvel, seeds that would grow and spread like

a cancer through the body until it was rotten and beyond resuscitation.

There can be no modern marvel of the technological age which promised so much at its birth and which was accompanied in its early years with high ideals and potential for good, and yet developed in a comparatively short time to be the most powerful, corrupting and manipulating force throughout the world.

One person who did recognise the ‘ghost in the machine’ was Pope Pius XII. His now little-remembered encyclical, *Miranda Prorsus* (1957), although covering film, radio and television, surely had television very much in mind when he warned that unless these marvels are “subjected to the sweet yoke of Christ, they can be the source of countless evils, which appear to be all the more serious because not only material forces but also the mind are unhappily enslaved.”

In another part he writes of the powerful influence of television on men’s minds and how, instead of “flooding them with light and raising them to nobility, it can disfigure them by dimming their lustre, dishonour them by a process of corruption and make them subject to uncontrolled passions...”

Those of us who were connected with the television and film apostolate at that time were encouraged by the Pope’s encyclical, which authorised the establishment of Catholic media offices with the purpose of writing criticism, training priests in the techniques of the media, and encouraging the production of television and film which endorsed Christian ethics. Alas, the work was akin to David meeting with Goliath without the satisfactory conclusion recounted in the first book of Samuel.

The language of *Miranda Prorsus* should not be read as Vatican rhetoric

### Tuchman’s Law

DISASTER is rarely as pervasive as it seems from recorded accounts. The fact of being on the record makes it appear continuous and ubiquitous whereas it is more likely to have been sporadic both in time and place. Besides, persistence of the normal is usually greater than the effect of the disturbance, as we know from our own times. After absorbing the news of today, one expects to face a world consisting entirely of strikes, crimes, power failures, broken water mains, stalled trains, school shutdowns, muggers, drug addicts, neo-Nazis, and rapists. The fact is that one can come home in the evening, on a lucky day, without having encountered more than one or two of these phenomena. This has led me to formulate Tuchman’s Law, as follows: “The fact of being reported multiplies the apparent extent of any deplorable development by five-to-tenfold”.

- Barbara Tuchman (1912-1989), *A Distant Mirror* (1978)

## Murderers and Martyrdom

**B**ETWEEN 3 and 4 AM on August 10, 15 Uighurs [Chinese Muslims] in different taxis drove round the town of Kuqa (pronounced Kucha), located midway on the railway line between Kashgar and Urumqi, the capital of the province, and threw home-made hand-grenades and tins filled with gasoline at the local office of the Public Security Department, other government offices, hotels and shops owned by Hans. Since there were not many people on the road at such an early hour in the morning, there were only two fatalities, a police officer and a civilian. The police, who were initially taken by surprise, subsequently managed to corner the attackers and shot dead eight of them. Two blew themselves up with hand-grenades in order to escape capture. Two, including a 15-year-old Uighur girl (Hailiqiemu Abulizi), who was badly injured by a hand-grenade, were captured. Three managed to escape. The Germany-based East Turkestan Information Center (ETIC) said that "East Turkestan freedom and independence fighters attacked a Party building ... a people's government building, a tax office, bazaar management, and brothel on Aug. 10." It added that the attackers, seven men and four women, were "martyred."

– B. Raman, Director, Institute For Topical Studies, Chennai, India.  
He is also associated with the Chennai Centre For China Studies.  
e-mail: seventyone2@gmail.com)

or flowery, exaggerated prose. Compared with the language and argument twenty years on, in Jerry Mander's 1977 book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, the Pope's language may be considered fairly mild.

The title of Mander's book caught the public's eye and awoke responsible viewers and researchers to the dangers of television watching for the first time – albeit with special reference to conditions in the United States.

Mander is still read and quoted with respect today and hundreds of subsequent, but less publicity-seeking

academic studies, have drawn similar conclusions echoing both Mander's and Pius XII's words. Mander was the first to point out that the problems inherent in the technology itself are so dangerous to public health and sanity, to the environment and to democratic processes, that TV ought to be eliminated forever – a forlorn Quixotic cry with little or no hope of success. The arresting title of the book ensured its notoriety but Mander, being true to his principles, refused to promote it on television.

The growing disillusionment of older viewers with present-day

public television is hardly significant enough to alarm television stations. Their only response is to dumb down programs even further, and employ sensation built upon sensation in an effort to retain the viewing mass – thus safeguarding company profits.

Mander bases his arguments for the elimination of television mainly upon the medium's affect on the human person, on the mind, the personality, and the behaviour of the viewer – and his particular concern is with young people and how their minds are hypnotised by the screen.

A more recent and authoritative study on how television is damaging our lives was published in 2005 and has as its title, *Remotely Controlled*. The author, Dr Aric Sigman, quotes research, which shows that television watching slows the body's metabolic rate, and stunts the development of children's brains; how it increases attention disorders and leads to violence and related crime. He also shows how continual television watching in middle age increases the incidence of Alzheimer's disease.

Much of the evidence from current studies, he claims, is seldom reported in the newspapers because newspapers also own television stations, or fear their advertising may suffer if television was shown to be the danger that it really is.

A recent survey in Britain showed that children aged 11 – 15 spend an average of 53 hours each week watching television and computers. "In fact, most of our children now literally have more eye contact with television characters than with their own parents." The findings of statistical surveys are now legion, and alarming and conclusively point to the corrupting influence of television watching.

When Pius XII wrote of the technological marvels in his encyclical, he believed as most of us believed at the time, that television was a neutral technology, 'a gift of God, our Creator'. The Pope envisaged the possibility of this neutral technology being used for the betterment of mankind, to inspire goodness and transmit noble ideas and religious instruction to vast audiences. His optimism now seems sadly misplaced. He could not

see, as we could not see, the reality of what television would become, and the negative power it would eventually hold over us. It was Mander, elaborating on his four arguments, who first proclaimed that television was not a neutral technology, in the same way that a gun is not a neutral technology – the purpose of a gun and its only function is to kill.

Far from neutral, television itself predetermines who shall use it, how they will use it, what effects it will have on individual lives, and, if it continues to be widely used, what sorts of political forms will inevitably emerge.

When Arthur Koestler published his book, *The Ghost in the Machine*, and so popularised the phrase, he was writing of the dormant, violent tendencies suppressed in the human brain and remain there as a threatening presence which can and often do, surface again and influence our behaviour. Koestler was not a Christian and so would not have seen the analogy with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, the corruption in all of us which is endemic and must be exorcised by Baptism.

Unfortunately Baptism is not theologically acceptable for technology. The only conclusion is that television is past redemption and should be consigned to the flames by Catholics and by all those who value their individuality, their mental health, and their joy in observing the natural world around them undefined by the warped and limiting vision presented on the television screen.

1. *Miranda 17arsus*. Encyclical of Pope Pius XII on the communications field: Motion Pictures, Radio Television. September 8, 1957
2. Arie Sigman. *Remotely Controlled: How Television is Damaging Our Lives*, p.2, London 2005 3 Jerry Mander, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, p.45, New York. 1978.

TONY EVANS was a producer with the ABC for many years and is now a freelance writer living in Western Australia. He has published three historical biographies, the latest being the very popular *C.Y.O'Connor, His Life and Legacy*, published by UWA Press. Evans founded the *C.K. Chesterton Society* in W.A. Recently it became the national *Australian Chesterton Society*. He has just completed a biography of William Wardell. The beautiful St John's College within the University of Sydney, founded in 1858, is the oldest Catholic University College in Australia, and first Catholic University College to be built in the English speaking world since the reformation is also one of the cultural treasures bequeathed to Australian Catholics by William Wardell its architect.

## It's a Mad World

**R**ADIOLOGISTS across the country received letters attempting to exact royalties on a patent covering a technique for determining the sex of a fetus at age twelve to fourteen weeks with ultrasound. The procedure's patent – legitimate and still technically valid – boils down to visually distinguishing male genitalia from female. Not surprisingly, the American College of Radiology has condemned the patent. Many in the field have also publicly scoffed at it. As Chris Merritt, a radiologist at the Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans, says, 'It's like saying you have a secret method for distinguishing the gender of patients when they take their clothes off for a physical. That's an invention?' Another likened it to a patent on telling your right hand from your left.

The matter can't simply be laughed away, however. As unbelievable as it sounds, John D. Stephens of San Jose, California, a radiologist who specializes in prenatal diagnosis, does in fact hold a twenty-year monopoly over the technique. Stephens is fazed by neither the seemingly obvious nature of this 'invention' nor the fact that it relies completely on the work of untold thousands of medical engineers who developed and refined the ultrasound imaging devices needed to perform the procedure. He says the patent is merely his rightful means to protect his intellectual property. As for the Hippocratic ethic, Stephens calls it 'naive and out of date.'

- Seth Shulman, *Owning the Future*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1999, pp.36-37.

## SANTA CLAUS

**W**as a secular alternative to the traditional Catholic veneration of Saint Nicholas. It seems to have originated in the USA, via Dutch settlers. Clement Clarke Moore wrote a poem 'A Visit from St Nicholas' in 1823, for his children, in which a jolly figure, reindeer [with familiar names], chimneys, stockings and presents, all feature. Bret Harte (1836-1902) the American backwoods poet, introduced the term 'Santa Claus' to England in the nineteenth century with his popular short story 'How Santa Claus came to Simpson's Bar,' and it spread more widely from that time. In a Sydney Department Store this Christmas, there is, for the first time, to my knowledge, a Mrs Santa Claus. Ed. *Annals*.

*Dusseldorf court rules against headscarves and habits*

## CALL FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

*By* Karna Swanson

**C**ONNECTIONS BETWEEN Islam and violence, as well as religious freedom for non-Muslims in Islamic countries, must be the top priority of Christian-Muslim dialogue, the leaders of the Catholic and Lutheran Churches in Germany, Cardinal Karl Lehmann and Bishop Wolfgang Huber, told delegates at a major church conference last week.

'If European countries permit Muslims to build prestigious mosques, then I would like to be able to celebrate Mass in Saudi Arabia without being arrested,' said the cardinal during the thirty-first German Protestant Kirchentag [Church gathering], which took place in Cologne last week, while pressing for religious freedom for Christians in Islamic countries.

It was unacceptable that Christian communities in Turkey were not allowed to purchase land for churches, he said, adding that true religious freedom could only be practised mutually. He said he could understand why many Germans were against building mosques in Germany, as he knew from discussions he had had with Turkish Muslims in Germany that many mosques were now 'inundated with fundamentalist tendencies'.

Bishop Huber said that if Muslims in Germany accepted religious freedom as a basic freedom, then they must be prepared to accept that Muslims had a right to convert to other religions. Former Muslims who had converted to Christianity in Germany were still frightened of professing their faith openly for fear of reprisals. The potential for violence within Islam must also be discussed openly.

'Islam as such does not promote violence, but one must not play down the connection between violence and Islam that we are faced with,' Huber said. While it was important to discuss what the two religions had in common, it was equally important to discuss the controversial issues 'and not just brush them aside,' he said, adding that without doing this there was no point in Christian-Muslim dialogue.

However, the two men's comments angered the chairman of the Central Muslim Council in Germany, Ayyub Axel Kohler, who said that Muslims had expected more understanding for their situation. 'Patronising sufferance is not tolerance,' he said.

The conference was also attended by eminent figures including the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and two Nobel Peace Prize winners - Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Bangladeshi economist, Muhammed Yunus. At lectures and debates such topics as ecology, the world economy and world peace were discussed. This year's Kirchentag attracted a record 110,000 participants and 3 million visitors. The Kirchentag was founded in 1949 and is held every two years. It alternates with the Catholic Katholikentag.

Meanwhile, Muslim teachers at state schools in North Rhine Westphalia may no longer wear headscarves, nor Catholic nuns wear habits, according to a court ruling in Diisseldorf.

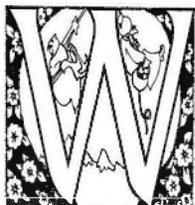
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- Christa Pongratz-Lippitt in Vienna. Source: *The Tablet*, London, June 16, 2007.

*John Henry Newman's speech on the occasion of his elevation to the Cardinalate*

## CARDINAL DEACON OF ST GEORGE IN VELABRO

By J. Gerald Wilson



WHEN POPE PIUS IX<sup>1</sup> died in February 1878, Leo XIII was elected Pope. It seems that the idea of making Newman a Cardinal originated with the new Pope. At any rate the idea was at once taken up by the Duke of Norfolk and some of the English laity who approached the Pope and asked him to recognise Newman officially for his loyalty and orthodoxy. A year later in 1879 Newman was created a Cardinal of the Roman Church, with the title of 'San Giorgio in Velabro', and by a privilege unique in those days was allowed to remain at his Oratory in Birmingham, and would be neither a Cardinal with a diocese nor a Cardinal in Curia. His elevation was a providential vindication of all he stood for and in the speech he made in Rome after receiving the official summons, he explained officially what the main work of his life had been.

### The Biglietto<sup>2</sup> Speech

On Monday morning May 12, Dr Newman went to the Palazzo della Pigna, the residence of Cardinal Howard, who had lent him his apartments to receive there the messenger from the Vatican bearing the note or biglietto from the Cardinal-Secretary of State, informing him that in a secret consistory held that morning his Holiness had deigned to raise him to the rank of Cardinal.

By eleven o'clock the rooms were crowded with English and American Catholics, ecclesiastics and laymen, as well as many members of the Roman nobility and dignitaries of the Church, assembled to witness the ceremony. Soon after midday the consistorial messenger was announced. He handed the biglietto to Dr Newman, who,

having broken the seal, gave it to Dr Clifford, Bishop of Clifton, who read the contents. The messenger having informed the newly-created Cardinal that his Holiness would receive him at the Vatican the next morning at ten o'clock to confer the *berretta* upon him, and having paid the customary

compliments, his Eminence replied in what has become known as his 'Biglietto Speech' as follows:

'Vi ringrazio, Monsignore, per la partecipazione che m'avete fatto dell' alto onore che il Santo Padre si è degnato conferire sulla mia umile persona'. [Thank you, Monsignor, for notifying me of the high honour that the Holy Father has deigned to confer on my humble person]. And, if I ask your permission to continue my address to you, not in your musical language, but in my own dear mother tongue, it is because in the latter I can better express my feelings on this most gracious announcement which you have brought to me than if I attempted what is above me.

'First of all then, I am led to speak of the wonder and profound gratitude which came upon me, and which is upon me still, at the condescension and love towards me of the Holy Father in singling me out for so immense an honour. It was a great surprise. Such an elevation had never come into my thoughts, and seemed to be out of keeping with all my antecedents. I had passed through many trials, but they were over; and now the end of all things had almost come to me and I was at peace. And was it possible that, after all, I had lived through so many years for this?

'Nor is it easy to see how I *could* have borne so great a shock, had not the Holy Father resolved on a second act of condescension towards me, which tempered it, and was to all who heard of it a touching evidence of his kindly and generous nature. He felt for me and he told me the reasons why he raised me to this high position. Besides other words of encouragement, he said his act was a recognition of my zeal and good service for so many years in the Catholic cause; moreover, he judged that it would give

### Just Stand Still

SUCH IS THE STATE of things in England, and it is well that it should be realised by all of us; but it must not be supposed for a moment that I am afraid of it. I lament it deeply, because I foresee that it may be the ruin of many souls; but I have no fear at all that it really can do aught serious harm to the Word of God, to Holy Church, to our Almighty King, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Faithful and True, or to His vicar on earth. Christianity has been too often in what seemed deadly peril, that we should fear for it any new trial now. So far is certain, on the other hand, what is uncertain, and in these great contests commonly is uncertain, and what is commonly a great surprise, when it is witnessed, is the particular mode by which in the event, Providence rescues and saves His elect inheritance. Sometimes our enemy is turned into a friend; sometimes he is despoiled of that special virulence of evil which was so threatening; sometimes he falls to pieces of himself; sometimes he does just so much as is beneficial, and then is removed. Commonly the Church has nothing more to do than to go on in her own proper duties, in confidence and peace; to stand still and to see the salvation of God.

- John Henry Cardinal Newman, from his 'Biglietto Speech,' the address he made to the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII on the occasion of his being named Cardinal of the Roman Church with the title of St George in Velabro. See the article by Gerald Wilson p ... in this issue of *Annals*.

pleasure to English Catholics, and even to Protestant England, if I received some mark of his favour. After such gracious words from his Holiness, I should have been insensible and heartless if I had had scruples any longer.

'This is what he had the kindness to say to me, and what could I want more? In a long course of years I have made many mistakes. I have nothing of that high perfection which belongs to the writings of Saints, *viz.*, that error cannot be found in them; but what I trust that I may claim all through what I have written, is this - an honest intention, an absence of private ends, a temper of obedience, a willingness to be corrected, a dread of error, a desire to serve Holy Church, and, through divine mercy, a fair measure of success.

'And, I rejoice to say, to one great mischief I have from the first opposed myself. For thirty, forty, fifty years I have resisted to the best of my powers the spirit of Liberalism in religion. Never did Holy Church need champions against it more sorely than now, when, alas! it is an error overspreading, as a snare, the whole earth; and on this great occasion, when it is natural for one who is in my place to look out upon the world, and upon her future, it will not, I hope, be considered out of place, if I renew the protest against it which I have made so often.

'Liberalism in religion is the doctrine that there is no positive truth in religion, but that one creed is as good as another, and this is the teaching which is gaining substance and force daily. It is inconsistent with any recognition of any religion, as *true*. It teaches that all are to be tolerated, for all are matters of opinion. Revealed religion is not a truth, but a sentiment and a taste; not an objective fact, nor miraculous; and it is the right of each individual to make it say, just what strikes his fancy. Devotion is not necessarily founded on faith. Men may go to Protestant Churches and to Catholic, may get good from both and belong to neither. They may fraternise together in spiritual thoughts and feelings, without having any views at all of doctrine in common, or seeing the need for them. Since, then, religion is so personal a peculiarity and so private a possession, we must of necessity ignore it in the intercourse of man with

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The church we seek

man. If a man puts on a new religion every morning, what is that to you? It is as impertinent to think about a man's religion as about his sources of income or his management of his family. Religion is in no sense the bond of society.

'Hitherto the civil Power has been Christian. Even in countries separated from the Church, as in my own, the *dictum* was in force, when I was young, that: 'Christianity was the law of the land'. Now, that goodly framework of society, which is the creation of Christianity, is throwing off Christianity. The *dictum* to which I have referred, with a hundred others which followed upon it, is gone, or is going everywhere; and, by the end of the century, unless the Almighty interferes, it will be *forgotten*. Hitherto, it has been considered that religion alone, with its supernatural sanctions, was strong enough to secure submission of the masses of our population to law and order; now the Philosophers and Politicians are bent on satisfying this problem without the aid of Christianity.'

'Instead of the Church's authority

and teaching, they would substitute first of all a universal and thoroughly secular education, calculated to bring home to every individual that to be orderly, industrious and sober, is his personal interest. Then, for great working principles to take the place of religion, for the use of the masses thus carefully educated, it provides – the broad fundamental ethical truths, of justice, benevolence, veracity, and the like; proved experience; and those natural laws which exist and act spontaneously in society, and in social matters, whether physical or psychological; for instance, in government, trade, finance, sanitary experiments, and the intercourse of nations. As to religion, it is a private luxury, which a man may have if he will; but which of course he must pay for,

**'ST MATTHEW  
WROTE FOR THE  
HEBREWS'**

- St Gregory of Nazianus, 329-389 AD

and which he must not obtrude upon others, or indulge in to their annoyance.

'The general character of this great *apostasia* is one and the same everywhere; but in detail, and in character, it varies in different countries. For myself, I would rather speak of it in my own country, which I know. There, I think it threatens to have a formidable success; though it is not easy to see what will be its ultimate issue. At first sight it might be thought that Englishmen are too religious for a movement which, on the Continent, seems to be founded on infidelity; but the misfortune with us is, that, though it ends in infidelity as in other places, it does not necessarily arise out of infidelity. It must be recollected that the religious sects, which sprang up in England three centuries ago, and which are so powerful now, have ever fiercely opposed to the Union of Church and State, and would advocate the un-Christianising of the monarchy and all that belongs to it, under the notion that such a catastrophe would make Christianity much more pure and much more powerful.

'Next the liberal principle is forced on us from the necessity of the case. Consider what follows from the very fact of these many sects. They constitute the religion, it is supposed, of half the population; and, recollect, our mode of government is popular. Every dozen men taken at random whom you meet in the streets has a share in political power – when you inquire into their forms of belief, perhaps they represent one or other of as many as seven religions; how can they possibly act together in municipal or in national matters, if each insists on the recognition of his own religious denomination? All action would be at a deadlock unless the subject of religion was ignored. We cannot help ourselves.

'And, thirdly, it must be borne in mind, that there is much in the liberalistic theory which is good and true; for example, not to say more, the precepts of justice, truthfulness, sobriety, self-command, benevolence, which, as I have already noted, are among its avowed principles, and the natural laws of society. It is not till we find that this array of principles is intended to supersede, to block out, religion, that we pronounce it to be evil. There never was a device of the Enemy so

cleverly framed and with such promise of success. And already it has answered to the expectations which have been formed of it. It is sweeping into its own ranks great numbers of able, earnest, virtuous men, elderly men of approved antecedents, young men with a career before them.

'Such is the state of things in England, and it is well that it should be realised by all of us; but it must not be supposed for a moment that I am afraid of it. I lament it deeply, because I foresee that it may be the ruin of many souls; but I have no fear at all that it really can do aught serious harm to the Word of God, to Holy Church, to our Almighty King, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Faithful and True, or to His vicar on earth. Christianity has been too often in what seemed deadly peril, that we should fear for it any new trial now. So far is certain; on the other hand, what is uncertain, and in these great contests commonly is uncertain, and what is commonly a great surprise, when it is witnessed, is the particular mode by which in the event, Providence rescues and saves His elect inheritance.

'Sometimes our enemy is turned into a friend; sometimes he is despoiled of that special virulence of evil which was so threatening; sometimes he falls to pieces of himself; sometimes he does just so much as is beneficial, and then is removed. Commonly the Church has nothing more to do than to go on in her own proper duties, in confidence and peace; to stand still and to see the salvation of God.'

And he concluded with the couplet he had chosen at Littlemore, thirty-six years before, to head the series of the *Lives of the English Saints*.

Mansueti hereditabunt terram,  
Et delectabuntur in multitudine pacis.<sup>3</sup>

'The meek shall inherit the earth and they shall take their delight in an abundance of peace.'

One is tempted to draw parallels between Newman's time and the present day as liberalism's secularism seeks to ban religion from the public square. Newman had already written in his famous spiritual autobiography, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, that by liberalism he meant false liberty of thought on matters, in which, from the constitution of the human mind, thought cannot be brought to any successful issue. Among

### ANNALS CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 8

1		2		3		4		5	6		7		8
9								10					
11								12					
								13					
15		16		17									
18													
22							23						
24							25						
26								27					

#### ACROSS CLUES

1. Released prisoner places bars around Swedish singers (8)
5. Broken hip and cheek for brother of James (6)
9. Shake idle dogs and remove (8)
10. Founder of Order has last of meat with wine (6)
11. Change unto huge Calvinist (8)
12. Quietly lift and pay homage (6)
14. Third note's off key for singer of lamentations for the dead (10)
18. Capone meets rat returning with fabric used to cover Communion table (5,5)
22. Kick ball, go all over the world (6)
23. Lebanese monk has Mare going around on it (8)
24. Periods of rule when Queen returns gin cocktail to first Saint (6)
25. Franciscan Friar, under age with tie undone (8)
26. One day arranged execution by drowning (6)
27. Tars seem to be going off ships (8)

#### DOWN CLUES

1. Religious figure had Bud converted (6)
2. Terrible singer to quit, then join up again (6)
3. Smashed by little Brother Kenneth (6)

4. A loving Albion supporter? (10)
6. Sacred door up to Crucifix (4,4)
7. Hooligan Larry mentioned relatives (8)
8. Sick people join father and I in tents (8)
13. Saint Puget translated Greek version of the Old Testament (10)
15. Sycophantic paratrooper? (6,2)
16. Outrage when at, or returning to, big smoke (8)
17. Decreed that one is given Holy Orders (8)
19. Lola hugs middle of joyous Jesuit (6)
20. Godlike five hundred and four in Middlesex (6)
21. Somehow repels Father Damien's charges (6)

#### SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 7

C	A	O	G	C	S	N							
T	R	A	D	I	T	O	R	H	E	C	T	O	R
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S	A	T	O	R	I	R	E	P	E	N	T	E	D
L	N												

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such matters are first principles of whatever kind; and of these the most sacred and momentous are especially to be reckoned the truths of Revelation.<sup>4</sup>

It would not be hard to imagine what Newman would have thought of the 'Common Ground' project launched by some prominent Churchmen in the U.S. in the 1990s, nor hard to imagine what he would have thought of the theological dissent so common in our own Catholic Church and which has been justified by the dissenters who proclaim that they are only the Church's loyal opposition.

