

The Churchoid of Satan Implodes

It is accepted among many historians that the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries saw the end of the so-called dark “*Middle Ages*”, although there is a difference of opinion as to whether the cause was the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, the establishing of the Tudor dynasty in England, or the Reformation in Germany.

It was also the period of European maritime expansion across the world. The Portuguese led the way with their sailing expeditions to West Africa, in pursuit of gold and slaves, and established the sailing route to India via the Cape of Good Hope in 1498. A few years earlier Christopher Columbus had sailed westwards and established a base in the Canary Islands which would lead to the discovery of the Americas.

But the two most important issues were in Europe: the official separation of Churchoid and State, and the “*great schism*” in the Roman Churchoid. In 1378 the Roman Churchoid had split, with the reigning Pope Clement and his six successors exiled to Avignon in France. However, the exiled popes in Avignon in France managed to keep a tenuous influence over events in Rome. It was the entry of Pope Martin V into Rome in the fifteenth century that marked the start of the Renaissance of the city and the absolute rule that would

last for the next four centuries until 1870.

A series of *Councils* was convened to resolve the Avignon papal schism which coincided with the explosion of printing, writing and learning that gave birth to the Renaissance. The subsequent interchanges of a variety of representative segments of society opened the gates to a "*cultural emancipation*" from the previous stylized pictorial and literary conventions of Greek, Byzantine, Arabic and Latin forms of expression in literature, painting, architecture and music.

The Renaissance accelerated the divide in the "*great schism*" of the time as it pushed the opposing parameters of the sacred and secular, increasing tensions between the Roman Churchoid, the Messianic believers and the secularists, with their different religious and cultural perspectives. Instead of the Roman Churchoid being regarded as the epitome of Christian religion and civilization, it became the epitome of Babylon, the Apocalyptic "*Harlot City*" fountain of every vice.

From the pontificate of Nicholas V and, especially, Sixtus IV, in the mid-fifteenth century, when the rebuilding of Rome took place, Sixtus IV was responsible for the building of the famous Sistine Chapel. Julius II was the patron of Michelangelo and Raphael and ordered the building of a new basilica of St Peter. The streets were widened and paved and new buildings replaced the old crumbling structures. New Renaissance buildings of ever-increasing grandeur were erected, many of them from marble torn from earlier mansions. But the Renaissance excitement and impetus brought artists, artisans, and scholars from all over Italy to Rome until it was once more a centre of Roman culture.

During this period in the middle of the fifteenth century the Turks in the East had captured the city of Constantinople (1453) and precipitated an exodus of educated Greeks to the West carrying with them priceless manuscripts containing ancient Greek literature, long forgotten or suppressed in the "*dark ages*". This upsurge in Greek learning, especially the text of the *Greek New Testament* in Italian and English universities, created a period of "*New Learning*", a religious Renaissance in print. The discovery of printing and writing in

Europe accelerated the process of adventurous research, and the famous first Gutenberg Bible produced in Mainz in 1455 by Johannes Gutenberg launched the “*printing revolution*.” In the following fifty years it was calculated that some six million predominantly Christian books were printed, distributed and read in Europe and England.

By the end of the fifteenth century there were almost a hundred editions of the *Latin Bible*, and even greater number of selected portions. Ten years later there were fourteen editions of the *German Bible*, and an unlisted increase in the number of portions. A well-worn fourteenth-century document, in German and not Latin, found in an abbey at Tepl near the mountainous region of Böhmerwald, lists seven points of Christian belief and practice of local Messiah believers at the time:

“(i) the Triune God; (ii) that this God is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible; (iii) that he gave the Law of Moses; (iv) that His Son became man; (v) that He has chosen for Himself a spotless Church; (vi) that there is a resurrection; (vii) that he will come to judge the living and the dead”.