'Newman! Thou shouldst be living at

this hour; the Church hath need of thee.'

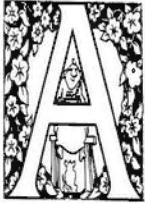
1. Pope Pius IX was beatified on September 3, 2000.
2. Wilfrid Ward. *The Life of John Henry Cardinal Newman*, 2 Vols, [Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1912], Vol. 2, pp. 458-462.
3. Meriol Trevor. *Newman, Light in Winter*, [Macmillan & Co Ltd, London, 1962], p. 570.
4. John Henry Newman: *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1864), ed. M. J. Svalgic, [Oxford University Press, 1967]. See Note A, pp. 254-6, in this edition. Note A: Liberalism, was added by the author to the 1865 edition of the *Apologia*. It does not appear in all the subsequent editions.

J. GERALD WILSON is a retired scientist [organic chemist] who spent the last twenty-five years of his career at ANSTO [formerly the Australian Atomic Energy Commission]. His interest in the Catholic Church has been lifelong.

*What was, and what might have been*

# THE 'GOLDEN AGE' OF HARUN AL-RASHID

By Paul Stenhouse MSC, Ph.D



As the 'Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad Harun al-Rashid lay on his death-bed in 809 AD in Tus, Khurasan, in what is today Iran, he listened to gossips blaming his physician Jibril bin Bukhtishu' for mis-prescribing medicine and causing his illness. He decided to have him put to death and to have him dismembered as had earlier been done at his command to Bashir, the brother of his enemy Rafi' bin Layth bin Nasr bin Sayyar.<sup>1</sup>

Bashir had been captured and brought to the Caliph as he lay ill in bed. When Bashir begged for mercy, Harun al-Rashid ordered him to be dismembered by a butcher with blunt knives. When his body had been cut into fourteen pieces the Caliph praised Allah for permitting him to exact vengeance 'to your [i.e. Allah's] satisfaction.'<sup>2</sup>

The wily [and almost certainly innocent] physician, grandson of the Nestorian Christian physician of al-Rashid's own grandfather, al-Mansur, begged that he be granted a respite until the following morning. The Caliph died before morning came and the Bukhtishu' family continued its monopoly on the Baghdad court medical practice for another four generations.<sup>3</sup>

Much is made by Islamic apologists these days of the Golden Age of Islam represented by the 'Abbasid Caliphate with Baghdad as its capital.<sup>4</sup> Its high point is associated with the reign of Harun bin Muhammad bin 'Abd Allah better known from the ever-popular collection of colourful Indian, Persian and Arab legends, *The Thousand Nights and One Night*, which feature him, and describe him as Harun *al-Rashid*, i.e. Harun the 'rightly-guided'.

Harun was a child of his time – a good friend, chivalrous and generous at

When the Islamic empire was established in 634 AD, within seven years – 640 – the core of the empire was created. The rules that were taken from the Koran and from the tradition that was ascribed to the prophet Mohammed, were translated into a real legal system. Jews and Christians could live under Islam provided they paid poll tax and accepted Islamic superiority. Of course, they had to be humiliated. And Jews and Christians living under Islam are humiliated to this very day.

– *The Agenda Of Islam – A War Between Civilizations* by Professor Moshe Sharon

times, but changeable, and a bad enemy. At his worst he was as Richard Burton describes some contemporary Arabs, 'a mere barbarian, ... [whose] acts of revolting savagery are the natural results of a malignant fanaticism and a furious hatred of every creed beyond the pale of al-Islam.'<sup>5</sup>

As his media image, and the myth of the 'Golden Age' is largely derived from the compilation of tales of *The Thousand Nights and One Night*, it is well to remember that according to contemporary Muslim ideas to which the *Nights* appealed for their popularity, his headstrong and violent nature fitted him perfectly for the role of autocratic Caliph.

His life was filled with blood-letting. When Harun was fourteen, and again when he was sixteen years-old, he was appointed by his father – the Caliph al-Mahdi – to lead expeditions against the Byzantines. These were successful. In the latter expedition 54,000 Byzantines were killed in battle, and 2,090 prisoners were put to death.<sup>6</sup> The planning and leadership fell to others more experienced but in the light of these victories his father gave him the title by which we remember him still: Harun the 'rightly-guided'.<sup>7</sup>

The title caught on. When just a

sixteen-year-old, Harun [like Alexander the Great] was proclaimed 'governor' not [like Alexander] of Byzantium, but of Afrika, Egypt, Syria, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Again unlike Alexander in Byzantium, the day-to-day affairs of these regions were again run by others: in this instance by Harun's mentor and secretary Yahya bin Khalid whom he called 'father'; and whose influence on the young prince and on the welfare of the 'Abbasids was positive and even crucial.

Despite Harun's having been nominated as his successor by the Caliph, his elder brother Musa al-Hadi became Caliph after al-Mahdi died under suspicious circumstances.<sup>8</sup> Harun was 19 years old. It was only when al-Hadi himself died mysteriously in 786 AD as a result of a palace conspiracy<sup>9</sup> that Harun succeeded to the throne at the age of twenty.

Life as a pampered if insecure youngster in al-Mahdi's lax and hedonistic court did not prepare the young Harun for the kind of independent and magnanimous thinking necessary to rule the fractured and fractious Muslim empire he inherited.

He handed administration over to Yahya and his two sons, al-Fadl and Ja'fir – and these wazirs of Persian origin virtually ruled the Empire for seventeen years. Their rule was nicknamed *Barmakid* because Yahya's grandfather was a Barmak or chief priest in a Buddhist monastery in Persia.

On the whole, the shi'ite Barmakids ruled wisely and well; too well, as it turned out, for the sunni Harun al-Rashid, who eventually grew to fear their great power and wealth.

He had his former mentor Yahya, along with Yahya's son al-Fadl [who was Harun's foster-brother because their mothers had suckled each other's child], and two other sons Muhammad and Musa [of whom it was said 'they did

good, and harmed no one']<sup>10</sup> imprisoned until they died. Al-Faql died in prison five months before the Caliph died.

Ja'fr, the remaining son, famous as an adviser of calm good sense, a peace-maker and even more generous than his ever-generous father and siblings,<sup>11</sup> was beheaded. His head was impaled on the Middle bridge in Baghdad, and the other two halves of his body impaled on the Upper and Lower bridges.<sup>12</sup>

The page Yasir, whom Harun ordered to behead Ja'fr, was himself immediately beheaded because the Caliph 'could not bear to look upon the slayer of Ja'fr'.<sup>13</sup>

All the Barmakid family's wealth [30,672,000 dinars in cash alone] and property was confiscated, and all their family members, retainers, slaves and agents were arrested and according to one source, massacred.<sup>14</sup>

The grisly end of Yahya and his family is doubly ironical, granted that Harun would never have become Caliph without the Barmakids' endorsement of his claim, and the loyal advice of Yahya and assistance of the sons.

The 'rightly-guided' Caliph was only following the example of his bloodthirsty grandfather, Ja'fr al-Mansur ['rendered victorious by God'], who had his paternal uncle 'Abd Allah to whom he owed the Caliphate, murdered.

After imprisoning 'Abd Allah for seven years he had him put in a house whose foundations were made of salt and that was surrounded by water. The house collapsed on 'Abd Allah and killed him.<sup>15</sup>

The other person to whom al-Mansur owed his throne was Abu-Muslim from

## Islam's Debt to Persia and the Baylonians

THE whole of [al-Islam's] supernaturalism is borrowed bodily from Persia, which had 'imparadised Earth by making it the abode of angels.' Mohammed, a great and commanding genius, blighted and narrowed by surroundings and circumstance to something little higher than a Covenanter or a Puritan, declared to his followers, 'I am sent to establish the manners and customs,' and his deficiency of imagination made him dislike everything but 'women, perfumes, and prayers,' with an especial aversion to music and poetry, plastic art and fiction. Yet his ... soul and spirit, his angels and devils, his cosmogony, his heavens and hells, even the Bridge over the Great Depth are all either Talmudic or Iranian.

— Richard Burton, 'Terminal Essay,'  
*The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Private Subscribers' limited edition, vol.x, pp.127, 128.

Khurasan, who had defeated 'Abd Allah. He was prevailed upon to visit the court, and was treacherously killed.<sup>16</sup>

The 'Abbasids had gained the Caliphal throne of the 'Umayyads whom they exterminated almost to the last family member, by posing as sympathizers if not kin of the Persian Shi'ites known as the 'Alids.

With 'Abbasid victory, the Caliphate was moved from Damascus to Baghdad, and the mask dropped. Harun al-Rashid continued the 'Abbasid animosity towards their former allies, and especially towards the Zindikis, or Muslim Manichees,<sup>17</sup> of predominantly Persian origin.

Throughout the 'Umayyad Caliphate, despite being nominally Muslim, Syria remained predominantly Christian. This was to change under the 'Abbasids, especially under the intolerant regime of Harun. Christian churches along the border with Byzantine territory were demolished, and Jews and Christians had to wear different clothes from the Muslims.

According to scholars the reign of Harun was a high point, but like many such, it was also a *turning* point for the 'Abbasid dynasty and for Islamic culture.

The legends about the Caliph of Baghdad in the *Thousand Nights and One Night* make much of the magnificence and luxury<sup>18</sup> and frivolity that was a feature of 'Abbasid life in the time of Harun al-Rashid, but as Philip Hitti writes: '[of] the humdrum life of the ordinary citizen in Baghdad and the feelings that surged in the breast of the common man, we find little in the sources ...'.<sup>19</sup>

Between 797 and 806 AD western chroniclers<sup>20</sup> report that Charlemagne the emperor of the Franks in the West exchanged embassies and presents with Harun al-Rashid in the East. Charlemagne may have been seeking a possible ally against a hostile Byzantine empire, and Harun may have wanted



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assistance against the rival 'Umayyad Caliphate in Cordova set up by 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Mu'awiyah one of the few members of the 'Umayyad dynasty to escape the 'Abbasid spies and assassins who dogged his every step until he reached Spain in 755 AD.

Muslim authors are silent on the matter of the embassies between Charlemagne and Harun al-Rashid, though 'Aaron the king of Persia' can be none other than Harun the 5th Caliph of Baghdad.

In 800 AD the keys to the Holy Sepulchre had been sent to Charlemagne and some thought these to have been a gift from Harun al-Rashid, or at least sent with his approval.<sup>21</sup> No reliable evidence has been produced to support this claim.<sup>22</sup> They were sent by the Patriarch of Jerusalem.<sup>23</sup>

The marked decline in the quality of Imperial administration under Harun, along with the much flattered affluence of the rich few, the continuing battles between Yemens and the Mudaris [from northern Arabia], between the Sunni and the Shi'a, and the fragmentation of Islam into myriad sects and sub-sects, set in motion forces that were to lead to the eventual disintegration of the Muslim 'Empire'.<sup>24</sup>

This disintegration occurred despite impressive economic and cultural gains that flowed from the rich trade that extended as far as China and brought brief but dazzling brilliance to the court of the Caliph in Baghdad.

When Harun died in 809 AD the Baghdad treasury contained 900 million silver dirhams [or 630 million gold dinars].<sup>25</sup> One hundred years later, in 908 when the Caliph al-Mu'ktafi died, the treasury contained 100 million gold dinars.<sup>26</sup>

Richard Burton, no slouch as an Arabist, yet tainted, albeit unwittingly, by the political correctness of his day [and ours], predictably contrasted the 'civilised and well-regulated rule' of the 'Abbasid Caliph Harun with the barbarity and turbulence of occidental Christendom', comparing unfavourably the 'quasi-savagery of London and Paris whose palatial halls were spread with rushes, with the splendid court and luxurious life of Baghdad and its carpets and hangings'.<sup>27</sup>

This half-truth holds much appeal for those who like their prejudices to be

## Real Blood clung to Muhammad's Sword

**M**UHAMMAD brought the sword into the world; he did not merely 'smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slay the wicked.' The trumpet of war he sounded was real enough. Real blood clung to the sword he wielded to establish his realm. An Islamic tradition asserts: that in the Torah Muhammad is given the epithet "Prophet of Struggle and War." This is a correct assessment of his career.

- Ignaz Goldziher, *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law*, Princeton University Press, 1981, p.23.

dished up hot and spicy, but when will pundits admit that comparisons between the Western and Eastern Roman Empires, and the mediaeval Muslim empire of the 'Umayyad and 'Abbasid dynasties, are intellectually dishonest, and even dangerous?

The Byzantine Christian empire based in Constantinople, and the Arab Muslim empires based in Damascus and Baghdad, had relatively easy and untrammelled access to earlier civilizations whose knowledge and technologies they inherited [in the case of the Byzantines] or took by main force [in the case of the Arabs]. Their military might and consequent immense wealth gave them the opportunity to enhance and further develop their eclectic cultures despite occasional – mainly external – threats to their political and social integrity.

Western Europe, on the other hand, had been reduced to a cultural and militarily defenceless wasteland, first of

all by the transfer under Constantine from 324 AD onwards of much of its wealth, skilled-labour and resources to Byzantium, and then by successive waves of barbarian invaders and by neglect and treachery on the part of the Byzantine Emperors who from 476 AD onwards were officially emperors of Old and New Rome.

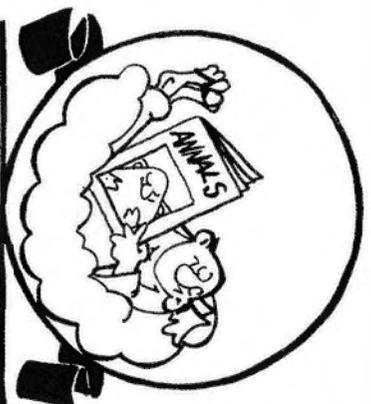
Instead of deploring the poverty and intellectual and technological backwardness of Europe in the so-called Dark Ages, critics should wonder in amazement at the intellectual vitality and spiritual resilience of those who survived the depredation of the invaders and the internecine wars caused by the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. There was little or no economic or military support from the Eastern empire that closed its borders [apart from the odd incursion westward] and turned in on itself.

The perilous situation for the west was not helped by the constant sniping of some of the Byzantine patriarchs jealous of the pre-eminent position of the Pope, the bishop of Old Rome. This latter, despite being bishop of a devastated and at times almost depopulated city, remained nevertheless successor of the Prince of the Apostles and enjoyed the primacy among Catholic bishops.

Harun al-Rashid's decision to split his empire between his sons was, like Constantine's almost five hundred years earlier, misguided. It sounded the first drum roll of what was to be the death-knell of the 'Abbasids and their empire. His subsequent fear of being poisoned boded ill for the future, as did the still-simmering popular resentment at the brutal extermination of the Barmakid family.<sup>28</sup>

He designated his eldest son al-Amin his first successor, and Amin's younger and brighter brother al-Ma'mun as his second successor. After Harun's death, a war between the brothers ensued. Al-Amin was murdered in September 813 AD, and a series of rebellions led to four Caliphs occupying the throne of the 'Abbasids in Baghdad over the next 34 years. The so-called 'Golden Years' of the 'Abbasids effectively ended with al-Wathiq who died in 847.

The death-knell for the 'Abbasids, however, never stopped sounding until Al-Must'sim, the thirty-seventh and last Caliph of the dynasty, was killed by



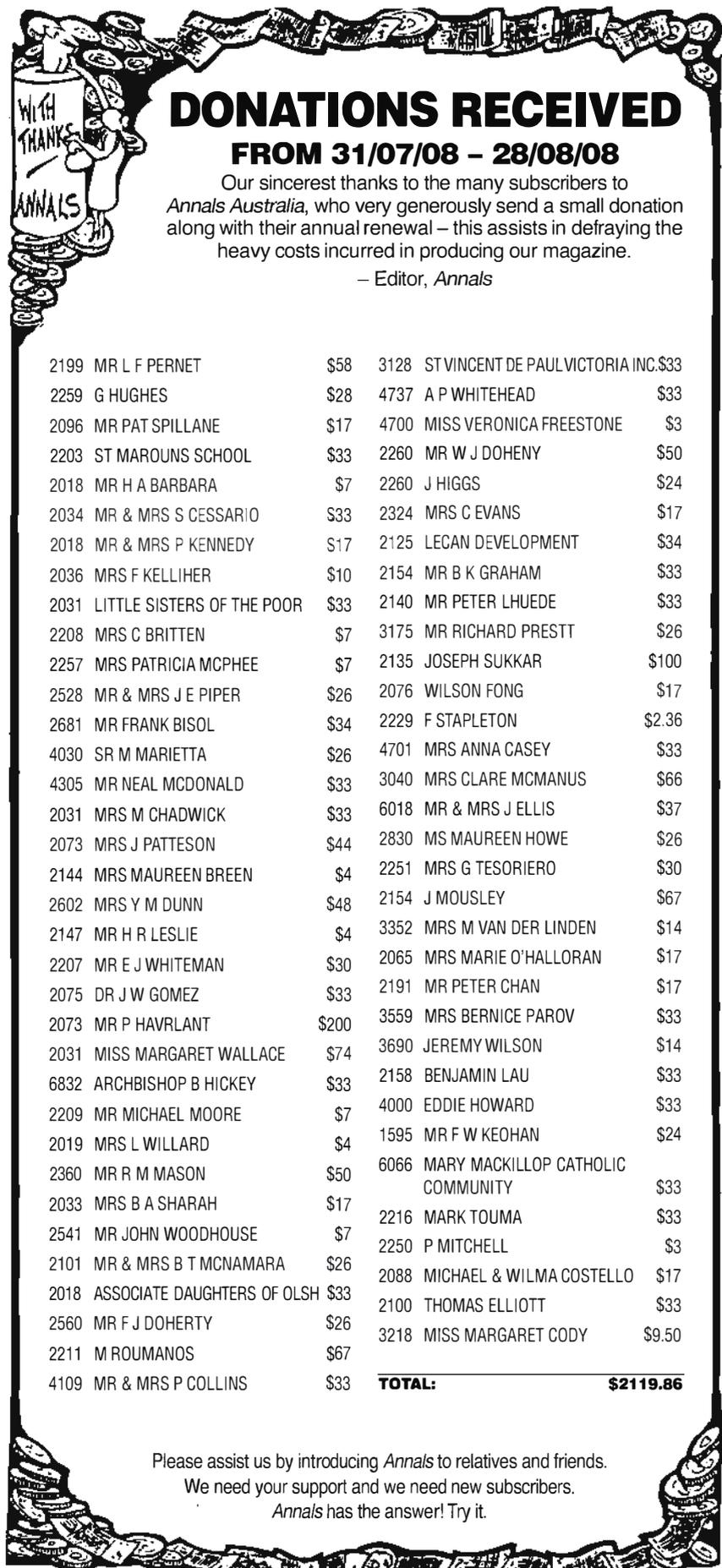
Mongol forces led by the grandson of Genghis Khan four hundred years later, on February 20, 1258 AD.

Baghdad, officially named *Madinat as-Salam* or the 'city of peace,' had been built over a period of four years from 762-766 AD from materials taken from the ruins of Ctesiphon, the greatest and most beautiful royal city of the Sasanid Persians.

Ctesiphon had been captured and pillaged by the marauding Arabian Muslim bands a mere five years after the death of Muhammad in June 637 AD.

Baghdad was to suffer the same fate in 1258 AD: it was to be put to the torch by a terrifying Mongol horde, and the majority of the population and all the family of the last 'Abbasid Caliph were to be massacred. But all that lay in the future.

1. *The History of al-Tabari*, State University of New York Press, vol. xxx, #737, p.301.
2. *ibid.* #734/735, p.297, 298.
3. *ibid.*, #737, p.301.
4. For an analysis of the treatment of *dhimmis* or 'tolerated' non-Muslims under the 'Abbasids see *The Legacy of Jihad*, by Andrew C. Bostom, Prometheus Books, 2005, New York, *passim*.
5. Richard Burton, 'Terminal Essay,' *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Private Subscribers' limited edition, vol. x, p.65.
6. *al-Tabari, op.cit. vol. xxx*, #505, p.221.
7. *ibid.* vol. xxix, #506, p.223.
8. *ibid.* vol. xxix #523-526, pp.243-246.
9. *ibid.* vol. xxx, #569ff, pp 41ff.
10. al-Mas'udi, ch.xxii, quoted – Richard Burton, 'Terminal Essay,' *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Private Subscribers' limited edition, vol.x, p.138.
11. Richard Burton, 'Terminal Essay,' *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Private Subscribers' limited edition, vol.x, p.139.
12. *The History of al-Tabari*, State University of New York Press, vol. xxx, #678ff, pp.216ff esp. p.219.
13. Burton, *op.cit.* p.139.
14. *ibid.* See also *The History of al-Tabari*, ed.cit., vol. xxx, #678ff pp.216ff. See note 749.
15. *ibid.* vol. xxix, #330, p.16.
16. *ibid.* vol. xxix, #433, p.138.
17. See among many other references in al-Tabari. *op.cit.* vol.xxx, #549ff, p.10ff, and #588ff, pp69ff.
18. When Harun's mother al-Khayzuran died, they found in her house, among her possessions, eighteen-thousand sleeveless robes of embroidered silk. See the Arabic text of al-Tabari, ed. Dar ibn Hazim, 1426 AH vol. ii, p.2702.
19. *History of the Arabs*, Macmillan 1968, p.304.
20. See e.g. *Annales Regni Francorum, in Scriptorum Rerum Germanicarum*, vol.43, Hanover 1895, pp.114, 123-124 quoted Hitti, *op.cit.* p.298.
21. E.g., Louis Bréhier, 'Croisades,' *Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique*, ed. A D'Alès, Gabriele Beauchesne, Paris, 1925, tome i, col.820. See Eginhard, *Vita Karoli*, cap xvi
22. See Hitti, *op.cit.* p.298.
23. See Einar Joranson, 'The Alleged Frankish Protectorate in Palestine,' *American Historical Review*, vol.xxxiii, 1927, pp.241ff.
24. See 'Harun al-Rashid,' by F. Omar, Baghdad, in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Brill, 1976, vol.3 p.232.
25. *The History of al-Tabari*, State University of New York Press, vol. xxx, #764, p.335. See all Hitti, *op.cit.* p.321. The dirham was worth 7/10ths of a dinar so 900 million dirhams would = 630 million dinars,
26. 100 million dinars = 130 million dirhams.
27. *op.cit.* p.136.
28. See, for example, Richard Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, Private Subscribers' limited edition, vol.iv, p.159 'Ja'fr and the bean seller,' and pp.179, 181.



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*Interview with the Auxiliary Bishop of Baghdad, Msgr. Warduni*

## PROMISES, PROMISES



THE HOPE President Barack Obama will govern with the good of all peoples in mind. An invitation that we also send to the world's political leaders that they may strive for peace, prosperity and love between all nations, putting aside divisions and partisan interests". This is the wish expressed by Msgr. Shlemon Warduni, auxiliary bishop of Baghdad, to AsiaNews following Obama's election victory. Referring to the future of Iraq, the prelate has invited the newly elected Head of State to "safeguard the good of all", not only by working to "win the war", but also to "bring a stable and lasting peace", because only then can a "true victory" be claimed, not only in Iraq, but in all "those areas of conflict".