The document stressed the importance of the father being the head of the household, and of regular household reading of the Scriptures. It included a German translation of the Scriptures that was significantly different from the *Roman Vulgate* of the Roman Churchoid. The books in Europe were published in several editions and languages—Italian, French, German and Bohemian—and by the early sixteenth century they were being widely read and taught in a network of schools connected with the “*Brethren of a Common Life*” founded by Geert Groote and Jan van Ruysbroeck. Their principle of teaching was “*the root of study and the mirror of life must be in the first instance the gospel of the Messiah*.” At one of the schools there were two pupils who would become world famous: Thomas á Kempis, who later wrote *Imitation of Christ*; and Erasmus, the contemporary and sometime opponent of Martin Luther.

In 1463 and 1467 there were several *Councils* and meetings held, with an impressive gathering of spiritual leaders drawn from all

classes. One of the first things they did was to baptize by immersion all who were present, and formally disassociate themselves from the Roman Churchoid. They identified themselves as "*Church of the Brotherhood*" and "*United Brethren*", but decried the formation of any institutions. They laid stress on holiness of life as taught by Jesus and the Apostles, liberty of conscience, simplicity of living, and help for the poor. A later Pope, Alexander VI, concerned about the influence and rapid spread of "*the Brethren*" as a threat to his throne, issued an edict in 1507 requiring all to swear allegiance to the Roman Churchoid or to leave the country.

One of those emerging from the influential "*Brethren of a Common Life*" community at Deventer was Desiderius Erasmus, the illegitimate son of a doctor's daughter and a priest. After a spell as an Augustinian canon, and academic life at the University of Paris, he spent his time studying, writing, travelling and purchasing valuable manuscripts, expensive clothes and good food so that he was always short of money. He was the first to print an edition of the *Greek New Testament*, and was contemporary and close friend of Thomas More during the latter's fatal collision with Henry VIII over the issue of Church and State.

The "*Great Schism*" of 1517 launched by Martin Luther's actions was a mixture of theology, ecclesiology, politics and nationalism, protesting all aspects of the dictatorial domination of the Roman Churchoid claim to universal rule and jurisdiction in religion and politics, and in the process earning the designation of "*Protestants*" — an event which shook the Roman Churchoid to its foundations.

The spark which lit the world-wide explosion was a single verse in Scripture containing two words of spiritual dynamite (from Greek *dunamis*, meaning "power") in the Apostle Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* "*In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith'*".¹¹

The two words "*righteousness*" and "*faith*" were like two sides of a single coin whose value of "*forgiveness of sin*" was guaranteed by God, and they transformed Luther from a poor monk into a spiritual giant. In spiritual agony with personal guilt about his

¹¹Romans 1:17

personal unworthiness before a holy and righteous God, and spiritually enraged by the Roman Churchoid effrontery in “selling indulgencies” for forgiveness of sins, he read these explosive words in Romans and then wrote in an *Autobiographical Fragment*:

“I certainly had been seized with a wondrous eagerness to understand Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, but hitherto I had been held up . . . by one word only, in chapter 1: ‘The righteousness of God is revealed’. For I hated this word ‘righteousness of God’, which I had been taught to understand philosophically as what they call the formal or active righteousness whereby God is just and punishes unjust sinners . . .

“For my case was this: however irreproachable my life as a monk, I felt myself in the presence of God to be a sinner with a most unquiet conscience, nor could I believe him to be appeased by the satisfaction I could offer. I did not love – nay, I hated this just God who punishes sinners. And so I raged with a savage and confounded conscience; yet I knocked importunately at Paul in this place, with a parched and burning desire to know what he could mean.

“At last, as I meditated day and night, God showed mercy and I turned my attention to the connection of the words, namely, ‘The righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written: the righteous shall live by faith’ —and there began to understand that the righteousness of God is the righteousness in which a just man lives by the gift of God . . . in other words that by which the merciful God justifies us through faith . . . At this I felt myself straightway born afresh and to have entered through the open gates into paradise itself.”