The auxiliary bishop of Baghdad had far harsher words for the "slashed representation" of minorities in the upcoming provincial elections. On Monday 3 November the Parliament approved a resolution, by 106 votes out of 150, to reserve only 6 seats for all minorities: three for Christians (Baghdad, Nineveh and Bassora), one each for Yazidis and Shabaks in Nineveh and the last to the e Sabei, in the capital. "It is pittance – denounces Msgr. Warduni – but we don't want it. We want equal rights".

The Chaldean bishop recalls the battle launched by the Church "for the reinstatement of article 50 of the electoral law", which would have guaranteed 15 seats (out of a total of 440) to minorities, 13 to Christians, one to the Shabaks and the last to the Yazidis. "We met with Premier al-Maliki, the president and the Muslim religious leaders among them the great Ayatollah al Sistani, the Sheiks and tribal chiefs. All of them promised the article would be reintroduced based upon the principal, enshrined in the constitution that all Iraqis are equal and enjoy equal rights. Evidently they preferred to give us this pittance; but we won't accept it, we want equal rights".

The patriarchal vicar states that "it is not right that they continue to speak of minorities", because they are in reality "different parts of the one Iraq", which must work together to "transform the desire for democracy into a concrete project"; he emphasises the role of the Christian community in the rebuilding of the country, particularly its "precious contribution in terms of the spreading of culture, in education and formation, in social work and in healthcare", in the midst of very real "dangers, threats and persecution". A slaughter that for too long has unfolded in silence, thanks to the behaviour of the "European Union, the United States, the parliament and the international community, all of whom stood by without raising a finger to help".

The prelate spoke of some positive elements for Christians in Mosul: "the close bond between the Church and the community, who thank the priests and bishops for their work; the solidarity with the Muslims, who help the Christians bringing them food and who ask those families not to flee; the friendships born between the young people of those two communities, who today greet and speak to each other, something that was impossible in the past; the governments response, their partial answer to our cries for help". Many aspects however remain unresolved, among them the "drama of death and pain of our families" who wait for compensation for the raids carried out against Christians that saw "guns and rifles pointed to the heads of small children" and the sense of "latent fear" which pervades the "future of so many people".

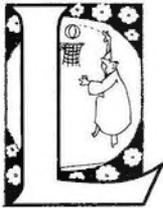
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- Source AsiaNews.

*Remembering the Rwandan holocaust*

# A VOICE FROM THE SHADOWS

Reviewed by WANDA SKOWRONSKA



**L**eft to Tell is the autobiography of an extraordinary woman, Immaculée Ilibagiza, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. When speaking of holocausts and genocides, words we really cannot comprehend, we need witnesses, translators of the untranslatable, ordinary human beings who have survived the abysses of terror, who are conduits of the realities of man's inhumanity to man, far beyond the level of CNN reports. These witnesses are often sole survivors of towns and families, like the dead come to life, deciphering the horror, forming words from the shadows of evils we prefer to forget. So Primo Levi, Victor Frankl and Bruno Bettleheim, concentration camp survivors, will forever haunt us with their accounts of the Nazi Holocaust. And Immaculée Ilibigaza, a new voice, perceptive, authentic and riveting, tells us about that hell on earth which took the form of the massacre of the Tutsi tribe by many Hutus in Rwanda. A young Tutsi of Catholic background, she recounts how evil took collective hold of former neighbours and 'good kind people', enabling them to behead, stab and massacre in continual frenzy, over a million of their countrymen.

Immaculée describes her story, co-written by American Steve Irwin, in a simple, unadorned way threading the narration of turbulent events with profound reflection. Her account is moving not only because of the details of her survival, but also because of her spiritual odyssey leading her to forgive her family's killers, after experiencing evil on a scale most of us are mercifully spared.

Recalling her childhood, Immaculée sees the lurking seeds of war, in such incidents as her Hutu teacher scowling at her in class, because she is from

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*Left to tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*  
Immaculée Ilibagiza with Steve Irwin.  
(Hay House Inc, 2006).

---

the Tutsi tribe (then 15% of Rwanda's population). She reflects on the sources of violence and hatred:

Young Hutus were taught from an early age that Tutsis were inferior and not to be trusted, and they didn't belong in Rwanda. Hutus witnessed the segregation of Tutsis every day, first in the schoolyard and then in the workplace and they were taught to dehumanise us by calling us 'snakes' and 'cockroaches'<sup>1</sup>

Born into an affectionate, loving family, she is protected by her parents and three brothers, Damascene, Aimable and Vianney, with whom she lives in a village until they leave for university. The parents pass their deeply lived Catholic faith on to their children, who befriend and help many of their Hutu neighbours. While Immaculée is at university in the capital Kigali, she hears that war has started with the

incursion of Tutsi refugees who had been expelled years before to exile in Uganda and who now have crossed back into Rwanda to reclaim homes and land confiscated in the massacres of 1959 and 1973. Immaculée returns to her parents' house only to find that they are all trapped, surrounded by Hutus bent on exterminating the entire Tutsi tribe. When she hears a government minister on the radio inciting all to 'kill the Tutsis wherever you find them – don't spare a single one', she knows what faces them:

... There is a culture of obedience in Rwanda, and I knew that when many otherwise peaceful Hutus heard their leaders on the radio telling them to kill Tutsis, they'd dutifully pick up their machetes.<sup>2</sup>

In haste Immaculée's father tells his daughter to hide in the house of a nearby Hutu Protestant pastor, who offers to help them. When she arrives at the house, she is led to a tiny bathroom whose entrance can be hidden by placing a wardrobe before it. This tiny room is where she and seven other Tutsi women hide for months,

## Never Despair of Pardon

**A**ND SO, my brethren, we ought all to rejoice on this holy day. No one should separate himself from the general rejoicing because he has sins on his conscience; no one should refuse to take part in the public worship because of the burden of his misdeeds. However great a sinner he may be, on this day he should not despair of pardon, for the privileges granted by this day are great. If a thief was thought worthy of paradise, why should not a Christian be thought worthy of forgiveness?

- St Maximus of Turin, Sermon 53, on Easter. Maximus was present at the Council of Milan in 451 AD, and at the Council of Rome in 465 AD where his name appears after that of Pope Hilary. From the Second Reading at Matins for the Fifth Sunday of Easter in the *Roman Breviary*.

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lying one atop the other, enduring the Interahamwe (Hutus) assassination groups searching the house, hearing them boast how they have burned churches full of people, raped women and killed a local man with a Master's degree, who Immaculée realises is her beloved brother Damascene. She hears the relentless mantra 'Kill them big, kill them small, kill them, kill them, kill them all'. The women, in terrorised silence, develop sign language to communicate. They are fed once a night by the pastor, who becomes increasingly edgy at their presence in his house.

In the continuing horror, Immaculée, seeks spiritual solace, retreating within saying;

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- Editor. *Annals Australasia.*

I found a small part of the bathroom to call my own: a corner of my heart.<sup>3</sup>

While lying crouched on the ground, with bodies above her, she talks to God the entire day, beginning each morning, after fitful sleep, with detailed, lengthy praise of all his goodness. She speaks to him as a child for hours on end, becoming totally absorbed in her heavenly conversation, oblivious to her surroundings, at times even joyful. She describes certain spiritual experiences, of 'floating above the room', watching herself below. She has a dream in which Jesus tells her most of her family have died and when she becomes ill with racking fevers and a urinary tract infection, she prays fervently and discovers the ailments soon disappear. One night, when the pastor enters with food she asks for a Bible, which he gives her and the first passage she opens is Psalm 91:

*This I declare, that He alone is my refuge, my place of safety: He is my God and I trust Him. He rescues you from every trap and protects you. He will shield you with His wings! They will shelter you. His faithful promises are your amour. Though a thousand fall at my side, though ten thousand are dying around me, evil will not touch me.*

Immaculée's closeness to God in prayer helps her to endure repeated Hutu house raids, to console the other women and to face death if it comes. One day, she learns that the French army has entered Rwanda, setting up safe houses around the country. She realises that she has to try to reach one, as a young Hutu has become suspicious about possible hideouts in the pastor's house and the women are in danger of discovery. After months of hiding, she emerges with the other women, gaunt, emaciated, hardly able to stand, and the pastor selects some trusted men, who are to surround them as they walk to a safe French area. Along the road the group come face to face with Hutu militia, who fortunately pass them by. However, the women's protectors then lose heart and flee, leaving them exposed on the road. The women run the final 500 metres to the French camp, hardly able to say 'Please help us'. But from then on they are safe and 'sob uncontrollably' before the soldiers.

In time Immaculée learns most of

## The Australian Connection

THE FARC'S [Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia's] allies and suppliers come from places as far flung as Australia, China, Russia, the Middle East and all parts of Latin America. Some are ideological comrades – both inside governments and operating as illegal cells; others are members of organized crime networks. All are crucial actors in the FARC's bloodthirsty search for power.

All this is facilitated by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez. The Colombian military has been running up the score against the FARC of late, and rebel operations are close to falling apart, as Journal reporter José de Cordoba wrote last week. But the documents show that aid from Mr. Chávez is prolonging the war by keeping FARC hopes alive. ...

In January 2007, the rebels wrote a memo explaining that a Venezuelan general told them that arms shipments from abroad could be brought in through the Venezuelan port of Maracaibo. By September, the shipments were being lined up. ...

"Yesterday I received two Australian arms suppliers," one rebel wrote to the high command, "thanks to a contact made through Ramiro [a Salvadoran.]" The Aussies "offer very good prices on all we need." The list includes 50-calibre machine guns, sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenades and missiles. "All of these materials are made in Russia and China," he wrote, and the shipment would take a month or so "to arrive in Venezuela."

Just in case all this military hardware doesn't maim and murder enough civilians to produce a surrender by the Colombian government, Mr. Chávez and the FARC also have been collaborating on Plan B: an effort to acquire legitimacy in the eyes of the international community by branding Colombian President Álvaro Uribe as heartless and unreasonable.

Mary Anastasia O'Grady, *Wall Street Journal Online*, June 2, 2008, Page A15,

her family have died in a massacre by the Hutus. One brother, who had been in Senegal studying during the conflict, survives. She tries to make sense of this living nightmare which has taken hold of her entire life. She realises, as Primo Levi said 'he who loses all often easily loses himself' and that she will never be able to live again as the memory of the evil will forever haunt her, and destroy her, if she cannot find a way of releasing herself from it.<sup>4</sup> The only escape from the bondage of evil of such great magnitude, is to call on spiritual help of greater magnitude, seeking supernatural 'release'

from it, so that it will not forever pervade her life. Immaculée says that the hold of evil, its inevitable memories, anger and pain in those who will not forgive, continues the triumph of that evil, and steals a person's life. And in this way she realises she must see the killers as God's creatures, souls who fell prey to evil but are nonetheless His children. She realises she must forgive the Hutu killers. In this Homeric journey to forgiveness, she begins a her inner moral victory over the Holocaust, of asserting the power of God's love in the face of death, and being released from the grip of evil.

Immaculée's journey to forgiveness does not involve denying the crimes, invalidating sorrow, nor avoiding punishment for injustice (as opposed to revenge), but rather seeking divine help to rise above the all consuming effects of evil, which would in effect, constitute another 'death' perpetrated by the killers. For survivors of holocausts often say they have died inside, that their lives ended with the deaths of those they loved. Forgiveness for Immaculée is the only way of leaving the hollowness of despair, the prison of revenge. After the war, she travels to a jail to meet her family's killer, Felicien, whose children she had played with, who now in a prison cell, crouches before her in shame and begins to sob. She says:

Felicien had let the devil enter his heart and the evil had ruined his life like a cancer in his soul. He was now the victim of victims, destined to live in torment and regret. I was overwhelmed with pity for the man.<sup>5</sup>

She realises, with profound insight, that the people who had hurt her family 'had hurt themselves more'. She says, slowly, with all her soul 'I forgive you' to Felicien and quietly turns to go, leaving the prison guard who had expected vengeful scenes, indignant and uncomprehending. After this momentous moral step, she then describes how with time, she is able to re-connect with people, make friends, and look at life with hope again.

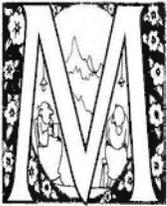
Immaculée never ceases to say, throughout her story, that it is her Catholic faith that brought her to a place where she could 'see' things differently, knowing those who have died are safe in God's hands, knowing that forgiveness can bring healing to the forgiver, whether the perpetrators of evil acknowledge guilt or not. Her experiences have become the basis of a life mission in speaking about forgiveness, touching the hearts of many victims of injustice. Immaculée's story is not only about Rwanda and its recent horrors but about any soul rising above sufferings, trusting the power of grace, transcending evil and forgiving the unforgivable.

1. *Left to tell Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (LTT)
2. Immaculée Ilibigaza with Steve Irwin. (Hay House Inc, 2006). p86.
3. *Ibid* pp88-9.
4. *Ibid* p95.
5. Primo Levi *If This Is a Man* (Penguin 1971) p33. LTT p 204.

*The Eternal City in one of Europe's newest Countries.*

## PAPAL ROME'S LAST MOMENTS

By Elizabeth Lev



ANY visitors are surprised to discover that Italy is such a young country. At only 138 years, Italy is a little brother to many countries in the world of unified nations.

After Cavour and Garibaldi seized Rome from Pope Pius IX in 1870, they declared the Eternal City as the new capital of Italy, and after 1,300 years of papal tutelage, which saw the creation of St. Peter's, the Trevi Fountain, the Piazza Navona and the numerous other marvels of Rome, the city was transformed.

The new plan for Rome called for the destruction of several areas of the city, most famously the Ghetto, as well as the construction of the embankments for the Tiber river. The green fields of Prati were to be developed into a residential quarter and new bridges were to stretch across the Tiber.

A young watercolor artist, Ettore Roesler Franz, was at the beginning of his career when these demolitions and new constructions were in their final stages of planning.

From 1876, Franz dedicated the next 20 years of his life to recording the last moments of Papal Rome before they were swept away by the new era.

In honor of the centenary of his death last year, the Museum of Rome in Trastevere organized an exhibit of Franz's 120 watercolors.

The exhibit was well-named the "Landscapes of Memory" as the long hall of images with their gray tones and many desolate landscapes at first evoked the sad nostalgia felt by many at the time.

But as one noted Franz's developments in technique as the series progressed and his vivid depictions of bustling piazzas alive with people and activity, the mood changed to one of happy confidence that Rome handled change as no other city.

The first section offered views of the Appian Way and the Claudian aqueduct with a herd of sheep trotting down the ancient paths, a sight still often visible today.

But Franz's composition put the dome of St. Peter's shimmering faintly in the distance, while the collapsed arches of aqueduct or ruined tombs of famous ancient families in the foreground form a solemn metaphor of the end of the Papal era.

Franz's earlier paintings use the exaggerated relations in size typical of the famed landscape artist Piranesi, but in two images of the sacred grove of Egeria, modern influences creep into his work. The first one is painted in the sunshine while the next is after the rain, reflecting the rise of the Impressionists and the use of color and brush stroke

reflects his contact with this new painting technique.

The next section of the show brought visitors to various neighborhoods. The most charming are the busy scenes of Rome's Ghetto, with the fabric sellers displaying tall piles of bright cloths as children play in the street and passing friars inspect the wares. Amid the vivacity, a sign on a wall of peeling plaster announces the imminent destruction of that very square.

The Ghetto was rife with poverty and the rickety wooden balconies perched overhead speak of unsafe conditions, but Franz seems to rue the loss of the improvised fish market clinging to the ruins of an ancient portico while the "azimelle," sellers of unleavened bread, cook and sell their products on slabs of old foundation stones.

Franz also offers us precious testimony of lost treasures. The famous Ripetta Port, a grand curving staircase into the water, takes its final bow before being dismantled to make the embankments.

On the other side of town, the mighty tower of Paul II in Piazza Venezia and its hanging garden would be soon buried under the Victor Emmanuel monument.

The quiet lull before the explosive activity of the rebuilding is best seen in Franz's Tiber scenes, where boys stretch out on boats in the warm sunlight while others fish lazily from the banks with the ruins of soon-to-be-demolished palaces looming behind them.

In these peaceful, loving scenes of a tranquil city, after the battles to claim Rome and before the frenetic rebuilding, this exhibit offered a special intimate glimpse of the Rome that was.

### Literacy and Image-Making

One America, now the minority, functions in a print-based, literate world. It can cope with complexity and has the intellectual tools to separate illusion from truth. The other America, which constitutes the majority, exists in a non-reality-based belief system. This America, dependent on skilfully manipulated images for information, has severed itself from the literate, print-based culture. It cannot differentiate between lies and truth. It is informed by simplistic, childish narratives and clichés. It is thrown into confusion by ambiguity, nuance and self-reflection. This divide, more than race, class, gender ... believer or nonbeliever, has split the country into radically distinct, unbridgeable and antagonistic entities.

— 'America the Illiterate,' By Chris Hedges, *Information Clearing House*, 16 November 2008

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# THE SEVEN GREAT 'O' ANTIPHONS

**C**HRISTMAS was a feast much beloved of our Catholic forebears. It heralds salvation for mankind, and gives meaning finally to tenderness as well as suffering. Among many pre-reformation Catholic writers, Wulfstan the Anglo-Saxon Benedictine monk who was Archbishop of York and died in 1023 A.D. expresses the wonder of Christmas, and the Incarnation: 'Christ made himself wonderfully humble ... when he was a child they fed him just as other children are fed. He lay wrapped, in a cradle, just as other children do, and they carried him until he could walk ...'. The Great 'O's are offered to Annals readers in the hope that their sentiments and music will bring Christmas truly into our hearts this 2002nd anniversary of Christ's birth. Wulfstan sang them, as did St. Thomas a Beckett and St. Thomas More. They are part of our heritage as Catholics.

## What they are

For the seven days before the vigil of Christmas [December 17 to 23] all priests say [and monks and nuns sing] special antiphons before and after the Magnificat during the evening office of vespers. Each antiphon begins with 'O', and contains prayers and sentiments drawn from the Old and New Testaments referring to the hope for the coming of the Messiah.

## Their origin

Originally of course they were in Latin, and four of the prayers [O Sapientia - O Wisdom; O Radix Jesse - O Root of Jesse; O Emmanuel, and O Clavis David - O David's Key] are found prefigured in a work by Pope Damasus [366-384 A.D.]. We find St. Ambrose of Milan [339-397 A.D.] also referring to Jesus as David's Key in his *Concerning the Institution of Virginity*. The same phrase was used in the ancient Roman Pontifical or Mass Book, during the Mass for the consecration of a King. The Antiphons were always seven in number, and are first found in their present form in the 8th century A.D. although some scholars attribute them to the 7th century.

Artwork: the late incomparable Hal English, RIP.  
Transcription of Gregorian Chant: John Colborne-Veel  
Text and English translation of Antiphons: Paul Stenhouse

## December 17 O Wisdom

**O** Wisdom which came from  
the mouth of the Al-mighty God's Red- cing  
the world's furthest bounds.  
Gent-ly ordering all things, Come  
teach us the way of pru- dence. \*

## December 18 O Adonai

**O** A- do- nai and royal prince  
of Israel: who long a- go revealed; or set to  
Moses in fiery flame and gave to him  
the law. Come to give us



Follow the Magi →

## How they were sung

The music, despite the modern notation, is the ancient Church chant called 'Gregorian' after Pope St Gregory the Great [590-604 A.D.]. During the singing of Vespers in the evening Office of the seven days preceding the Vigil Mass of Christmas, the singing of the Great 'O's, as they were called, was reserved to various dignitaries in Monasteries and Cathedral Chapters. Thus, the first [O Sapientia - O Wisdom] would be sung by the Abbot or Bishop, the second [O Adonai - O Lord] by the Prior; the third [O Radix Jesse - O Root of Jesse] by the Doorkeeper, the fifth by the Cellarer and so on until the last evening. The monastery church or cathedral would have been packed for the Vespers and the Singing of the Great 'O's. The atmosphere of expectancy proper to Advent was heightened by the singing and colour that accompanied the traditional Latin Vespers, and is still to be found in monasteries where the Divine Office is sung.

## At the conclusion\*

Each of the Antiphons concludes thus: You who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen. This is sung in a monotone using the note F for all the syllables until the words 'forever and ever' for which the notes have been provided below. In the music, at the end of each 'O' antiphon, the final note with, an asterisk, is F. In singing the chant, it is important for the music to flow with the words and for that reason there are no bar lines.



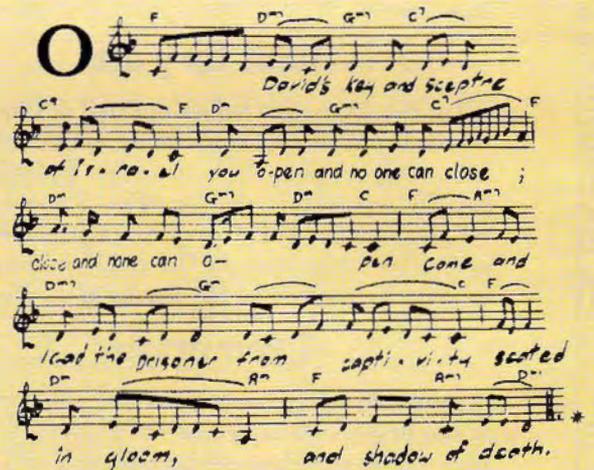
## Christmas banned!

Christmas was not a holiday in Communist countries, and Christmas is not celebrated in Muslim countries. The fairly general observance of this Catholic Feast in the West is all the more remarkable when we recall that in Britain in the 1600s it was banned! It was declared a fast day by Act of Parliament to stop the people from celebrating it; even eating plum puddings was forbidden! After the Restoration 'Yuletide' was called 'Foolstide' and in the early days of the United States the Feast was forbidden by law. Modern paganism seems intent, today, on reducing the Religious Feast to a time of merrymaking and holidays, without much reference to the birthday of Jesus Christ.

## December 19 O Root of Jesse



## December 20 O David's Key



## Secret message of the Great 'O's

The singing of the O Antiphons was eagerly awaited each Christmas from early mediaeval times right up to the present century, when the liturgy was still exclusively in Latin. When the final antiphon has been sung on the Christmas Vigil, the initials of each prayer, in inverse order, form an acrostic. Thus (reading backwards): O Emmanuel, O Rex Gentium, O Oriens, O Clavis David, O Radix Jesse, O Adonai, O Sapientia form the words, in Latin, ERO CRAS - "I shall come tomorrow". This acrostic was interpreted by the faithful down through the Middle Ages as our Lord's response to the prayers that were offered during the preceding seven days.

# The Nativity Of Christ

Follow the Magi →

**B**EHOLD the father is  
his daughter's son,  
The bird that built the nest  
is hatched therein,

The old of years  
an hour hath not outrun,  
Eternal life  
to live doth now begin,  
The Word is dumb,  
the mirth of heaven doth weep,  
Might feeble is,  
and force doth faintly creep.

O dying souls,  
behold your living spring;

O dazzled eyes,  
behold your sun of grace;  
Dull ears, attend what word  
this Word doth bring:

Up heavy hearts,  
with joy your joy embrace.  
From death, from dark,  
from deafness, from despairs,  
This life, this light,  
this Word, this joy repairs.

Gift better than himself  
God doth not know;  
Gift better than his God  
no man can see.

This gift doth here  
the giver given bestow;  
Gift to this gift  
let each receiver be.

God is my gift,  
himself he freely gave me;  
God's gift am I,  
and none but God shall have me.

Man altered was by sin  
from man to beast;  
Beast's food is hay,  
hay is all mortal flesh.

Now God is flesh  
and lies in manger pressed  
As hay,  
the brutest sinner to refresh.

O happy field  
wherein this fodder grew,  
Whose taste doth us  
from beasts to men renew.

- Saint Robert Southwell (1561-1595). A native of Norfolk, Robert was educated by the Jesuits at Douai and Paris and entered the Jesuits in 1580. After working as a priest in England for 8 years, he was betrayed by Anne Bellamy, daughter of Richard Bellamy of Harrow. He was hanged, drawn and quartered as a traitor in 1595. He was canonized in 1929.

# December 21 O Morning Star

**O** Morning Star, splendour of  
light e-ternal and shining sun of jus-tice  
Come en-ligh-ten those who sit in  
dark-ness, and shadow of death.