When a Johann Tetzel by a grant from the pope blatantly began exchanging papal indulgences for money in a visit to Wittenberg in Saxony, Luther protested the fraud to the Elector of Saxony. When no action was taken he nailed on the church door in Wittenberg the historic *Ninety-Five Theses* which set Europe ablaze. What was not known widely at the time was that the pope had issued the specific indulgence grant to Tetzel involved in the Luther protest to help pay for the rebuilding of St Peter’s in Rome, and to pay half of the proceeds to meet a financial debt owed to the financiers for a loan to the Archbishop Albert of Mainz to bribe the pope for appointment to high office.

The *Ninety-Five Theses* posted by Luther on the door in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, came to be considered as the beginning of the "*Protestant Reformation*". Although normally only of interest to theologians, what gave them importance and impetus were the political and religious circumstances of the time and, most of all, the recent invention of printing. Luther did not give them publicity personally, only sending copies to the Archbishop of Mainz and the Bishop of Brandenburg, but others had them printed and widely distributed and people began to question everything in the Roman Churchoid—organization, worship, life-style of the clergy and authority of the Pope.

The Pope issued a bull excommunicating Luther, and Luther burned the bull publicly in the square at Wittenberg. He was summoned to Worms to be confronted by enraged papal authorities, and refused to recant. He was secretly smuggled out of the region by friends who, to protect him, spread the rumour that he was dead; but he was secretly translating both the *Old* and *New Testaments*.

The second formidable contributor to the Reformation Protest of the Roman Churchoid was Desiderius Erasmus, the illegitimate son of a doctor's daughter and a priest. After a spell as an Augustinian canon, and academic life at the University of Paris, he spent his time studying, writing, travelling and purchasing valuable manuscripts, expensive clothes and good food so that he was always short of money.

Erasmus emerged to become one of Europe's greatest scholars with the publication of several notable works contrasting the writings of the Apostles with the religious tyranny and wickedness of the Roman Churchoid, including "*wretched mendicant friars*." But Erasmus genuinely sought a peaceful solution to the reformation of Christendom, declaring:

"I wish that they (the Gospels) were translated into all languages, so as to be read not only by Scots and Irishmen, but even by Saracens and Turks. But the first step is to make them intelligible to the reader . . ."

Erasmus was even offered a position as Cardinal by Pope Paul

III, but was later traduced as “a leader of all heretics” by Pope Paul IV, and a burning of all his works. It would have made some bonfire because at his death there were 300,000 copies of the *Greek New Testament* in circulation, his *Praise of Folly* ran over thirty-four editions, his *Enchiridion*—a layman’s spiritual handbook—translated into seven languages, and almost a million copies of his other writings available throughout Europe.

At that time Nicholas of Cusa tried to stem the flood of protests for “united toleration” between the East and the West Churchoids, including Islam; but the Roman Churchoid was unable to respond because of its own internal disputes and external protests, and the “Great Schism” included the widening between the Eastern and Western Churchoids. It was this widening gulf that had energised Erasmus to protest.

Pope Julius had been succeeded by Leo X of the famous, or infamous, Medici family, but he was more interested in art and literature than religious reform. Francis I, King of France, had resisted all papal attempts to subjugate France to Rome. King Henry VIII of England was in favour of reform, as were several other rulers of Europe, but the Roman Churchoid of Satan was unwilling to budge from its claims to total domination of religion and politics even as it was being rent asunder.

At the time when Luther burned the pope’s bull and launched the Protestant Reformation another man was preparing to counter the two leading Protestants, Luther and Erasmus. If Germany was the seed-bed of the Protestant Reformation, Spain was the centre of the Counter-Reformation within the Roman Churchoid, led by Ignatius Loyola with a militant group known as “Jesuits”. Ignatius Loyola was a Spanish aristocrat with a distinguished military career who brought a disciplined mind to a passionate missionary outreach of the Roman Churchoid following a night of fasting and confession. After a period of intense physical deprivations, meditations, and visions, he wrote *Spiritual Exercises*, which became the Bible of the “Company of Jesus”, or “Jesuits”, recognized by the pope. The Jesuits in turn became the “strong right arm” of popes in militant papal politics.

It was Luther's open defiance which led to several rebellions against the iron rule of the Roman Churchoid in which there were several outstanding protagonists in other countries in Europe—Wycliffe, Zwingli, Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Hus, Tyndale, Knox—with varying spiritual emphases as the Roman Churchoid disintegrated before the onslaught. Of these Erasmus at the time was most closely involved with Luther, at first as a friend then as a protagonist.

While Erasmus and Luther were polarized in their respective approaches to the Reformation of the Roman Churchoid, a "third force" greater in numbers and influence than either of them was sweeping through Europe, the "United Brethren". Erasmus wanted spiritual reform within the Roman Churchoid; Luther wanted political as well as spiritual reform; but the *United Brethren* wanted a return to the Biblical and Apostolic principles of the *New Testament*. Erasmus warned Luther of the dangers of only setting up an alternative Protestant religious institution, a charge which Luther rejected, declaring:

"Thus far I have, although unconsciously, proclaimed all that Huss preached and maintained; Johasnn Staupitz did unconsciously maintain the same – in a word we are all Hussites, without having known it; Paul and Augustine themselves are Hussites – in the full sense of the word! Behold the horrible misery which came over us because we did not accept the Bohemian doctor for our leader . . ."

Luther was not even a rebel against the Roman Churchoid *per se*, because for thirty-eight of his sixty-three years he was a conforming traditionalist. He and Erasmus, although initially respectful of each other, were totally different in personalities and convictions regarding actions to correct the evils of the Roman Churchoid. Erasmus urged moderation on both Churchoid and Luther, but Luther became increasingly militant in demanding nothing less than the Churchoid's dissolution. Eventually, Erasmus called Luther a "Goth", and Luther called Erasmus a "proud sceptic".

Meanwhile the *United Brethren*, with a charismatic leader called John Augusta, were spreading across Europe, mostly in Bohemia,

Moravia, Germany and Poland, but when he led the *United Brethren* into open war with the Roman Churchoid and was defeated at the *Battle of White Mountain*, it was John Amos Comenius who emerged as the more spiritual leader, writing the influential books, *The Labyrinth of the World*, the *Paradise of the Heart*, and *The Testament of the Dying Mother*. In the latter he stated:

“Even you I cannot forget, dear sisters, evangelical churches; nor thee our mother from whom we sprang, Roman church. Thou wast a mother to us but art become a...vampire who sucks the children’s blood. Therefore, I wish that in thy misery though mightest be converted to repentance and forsake the Babylon of thy blasphemy . . .”

In 1520 Luther published the works that defined his spiritual reasons for his “*Protests*”: one was *The Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, a critique of the Roman Churchoid, and Biblical programme; *On the Liberty of a Christian Man*, expanding the doctrine of justification by faith; *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, a new form of religious practice. The three books would form the basis of his own Protestant offshoot version of the Churchoid Lutheranism.

The Peasant’s Revolt, which had broken out in the fourteenth century, and had flared up occasionally in a few regions during the fifteenth century, emerged as a powerful force in the early sixteenth century in Germany under the leadership of Thomas Muntzer. He systematically set about organizing the peasants into a group known as the “*Eternal Covenant of God*” based on converts with “*an inner experience of conversion*” divinely chosen to be “*the elect*” to rule because they had “*knowledge of the will of God*”. They elected an “*eternal council*” in 1525, became widely popular not only with the working classes but also with members of the nobility. Munzer’s ideals were for a future society without social and legal distinctions, and the liberation of all Christendom from its Churchoid bondage. The Peasant Revolt collapsed at the Battle of Frankenhausen in 1525 against the combined forces of Churchoid and State.