# December 22 O King of Nations

**O** King of nations, hope of all the  
peo-ple and corner stone:  
Bond that unites us. Come and save  
man-kind, men from the earth you formed.

# December 23 O Emmanuel

**O** E-ma-nu-el, King and  
Giver of laws; the hope of all na-tio-ns  
and their sa-viours: Come O our Lord  
and God and save us.

Follow the Magi →



**A**NNALS Australasia offers the Great 'O's in an English form, and with musical notation more easily sung by modern-day Catholics, in the hope that families or parish groups or school choirs may be able to join in the choral Preparation for Christmas in the traditional Catholic manner: A suggested format for the preparation, drawn from the Roman Breviary, is as follows:

## Family/Parish/Group Preparation for Christmas

**All:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Leader:** O God, come to our aid.

**All:** O Lord, make haste to help us.  
Glory by to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.

**Reading:** (From St Paul's letter to Philemon) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand.

**Leader:** Let your face shine on us and we shall be safe.  
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Come to us and save us, Lord God Almighty.

Antiphon (depending on the day)

**Magnificat:** recited by all.

### Intercessions:

**Leader:** The Son of God is coming with great power;  
All mankind shall see his face and be reborn.

**Response:** Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

**All:** You will bring us wisdom, fresh understanding and new Vision.

**Response:** Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

**All:** You will bring us good news and power which will transform our lives.

**Response:** Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

**All:** You will bring us Truth, showing us the way to your father.

**Response:** Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

**All:** Born of a woman, you will open in our flesh the way to eternal life and joy.

**Response:** Come Lord Jesus, do not delay!

**All:** Our Father, etc.

**Prayer:** Father, by your will your Son took upon himself that human nature which you fashioned and redeemed. Grant that the Word who took flesh in the womb of the ever-Virgin Mary and became a man like us, may share with us his Godhead. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Follow the Magi →

## Magnificat

*Song of Blessed Mary  
the Virgin*

**M**Y soul proclaims  
the greatness of the Lord.  
my spirit rejoices in God  
my Saviour;  
for he has looked with favour  
on his lowly servant,  
and from this day on  
all generations will call me  
blessed.

The Almighty as done  
great things for me;  
holy is his Name.  
He has mercy on those  
who fear him  
in every generation.

He has shown  
the strength of his arm,  
he has scattered the proud  
in their conceit.  
He has cast down the mighty  
from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry  
with good things,  
and has sent  
the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid  
of his servant Israel  
for he has remembered  
his promise of mercy,  
the promise he made  
to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children  
for ever.



*'The only thing that inhibits us from saying that 'Europe is not Christian' is the fact that Europe is Christian.'* – Pierre Manent

# DEFENCELESS EUROPE

By Jude P. Dougherty



ROBERT MISIK, writing in the July 2008 edition of *The Atlantic Times*, is dismayed that Pope Benedict XVI has called for 'the re-evangelization of Europe.' Misik fears that, 'The revival of religion in political discourse brings with it an 'us against them' rhetoric.' 'Religions,' he continues, 'are a potentially powerful force to stir up hatred against other people, and the distance from a renaissance of faith to a rivalry of fundamentalists is mostly a small step.'<sup>1</sup>

Racism and xenophobia, Misik holds, are increasingly entering religious jargon. 'Hardly surprising, then,' he says, 'that anti-immigrant and radical right-wing politics, for example, in Austria, Italy, and Denmark, have taken up the alleged threat of Islam to Europe as one of their central issues.' Misik believes that it is not division but mutual tolerance and respect that the world needs.

One could easily ignore the attitude of a naive reporter, somewhat innocent of the historical record, if it were not that his view pervades much of the academic world as well as that of the Western media. To use one example, Ruth Sutter Fichner, in a work entitled *The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850* places the Habsburgs in a negative light for equating the defence of empire with the defence of Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

Although Fichner, in her well-documented work, describes page after page of Ottoman atrocities, she faults the Habsburgs for demonizing Islam in their attempt to rally support against the Turks. She acknowledges that the expansion of the Ottoman Empire and the religious mission that

many sultans assigned to themselves were responsible for the hardening of the European hostility to Muslims. That attitude, she fears, yet prevails in some quarters. In telling the story of repeated Islamic attempts to conquer Europe, Fichner writes, 'Popes of the Middle Ages had never been confident that they could defend themselves against Muslim expansion; their Renaissance counterparts and their advisors were equally uneasy.'<sup>3</sup>

'Out of this mixture of fear and loathing came a strident model for Catholic homiletics intended to rally all classes of the faithful in defence of Christendom and its institutions.' The decisive Battle of Lepanto took place in 1571. The peace of Zsitva-Torok ended the conflict in 1605, yet the Ottoman Empire was driven from Europe's southeast only at the end of the seventeenth century. 'No one, however,

thought that they had seen the last of the Sultan's armies, nor did anyone, even the highly educated, substantially revise the picture of Turkish behavior embedded in the common culture,' writes Fichner.<sup>4</sup>

Yet as time wore on, a highly influential group of scholars in the Austrian capital began to recognize that inherited stereotypes inhibited a fact-based understanding of the enemy.

Under the leadership of Joseph von Hammer Purgstall, a Viennese historian and 'orientalist,' Islamic studies gained support, even from the crown. It was thought that a study of the language, institutions, and general culture of the enemy was more useful in conducting relations with Islam than the then-prevailing 'simplistic stereotypes.'<sup>5</sup>

Hammer Purgstall, a Freemason lauded in his own time for his 'non partisan' scholarship, displayed little

## Losing the Plot?

IS a commonly held asset eroded ... when a doctor claims private ownership of a widely used medical procedure and demands royalties from his colleagues? Or when a university allows private sponsors to dictate the topics for its faculty and graduate students to study? Or when a national park sells a private firm exclusive rights to the genetic information contained in the park's plants or microorganisms? If so, are there clear democratic mechanisms to halt the process if a majority so desires? Unfortunately, we often learn that it is relatively easy to erode commonly held assets but more difficult to build them back.

The issues arise in every facet of our participatory democratic system. "The press and the public are being slowly blinded," says Bill Kovach, respected journalist and curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard, about the privatization of formerly public institutions. As he notes, a publisher in Mississippi has claimed exclusive rights to distribute and sell the electronic version of the state's laws. In Newton County, Texas, journalists have been denied access to prisoners in the privatized jails; the managers have claimed their prerogative to establish a policy of "no media contact with prisoners." The public's access and voice are clearly limited by such private arrangements. So is the system's accountability: freedom of information laws do not cover private businesses.

– Seth Shulman, *Owning the Future*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1999, p.28.

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– Editor, *Annals*

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patience with those who stereotyped the Turks in the name of emperor and country or with those whose sole concern was defending their own views against those who thought otherwise.<sup>6</sup> Although he and his disciples proselytized for an understanding of an alien culture through a detailed study of its institutions, they remained loyal to their own inherited culture.

Presumably the present is not unlike the past. In the final pages of her study, Fichner asks would not Western governments 'be better equipped to handle both present and future relations with the Muslim world if today's politicians and their educational establishments encouraged the public to think freely and critically about the religious and cultural heritage of the three Abrahamic faiths?'<sup>7</sup>

Putting aside the question of whether Islam is indeed an Abrahamic faith, Fichner fails to acknowledge that Islam is more than an a religious faith. By its own confession, it is a political program aimed at world domination. Fichner's own research attests to that. Her study, in fact, shows how intimately a nation and the faith of its people are intertwined.

Unlike Misik, some liberal journalists are beginning to understand the Islamic threat for what it is, if for no other reason than it threatens to curtail free speech. Frank Gaffney, Jr. reports that: 'The fifty-seven member Muslim Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has prevailed upon the U.N. Human Rights Council to adopt a resolution requiring the effective evisceration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Henceforth the guaranteed right of free expression will not extend to any criticism of Islam, on the grounds that it amounts to an abusive act of religious discrimination.'<sup>8</sup>

Western officials and governmental agencies, Gaffney reports, appear increasingly disposed to go along with efforts to mute warning about the danger Shariah law poses for the West. Gaffney believes that the liberal attempt to silence criticism of Islam threatens to criminalize behavior that has long been regarded as merely 'politically incorrect.' If we follow the liberal agenda vis-a-vis Islam and its demand to recognize Shariah, Gaffney fears that 'we will mutate Western law, traditions, values and societies beyond recognition.'

Perhaps the most astute commentator on the European condition is Pierre Manent, author of *La raison des nations*.<sup>9</sup> Manent is a professor of political philosophy in the Centre des Recherches Politiques Raymond Aron in Paris. He is the author of works, in English translation, entitled *Tocqueville and the Nature of Democracy*, *The City of Man*, and *An Intellectual History of Liberalism*.

Manent asks: How is one to talk politically about religion? Objective discourse is made difficult by those who maintain that religion is a private affair, a subjective disposition without social implications. He believes that Europe is on the verge of self-destruction, largely because its governing elites will not recognize and defend what it is.

Meditating on the condition of European democracy, Manent fears that with the absorption of the old nations of Europe into an amorphous and ever-expanding European Union, the foundation of representative government is being lost. He asks whether democracy can exist apart from a national context. Can one really be a 'citizen of Europe,' much less of a worldwide human community?

By 'nation' Manent means a political body, not an expression of particularity, that is, a region, a territory or distinctive culture. The nation, he maintains, is the irreplaceable political context for human action, the instrument of self-government, the locus for deliberation and the administration of justice. Democracy, by definition, requires that the population consent to the political structure proposed to it. After Maastricht, the EU's bureaucratic contrivance detached itself from the national political bodies that initially formed the Union. In Manent's judgment, the artifice took on a life of its own. Instead of increasing self-governance, Europe's new instruments of governance increasingly shackle it, promising an indefinite extension that no one wills, no one wants, and no one knows how to stop.

Enlightened despotism, Manent is convinced, has returned in the form of agencies, administrations, courts of justice, and commissions that lay down laws or create rules, ever more meticulously contrived. In creating an uncontrollable bureaucracy, Europe

### ANNALS CROSSWORD No. 61

#### ACROSS CLUES

1. The bones of the ankle and heel, collectively; birthplace of Paul (6)
4. A large cushion used as a seat (6)
9. Those who perform charitable or benevolent acts (15)
10. Merchant; dealer (6)
11. Successor to Judas Iscariot (8)
12. Reveals (8)
14. An afternoon nap (6)
15. Old Testament prophet; a helper of Elijah (6)
18. Baptise (8)
21. A body of troops stationed in a fortified place; the place itself (8)
22. Former soviet leader (6)
24. Founder of the pious society of missions (7,8)
25. An unquestionable truth; any of the first four books of the New Testament (6)
26. The Greek goddess of the moon (6)

#### DOWN CLUES

1. The capital of Iran (7)
2. Reigned (5)
3. To cause to lose courage (7)
5. A river in SW Asia, rising in Lebanon and flowing through Syria into Turkey
6. Terrifies; scares (9)
7. To withdraw; pull out; or uproot by force (7)
8. Welsh poet and essayist, first name Dylan; one of the Apostles (6)
13. Impedes or blocks (9)
16. Lounging around in an idle way (7)
17. The state of being away (7)
18. A small piece of bread spread with a savoury topping (6)
19. Determine; firmness (7)
20. A letter (7)
23. To make amends (for) (5)

#### SOLUTION TO CRYPTIC NO. 8

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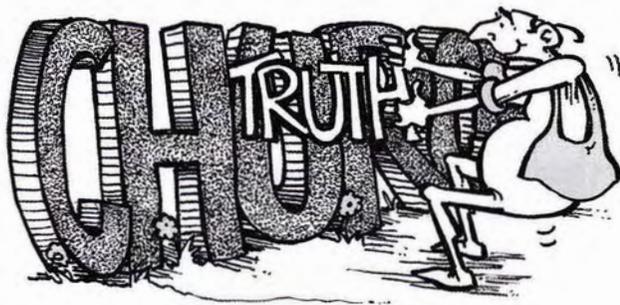
unwittingly has institutionalized the paralysis of democracy. 'Not long ago,' he writes, 'the democratic idea justified

and nourished the love each people had naturally for itself. But now, in the name of democracy and openness to the other, that love is criticized and mocked.' Europe's governing classes, without explicitly saying so, aspire to create a homogeneous and limitless human world.

**'Unless we see the money in our hand we never think we are rich.'**

— St Teresa of Avila, *The Way of Perfection*, ch.30, quoted *The Roman Breviary* Second Reading at Matins for Wednesday of Week 13 of the Year.

As a matter of fact, given Europe's intellectual climate, Manent notes that 'what distinguishes us or differentiates us cannot be even publicly named. 'We know only Humanity, we do not possess any particular existence.' We do not want to possess any shape, manner or form,



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a distinctive existence of our own, one that would be particular.<sup>10</sup> Universal Humanity, he finds, 'tends to overwhelm differences so much so that it sometimes seems that between the individual and the world... nothing intrudes except perhaps a void where various ethnic, religious and sexual identities flood, each demanding respect.'<sup>11</sup>

It is Manent's thesis that only within the political body can liberty be realized and defended. Yet the principle of consent is in danger as more and more power is yielded to Brussels and its ruling elite. Enchanted by a global cosmopolitan vision, that ruling elite 'can see virtue only in what is general or universal, a universalism without borders or limits.'

To the contrary, Manent argues that a humanism that is wholly detached from all responsibility toward a particular people or is impervious to any distinctive view of the human good is indeed a hollow humanism. Manent is convinced that neither Muslims nor Israelis identify Europe with humanity. They find us more substantial than we find ourselves. 'The only thing that inhibits us from saying that 'Europe is not Christian' is the fact that Europe is Christian.'<sup>12</sup>

To parry the threat of self-destruction, Manent concludes: 'Nothing is more important than to get a grip on our centuries-old development. And that means first of all we must again become fully aware of the original character of our nations.' He is insistent that this claim is not a call to roll back the secular state. 'The neutral state and Christianity go hand in hand.' Benedict XVI would concur, while yet insisting on the re-evangelization of Europe.

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1 Robert Misik, *The Atlantic Times*, July 2008, p. C17-  
 2 Ruth Sutter Fichner, *The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526-1850* (London: Reaction Books, 2008).  
 3 *Ibid.*, p. 25  
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 8 Frank Gaffney, Jr., *Washington Times*, July 8, 2008, p. A16.  
 9 Pierre Manent, *La raison des nations* (trans. by Paul Seaton as *Democracy without Nations: The Fate of Self Government in Europe* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2008).  
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 12 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

*McAuley had committed the unforgivable outrage: he had become a Christian.*

## WHY DON'T THE ENGLISH?

By Peter Coleman



WHY don't the English publish the major – some say the greatest – Australian poet, James McAuley (1917-1976)? Carcanet Press and others have published the works of several Australian poets. But the only acknowledgement in England of McAuley's place in modern poetry is Les Murray's anthology *Fiveways*, which includes a number of McAuley's poems. Another anthology, *The School Bag* edited by Seamus Heaney and Ted Hughes, has one McAuley poem. That's it.

The reason for this neglect or rejection is plain enough. McAuley's work is against the spirit of the times – literary, religious and political. It is certainly against the spirit of contemporary English culture. He is, as they say, too rebarbative.

Three movements have persistently attacked McAuley's achievement.

The first has been the modernists seeking revenge for the devastating success of the Ern Malley hoax of 1944. McAuley had created a fictitious Rimbaudesque poet, Ern Malley (not unlike the younger McAuley.) He had recently died of a mysterious disease, leaving behind behind 16 modernist poems. They blended demented rhetoric and leftist ideas with a leavening of gibberish in the style of the English Apocalyptic school. McAuley plucked some of the lines at random from books, journals, newspapers. Ern's sister Ethel submitted the poems to an *avant-garde* magazine. The excited editors thought they had discovered a genius. They published the poems with a cover illustration by the *avant-garde* painter Sidney Nolan.

When the hoax was revealed, the modernists conceded nothing but

decided to retreat, lie low and wait for better days. They waited fifteen years.

Their moment returned with the explosion of "The Sixties." They then ridiculed McAuley's diction as abstract, intellectualised and timorous. They deleted him from the anthologies. They laughed at his poetics and politics. They proclaimed that the only true poetry he ever wrote were his Ern Malley poems. That broadly remains the position today.

Two other guerrilla movements joined the anti-McAuley campaign.

One was the atheists.

McAuley had committed the unforgivable outrage. He had become a Christian; he had been received into the Catholic Church. It was a famous conversion. It was probably the most

talked about in Australian history. It was also the most deplored. As Les Murray put it, the non-God of Australian atheists is a jealous absence. They will tolerate any belief from astrology to scientology to the Da Vinci Code but not the faith of our fathers.

To make matters worse, McAuley began to write poems under the influence of his new creed, notably *A Letter to John Dryden*. Its target was not the likes of Richard Dawkins or Christopher Hitchens but

The disinherited defrauded rout  
Who do not think or dream, deny or  
doubt,  
But simply don't know what it's all  
about.

The *Letter* rejects the competing creeds of Marxism, the welfare state,

### Need for Sound Philosophical Principles

**B**UT IT is no use waiting for the appearance of some political Messiah who will solve all our difficulties by 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. As Burke said, a people will only find worthy leaders when they recognize that political authority is "not a pitiful job but a holy function." Consequently politics must be based on something higher than purely 'political' interests. No doubt a government must be judged by its practical achievements, but these achievements must be judged not in a crudely practical spirit but in the light of political principles which themselves involve a social philosophy ... to look beyond the next general election, and to feel independent of the shifting tide of popular opinion, because they believe that their policy is not a mere temporary makeshift designed to catch the largest number of votes, but the logical application of principles which are absolutely just and true.

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

## St Monica's Death

‘WHEN THE DAY was approaching on which she was to depart this life – a day that you knew though we did not – it came about, as I believe by your secret arrangement, that she and I stood alone leaning in a window, which looked inwards to the garden within the house where we were staying, at Ostia on the Tiber; for there we were away from everybody, resting for the sea-voyage from the weariness of our long journey by land. There we talked together, she and I alone, in deep joy; and forgetting the things that were behind and looking forward to those that were before, we were discussing in the presence of Truth, which you are, what the eternal life of the saints could be like, which eye has not seen nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man. But with the mouth of our heart we panted for the high waters of your fountain, the fountain of the life which is with you.

‘Such thoughts I uttered, though not in that order or in those actual words; but you know, O Lord, that on that day when we talked of these things the world with all its delights seemed cheap to us in comparison with what we talked of. And my mother said: ‘Son, for my own part I no longer find joy in anything in this world. What I am still to do here and why I am here I know not, now that I no longer hope for anything from this world. One thing there was, for which I desired to remain still a little longer in this life, that I should see you a Catholic Christian before I died. This God has granted me in superabundance, in that I now see you his servant to the contempt of all worldly happiness. What then am I doing here?’

- St Augustine Confessions, ix, 10-11. Quoted Roman Breviary, Second Reading at Matins for the Feast of St Monica, August 27.

Monica was born in Thagaste in Africa around AD 331, and died in 387.

## In Defence of Reason

I can only describe the tangle; I take no delight in it. Like most people with a taste for Catholic tradition, I am too much of a rationalist for that; for Catholics are almost the only people now defending reason.

- G.K.Chesterton, *The New Jerusalem*, p.153

and Eastern religions, and appeals to the faithless :

And when the heart is once disposed to see.

Then reason can unlock faith's treasury

It provoked a flurry of rejoinders, including, from England, Jack Lindsay's *Unsolicited Reply to James McAuley's Letter to John Dryden*. But when McAuley began to write hymns (some of which enjoyed wide international circulation), the critics decided there was nothing more to be said. They fell into a pained silence.

If that was not bad enough, McAuley added to his offences by becoming an anti-Communist, a Cold Warrior. He allied himself with the leading anti-Communist intellectual and Catholic Action organiser, B.A. Santamaria. He even joined the Democratic Labor Party in its opposition to the pro-Communist or leftist Australian Labor Party:

This land I have loved indeed,

Yet have too little served,

Fastidious in her need,

Discordant, half-unnerved.

Now at forenoon I swear

Deeper complicity.

But this "complicity" went beyond civic duty or love of country. "In a Late Hour" (1957) sees the Cold War in apocalyptic terms:

The hearts of men grow colder,

The final things draw near,

Forms vanish, kingdoms moulder,

The Antirealm is here;

Whose order is derangement:

Close-driven, yet alone,

Men reach the last estrangement –

The sense of nature gone.

The Australian cultural establishment could find little common ground with a poet who represented Tradition, Christ and anti-Communism. It decided the best course was to ignore him entirely. Take his collection of essays *The End of Modernity* (1959). It is a sort of manifesto of his ideas how poetry may recover passion, meaning and audience. He had a four-fold programme.

The first step is to exorcise the Romantic-Symbolist reliance on irrational inspiration. The second is to acknowledge the role of the intellect in poetry.

The third is to restore the High Road of Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare and Milton.

The fourth is to recover the ecumenical tradition, that is, Christianity.

Nothing like *The End of Modernity* had appeared in Australian letters before – or has since.

McAuley is the only Australian poet whose work is informed by a comprehensive vision of the world, life and society. His poetry, poetics and politics all hang together. But it was too much for the editors and critics, who ignored it almost entirely. (The Soviet Embassy in Canberra took some oblique notice. It announced that the Writers' Union in Moscow would exclude McAuley from its anthology of Australian poetry because of "civic considerations.")

Despite boycotts (tempered by defamation) McAuley continued to play an active part in public life. For fifteen years after the second World War he was a teacher of district officers and administrators in the Australian colony of New Guinea as it prepared for self-government.

His essays on New Guinea are among the most sensitive in the literature of decolonisation.

In the early 1960s he became a professor at the University of Tasmania and played a major role in helping teachers and students resist the long march of the Left through Australian universities. He was a lively public lecturer and editor (of *Quadrant*.) He also produced several volumes of poetry – to which we must now turn.

McAuley published some 400 poems over forty years. Some are discursive and long. (His epic *Captain Quiros* about the quest for the Great South Land takes two hours to read aloud.)

Some are satirical, such as "A Wedding Piece," mocking Milton's diction and chauvinistic attitude to women. He also wrote occasional verse such as "The Royal Fireworks," about the Queen's hugely popular tour of Australia in 1954. But his most enduring poems are his personal lyrics.

The early ones of the 1930s have as their themes lust, despair and the yearning for release:

That I might stoop no more,  
When spring shall clot the bough,  
To peel the ancient sore,  
And wince as I do now.

The later ones are about family, marriage, children, civilisation, grief and death. It is almost impossible to illustrate short lyrics without quoting them in full. The reader will do best

## Hidden Agendas

**I**T MUST BE borne in mind, that there is much in the liberalistic theory which is good and true; for example, not to say more, the precepts of justice, truthfulness, sobriety, self-command, benevolence, which, as I have already noted, are among its avowed principles, and the natural laws of society. It is not till we find that this array of principles is intended to supersede, to block out, religion, that we pronounce it to be evil. There never was a device of the Enemy so cleverly framed and with such promise of success. And already it has answered to the expectations which have been formed of it. It is sweeping into its own ranks great numbers of able, earnest, virtuous men, elderly men of approved antecedents, young men with a career before them.

- John Henry Cardinal Newman, from his 'Biglietto Speech,' the address he made to the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII on the occasion of his being named Cardinal of the Roman Church with the title of St George in Velabro.

to look up Les Murray's excellent anthology. I will limit myself to a tasting of the lyrics, and a stanza from one of the satires.

The satire is the 1944 "The True Discovery of Australia" in which Gulliver reports on his travels among the Australians:

Knowledge is regarded with suspicion.  
Culture to them is a policeman's beat;  
Who, having learnt to bully honest whores,  
Is let out on the Muses for a treat.  
The citizenry takes no part. For it,  
Plato's a horse, Socrates a dog.  
Surrounded in its vast domain, it sleeps:

A pigmy in the iron bed of Og.  
"Pieta" (1963) is about the death at birth of his son:

Once only, with one hand,

Your mother in farewell  
Touched you. I cannot tell,  
I cannot understand  
A thing so dark and deep,  
So physical a loss:  
One touch, and that was all  
She had of you to keep.  
Clean wounds, but terrible,  
Are those made with Cross  
The later lyric, "Because" (1966) is about the poet's parents:

... Once they stood  
Tall in my childhood as the school, the steeple.  
How can I judge without ingratitude?  
It's my own judgment day that I draw near,  
Descending in the past, without a clue,  
Down to that central deadness: the despair  
Older than any hope I ever knew.