The repercussions of the Peasant’s Revolt complicated the Protestant Reformation mixing as it did the issues of Churchoid and

State in politics, but the subsequent spiritual intensity of the issues being raised by the two Christian giants, Erasmus and Luther, brought religion to the forefront of the related political issues not only in Europe but also in Britain where the peasants were also in a state of unrest. At the same time several very gifted English Christians emerged who were to significantly contribute to the expanding Protestant Reformation.

The "*New Learning*" and the "*Reformation*" consuming Europe impacted on the situation in Britain through the work of William Tyndale, who had studied at Oxford and Cambridge and who was familiar with the writings of Luther. He made a vow to himself "*if God spared his life, ere many years he would cause the boys that drove the plough to know more of the Scriptures*". The first edition of his translation of the *New Testament* in English was published in 1525, and was followed by a second printing the next year in Cologne. Afterwards, from his enforced exile in Europe, he translated the *Old Testament*, and all of his writings were distributed throughout Britain by an association of Messiah believers called "*Christian Brethren*", violently opposed by the English clergy. Tyndale's version became the foundation of the later world-famous *Authorized Version, King James Bible*.

Great changes were taking place in England at the time. In 1531 King Henry VIII was acknowledged as "*Supreme Head of the Church of England*", replacing the Roman Churchoid, and the King replacing the Pope. The issue between the King and the Pope was ostensibly religious between the religious responsibilities of the Church and State; but politically between the secular responsibilities of the State and the Church. For the country at large, the issue was between Papist, Lutheran or Erastian principles as their passionate dialogue intensified. Within twenty years, during the reign of Edward VI, in addition to these three there were *Protesting Reformation "Congregations"* comprising Puritans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and Independents. But during the short reign of the Catholic Queen Mary, England officially returned to allegiance to the Pope.

To make their situation worse, the Ottoman Empire was

consolidating its hold over Asia Minor. In the fifteenth century, after the sudden but short threat of Timur had ended with his death, the Ottomans had expanded their conquests under Mehmed (Muhammad) I and his successor sons, until they reasserted control of Europe south of the Danube, defeating a crusader army at Varna in 1444. In 1453 Constantinople (now Istanbul) was taken, and in subsequent years Morea, Trebizond, Bosnia, Albania, the Crimea, and other areas were conquered or annexed. Of the many unique military and administrative forms evolved by the Ottomans, the most notable included the *devsirme* system, whereby Christian youths from the Balkans were drafted and converted to Islam for a lifetime of service.

Under Selim I (1512–20) Ottoman expansion in the East was resumed while Western Europe was absorbed with the Protestant revolution. His defeat of the Mamluks in 1516–17 doubled the size of the empire at a stroke by adding to it Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Algeria. The reign of his son Süleiman I (1520–66), known in Europe as “*the Magnificent*,” was a golden age of Ottoman power and grandeur. He conquered Hungary from the Habsburgs, annexed Tripoli, extended the empire south-eastward through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, and made the Ottoman navy dominant in the eastern Mediterranean. After the Suleiman reign, decline set in and reforms instituted in the 17th century were too weak and narrow to arrest the decline.

In France, one of the most committed and influential of Protestant leaders emerging during the early stages of the Reformation was Jean Calvin, who was studying at the University of Paris. Calvin read the recently published writings of Luther and was immediately impressed. At the time France was convulsed with both political and religious problems so Calvin fled to Basle. In 1536 he began writing six chapters of commentary on the *Ten Commandments*, the *Apostles’ Creed*, and the *Lord’s Prayer*, and forty years later, in 1559, he completed his book, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. It was written as an apologia for Protestantism and expanded into a comprehensive, systematic theology, making him the leading theologian in Europe, with a following that dominated the

Reformation in Britain and the later colonies in North America. When Lutheranism eventually was restricted to a conservative and mostly German phenomenon, the theology of the *Institutes* of Calvin embraced the aspirations of both contemporary religion and culture in Europe.

Calvin shared with Luther a commitment to the Pauline three fundamental principles of “*justification by faith, the priesthood of all believers, and the sole authority of the divine revelation of the Scriptures*”. But Calvin went beyond Luther and Paul by interpreting the *Old and New Testaments*’ unfolding of God’s purposes for the world with a dogmatic doctrine of predestination, ensuring salvation for “*the elect*” and damnation for others. This rigid doctrine gave rise to many controversies and divisions within the Protestant communities, and accelerated the development of “*denominations*” such as Congregationalist, Baptist, Reformed, and Anabaptist to add to the existing evangelical varieties in Europe, and new offshoot cults and sects. In fact, they became the opposite side of the same coin as the Churchoid of Satan, many holding the same debased institutional values of a counterfeit currency in terms of secularized organization and hierarchy.

Calvin’s influence on the unique reform movements taking place in Britain was far more momentous than those in continental Europe, because it was more nationalistic in politicizing the English Episcopalian Churchoid and the Scottish Presbyterian Churchoid. During Queen Elizabeth’s reign she confirmed the dominance of Episcopalianism, while excluding both Papist and Presbyterian influences. Her antagonism was related to the widespread influence in Scotland of a favourite student of Calvin’s, John Knox, and his highly publicised defiance of both Queens in his “*Monstrous Regiment of Women*” sermons and writings.

In 1546 Knox had participated in a plot to kill a Catholic cardinal, and he had been condemned to being a slave in a French galley. He regained his freedom, fled to Geneva, became a convinced Calvinist and returned to Scotland to lead a rebellion against Queen Mary of Scotland and the papacy. Knox established a Presbyterian Churchoid of Scotland in which bishops were abolished and

spiritual oversight of its members was vested in committees of elders comprising both clergy and laity to represent the interests of members. At the same time he made it the responsibility of the Churchoid of Scotland to advance education and Bible instruction through village schools, a form of “*democracy*” long before it was ever articulated in the later French Enlightenment. This Calvinist “Presbyterianizing” of the Churchoid of Scotland, with its sombre predestination and austere liturgy, together with its “*democratic*” governing structure, was to have its knock-on impact “*episcopalianizing*” the Churchoid of England with the radical simplicities on the emerging Puritan and Quaker movements.

Another attempt at reform of the Roman Churchoid with a spiritual rather than the political emphasis of the Jesuits was led by Juan de Yepes, who would become better known as John of the Cross, a Carmelite monk. In a protest against the widespread secularization of the monasteries John, with his close friend the devout Teresa of Avila, founded the *Discalced* (“barefoot”) *Carmelites* to revive the emphasis on spiritual values. He was imprisoned in a tiny cell by the official Carmelites during which he wrote a series of devout works including the most famous, *The Dark Night of the Soul*:

“The conduct of beginners upon the way of God is ignoble, and has much to do with their love of self and their own inclinations . . . When they are going about these spiritual exercises with the greatest delight and pleasure, and when they believe that the sun of divine favour is shining most brightly upon them, God turns all this light of theirs into darkness, and shuts against them the door and the source of the sweet spiritual water which they were tasting in God whensoever and as so long as they desired . . .

“And this he leaves them so completely in the dark that they know not whither to go . . . For, as I have said, God now sees that they have grown a little, and have become strong enough to lay aside the swaddling clothes and be taken from the gentle breast; so he sets them down from his arms and teaches them to walk on their own feet: which they feel to be very strange, for everything seems to be growing wrong with them”.

Throughout the sixteenth century the Western Roman Churchoid powers Spain and Portugal began a global imperial expansion under

the guise of Christianity. While the Vatican in Rome was absorbed with the rapidly expanding threat of Protestantism Spain and Portugal were colonizing under the guise of pseudo-evangelizing in Asia, Africa and the Americas. By 1580 they had virtually conquered the New World of the Americas and, when Portugal especially established an imperial sea route as far as China and the Philippines in the East, it looked as if what the Roman Churchoid had lost in Europe it had increased in the world at large. But the accompanying political and economic exploitation of the acquired territories resulted in more gains of earthly treasures than heavenly conversions.