In "Listening to the Magic Flute", published in 1974, the poet hears the swansong of the West:

Pamina sings, and Europe's is the song.  
And if at her lament the tears fall down,  
Not that heart-piercing loveliness alone  
Now makes the tears flow, but the bitter thought  
Of all that it farewells: the style, the grace,  
Unbought, irrecoverable, of a ruined world.

Pamina sings, and Europe's is the song.  
When McAuley died of colon cancer in October 1976, there was a last regrouping of his scattered admirers. His funeral service in St Mary's Cathedral in Hobart was a great public

**He  
who does  
God's will  
stands  
for  
evermore**

- First Epistle  
of St John, 2,17

## 'There am I in the midst of them'

**I**F I TELL YOU to imitate the apostle Paul, this is not to tell you: Raise the dead or cure lepers. Go further: have charity. Have the same love that animated Saint Paul since this virtue is far superior to the power to work miracles. Where there is charity, there God the Son reigns together with his Father and the Holy Spirit. It was he who said: Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Loving to meet together is the nature of a love that is as strong as it is genuine.

'Are there people so wretched, you will say, as not to desire to have Christ in their midst? Yes, we ourselves, my children. We cast him away from us when we are at enmity with one another. You will say to me: What are you talking about? Can't you see that we have assembled in his name, all together under the same roof, within the walls of the same church, paying heed to the voice of our pastor? There is not the least dissension among us in the unity of our songs and prayers, listening together to our pastor. Where is the discord?

'Yes, I know we are within the same fold, under the same pastor. I weep all the more bitterly about it... For if you are peaceful and untroubled at the moment yet, when you leave the church, this one is criticizing that one; one publicly insults another; one is consumed by envy, jealousy or avarice; another ponders revenge; yet another sensuality, duplicity or fraud... Show respect, then, show respect to this holy table where we all receive communion together; show respect for Christ immolated on our behalf; show respect for the sacrifice offered on this altar in our midst.'

– Saint John Chrysostom (c.345-407), Bishop of Antioch then of Constantinople, Doctor of the Church. Homily 8 on the Epistle to the Romans, 8; PG 60, 464-466

occasion. The mourners knew what a loss Australia had suffered. One of them in Sydney wished she lived in a country where schoolboys bow their heads and sirens sound in salute on the Harbour when a great poet dies.

But the critics soon resumed their campaign against McAuley and in a sense they triumphed. Today most OzLit scholars and poetasters agree that McAuley is a deservedly forgotten writer of poor poetry, reactionary politics and bad character. No calumny is too gross but someone will pass it on. One recent critic presented him, without bothering about evidence, as a homosexual cruiser, drug addict, serial adulterer – and probably a thrill-killer.

In his last public lecture shortly before his death in 1976 he offered this *apologia*:

I am now fortunate enough to be able to say that never in my life have I been an advocate or an apologist for movements or regimes that trample systematically on liberal principles and human rights and are essentially based on murder and lies.

I have never defended the misdeeds of any terrorist organisation or dictatorial regime of any complexion. I have never been a retailer of propaganda made in Moscow or Peking or Hanoi or any other centre devoted to the subversion of free countries like Australia. I have blurred the distinction between free and unfree systems or exalted an unfree system above ours. I have never denied that offensive action by a totalitarian power is aggression; I have never stigmatized defensive action by the victims as provocation.

By the canons of the Left, he had clearly earned the corrupt malice and libels that had been heaped on him.

He reserved his dying declaration, "Explicit", for his old magazine, *Quadrant*,

published after his death. This is part of it:

So the word has come at last:  
The argument of arms is past.  
Fully tested I've been found  
Fit to join the underground.  
No worse age has ever been –  
Murderous, lying, and obscene;  
Devils worked while gods connived:  
Somehow the human has survived.  
Welcome now to bread and wine:  
Creature comfort, heavenly sign.  
Winter will grow dark and cold  
Before the wattle turns to gold.

## BOXING DAY

**I**n mediaeval England, boxes were placed in Churches for offerings to the poor, to be opened on Christmas Day and the contents distributed on the first day within the Octave of Christmas, our 'Boxing Day,' actually the Feast of St Stephen. These days we enjoy a public holiday on 'Boxing Day' but its connection with the poor seems to have been overlooked.

*Inventing the Past*

## UNIVERSITIES IN 18TH CENTURY ENGLAND



THE notion of colleges full of gentlemen in gold-laced gowns and silver-tasselled caps holding at bay a horde of obscure Judes is nonsense at any time. The fantasy of a university dominated by gentlemen with what came to be called 'Public School accents,' took on a semblance of reality in the nineteenth century, and had a life of about 100 years. In Bentley's day, fellows of colleges were not young aristocrats. For the most part they were promoted *sizar*s, men of lowly or middling birth, and often of coarse and common fibre. College life, with its official celibacy and its peculiarly secular type of monasticism, was unlikely to transform them into gentlemen. They had too little to do, and tended to turn rather readily to the bottle and the bawdy-house. Throughout the eighteenth century, the aristocracy were inclined to shun the universities as schools for their sons and to rely upon private tutors and the Grand Tour. 'Dens of dunces,' and 'schools of vice,' were the soubriquets in common use when Oxford and Cambridge were mentioned. Every age gets the kind of universities it deserves. Drinking and drabbing and idleness were the common occupations of young men at the universities because they were the common occupations in the extra-mural world in a coarse, masculine and brutal society.

— R.J.White, *Dr. Bentley: A Study in Scarcity*, Eyre & Spottiswood, London, 1965, pp.239-240

*Reflections on graffiti, drug culture and objecting to the Lord's Prayer in Parliament*

# PONDERING PROGRESS

*By* Giles Auty



IN A RECENT visit to Europe I had ample time – and cause – to reflect on the very widely held human belief that our modern age is inherently superior to any which preceded it.

Enthusiasts for this point of view can point immediately to the huge technological advances that have occurred in our time in almost any area one can think of: computers, space travel, medicine, surgical techniques, genetics, mass production, aviation, automobiles, communications... the list goes on and on.

In the past few weeks, however, the wonders – or mysteries – of a globalised banking system may have been crossed off many people's lists as a convincing example of the inevitability of human progress. The evidence for certain kinds of technological advance remains pretty formidable nevertheless.

These were some of the thoughts that entered my head as I sat on a comfortable modern train which was passing through central Holland on my way – or so I hoped – to reacquainting myself with the wonders of Dutch 17th century painting at the Rijksmuseum.

As the kilometres sped by, however, I was treated involuntarily to a continuous display of so-called art of another kind – that of the spray-can.

Alongside railway tracks, this now covers almost every square centimetre of available wall, building and bridge support across the length and breadth of a small nation which was once rightly renowned for its more conventional artistic output.

Today, stylised lettering in a variety of hues has become the chosen art form of Holland's young with a presumed desire to deface or offend taking precedence over any particular evidence

of imagination or skill – other than for climbing.

Holland is far from alone, of course, in suffering the urban blight of graffiti yet seems destined somehow to remain one of the less successful nations in dealing with it largely through lack of will.

However, I cannot remember seeing any graffiti at all back in 1965 when I enjoyed the privilege of being invited to paint at Holten in East Holland as a guest of a Dutch hotels group. Nor can I recall seeing any evidence of widespread drugs use, as the time, even in Amsterdam.

Presumably graffiti and the use of drugs must be thought by some to be evidence of ways in which the Dutch nation has 'progressed' since 1965, almost certainly as a spill-over from the left-wing student riots in Paris in 1968.

Regrettably the Rijksmuseum was largely closed for renovations when I arrived finally in Amsterdam.

To counter this disappointment I found myself some days later in Bruges where the architectural beauties of this

old Belgian city provide a perennial reminder of what human ingenuity and sensitivity to the aesthetics of building could once achieve. Bruges remains breathtaking whether seen from the 20 kilometres of canals that thread the city or on foot from its cobbled streets.

As evening fell, great peals of bells rang out from one of the soaring cathedrals in the city centre, reminding any who heard them of the staunchly Christian heritage to which the whole of Europe was once heir.

Whenever I think of all the great towns and cities of Europe I have visited in my continental meanderings of former days my memories always seem inextricably bound up with the sound of carillons and with the shrieks of swallows as they plunge and hurtle through the summer streets.

Another objective of my brief European tour was a visit to my own home city of Canterbury where one of Europe's more beautiful cathedrals proclaims the extraordinary skills common to architects and great teams of masons more than 800 years ago.

Should we not feel less certain about our notions of 'progress' in the light of the above?

Perhaps, even more amazingly, Canterbury was merely one of some 600 great Christian cathedrals and churches which were built across Europe in the heyday of Gothic building.

Today, the unity of faith and purpose which these represented comes to seem more and more miraculous especially, perhaps, in view of an announcement made at the time of writing this by the Speaker of Australia's House of Representatives, Harry Jenkins. The latter basically objects to the saying of the Lord's prayer each day at the opening of parliament. In his view and that of others this 'controversial' ceremony which dates back to the Standing Orders of 1901 needs

### Science's Boast

Science has pierced man's  
cloudy commonsense,  
Dowered his homely vision with  
more expansive an embrace,  
And the rotten foundation of old  
superstition exposed.  
That trouble of Pascal, those vain  
paradoxes of Austin,  
Those Semitic parables of Paul,  
those tomes of Aquinas,  
All are thrown to the limbo of  
antediluvian idols.

- Robert Bridges, Poems, quoted  
Christopher Dawson, *Enquiries into Religion  
and Culture*, Sheed and Ward, London,  
1933, p.323. Bridges believed that science  
had disproved original sin and that man  
was progressively perfecting himself. One  
wonders what his judgement would be of the  
modern world where science is a god, and  
claims to reign supreme.

'rewriting' or replacing as part of an 'evolutionary' programme. (*The Sunday Telegraph* 26 October 2008).

In common with much of the 'developed' world, Australia is currently facing an economic crisis the final consequences of which remain unknown.

Surely – at least for those who continue to believe in the existence and relevance of a human soul – this might suggest some greater need for prayer rather than the reverse?

Mediaeval man, of course, faced very frequent injustices, setbacks and horrors but these – no less than the joys of life – increased rather than decreased the need he felt for faith.

As Friedrich Heer remarked tellingly in his *The Mediaeval World* (New American Library 1961):

"Injustice, war, feuds, the general horror of life – all could be overcome by fighting for justice, by righteous warfare (above all between sinners and the devil), and by observing the solemn ceremonies of God's house and one's own. Call this common mediaeval piety naïve and primitive if you will: in its day it performed vital functions in the lives of man and society. To evaluate what was achieved by mediaeval popular religion, with its mixture of archaic, 'heathen', folk and Christian elements, it is pertinent to ask what functions religion fulfils in the life of a Christian in the industrial society of the twentieth century. Mediaeval man had a single faith: God, the saints and the priesthood all worked together toward his protection, healing and redemption. These functions have now been assumed by other 'callings': by doctors and psychoanalysts; by technicians and agronomists; and by industry, with its large-scale undertakings, devoted to economic activity of all kinds, to entertainment and to war".

Faced with the wonders of mediaeval ecclesiastical building or, in my case especially, with the glories of the great heritage of European art, it becomes hard sometimes not to see many of the pretensions of our own time as grossly inflated.

---

GILES AUTY was born in the UK and trained privately as a painter. He worked professionally as an artist for 20 years. Publication of his *The Art of Self Deception* swung his career towards criticism. He was art critic for *The Spectator* from 1984 to 1995 when he became national correspondent for *The Australian*. He now devotes himself to his original love - painting.

Vatican newspaper leads debate on organ transplants

## The Moment of Death

by Sandro Magister

**A**'newspaper of ideas': this is what 'L'Osservatore Romano' was supposed to become when Professor Giovanni Maria Vian took command of it thirteen months ago.

A 'newspaper of ideas' is how Giovanni Battista Montini had described it many years before, while he was still archbishop of Milan, before he became pope under the name of Paul VI. This means a newspaper that 'does not seek only to furnish news; it intends to influence thought. It is not enough for it to report events as they happen: it intends to comment on them in order to indicate how they should have happened, or not happened. It does not only conduct a conversation with its readers; it conducts one with the world: it comments, discusses, polemicises.'

Today it can be seen that the promise has been kept. 'L'Osservatore Romano' acts as an official bulletin only for a few things: those contained each day in the feature 'Our information,' reporting the audiences that the pope has held and the appointments he has made, which become official once they are published in the newspaper. But other than this, it is a newspaper of documents, of news, of commentary, and even of polemics, under the autonomous responsibility of those who write for it and direct it. With the entire world as its horizon, and on questions without boundaries.

For example, one of these is death. Ordinarily, this is no longer identified with cardiac arrest, but with the total cessation of brain function. This convention, introduced by the 'Harvard report' in 1968, has extraordinary practical effects, because it allows organ transplants from donors whose hearts are still beating. But the point is that this is simply a convention. It is questionable, and controversial. Last September 2, 'L'Osservatore Romano' published a front page commentary – signed by Lucetta Scaraffia – that reopened the dispute about what really establishes the end of life, and therefore about whether current transplant practices are permissible.

The article raised a firestorm. In the first place, within the Church itself. The predominant approach in the Vatican was that of agreement with the practice of transplanting organs after the confirmation of brain death. A chorus of protest was raised in the curia against 'L'Osservatore Romano.' A conference on organ transplants was approaching at the Vatican, and pressure was applied to make the pope use the opportunity to cut off the dispute by confirming brain death as a valid criterion.

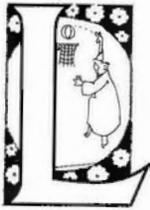
But when Benedict XVI received the conference participants last November 7, he had something different to say. He didn't talk about brain death. He said that 'science in these years has made further progress in verifying the death of the patient.' And he warned that 'where certainty has not been reached the principle of precaution must prevail.'

This meant that the pope was siding with 'L'Osservatore Romano,' and with those scholars of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences who, at a previous conference at the Vatican, from February 3-4, 2005, had taken a majority position against the criterion of brain death.

*Catholics pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died.*

## THE MYSTERY OF THE BREVITY OF LIFE

*By* Kit Cunningham



LAST month was November, the month in which Catholics particularly remember and pray for the dead. For the general public, there is also a reminder: Remembrance Day, the day when the First World War ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, though it seems nowadays to be celebrated on the nearest Sunday.

This involves ceremonies at innumerable war memorials up and down the country. It is good that we remember, but we are called upon to do more than that. We are called upon to pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died.

Catholics have always prayed for the dead, but in this country, with the Reformation and its consequences, prayers, Masses and services had largely disappeared until the advent of the First World War, with its horrendous casualty rate, of young men in their teens, and those barely out of them.

What could the government and the Anglican Church say to those poor mothers, to comfort them in their great losses? In those days communications were not very good: there was no television to bring home the ghastly reality of the war. Casualties were looked upon as inevitable, and the notion of dying for King and Country was held up as a high ideal.

The futility of so much fighting on the ground was brought home to me when walking a stretch of road from Metz, in northern France, to Verdun, armed with *The Times* correspondents' accounts of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870.

I remember standing at the head of one valley and reading of the savagery and loss of life, when men fought for

the possession of a piece of ground that on the following day had no strategic importance at all.

War memorials are a secular way of honouring the dead, but they do have other purposes. Any traveller looking at a French village memorial for the First World War often sees that a whole family was decimated. But the human race renews itself, and one sees clearly in France that the human losses of the 1870s were made up for until 1914, when another haemorrhage occurred. During my trip, I saw great

advertisements on the road out of Strasbourg proclaiming *'La France a besoin d'enfants'*. We hope and pray that France is not looking for cannon fodder.

The Catholic tradition of celebrating Mass for the repose of the souls of the dead has always been very close to the heart of the Church. The chancery chapels of the Middle Ages, the rituals and prayers that we call read about in such books as *The Stripping of the Altars* by Eamon Daffy, point to an abiding need in our lives.

It is not sufficient just to have memorial services, because often a memorial service fails in one essential: we do not pray to God for a particular person as someone who is in need of forgiveness. Reminiscences of deceased persons' qualities with appropriate stories are more suited to the "wake," which is the human side of the celebration of the departed's life.

It is generally the young who die in wars, but today there also many civilian casualties, caught up in the more indiscriminate way in which war is now fought. We console ourselves with the knowledge that we know how and why an individual died, but it is when we do not know the why and wherefore, when in civilian life a young man dies, that we ask why and do not find the answer.

We realise that life is unequal and at times unfair, Or so we think. We are aware that some are more intelligent than others; that one person is richer than another, and some are more beautiful than others. We come to terms with these. But the inequality of time – that some live short lives, and others longer lives – leaves us puzzled and bewildered.

The recent passing of a young New Zealander who dropped dead at the St Paul's end of the Millennium Bridge

### Return the Favour

DO not be a friend of Jesus in time of peace and his foe in time of wars. You receive now the remission of your sins and the gifts of the king's spiritual bounty; when wars shall come strive nobly for your king. Jesus the king was crucified for you; and will you not be crucified for him who was crucified for you? You are not bestowing a favour, for you have first received. You are returning a favour; repaying your debt to him who was crucified for you on Golgotha.

– From the Catechesis of St Cyril of Jerusalem, 13,23. Quoted in *The Roman Breviary*, Second Reading at Matins for the Fourth Week of the Year.

- so suddenly that he didn't even instinctively put out a hand to break his fall [this was all recorded on CCTV] - was a great shock to the community in Central London.

We had a short memorial service before his coffin was flown to New Zealand. The church was packed, and I had never seen a group of young people who looked so vulnerable. The postmortem showed he was one of those who, unfortunately, had a heart condition which doesn't show up on medical machines.

To all these healthy yet vulnerable young people, I did not attempt (and it would have been wrong to do so) to give a religious explanation. I said that I would not explain, but that I would help them to accept what had happened. For it is one of the great inequalities of life: the time factor; that life is a mystery.

This is a point that I also made to a church full of doctors and civil servants who had come to mourn the sudden death of a colleague who died of a heart attack in Baghdad. An intrepid character, it seemed, with his car full of bullet holes, who lived in a hotel that had been subjected to rocket attacks. He was there to help rebuild the medical services on Iraq.

I took the occasion to praise the doctors' skills and medical science, but put it to them that the spiritual aspect of their profession is one they should not overlook. I reminded them that life is more than all the parts that go to make up a human being.

When we pray the rosary, we Catholics say the Hail Mary, with words that should comfort us greatly: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, Amen.'

---

FATHER KIT CUNNINGHAM is a Rosminian priest, until recently the revered rector of the Church of St Etheldreda, in Ely Place, London. St Etheldreda's Church is located in Ely Place, and it is the oldest church in Catholic hands in London. The church was built in 1251, and still maintains many of the traditions of the diocese of the city of Ely, when bishops had Episcopal houses. The church is still located within a private road, and is looked after by six elected commissioners. The church has a proud musical tradition, and the Sunday Mass is often sung in Latin. The church is also famously mentioned by Shakespeare in both Richard II and Richard III. This article first appeared in the Charterhouse Chronicle which was edited by Father Kit.

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*Taking a look at the syndrome: – “it’s my culture, right or wrong!”*

# THE TWO CULTURES

*By* Roger Sandall



AMBIGUOUS words are a gift to poets, while soothsayers could hardly do without them. The crux of the Oedipus story is a fatally misleading oracle, while Macbeth was justifiably miffed to discover that the witches’ predictions, on which he and his lady had built so much, were “double-tongued”.

But for those of us who are neither poets nor oracles ambiguity is just a nuisance. When an important word has two contrasting meanings, but is spelled the same for each, misunderstandings multiply. And where an ambiguity of this kind is mischievously exploited for social ends one is entitled to be not only miffed but indignant. Yet that’s what has happened to one of the most significant items in the lexicon, much used in Australian political discourse today – the word “culture”.

Matthew Arnold noticed what was happening in his influential book *Culture and Anarchy*, way back in 1869. He also correctly diagnosed the motive of the mischief-makers. He saw that as a prestigious term it would be both targeted and enviously claimed by all those seeking equal respectability, honour, and social esteem.

We shall return to Arnold’s analysis in due course. It deserves to be better known. At this stage, however, it is more important to grasp what he had in mind when he advocated more culture, rather than less, for his unruly, boisterous, violently uncultivated English countrymen.

Arnold took the word “culture” to denote something evaluative and exclusive, and – just as importantly – something that required application and work. By a sustained process of reading, observing, and thinking, a citizen might become acquainted with “the best that has been thought and said”.

It was not, let it be emphasized at the outset, the best that has been thought or said by a particular tribe, or political party, or the best that has been said in the vicinity of Bondi Beach. It was not local. It was universal. Matthew Arnold wished to advertise the best that humanity can show, as seen on a vertical scale of increasing quality deserving high esteem – Chartres, Dante, Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Bach. When by reading and thinking and general inquiry a man was acquainted with the best in architecture, literature, art, and music, he was in a fair way to having “culture”.

Without that, nothing. Culture was definitely not something you automatically inherited just by being born into a community who like folk-dancing on Saturday night. Nor was it merely an inventory of that community’s manners, customs, and prejudices, let alone its more bellicose attitudes, its more baseless beliefs, or its more ignorant habits of mind.

In contrast, the meaning of “culture” we use today means all of the above. This is the anthropological sense of the word, though you might just as well call it the warehouse, supermarket, or ragbag sense. Anthropological culture consists precisely of an impartial inventory of manners, prejudices, and

unexamined and unranked mental habits and social traditions – good, bad, and indifferent.

Where Arnold’s meaning was vertical and exclusive, the anthropological meaning is horizontal and promiscuously inclusive, denying any yardstick by which its miscellaneous items might be judged better or worse, and placing chamber music and chamber pots on a democratically level plain.

In much the same way it views indifferently all and every adjectival variety of “culture” – footy culture and foody culture, Mafia culture and hoon culture, drug culture and booze culture... whatever. It seems you can take any habitual form of collective behaviour, including the most disgusting or depraved, and by adding the word “culture” give it a bit of tone and respectability, and thereby make it seem reasonable, necessary, and right.

But should this be a cause for concern? If it is true that ambiguity has historically been a source of evil, can it be shown that serious consequences follow from this particular muddle – this inability to distinguish the vertical and horizontal concepts of culture? An article in the September 2008 issue of the new UK monthly *Standpoint* may help illuminate the issue.

## CHRISTMAS TREES

Ancient Germanic pagan tribes venerated trees. It is said that St Boniface [675-754 AD] cut down an oak dedicated to the god Thor and found a fir tree growing in its roots. He presented this evergreen as a symbol of Christ: ‘This humble tree’s wood is used to build your homes: let Christ be at the centre of your households. Its leaves remain evergreen in the darkest days: let Christ be your constant light. Its boughs reach out to embrace and its top points to heaven: let Christ be your Comfort and Guide’. Christmas Trees were unknown in England until Queen Victoria’s marriage to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha in 1840.

There Sir Richard Eyre wrote a piece with the title “What do we mean by art?”, and art happens to be something he knows a lot about. A theatre man of distinction, he led the British Royal National Theatre from 1987 to 1997, has directed numerous productions on stage and screen, and is educationally active as well.

Invited to participate in a panel discussion about subsidies for the arts, Eyre adopted what he must have thought was the eminently safe and respectable “cultural” defence. With Matthew Arnold looking over his shoulder, he argued that because culture was self-evidently good (in Arnold’s terms it works by spreading ‘sweetness and light’), it self-evidently deserved government support. The British knight appeared to believe that he had only to state this forcefully enough for the proposition to be unanimously carried.

But not so. To his surprise he was immediately challenged by a representative of Formula 1 motor racing, Mr Max Mosley, who declared that his own preferred pastime also deserved funding – after all, wasn’t motor racing a feature of British culture too? If that was not the case, the F1 man boldly asked, what exactly did Eyre mean by the word “culture”?

This gambit left Sir Richard completely floored. As he recalled later with embarrassment,

I dithered. I struggled. ‘Er... culture is about what we think, what we do, what we buy, how we behave, how we entertain ourselves. Er... our ‘lifestyle’ – if you must...

And some time later, in the course of the article in *Standpoint*, he plunged still deeper into the mire:

I acknowledge that car adverts, TV sitcoms, Shakespeare and George Lucas, body-piercing jewellery, Bollywood movies, Pinter and Stoppard, Polaroid photography, Harry Potter and Philip Roth, punk, house, hip-hop, rap, acid, Keats and Bob Dylan, the Andrews Sisters and the late works of Beethoven are all part of our culture and sit side by side in the supermarket, waiting for the consumers to pick and mix according to their taste...

And it was at this stage, aware of the futile direction his argument was taking and that if this hodgepodge truly described British “culture,” then motor racing couldn’t possibly be excluded,



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that he tried to reverse out of trouble:

...but I don’t believe that they should all merge into a muddy soup of relativism. In short, I think some of them are better than others and it’s sentimental thinking to argue otherwise. It’s pointless egalitarianism which irritates all parties – the curators of low culture despise the intellectuals for sucking up to them, and the mandarins of high culture are infuriated by the invasion of the barbarians.

But how and why did the anthropological understanding triumph? How did the horizontal notion displace Matthew Arnold’s vertical ranking of our cultural aspirations as “the best that has been thought and said”? Why was an intellectually critical element in the concept of culture abandoned in favour of the vulgar follies of “the idols of the tribe” – tats, piercing, and Mr Mosley’s collection of racing cars going around and around?

In the intellectual life of the UK the historical answer to this question



has three parts. (The American story is somewhat different, but there’s no time for it here. See Chapter Nine of *The Culture Cult*, “Civilization and its Malcontents”.)

First came T. S. Eliot’s strange embrace of anthropology in his 1948 *Notes Toward a Definition of Culture*: “By ‘culture’, then, I mean first of all what the anthropologists mean.” He explained this as the “way of life” of a people “made visible in their arts, their social system, their habits and customs”.

Here the whole ethnographic gallimaufry was formally certified as “culture” by the most respected poet of the day. Not surprisingly, however, his statement raised more questions than it answered. Should anything be excluded? Where could a line be drawn? Why shouldn’t Bob Dylan and Dante sit “side by side in the supermarket” as Sir Richard Eyre recently suggested? And what about those racing cars?

However unintentionally, Eliot had opened the door to the resentful gaze of egalitarian man. And through it, in the 1960s, walked the figure of Raymond Williams, eagerly availing himself of a definition of culture elastic enough to include the activities of Arthur Scargill and the ruminations of the T.U.C. Weren’t they too part of the “social system” as Eliot said? Who could deny it? Candidly confessing his strategy some years later, Williams can be found in the pages of his *Politics and Letters* saying “that was the gain of talking about culture as a whole way of life.”

In the UK this prepared the way for a third factor: the influx of large numbers of colonial peoples. Animated by *amour propre*, they were delighted to find that in the new world of post-imperial England culture was no longer something you worked to acquire by reading, observing, and thinking: it was something inseparable from your own identity—something that was yours automatically and instantly from the day you were born. To prove that you were cultured, you had only to do your own thing – however illiterate or uninformed your own thing might be.

Idealised for political purposes, and often for the benefit of certain voting constituencies, presented as both good in itself and providing a universal exculpation – “it’s my culture, right or wrong!” – the anthropological doctrine

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that mere ethnicity = culture, in and of itself, armed tender colonials against the superciliousness of the imperial host and gave them, eventually through legislation too, a defiant justification for doing whatever they liked, whenever they liked.

The title of Arnold's most lastingly influential book is *Culture & Anarchy*, (1869), and its second chapter has the title "Doing As One Likes". Here the author notes that because his account of "culture" describes something rare, precious, and prestigious, others will try to appropriate the term in order to raise their own prestige. He refers to an American contemporary, intent on uplifting the image of industrialism and factory owners, who

"proposes that we should for the future call industrialism culture, and the industrialists the men of culture, and then of course there can be no longer any misapprehension about their true character; and besides the pleasure of being wealthy and comfortable, they will have authentic recognition as vessels of sweetness and light."

This was prescient: trying to borrow the prestige of the evaluative concept of culture by deliberately attaching it to other, far less significant forms of human activity, was exactly what lay ahead, and would take place in the late 20th century with a vengeance. But (said Arnold in response to the notion that industrialism was culture)

"I must remark that the culture of which I talked was an endeavour to come at reason and the will of God by means of reading, observing, and thinking; and that whoever calls anything else culture, may, indeed, call it so if he likes, but then he talks of something quite different from what I talked of."

It is inescapable that the triumph of the anthropological conception of culture, in which society is Balkanised into groups each of which is encouraged to take an inordinate pride in its own limitations, and to do as little as possible to correct them by reading and thinking about the achievement of western civilization as a whole, has seen in recent years the growth of much that Matthew Arnold set himself against.

ROGER SANDALL was born in New Zealand and educated at the universities of Auckland and Columbia. His most recent research and writing has concerned a forthcoming book on the history of architecture.

*Bishop blasts Bosnian government as Croatian refugee crisis continues*

## LET THEM RETURN HOME

*By John Newton with Eva-Maria Kolmann*

**A**N OUTSPOKEN bishop has once again hit out at the international community amid no sign of a let up in the struggle for tens of thousands of refugees to return home to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In a scathing attack, Bishop Franjo Komarica of Banja Luka in northern Bosnia criticised the Bosnian government and the international community for allegedly failing to allow exiled Croats – who are traditionally Catholic – to go back to the homes where they lived before the 1990s Balkans War.

According to church sources, before the conflict 220,000 Catholics lived in the Republika Srpska territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina but by the time peace returned only 12,000 remained. More than 13 years later, barely two percent of those forced to flee from the region have been able to return.

Speaking to *Aid to the Church in Need* [ACN], the charity for persecuted and other suffering Christians, Bishop Komarica said: “Justice in this case is being trampled underfoot.

“Why do human rights apply in Germany, France and the USA, for example, but not to us in Bosnia?”

The bishop described making numerous appeals to enable the Croats to return but said he had been repeatedly ignored. Many Croats are afraid of returning back to the region amid continued ethnic tensions in their former Bosnian homeland and Bishop Komarica has frequently demanded reassurances that they would be fully integrated into the political and social fabric of the region.

The bishop accused the Bosnian authorities of leaving him to take responsibility for the returning Croats, adding: “It is not the task of the Church to build homes, provide running water and repair roads.”

Bishop Komarica underlined the Catholic Church’s commitment to making a “fruitful contribution to the future of this country”, but he stressed that “in order to do so we must first be able to live here.”

Criticising the government for not taking steps to restore the country’s damaged infrastructure, he claimed there was no “discernible political will”, either at national or at international level, to put into practice public declarations that Catholic Croats would be able to return to their homes.

The bishop said: “Our appeals, pleas and protests have gone unheeded.”

The status of returning refugees is contested, especially by nationalist politicians in Bosnia. Late last month Vojislav Seselj, the controversial leader of the Serbian Radical Party, who is standing trial at the Hague tribunal for war crimes, claimed that Croats who left northern Serbia in 1992 should not be classed as refugees.

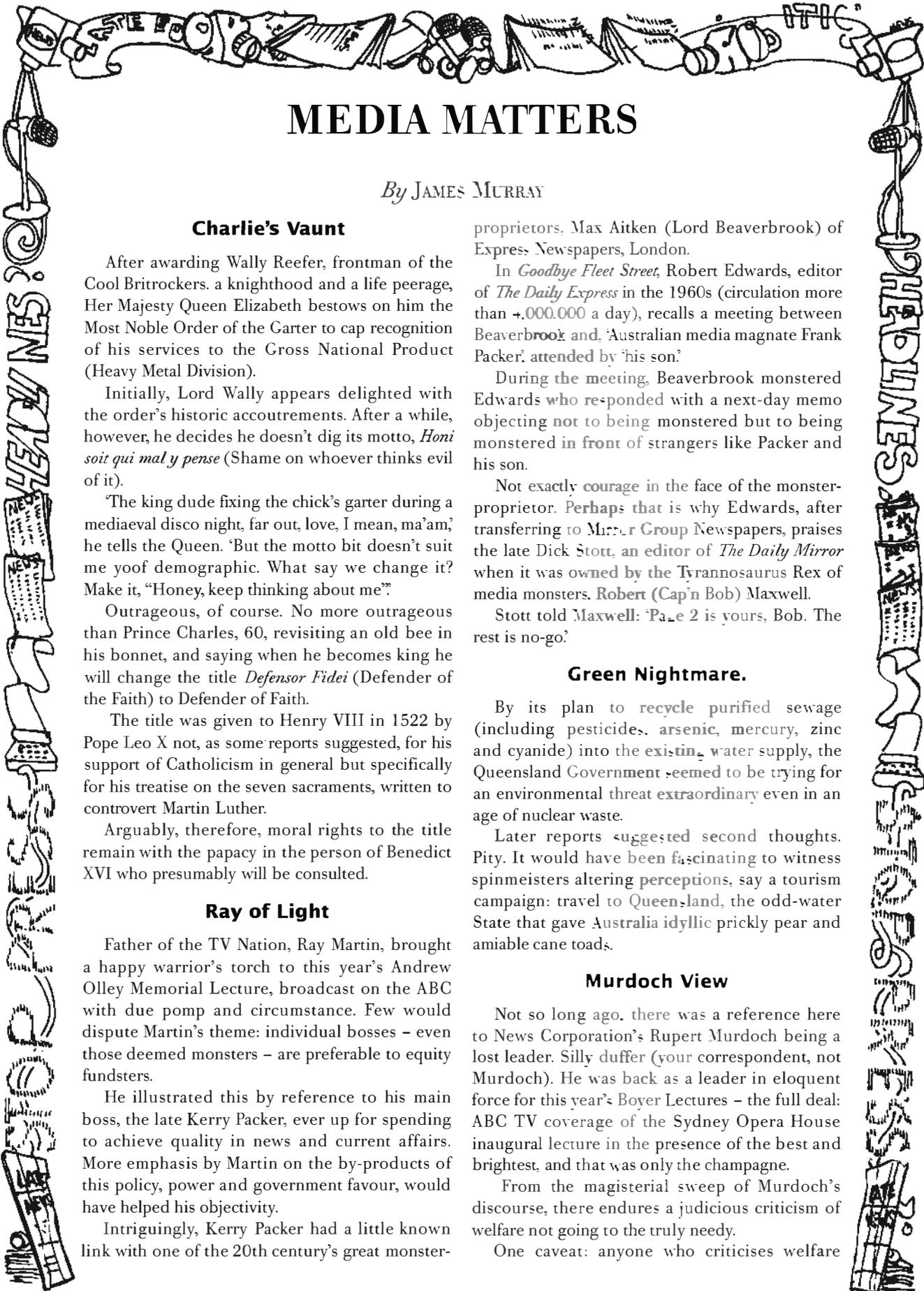
Bishop Komarica’s latest comments come after repeated criticism of the international community to act on behalf of the refugees. Accusing the international community of “hypocrisy”, in November 2005, Bishop Komarica gave an interview to ACN, accusing leading politicians including the UN of “rewarding the unjust and punishing the disadvantaged.”

The war that raged in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995, following the breakup of Yugoslavia, claimed the lives of some 243,000 people. During that period 2 million people were driven from their homes as a result of the ensuing ethnic conflict.

ACN’s recent *Index of Persecution* listed Bosnia as a country of worsening oppression against Christians, noting a rise in the number of attacks on churches, priests and ministers, as well as police reluctance to investigate such cases.

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# MEDIA MATTERS

By JAMES MURRAY

## Charlie's Vaunt

After awarding Wally Reeper, frontman of the Cool Britrockers, a knighthood and a life peerage, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth bestows on him the Most Noble Order of the Garter to cap recognition of his services to the Gross National Product (Heavy Metal Division).

Initially, Lord Wally appears delighted with the order's historic accoutrements. After a while, however, he decides he doesn't dig its motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense* (Shame on whoever thinks evil of it).

The king dude fixing the chick's garter during a mediaeval disco night, far out, love, I mean, ma'am, he tells the Queen. 'But the motto bit doesn't suit me yooof demographic. What say we change it? Make it, "Honey, keep thinking about me?"

Outrageous, of course. No more outrageous than Prince Charles, 60, revisiting an old bee in his bonnet, and saying when he becomes king he will change the title *Defensor Fidei* (Defender of the Faith) to Defender of Faith.

The title was given to Henry VIII in 1522 by Pope Leo X not, as some reports suggested, for his support of Catholicism in general but specifically for his treatise on the seven sacraments, written to controvert Martin Luther.

Arguably, therefore, moral rights to the title remain with the papacy in the person of Benedict XVI who presumably will be consulted.

## Ray of Light

Father of the TV Nation, Ray Martin, brought a happy warrior's torch to this year's Andrew Olley Memorial Lecture, broadcast on the ABC with due pomp and circumstance. Few would dispute Martin's theme: individual bosses – even those deemed monsters – are preferable to equity fundsters.

He illustrated this by reference to his main boss, the late Kerry Packer, ever up for spending to achieve quality in news and current affairs. More emphasis by Martin on the by-products of this policy, power and government favour, would have helped his objectivity.

Intriguingly, Kerry Packer had a little known link with one of the 20th century's great monster-

proprietors. Max Aitken (Lord Beaverbrook) of Express Newspapers, London.

In *Goodbye Fleet Street*, Robert Edwards, editor of *The Daily Express* in the 1960s (circulation more than 4,000,000 a day), recalls a meeting between Beaverbrook and 'Australian media magnate Frank Packer', attended by 'his son'.

During the meeting, Beaverbrook monstered Edwards who responded with a next-day memo objecting not to being monstered but to being monstered in front of strangers like Packer and his son.

Not exactly courage in the face of the monster-proprietor. Perhaps that is why Edwards, after transferring to Mirror Group Newspapers, praises the late Dick Stott, an editor of *The Daily Mirror* when it was owned by the Tyrannosaurus Rex of media monsters. Robert (Cap'n Bob) Maxwell.

Stott told Maxwell: 'Page 2 is yours, Bob. The rest is no-go.'

## Green Nightmare.

By its plan to recycle purified sewage (including pesticides, arsenic, mercury, zinc and cyanide) into the existing water supply, the Queensland Government seemed to be trying for an environmental threat extraordinary even in an age of nuclear waste.

Later reports suggested second thoughts. Pity. It would have been fascinating to witness spinmeisters altering perceptions, say a tourism campaign: travel to Queensland, the odd-water State that gave Australia idyllic prickly pear and amiable cane toads.

## Murdoch View

Not so long ago, there was a reference here to News Corporation's Rupert Murdoch being a lost leader. Silly duffer (your correspondent, not Murdoch). He was back as a leader in eloquent force for this year's Boyer Lectures – the full deal: ABC TV coverage of the Sydney Opera House inaugural lecture in the presence of the best and brightest, and that was only the champagne.

From the magisterial sweep of Murdoch's discourse, there endures a judicious criticism of welfare not going to the truly needy.

One caveat: anyone who criticises welfare



without mentioning corporate welfare criticises crumbs from the rich man's table while ignoring tax-payer supplements to the rich man's banquet.

Simple as ABC (Learning Centres). Or the Three Blind Beggars of Detroit: General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, flying to Washington on their jet-propelled company begging bowls.

Blind? Absolutely blind to the crisis they helped to create through excessive salary packages. Who says? Some peanut into the politics of envy? Not exactly: Paul Volker, ex-boss of the US Federal Reserve Bank, singing with a justified chorus.

If still in doubt, check the number of financial institutions worldwide being sustained a billionfold by taxpayers whose next-door neighbours are being evicted by similar institutions.

### Obama could

Prediction here that the veteran war hero US presidential candidate John McCain would defeat the newcomer Barack Obama was wrong. Why? McCain had the Texas monkey, George W Bush, on his back. In addition, he did not rouse the sleeper issue: abortion.

As noted last month, both McCain and Obama did define their stances on the issue, one that will not go away. After all, Obama's record does include that vote against a measure to aid newborns who had survived an abortion.

Contrast Obama's attitude with actor Jack Nicholson's. He is anti-abortion less on moral grounds than on the circumstance that his illegitimate birth might – father gone – have resulted in his abortion. As it was, he had the shield of his Catholic family.

Defining the ground of abortion as pro-choice is facile. Essentially abortion is anti-human or, jargonising, a waste of a human resource. How many potential Jack Nicholsons, or indeed Barack Hussein Obamas, have had their life promise ended in surgical incinerators?

### Evolution Rolls On

Ahead the second year of Prime Minister Plenipotentiary Kevin Rudd who faces crisis, catastrophe, cataclysm. Name your poison, add global and Kevin 09 will be there.

If anything the triple-C cocktail speeds Australia's evolution to a republic. Notable further evidence: Treasury Secretary Ken Henry confronting a parliamentary investigative committee, members of which acted as if they were on Washington's Capitol Hill.

So did Henry, although appearing to operate under Westminster conventions with his remark about not caring to discuss interest rates in public – a remark straight from, *Yes, Minister*.

But in tone of command, Henry echoed Washington not Westminster, inspiring the thought that he represents a necessary widening of the local, presidential talent pool. He went on to show more of the right stuff by becoming the first in his position to front the National Press Club, Canberra.

If a neophyte congressman like Barack Obama can become US president,

why not in Australia a hard-nut public servant (retired) and wombat protector like Ken Henry, campaigning for its presidency against ex-pols who were monkeys to his organ-grinder, and against business folk who also danced to his tune?

### One-eyed

Whatever the truth of the Great Kirribilli House Scoop in *The Australian*, alleging PMP Kevin Rudd had to define G20 for President George W Bush, it was hot – hot as deadline typemetal – after the revelation that the editor-in-chief of *The Australian*, Chris Mitchell, had attended the leaky chevo.

By contrast one of the great journalists of the 20th century, the BBC/Guardian Anglo-American correspondent Alistair Cook, avoided friendships

## World Youth Day PILGRIMS and ASYLUM

**N**EARLY 200 pilgrims who came to Australia for World Youth Day have applied for asylum. Department of Immigration and Citizenship officials said that by the end of September, they had received 186 protection visa applications from people who came for the Catholic event held in Sydney in July.

'About 11 of those applications have so far been refused, and two approved,' department secretary Andrew Metcalfe told a Senate estimates hearing today, 'the others would be currently under consideration.'

A further 31 pilgrims had overstayed their visas, officials said.

'Those folks could be anywhere in Australia,' Mr Metcalfe said.

More than 100,000 people came from overseas for World Youth Day, which culminated in Pope Benedict XVI hosting a papal Mass for 400,000 people.

Mr Metcalfe said there had been relatively few asylum-seekers and visa overstayers.

'A one per cent overstay rate against our visa programs is regarded as sort of usual, and the fact that so far we have only had 31 people overstay and 186 apply for protection visas actually shows a very good result.'

- Source: John Gillespie, <http://www.gilton.com.au>



with politicians. Unusual? Thaddeus Delane of *The Times* in the 19th century was similarly circumspect.

This is the 21st century. Of course, it is, the century of ARK (Australians' Right to Know), backed by major news organisations including News Limited, its latest report focusing on Suppression Orders.

Now perpetrators of such orders can argue News Limited has effectively put its own Suppression Order in place about the most celebrated meal since Little Jack Horner, eating his Christmas pie, put in his thumb and pulled out a plum.

'What a good boy am I,' Jack Horner said. So far no such delighted quote has come from Rudd or Mitchell.

Journalists must protect their sources. Must they also protect leaky cheevos? What about a column, or a website, telling the public with a right to know which executive journalists are breakfasting, lunching, dining, supping and pole-dancer watching with politicians, and on whose tab – taxpayers or press?

### Julia's Turn

One minister not overshadowed by Kevin Rudd is his deputy Julia Gillard. If Rudd's hyperactivity exhausts him, she may yet trigger spasms of sentimentality that will make Obamaphilia seem hard nosed. Think the taboo-breaking headline: Pommie red-head migrant Oz PM!

### Cooke's Stir

The travails of ABC foreign correspondent, Peter Lloyd, done for drugs in Singapore, continue. In a sympathetic interview with him (*SMH*, Nov 8-9), Jennifer Cooke wrote about his relief at a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome due to his prolonged, close-up coverage of shocking events.

Wasn't that his job? But as Cooke went on to describe the number of times Lloyd was called on to file radio up-dates in addition to his TV reports, it became clear that the multi-media, 24/7 newscycle set a context for breakdown.

Legends abound of newspaper foreign editors, fingers on an office map, contacting far-flung correspondents to get from Point A to hazardous Point B hundreds of kilometres away, 'soonest'.

Back then correspondents could take delaying acton before hiring expense account magic carpets. Nowadays fantastic plastic wins against magic carpets.

It also adds to pressure which may well include shooting your own footage and providing radio/website fodder before doing rolling updates or live-crosses, too often ritual rather than revelatory.

Cooke also reported that Kimina Lyall, ex-South-East Asia correspondent of *The Australian*, had left journalism after a diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

In this situation, onus is on editors to hire sufficient staff, not plague correspondents for up-dates. The phrase *duty of care* is increasingly used in compensation legal actions. One day, a lawyer will use it to win compensation for a hack driven too hard by a de k-bound exec.

### Cute Suit

High Court judge Michael Kirby appears to have won a famous victory through his reported suggestion of early resignation. This in a trade-off for legislation ensuring his partner of 40 years, Johann van Vloten, if Kirby pre-deceases him, gets 62.5 per cent of Kirby's pension (60 per cent of \$393,000 a year).

Is this a legal-eagle one-off? Or does it set a precedent for business types and others to effect similar outcomes on behalf of partners, male and/or female?

And what of duration? Must it be 40 years? Or will a shorter period suffice? No question: cue for a comedy of modern manners involving wigs and gowns.

### Reeling On

Already New Year 2009 has the aspect of a debt-drunk, Hogmanay eightsome reel. Some suggest capitalism is dead, others that socialism is back.