While Britain was experimenting with forms of Protestant religion and radical policies, in Europe the Emperor Rudolph II in 1602 requested the Bohemian Parliament for money in support of his military campaign against the advancing Turks, and one of the influential *Brethren* leaders in return demanded the retraction of the previous 1507 Edict and complete religious liberty given to the people. The Emperor agreed, and a Board of twenty-four "*Defenders*" was formed to supervise the agreement. In 1616 King Ferdinand became King of Bohemia, swore to keep the Charter, but under the influence of the Jesuits he reneged on this, and precipitated open war in 1620 between the two parties in the "*Battle of White Mountain*", which resulted in the defeat of the Protestant "*Defenders*". When they refused to recant, twenty-seven Protestant aristocrats were publicly beheaded, a pogrom of persecution and death swept the land to wipe out the "*Hussites*", and thirty-six thousand families left the country.

In England, meanwhile, the Puritans emerged as a potent protest against the remnants of popery in the Churchoid of England after the religious settlement agreed by Queen Elizabeth of England. They were that element in the Churchoid of England with a consistent opposition to the Roman Catholic influence, espousing the New Reformation emphasis of the Scriptures above the State. When James VI of Scotland succeeded Queen Elizabeth as James I of England in a "*union of crowns*" in 1603 he dismissed the claims of the Puritans with the words "*no bishop, no king*". Then, when Civil War broke out

between Parliament and Charles I in the 1640s Parliament convened a “*Westminster Assembly*” of clergy to achieve a settlement. Puritanism was never formed into a single entity such as a churchoid or denomination, but was an umbrella designation covering all those believers who were anti-establishment.

But in the midst of the political and religious ferment in England a new and more devastating theory to both was emerging in Europe. In the latter half of the seventeenth century a French scholar emerged whose influence was to continue throughout Europe and the Western world up to the present, René Descartes. He was a crucial figure in the development of philosophy, and one of the three founders of “*Rationalism*” with the Dutch Jew, Benedict de Spinoza, and his contemporary, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. Between them they developed a philosophy of strict determinism, which was a personal and moral quest for the meaning of life and the achievement of human perfection from within the individual.

Descartes postulated the self was just a substance from which the idea of God originated, and with which all deductive reasoning began. It was claimed human understanding was vastly superior to the senses, and in what constituted science only man’s reason could decide. He “married” the medieval theories about God and the human mind, creating a dualism between God the Creator and the mechanistic world of his creation, and between mind as a spiritual principle, and matter as mere spatial extension. This postulate that man was simply a duality of mind and body, and not a trinity of mind and body and spirit, effectively excluded the realm of the spirit as a communicating medium between God and his creatures and vice versa.

There is a difference of opinion among intellectuals regarding the start of the period known as “*the Enlightenment*”, but there is general agreement that it began in the early seventeenth century with Isaac Newton’s theories of light and planetary motion, and Rene Descartes with his “*new philosophy*” delineated in his *Discourse on Method*, which challenged the hitherto predominance of the scholasticism of Aristotle and Aquinas. Descartes was recognized as the “*father of scepticism*” with his dictum *cogito ergo sum*, (“I think,

therefore I am"), which argued that only through thought and not sensation could be determined a true existence.

From the early seventeenth century, therefore, Satan as well as God was excluded by the widening world of European intelligentsia, and only what could be seen, heard, tasted, touched and smelled had any validity. Newton and Descartes were followed by Spinoza, Voltaire and Rousseau, with their related philosophies of dualism and rationalism. God was declared "dead" as far as Europe was concerned.