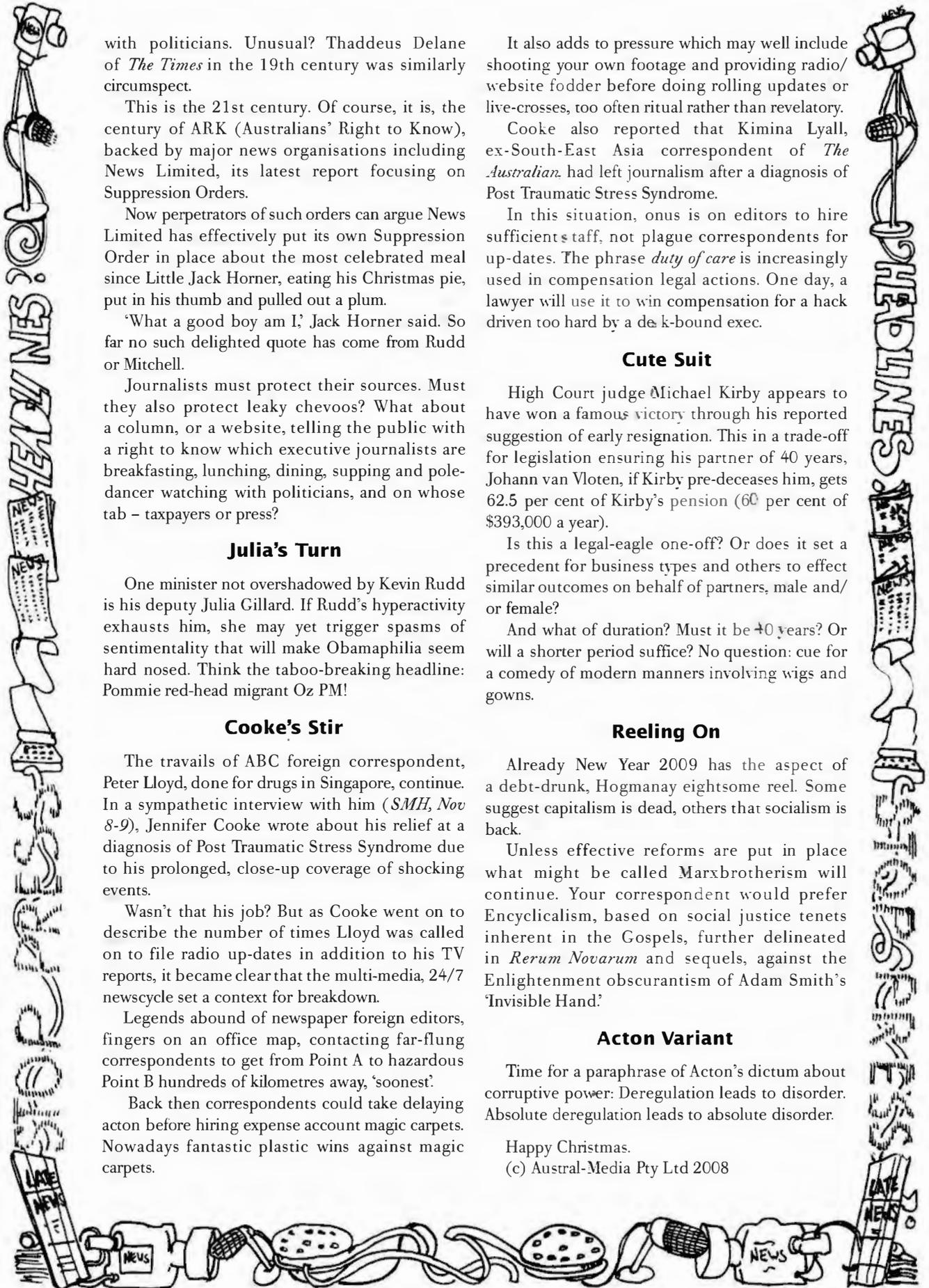
Unless effective reforms are put in place what might be called Marxbrotherism will continue. Your correspondent would prefer Encyclicalism, based on social justice tenets inherent in the Gospels, further delineated in *Rerum Novarum* and sequels, against the Enlightenment obscurantism of Adam Smith's 'Invisible Hand.'

### Acton Variant

Time for a paraphrase of Acton's dictum about corruptive power: Deregulation leads to disorder. Absolute deregulation leads to absolute disorder.

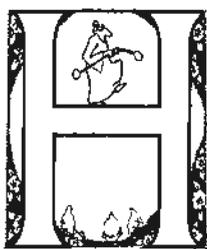
Happy Christmas.

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*Longevity*

## SURVIVOR OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES



HENRY JENKINS, that remarkable instance of longevity, was often at Fountains Abbey during the residence of the last Abbot; and (according to a paper copied from an old household book of Sir Richard Graham, Bart., of Norton Conyers) Jenkins, upon going to live at Bolton, was said to be about 150 years old; and the writer of the above paper had often examined him in his sister's

kitchen, when he came for alms, and found facts in chronicles agree with his account; he was then 162 or 163. He said he was sent to North Allerton with a horse-load of arrows for the battle of Flodden Field, with which a bigger boy went forward to the army, under the Earl of Surrey, King Henry VIII. being at Tournay; and he (the boy) believed himself to be then eleven or twelve years old. This was in 1513, and four or five persons of the same parish, each said to be 100, or near it, declared Jenkins to have been an old man ever since they knew him. He gave evidence in court to six score years in a tithe cause, 1667, between the Vicar of Catterick and William and Peter Mawbank, wherein he deposed that the tythes of wool, lambs, &c., mentioned in the interrogatories, were the Vicar's, and had been paid, to his knowledge, 120 years, or more. The writer was present at another cause, when Jenkins gave evidence to 120 years. The judge asked him how he lived. He said, by thatching and salmon-fishing; that he was thatching a house when served with a subpoena in the cause, and would dub a hook with any man in Yorkshire. The writer went to see him at Ellerton-upon-Swale, and met him carrying a pitcher of water upon his head. He told him he remembered the Dissolution, and that great lamentation was made; that he had been butler to Lord Conyers, of Hornby Castle; and that Marmaduke Brodelay, Lord Abbot of Fountains, did frequently visit his lord, and drink a hearty glass with him; and that his lord often sent him to inquire how the Abbot did, who always sent for him to his lodgings; and after ceremonies, as he called it, passed, ordered him, besides wassel, a quarter of a yard of roast beef for his dinner (for that the monasteries did deliver their guests meat by measure) and a great black jack of strong drink. Jenkins was the only one who, in the time of Charles II, survived to tell the tale of the Dissolution of Monasteries.

- John Timbs, *Abbeys, Castles and Ancient Halls of England and Wales*, London, Frederick Warne and Co, North, [undated] p.176. Fountains Abbey was a Cistercian foundation dating from 1132.

*Molan makes plain the reality that since 2003 there have been two wars in Iraq'*

## A SOLDIER'S VIEW OF THE IRAQ WAR

Reviewed by MICHAEL O'CONNOR



FROM early 2004 until a year later, the Australian Major General Jim Molan was Chief of Operations in the Coalition military force in Iraq. As such, he was the most senior non-American officer in the force and was responsible to the commanding general for all operations by the force. Among these were the second battle for Fallujah and the organisation of the first of three elections for a democratic Iraqi assembly. For most of his time in Iraq, he battled to get the infrastructure of oil production, transport and power generation back into working order. His book describes in great detail the life of a senior commander in a very hot war.

Molan is by no means the general of popular myth – if indeed there be any such – in the West at any rate. He makes plain that his Catholic upbringing – educated by the Christian Brothers at Parade College in Melbourne – led him to a deep examination of the justice of the Iraq conflict before taking up his appointment. His conviction that it was indeed a just war was reinforced by his experience, especially in the face of

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*Running the War in Iraq*  
by Major General Jim Molan  
Harper Collins, Sydney, 2008,  
358pp, soft cover.

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the almost incredible viciousness of the sectarian conflicts between Sunni and Shia, and the imported *jihadi* fighters sponsored by al Qaeda and others.

The war is one of enormous intensity, a fact that is not evident from the highly politicised media reporting which is about all we in Australia receive. Thus the criticism that the Americans have failed to restore Iraq's infrastructure suggests neglect of the damage done by the initial invasion in 2003. Not so, asserts Molan. In fact, the insurgency that comprises many disparate groups, including plain criminals, has targeted infrastructure in a deliberate campaign to discredit the occupation and the move to establish a free and democratic nation. Oil pipelines, electricity transmission lines, road and rail links are destroyed almost as fast as they are repaired. All too often, Molan reports, the insurgents are assisted by 'helpers' in the Iraqi ministries.

Molan makes plain the reality that since 2003 there have been two wars in Iraq. The first, highly successful, was designed to depose Saddam Hussein. This was arguably justifiable regardless of the flawed public rationale. Molan notes that the Coalition has uncovered mass graves of more than 300,000 Iraqi victims of Saddam's rule. Clearly, he believes that Iraq needed outside help to get rid of the monster and his family.

But following Saddam's removal, another war broke out. This was the insurgency that has plagued Iraq since mid-2003. It is a product of the Sunni minority trying to retain their privileged role in Iraq, the Shia majority trying to assert their supremacy and the imported terrorists of various extremist groups, many with extensive experience and training. In all of this, too, Iraq's several minorities have suffered grievously.

Molan is realistic but not bitter about the ruthlessness with which the insurgents treat ordinary Iraqis. He notes that, under the laws of armed conflict, which are based on Christian just war principles, the Coalition forces are not able to respond in kind. His acceptance of the limits is based upon his own personal moral principles without reservation and he believes that to be true of the Coalition forces generally. He makes no excuses for the very few actual abuses – such as the Abu Ghraib prison scandal – noting that these were due to a lack of proper training and supervision. He merely wishes that the Western, especially European, media would pay as much attention to the gross violations of the innocent perpetrated by the insurgents.

On a more technical level, Molan gives a good insight into the reality of the modern 24-hour war. For him as chief of operations, this meant a 20-hour working day every day provided that his four hours off was not interrupted by some emergency. Travel by air or by

### Fraudulent Imitations

WHAT is true of man, considered as an individual, is also true of society, both domestic and civil. Nature has not made society to be the last end of man, but so that man shall find in and through society the assistance he needs to attain his perfection. If a society, therefore, pursues exterior advantages, the elegance and abundance of the good things of life to the exclusion of everything else, if it professes to neglect God in the administration of the State and to take no account of moral laws, it is criminally deviating from its end and the commands of nature, it is not so much a society and human community as a fraudulent imitation and simulacrum of society

– Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical *Sapientiae Christianae* [On Christian Wisdom], quoted Jacques Maritain, *The Things that are not Caesar's*, Sheed & Ward, London, 1930, pp.138-139.

road was ever dangerous and his team, which included a six-man bodyguard, was frequently attacked.

He pays tribute to the ordinary Iraqis who suffered much more under the insurgency than the occupation. He notes the high percentages of ordinary people who turned out to vote in the election, many more each time, in defiance of the insurgents' threats. Iraqis were giving themselves a stake in their future and Molan clearly believes that, in justice, the Coalition must stay the course even though it will be a long one.

But it does raise the question: would it have been better if Iraq had never been invaded? One of the just war principles that must be satisfied is that there must be serious prospects of success. Another is that the use of arms must not result in graver evils and disorders than the evil to be eliminated.<sup>1</sup> The picture Molan paints – perhaps inadvertently – is of a large scale, very violent insurgency in which no one is safe and in which the resources of a very large military force are stretched to the limit. For the Coalition, there are three solutions: get out of Iraq altogether; carry on with a seemingly no-win, no-lose campaign; or do as was eventually done and boost troop numbers (the so-called Surge) and fight the insurgency to a standstill if that be possible. In these circumstances, the principles are not much help. They are no more than that, mere statements of ideals rather than directives, which the Church could not issue anyway. Ultimately, as the Catechism makes very plain, evaluating the conditions for a just war is the responsibility of those with legitimate authority. What it means further is that soldiers, especially senior officers like Molan, must decide for themselves on the basis both of the principles and of their professional knowledge, experience and judgement in an environment which is not static. Mistakes will be made, that is human. But the mistakes are more likely to be made by those with inadequate knowledge and experience, by those who rely upon media headlines or raw emotion, or by those who do not understand the nature of a violent and ruthless enemy.

## Peter the Rock

**T**HERE WERE ... three degrees in the spiritual fatherhood or the priesthood: each primary social community or village, transubstantiated into a Church, received a spiritual father or priest; and all these priests together formed the lower clergy or the priesthood properly speaking. The provinces of the Empire, transubstantiated into eparchies or dioceses of different orders, each formed a large family with a common father in the person of the archiereus or bishop, the immediate father of the priests under him and through them of all the faithful of his diocese.

But all the spiritual social units of this second order represented by the episcopate, the particular Churches of cities, provinces and nations governed by prelates of all degrees (simple bishops, archbishops, metropolitans, primates or patriarchs) are only members of the Universal Church which must itself be manifest as a higher unit embracing all these members. The mere juxtaposition of its parts is not in fact enough to constitute a living body. It must possess a formal unity or substantial form which definitely embraces in actuality all the particular units, the elements and organs of which the body is composed.

And if the particular spiritual families which between them make up mankind are in reality to form a single Christian family, a single Universal Church, they must be subject to a common fatherhood embracing all Christian nations. To assert that there exist in reality nothing more than national Churches is to assert that the members of a body exist in and for themselves and that the body itself has no reality.

On the contrary, Christ did not found any particular Church. He created them all in the real unity of the Universal Church which He entrusted to Peter as the one supreme representative of the divine Fatherhood towards the whole family of the sons of Man.

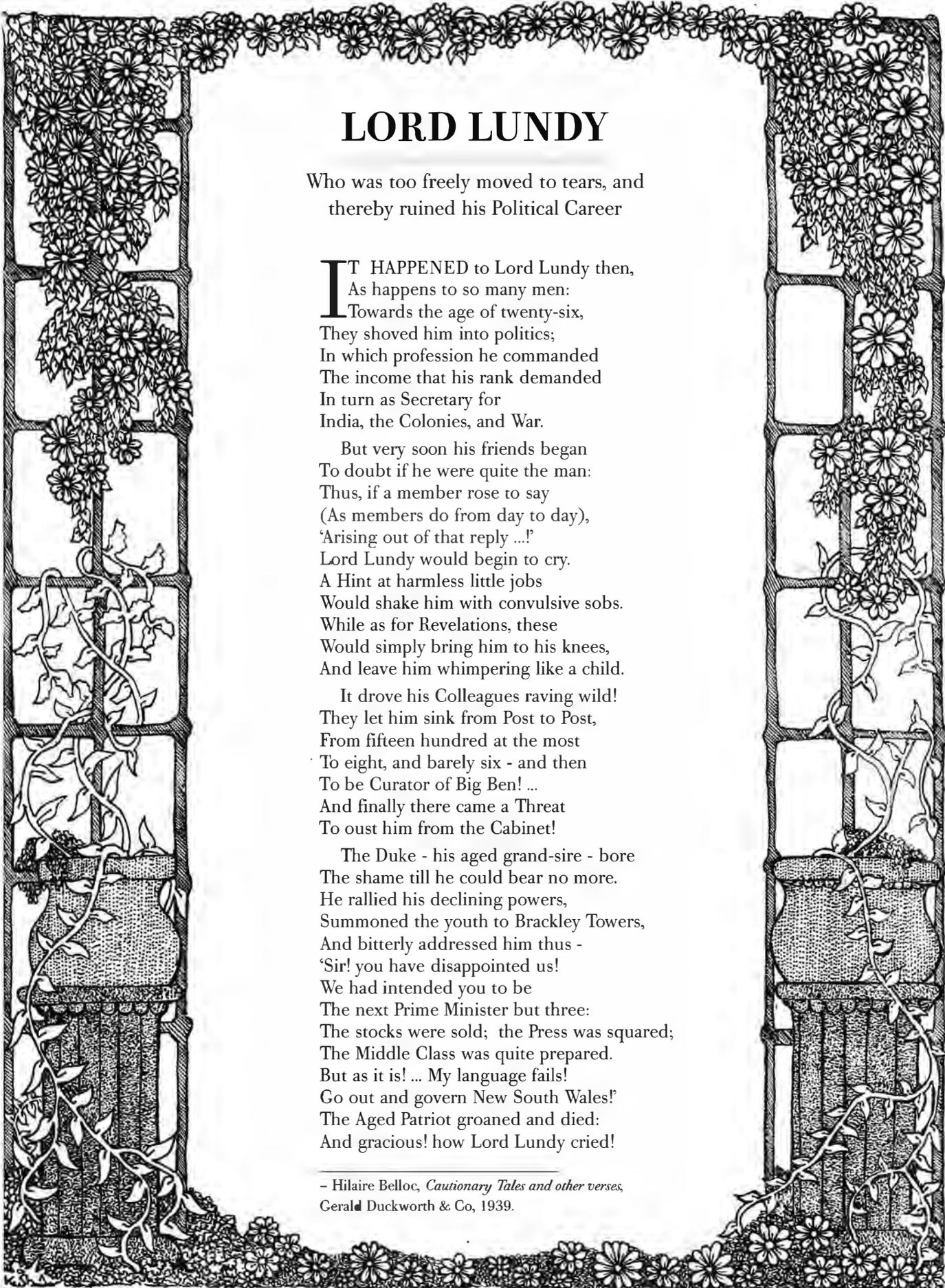
It was by no mere chance that Jesus Christ specially ascribed to the first divine hypostasis, the heavenly Father, that divine-human act which made Simon Bar-Jona the first social father of the whole human family and the infallible master of the school of mankind.

'It is not flesh and blood which have revealed it to thee – but My Father Who is in heaven.' God the Holy Trinity is as indivisible in His action *ad extra* as in His inner life. If St. Peter was divinely inspired, it was by God the Son and God the Holy Ghost as much as by God the Father, and since it was a matter of inspiration it might have seemed more appropriate to make special mention of the Holy Spirit who spake by the prophets.

But it is just here that we see the divine reason which governed every word of Christ, and the universal significance of His utterance to Peter. For it was not a matter of asserting that in this particular instance Simon had been inspired from above; that was as possible for him as for any of his fellows. But it was a matter of establishing in his favor the unique institution of universal fatherhood in the Church, the image and instrument of the divine Fatherhood; and therefore it was above all to the heavenly Father that the supreme reason and sanction for this institution was to be referred.

– *Russia and The Universal Church*, Vladimir Soloviev [1853-1900] translated by Herbert Rees, London, The Centenary Press, first published 1948

1 Catechism of the Catholic Church, Art 2309.



## LORD LUNDY

Who was too freely moved to tears, and  
thereby ruined his Political Career

**I**T HAPPENED to Lord Lundy then,  
As happens to so many men:  
Towards the age of twenty-six,  
They shoved him into politics;  
In which profession he commanded  
The income that his rank demanded  
In turn as Secretary for  
India, the Colonies, and War.

But very soon his friends began  
To doubt if he were quite the man:  
Thus, if a member rose to say  
(As members do from day to day),  
'Arising out of that reply ...'  
Lord Lundy would begin to cry.  
A Hint at harmless little jobs  
Would shake him with convulsive sobs.  
While as for Revelations, these  
Would simply bring him to his knees,  
And leave him whimpering like a child.

It drove his Colleagues raving wild!  
They let him sink from Post to Post,  
From fifteen hundred at the most  
To eight, and barely six - and then  
To be Curator of Big Ben! ...  
And finally there came a Threat  
To oust him from the Cabinet!

The Duke - his aged grand-sire - bore  
The shame till he could bear no more.  
He rallied his declining powers,  
Summoned the youth to Brackley Towers,  
And bitterly addressed him thus -  
'Sir! you have disappointed us!  
We had intended you to be  
The next Prime Minister but three:  
The stocks were sold; the Press was squared;  
The Middle Class was quite prepared.  
But as it is! ... My language fails!  
Go out and govern New South Wales!  
The Aged Patriot groaned and died:  
And gracious! how Lord Lundy cried!

- Hilaire Belloc, *Cautionary Tales and other verses*,  
Gerald Duckworth & Co, 1939.

## I've Loved You So Long

Novelist Philippe Claudel's debut movie as writer/director. And what a debut: intense, charming and profoundly moving because of a *tour de force* by Kristen Scott Thomas, her acting austere, steadfast, charged with a desolation where salty tears have dried.

Scott Thomas is Juliette Fontaine, united with her younger sister Lea (Elsa Zylberstein) and the latter's husband, children and friends in Paris after a mysterious absence in England. To say more would be to wreck the gossamer unfolding of Juliette's agonised past mediated through her sister in a duet of sibling love rather than rivalry.

Claudel, who bears the name of France's great Catholic playwright, Paul Claudel, eschews overt religious symbolism except for one eye-catching shot of an antique angel, poised in an art gallery – an image of Juliette's Guardian Angel?

No question Kristen Scott Thomas is a greater performer in French than in English: a phenomenon of disciplined grace. If she doesn't win an Oscar for Best Actress in a foreign language film, what's the French for? 'There ain't no justice.'

M★★★★★NFFV

## Ghost Town

Dentistry is no laughing matter. But Ricky Gervais extracts (ouch) a full set of smiles in the role of Dr Bertram Pincus, a misogynist who meets an Egyptologist Gwen Herlihy (Tea Leoni). She is contemplating re-marriage.

Does Pincus cast off misogamy to prevent it? No and yes but only at the urging of her late husband Frank Herlihy (Greg Kinnear). He is a ghost encountered after Pincus's recovery from a near death experience who wants him to prevent the re-marriage.

Director David Koops and co-writer John Kamps maintain the comedy spirit amid appropriately sophisticated locations: Upper Eastside Manhattan apartments, Central Park and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Given this, credit to Koops for enabling Ricky Gervais to keep his London accent, as essential to his humour as his tics which provide a perfect foil to Kinnear's chipmunk grin and Leoni's flashing charm.

## MOVIES

By JAMES MURRAY

Unfair to give full details of how Pincus impresses Gwen with a hypothesis on what killed her favourite mummy, Tutankhamen. The hypothesis, it can be said, is as toothy as the rest of the comedy which also involves other ghosts, other problems.

M★★★★★NFFV

## The Wrestler

Director Darren Aronofsky opens with a montage of memorabilia depicting wrestler Randy (The Ram) Robinson's glory days. He then cuts, on the rising roar of a crowd, to The Ram, beaten up but not completely down, still trading in rehearsed but risky mayhem, still hoping for a win.

Comeback clichés. What transmuted them to the Venice Golden Lion Award was the casting of Mickey Rourke. His acting and boxing career anticipated The Ram's self-destructive highs and lows so that Rourke – coming on like a Samson with long, bottle-blond hair who looks like he's been head-butting bulldozers – grips attention throughout.

Playing opposite him as a single mother, Cassidy, is Marisa Tomei, tough, tremulous, self-disgusted with her work as a poledancer/stripper amid shadowy, avid fans.

She and The Ram exist in a New Jersey cityscape where the buildings – supermarkets, trailer homes, American Legion halls, casinos – are made of might-have-beens.

It is a cityscape also inhabited by The Ram's estranged daughter (Evan Rachel Wood) with whom he tries to reconnect despite his tendency to brutal alcoholic and sexual excess.

Aronofsky and his co-writer Robert D Siegel capture the tawdry, raw humour of these lives and The Ram's temptation to a last bout against the fake-Arab Ayatollah (ex-pro wrestler Ernest, The Cat, Miller).

The ending is indeterminate but Aronofsky does allow The Ram one moment of grace: a prayer and a sign of the cross. These, it must be added, are what Mickey Rourke, actor, has confessed saved him.

TBA★★★★NFFV

## Quantum of Solace

There's little solace in this sequel to *Casino Royale*, first and best of the James Bond novels. From its white-knuckle, opening car-chase almost to the end director Marc Forster indulges in crash-bang-wallop.

Daniel Craig has brought muscle to the part but basically he's Pooh, the bear of little brain. Okay, Ian Fleming described Bond as 'a blunt instrument'. Time, however, to remember he based Bond less on himself than his sibling, Peter Fleming, a more intrepid adventurer and writer who early in World War II was assigned to organise UK resistance groups against the possibility of Nazi occupation.

Paul Haggis, the principal scriptwriter, has done this one by the numbers, inspiring the notion that the plot is offal. In other words, same-old secretive organisation, Quantum (not based on Wall Street), which plans to dominate the world through a South American deal masterminded by Dominic Greene (Matthieu Alamaric), who survived *Casino Royale* to grin evilly in this one.

The romance is provided by Camille (Olga Kurylenko) who like Bond is bent more on revenge than love. The enduring relationship is Bond's with M. She, as played by Judy Dench, has come to dominate: a tough cookie, baked from gunpowder and vinegar plus a tincture of honey. You get the sense that when Bond says, 'Yes, ma'am', he really means 'Sorry, Mum, I've been a naughty boy.'

M★★★★NFFV

## Defiance

Opens with fearsome black and white archival footage showing an SS round-up of Jews somewhere in Belarus, then part of the Soviet Union. The footage is so authentic its effect bleeds through when director Edward Zwick mixes to colour for his startling yet true story of the Bielsky Brothers who sustained a growing band of Jewish refugees in Belarus's vast forest areas during World War II.

The brothers, Jews, non-intellectuals, hard-drinking smugglers, are played by Leiv Schreiber and Daniel Craig. Here it must be said Craig responds to the authenticity of the material with a performance of primal power that makes his Bond appear, well, wimpish.

Schreiber emulates him as they split over whether to be pro-active in attacking Nazi forces or re-active when attacked. Economy is the keynote. When a forest-dweller is hanged as 'Jew-lover', they bury him without ceremony except for a rough cross at his gravehead.

The end credits reveal the fate of the Bielsky Brothers. One was killed in action after joining the Soviet Army. At war's end, the other emigrated to the United States where he ran a small trucking business without seeking credit for his life-saving exploits.

M★★★★NFFV

### American Teen

Since they invented the teenage concept, Americans have wrought more variations on it than on the T-Model Ford. Writer/director Nanette Burstein has come up with yet another: a documentary focusing on the suburban lives and high-school times of five students in Warsaw, Indiana.

Each is from a different background, awaiting the exam and application results that will take them away from home to college, their lives echoing any number of dramas, comedies and musicals.

The raw honesty of their responses, however, and the responses of their parents to Burstein's camera transcend the echoes. The five are Hannah Bailey; Megan Krizmanich, Jake Tusing, Colin Clemens and Mitch Reinholt. Burstein, confident that she has made us care shows what has happened to them.

M★★★★NFFV

### High School: The Musical Senior 3

After test-marketing its high school variation on television, Disney has released this feature movie sequel. It's hyperactive enough to make you theorise it may be a subliminal advertisement for Ritalin. Or the visual equivalent of Coco-Pops.

Clever stuff. Its director Kenny Ortega has skewed the expected characters. Troy (Zac Efron), the sports hero, becomes a song and dance man. Gabriella (Vanessa Hudgens), the prom queen, is a brainiac not a dim-bulb blonde.

Ortega has also reconstructed conventional film grammar to give it non-stop TV pace, the reality narrative

### 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 over; MA 15+: restrictions apply to persons under the age of 15; R 18+: Restricted to adults, 18 years and over.

### Annals supplementary advice

SFFV: Suitable For Family Viewing; NFFV: Not For Family Viewing.

blending with fantasy musical numbers in the manner of hard news blending with television ads.

G★★★★SFFV

### Pride and Glory

Despite a police funeral – Irish and Scots bagpipes and the muted thunder of drums – director Gavin O'Connor provides more gore than glory, more shame than pride in this cop movie about generational conflict amid drug-driven corruption.

The basic story is by O'Connor, brother Gregory, sons of a policeman, and Robert Hopes, the screenplay by Joe Carnahan and Gavin O'Connor. No lack of Irish-Americanism, then, as the Tierneys are introduced in New York's Washington Heights precinct: Francis Tierney Jr (Noah Emmerich), Ray Tierney (Edward Norton) and their brother-in-law Jimmy Egan (Colin Farrell).

After four cops are fatally shot during a drug-bust, Francis Tierney Sr (Jon Voight), family patriarch and chief of detectives, persuades Ray to come in on the case. His reluctance is prophetic. His investigation leads homewards.

The ensemble acting has a haunting, manic quality intensified by Declan Quinn's cinematography which puts you inside the action. The movie's power recalls director William Wyler's 1950s classic, *Detective Story*, starring Kirk Douglas and Eleanor Parker.

MA15+★★★★NFFV

### The Combination

No cops in the main action of this thriller although it's about the gangs of Sydney's Western Suburbs. John Morkos (George Basha) exits gaol to discover his younger brother Charlie (Firass Dirani) in conflict with a state-school gang led by Scott (Vaughn White) and in extra-curricular gun-toting crime controlled by Ibo (Michael Denkha).

He also meets and falls in love with Sydney (Clare Bowen). Her Anglo-Australian family disdains him, his family welcomes her while he works as a cleaner in a gym run by the Aborigine Wes (Tony Ryan) who offers the chance of pro-boxing.

Ibo looms, and Charlie's debt to him forces John to a different kind of fight.

Veteran actor David Field makes a brilliant debut as director yet resists the temptation to do a Hitchcock, making this one of the few local movies in which he has not appeared. From his cast of professionals and off-the-street amateurs, he draws intense performances amid vivid suburban locations, alive with multi-lingual yabber and music.

George Basha also wrote the script, based on his life experience. Behind the turf wars, the drug dealing, and the generalised sleaze, the movie is imbued with the good intent of avoiding stereotyping.

By its use of religious images, however, it is made clear that the Morkos family is Lebanese Christian. Thus the good intent is blurred; television news footage appears to link them at least sympathetically with the Cronulla beach riots, widely reported at the time as involving Euro-Australians and Lebanese Muslims. Fair to ask whether in avoiding stereotypes the movie and its makers may just – inadvertently – have shuffled them.

TBA★★★★NFFV

### City of Ember

Deep below earth's surface lies Ember, designed to be a refuge for humanity overtaken by annihilation, and powered by a hydro-electric generator with a 200-year warranty. Amid the glitter, interrupted increasingly by blackouts, Ember's people have been told, generation after generation, that upwards is everlasting darkness.

Mayor Cole (Bill Murray) and his offside Barton Snode (Toby Jones) personify threadbare ambivalence masquerading as hope. The fantasy Ember's governance includes children being assigned their lifetime jobs by lottery.

Among them is Lina Mayfleet (Saoirse Ronan). She is delighted to swap her Pipeworks assignment for the messenger job of Doon Harrow (Harry Treadaway).

The swap enables both to discover Ember's exit secret with help from Doon's inventor father Loris (Tim Robbins), engineer Sul (Martin Landau) and Clary (Marianne Jean-Baptiste), whose greens ward off scurvy.

Gil Kenan directs with brio from a script by Caroline Thompson and the novel by writer/illustrator Jeanne Duprau. Magnificent sets by Martin Laing, costumes by Ruth Myers and camera work by Xavier Perez Grobet make for high tension in the will-they-won't-they escape sequences. The ending is truly a surprise. Be warned: there's a rampaging, really scary monster who loves food in general as well as people who get between it and tinned baked beans.

G★★★★SFFV

## Igor

In the cartoon Kingdom of Malaria, evil inventions mean prosperity. They are promoted through an Evil Science Fair, the winning invention being used by King Malbert of Malaria to threaten the world's citizens unless they pay a preposterous sum, say, the equivalent of a GST or a motor-company bailout.

Igor, keen to rise above his station as slave to Dr Glickenstein, sets out to create a monster and duly does. But his creation turns out to be less a monster than a sweetheart, Jaelyn. How Igor turns this to good account forms the rest of the cartoon.

The story line by Chris McKenna is reminiscent of Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein: or the Modern Prometheus*, written in 1818 and first brought to the screen in 1931 with Boris Karloff. The title character bears a resemblance to Quasimodo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* as played by Charles Laughton way back in 1939.

Children may not make these cineaste connection although even

they may find the computer-generated images reminiscent also of Tim Burton's more recent body of work.

Igor is directed by Tony Leondis; its voice actors include John Cusack in the title role, Jennifer Coolidge as Jaelyn. John Cleese as Dr Glickenstein and Eddie Izzard as Dr Schadenfreude (the cartoon's best, but not only, joke).

G★★★★SFFV

## The View from Greenhaven

East-west home's best sums up the theme of this comedy which is as bitter-sweet as a cumquat. Wendy Hughes plays a frustrated wife, Chris Haywood her husband, a grump with a Santa Claus heart.

For pilots flying time makes all the difference. For actors it's camera time. Few have logged as much of the latter as Hughes and Haywood, once a summer item, now autumnal co-stars, lending their talent to neophyte filmmakers Kenn and Simon MacRae.

If Haywood takes the honours, it's only because he gets to use a motorbike in his climactic scene. The understated confidence and charm of the MacRae debut derives from winning the million-dollar Affleck-Damon Greenlight contest; it signals that the Brothers MacCrae may be set for a bright future.

PG★★★★SFFV

## Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa

Bigger, brighter than the original, this sequel is directed by Eric Darnell and Tom McGrath who co-wrote it with Etan Cohen. Neatly they mix child and adult appeal in giving us New York's Central Park Zoo's escaped denizens.

Aboard a jumbo – what else? – they head for Africa babbling in the voices



of Ben Stiller, Chris Rock, Jada Pinkett Smith and Alec Baldwin.

After their jumbo crashes, they endure reverse cultural shock while coping with their wilderness counterparts. This while the penguins of the piece, who have no African counterparts, rebuild the crashed plane.

Will they make it back home to the zoo, four square meals a day and yet another sequel? More intriguingly, the sub-text of the cartoon seems to be James Wolf's classic novel, *You Can't Go Home Again*.

G★★★★SFFV

## Rocknrolla

Writer/director Guy Ritchie's muse has not been his wife-in-parting, Madonna. His concentration on Cockney mayhem, begun with *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, shows odder – much odder – muses: the Kray Twins whose lethal villainy was as integral to London's Swinging Sixties as the antics of the Rolling Stones.

Ritchie has updated the Kray legend by adding Russian *mafya* to local *tearaways*, their currency euros not *quids*. But his gang boss Lenny Cole (Tom Wilkinson) and his offside Archie (Mark Strong) are surrogates for Ronnie and Reggie Kray.

Tearaways in attendance include One Two (Gerard Butler), Mumbles (Idris Elba) and Handsome Bob (Tom Hardy). They, with covert help from accountant Stella (Thandie Newton) seek to outwit developer Uri (Karel Roden) and his hardmen.

The cast perform with a ferocious *élan* that nudges caricature. The double crosses of the main plot and a sub-plot involving Lenny's drug-addled rockstar Johnny Ould (Toby Kebbell) attain an operatic falsity.

Their equivalent in reality would have given Reggie and Ronnie a headache and sent them home to Mum for a cuppa. Nonetheless, Ritchie ends his movie in franchise mode: a reconciliation scene between Archie and Johnny hints at a sequel.

MA15+★★NFFV

## Newcastle

Blunt title. But writer/director Dan Castle makes clear the complexity of his ambitions through director of cinematography Richard Michalak's

evocative opening montage of shots of Newcastle, New South Wales.

Castle is aiming for a movie that shows the extraordinary nature of surfing around an industrial city, once a powerhouse, now getting by on a wave, a prayer and coal.

His plot includes Jesse (Lachlan Buchanan), a young surfer, both inspired and inhibited by the exploits of his elder brother Victor (Reshad Strik).

Castle weakens his movie by his failure to realise that intensity grows from restraint. He expends too much footage taking us beyond *Puberty Blues* in explicitness while curtailing his key scenes of fatal aggression for waves.

And oddly Castle does not take his female characters into the water as surfers. Yet in a final sequence there's the great Layne Beachley, women's world champion, acting as a judge.

Christ Church Cathedral may loom in the background. But religion for Castle's characters is the wave – above all the wave that may carry them out of Newcastle into the world of pro-surfing.

MA15+★★★NFFV

### Vicki Cristina Barcelona

Writer/director Woody Allen is back but not alone. In significant sequences of his romantic comedy he appears to be mimicking the Hispanic screen bard, Pedro Amalvar.

Not a complete surprise this. Allen's stated location is Barcelona in the shadow of Antonio Gaudi's magnificent Familia Sagrada. That said, there is little holy or family about the cat's cradle of affairs Allen contrives through sensible Vicki (Rebecca Hall), scatty Cristina (Scarlett Johansson) and the love-artist Juan Antonio (Javier Bardem).

Add Maria Elena (Penelope Cruz), Juan's estranged wife, and the cat's cradle explodes into a fireworks display of wit and worldly wisdom.

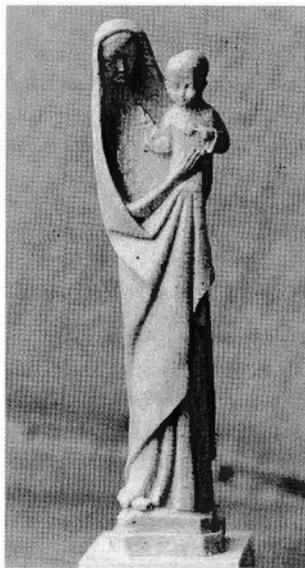
Vicki and Cristina are Americans. Through them Allen seems to be channelling Henry James and his idea that Americans are inhibited, Europeans wild. Certainly Cruz's multi-talented, seductive Maria Elena shoots the dramatic tone to exalted heights enrapturing everyone on screen.

MA15+★★★NFFV

### The Wackness

Teenager Luke Shapiro (Josh Peck)

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sells marijuana from an icecream cart on the streets of 1994 New York as part of his rite of passage while awaiting college. How cool is that, writer/director Jonathan Levine seems to be saying.

In his trafficking, Luke meets Steph (Olivia Thirlby) and sees her between sessions with his psychiatrist Dr Squires (Ben Kingsley) who happens to be her stepfather.

As Luke falls in love with Steph, Squires falls out of love with his wife Kristen (Famke Janssen) and into the arms of a much younger woman (Mary-Kate Olsen)

The meaning of the title – New York slang – is as obscure as the film, a mix of teenage angst and mid-life crisis. Peck's performance mixes shyness and chutzpah. Kingsley shows that his acting spectrum now extends from Gandhi to zaniness, spirituality to hilarity.

MA15+★★★NFFV

### Nights in Rodanthe

In a beach-house dreaming world, the star of this romance is neither Richard Gere nor Diane Lane, it is a tall, creaking weatherboard rising from the golden sands of the title's North Carolina fishing village.

Gere and Lane's characters, Paul, plastic surgeon, and Adrienne, housewife, are at a moment in their lives when they must find a way forward, he from an operation that went fatally wrong, she from a marriage founded on infidelity.

Director George C Wolfe works from Ann Peacock's script and a novel by Nicholas (*The Notebook*) Sparks. And it is hard work. The plot creaks like the weatherboard in the hurricane that sweeps over Paul and Adrienne.

All's well that end's well doesn't quite sum up the *dénouement* in which Wolfe brings on wild horses to drag a metaphor of hope along the golden sands.

PG★★★NFFV

### Sex Drive

On the frayed thread of romantic comedy, director Sean Anders and co-writer John Morris string a plethora of ribald sequences. The result is like watching a fast motion pile-up of hackneyed moments from too many teenage movies.

Anders does try for sweet originality. His hero Ian Lafferty (Josh Zuckerman) markets doughnuts, dressed in a giant doughnut suit.

Frustrated in every sense he takes off in a vintage Pontiac GTO to meet his Internet dream girl accompanied by his best friends Lance (Clark Duke) and Felicia (Amanda Crew).

Talented players, abetted by James Marsden as Ian's elder brother Rex owner of the Pontiac Yeah, true love prevails but only after Anders shovels aside heaps of rubbish.

Zuckerman's resemblance to the young Richard Benjamin makes you realise this kind of rubbish has been going on since *Portnoy's Complaint* (1972). Would that distinguished man of letters, Philip Roth, have written his novel had he known the tsunami of dreck it would release on the world?

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MA15+★★NFFV



*Excelsior! Once more into the Winston mountains*

## CHURCHILL'S LAST POST

Reviewed by JAMES MURRAY



NE of the signs on the blitzed walls of Britain during World War II read: 'Is your journey really necessary?' The question is relevant to Graham Freudenberg's necessity to traverse the lifescape of Winston Spencer Churchill.

After all Churchill himself raised a monument of Himalayan immensity, its Everest, the six-volume, *The Second World War*, its Kanchenjunga, *The Official Biography* (raw material Churchill, navvying by his son Randolph Churchill, followed by Martin Gilbert for a total of eight volumes). Numerous other authors have created adjuncts.

So impressive is the total monument that it calls up a paraphrase: 'My name is Churchill. Look on my works, ye hacks, and despair.'

Freudenberg did not despair. A speechwriter of prodigious gifts, his clients have included a conjugation of Labor eminences: Arthur Calwell, Gough Whitlam, Neville Wran, Bob Hawke and Bob Carr. And if no man is a hero to his valet, no politician intimidates a speechwriter, not even Churchill who wrote his own but did not always deliver them personally.

As a result Freudenberg's treatment of Churchill mixes scepticism and admiration, iconoclasm fighting idolatry but not prevailing. And not only with Churchill. Ever seeking balance, Freudenberg early cites Australian Prime Minister Alfred Deakin reaching London in 1907 for the Colonial Conference with a magnificent imperial concept and the eloquence to sell it only to see it founder on the rocks of *realpolitik*.

From this, Freudenberg contends, Churchill wrongly drew the lifelong conclusion that Australian politicians acted with domestic politics in mind. Freudenberg's accounts of the activities of Robert Menzies and Herbert Evatt

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*Churchill and Australia*  
by Graham Freudenberg  
Macmillan rrp \$55

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are evidence for an alternative view. Outside the time-frame of his work, John Howard and Kevin Rudd also appear to suffer from Deakinities.

Moving right along – and he maintains an admirably fast clip – Freudenberg reaches Gallipoli where he goes with the received wisdom that it was always and inevitably a disaster for Churchill. The commander-in-chief, General Sir Ian Hamilton, rates generous mentions but possibly not generous enough.

Discussing Keith Murdoch's part in Hamilton – and Churchill's – downfall through the notorious Gallipoli Letter, Freudenberg relates how Murdoch en route for London, carried an earlier revelatory letter from British war correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. At Marseilles, Murdoch was stopped and the letter confiscated by intelligence officers, 'tipped off by one of Ashmead-Bartlett's press rivals'.

True but true enough? The 'rival' was one of the great journalists of his day, Sir Henry Nevinson of what was then *The Manchester Guardian*. He knew Hamilton from Boer War coverage. Moreover he was the reporter who exposed the Belgian Congo atrocities. To call him Ashmead-Bartlett's rival is to compliment the latter, a beat-up merchant.

To exemplify Churchill's ruthlessness in the opening phase of World War II, Freudenberg refers to his refusing French Prime Minister Paul Weygand war planes. Context: seeking to keep France in the war Churchill offered a generous union with Britain. For the same reason, he sacrificed the 51st Highland Division, ordering that it should maintain its fighting position at

St Valery while the rest of the Second British Expeditionary Force was being evacuated from Dunkirk.

Result: most of the 51st, ordered to surrender, became prisoners of war, only a few elements, evacuated or escaped, remained. This episode, fudged at the time, may have caused Menzies, questioned about Australian casualties, to remark, as Freudenberg records, 'What about Scotland?'

Various Australian misconceptions are Freudenberg main targets. Among them that John Curtin's New Year 1942 message (in the Saturday magazine of *The Herald*, Melbourne) about future reliance on the United States led to a breach between Australia and Britain. Freudenberg argues the contrary and adduces convincing chapter and verse.

Less convincing is the suggestion that although Curtin's press secretary Don Rodgers wrote the message, it was Curtin's. 'In such a relationship, the question of "who wrote what?" is immaterial.' Freudenberg reinforces this dictum by referring to his own experience as a speechwriter. Yet he and his clients were upfront about ghosting while Rodgers hid his.

If there was nothing untoward in it, why was the letter revealing it to be opened only after his death (1978)?

As it turned out, Keith Murdoch enhanced the message's status. In London at the time, he wrote a piece for *The Daily Mail* and a letter to *The Times* (old contacts) interpreting the message as a Curtin demand for high-level consultation and not a turning to the United States, surely an early example of what is now called spin?

Question 1: Did Murdoch concert the spin with Rodgers and/or Curtin? Question 2: In the volleying of cables between Curtin and Churchill how much did Curtin write and how much did Rodgers? Question 3: How much did Churchill write?

Solution – go, Notre Dame Australia – there’s a PhD in running the Churchill-Curtin cables through a computer to establish whose is what stylistically.

Whatever the timing of Australia’s shift to the US from the UK, Freudenberg is clear – and elegiac – on the power shift from the British Empire to the US *imperium*.

He refers to President Roosevelt’s key adviser Harry Hopkins but without saying he embodied the Manifest Destiny that enabled the US to acquire what had been Spanish Empire territories and, as prelude to Lend-Lease British controlled places.

Yet another misconception targeted: Robert Menzies always hero-worshipped Churchill. By quotation after quotation Freudenberg shows that Menzies initially was no infatuated Aussie at the Court of King Winston. His assessments of Churchill in private conversation and coded cables to Australia were mordant.

Menzies met Irish leader Eamon de Valera who kept Ireland (Eire) neutral during World War II. This, Freudenberg suggests, was against Churchill’s wishes. Is this necessarily so? Menzies could have been into what he was into later during the Suez Crisis: trying to be a circuit-breaker.

Freudenberg juxtaposes the meeting and Churchill’s stated preference for Ulstermen (Protestant) as ‘improved Scotsmen’. Churchill was, of course, speaking of Northern Ireland gerrymandered from historic Ulster and its mainly Catholic counties – Donegal, Fermanagh, Monaghan – whose people, with their co-religionists in the rest of neutral Ireland, provided so many volunteers for the British forces.

Welcome clarity comes in descriptions of disputes over the deployment of Australian forces, particularly the 9th Division of the AIF. The author does not spare Curtin for urging its return even when, post-Tobruk, its defining action, it was deployed for First and Second Alamein, its greatest actions (under Auchinleck and Montgomery respectively).

Eloquence is added to clarity when Freudenberg writes: ‘El Alamein was the last battle of the British Empire. The ranks of Montgomery’s 8th Army were its last grand roll-call: the 9th Division, the 2nd New Zealand Division, the 1st South African Division, the 4th Indian

## Artifice and Entertainment

POLITICAL leaders in our post-literate society no longer need to be competent, sincere or honest. They only need to appear to have these qualities. Most of all they need a story, a narrative. The reality of the narrative is irrelevant. It can be completely at odds with the facts. The consistency and emotional appeal of the story are paramount. The most essential skill in political theatre and the consumer culture is artifice. Those who are best at artifice succeed. Those who have not mastered the art of artifice fail. In an age of images and entertainment, in an age of instant emotional gratification, we do not seek or want honesty. We ask to be indulged and entertained by clichés.

– ‘America the Illiterate,’ By Chris Hedges, *Information Clearing House*, 16 November 2008

Division, the 5th Indian Brigade, the Baluchi Regiment, the Rajputana Rifles, and regiments of the British army with traditions reaching back to Marlborough and Wellington.’

Fine peroration. Yet in this order of battle no direct reference to the 51st Highland Division. But wasn’t it ordered to surrender at St Valery and imprisoned? It was. It reformed round its evacuated elements, and spear-headed the longest advance of World War II: Alamein to Rome.

Ian Hamilton’s Gallipoli mentions have been covered His last mention relates to General Sir Archibald Percival, who surrendered Singapore, and is described as a ‘more tragic version’ of Hamilton. Freudenberg, a connoisseur of irony missed caviare here.

Hamilton provided an official report pointing out the inadequacies of the Singapore defences. It was ignored just as during the Gallipoli campaign his pleas for reinforcements and younger generals were ignored.

Reference is made to the *Parramatta*, first ship of the Royal Australian Navy, launched at ‘the Gowan shipyard in Scotland’. Gowan? Could this be a misprint for Govan? So which Govan shipyard: Stephens, Harland & Wolf or Fairfield? This reviewer would prefer

the latter; he was born within sound of its riveting guns.

Private soldiers are few. Generals abound. Above all, in the context of the book, is Churchill’s choice as Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Alan Brooke, vividly described as, ‘Stiff-necked, cocksure, and censorious of everyone – Churchill included – Brooke approached life with an utter self-belief bred into his family by 300 years of Protestant Irish ascendancy.’

Witty with it, Brooke, perhaps by osmosis from his birthplace Bagnere-de-Bigore, France. Emphatically, he was ready to say no to Churchill who was surrounded by noddies. Curtin was also a nay-sayer from a vastly different background (Irish-Australian Catholic).

The blemishes of Freudenberg’s work are minor, like his use of English/England as synonyms for British/Britain, veins in the monumental marble of his prose.

Compared to the Churchillian Himalayas and all their foothills, how does the Freudenberg work stack up? Some would say, given his Canberra-centric viewpoint, it is merely a Mount Ainslie.

Not so, he has transcended localism to give his work international scope. Think Mount Kosciuszko. Think also the Churchillian gift of combining journalistic, deadline pace with apt selection from a diamond pipe, a goldfield of material which could supply a new literary franchise: *Churchill and New Zealand*, *Churchill and Ireland*, *Churchill and Canada*, *Churchill and the Vatican...*

Wisely Freudenberg has embedded the most telling summing up of Winston Churchill in a text taken from Alan Brooke’s diaries: ‘God knows where we should be without him, but God knows where we shall go with him.’

God did know. So now do we: the child is father to the man, this child’s father, a lord, died mad of syphilis. His mother was wayward, depriving him of the sustaining love of his hired Nanny, leaving him to fight what he called his Black Dog, depression, and conquer it to maintain a kind of freedom that still endures.

JAMES MURRAY is a Glasgow-born Catholic. A Sydney-based writer his career includes ten years in Fleet Street, and contributions to Australia’s major publications. He writes *Annals* film reviews, and is the author of our ever-popular *Media Matters*.



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