Before the Enlightenment, life temporal and eternal was simple: the two figures portrayed for emulation by priests and philosophers were the saint and the knight. The Roman Churchoid defined and created the saints, and even encouraged the knights as models of chivalry and moral values. After the Enlightenment there were no such foci of behavioural authority: these were now the philosophers, artists, writers, architects, explorers, inventors, all at one time or another determining the beliefs, goals and conduct of society. God was wiped out from centrality in the Roman Churchoid, atheism and—ironically!—angels and astrology superstitions became predominantly fashionable as acceptable beliefs. Then the middle class almost *en masse* embraced the Enlightenment as a means of clearly defining themselves as a mass movement from the peasants below them and the aristocracy above them.

Each country, even each decade, found a new focus of emulation: Michelangelo and da Vinci in art, Goethe and Johnson in literature, Shakespeare in drama, Mozart and Beethoven in music, Kant and Hume in philosophy, Adam Smith in economics, Marx and Lenin in politics. As national societies followed their new gods they fractured and became increasingly disillusioned when disputes multiplied; and even the pro-God Reformists became infected with the multiplying theories and divisions.

The one and only stable centre of belief—the spiritual compass, the divine map, the Ultimate Mind—explaining the true meaning of Creation and its purpose was found across all classes, as it had always been: those in every nation who had found through personal experience "God's Secret Truth", the meaning of temporal and

eternal life above and beyond culture. As the Protestant Reformers went the same way as all lesser human theories there emerged in every generation “a voice in the wilderness”; not with a new theory of belief but rather a re-affirmation of what had always been there since the beginning of Creation, people who were prepared to believe in the existence of a God whose purpose had always been a personal relationship with his creatures; first the nation of Israel, then the Church of the Messiah, as the true channels of his revelation.

After Descartes, Spinoza carried on and expanded the tradition of Rationalism, arguing that philosophy was a personal and moral quest for the wisdom of life and the achievement of human perfection. This became the widely popular belief of the seventeenth century and was considered such a serious threat that the Roman Churchoid placed the works of Descartes on the *Index of Forbidden Books* in 1663, and the University of Oxford banned the teaching of his theories. The Rationalists were denounced by Francis Bacon as “*reasoners who resemble spiders making cobwebs out of their own substance*”.

While this religious/philosophical debate was convulsing continental Europe, in England one of the most influential Protestant Puritans was responsible for the overthrow of the contemporary Stuart monarchy. Oliver Cromwell emerged in the early seventeenth century to forge the Puritans into a militant “*peasant army of the people*” to overthrow Britain’s monarchy in an ambitious attempt to establish a “*Christian State.*” Cromwell was a devout English farmer of outstanding gifts and forceful moral character, who refused the monarchy for himself and became eventually Lord Protector of England during 1653-1658 as a “*republican Commonwealth*”, and a powerful influence in the emerging European political theatre.

The seventeenth century was probably one of the most disrupted period of English history, with the peasant revolution followed by the short-lived republic. Richard Baxter was an Anglican priest and director of music during the Civil War and an adviser to Oliver Cromwell during the Commonwealth. Later he was also an adviser

to Charles I when the monarchy was restored. He was most famous, however, for his book *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*, regarding the eternal joys awaiting believers, for which he was called "*the creator of popular Christian literature*". Baxter said about the importance of spiritual meditation:

"This is it that has deceived Christians in this business, they have thought that meditation is nothing but the bare thinking on truths and the rolling of them in the understanding and memory . . . Therefore this is the real task in hand, and this is the work that would set you on: to get these truths from your head into your heart . . . So much as you understanding and affections are sincerely acted upon by God, so much do you enjoy Him, and this is the happy work of this meditation . . ."

It was during Cromwell's rise and period of rule that Puritanism in England became established as a powerful religious force. The name was mostly applied to Quakers emerging at that time as a spiritual movement inspired by George Fox, who was both anti-establishment in religion and politics, and who devoted himself to itinerant preaching away from all churches and mostly in houses, fields and market-places. There were already meetings of the kind later associated with the Quakers before there was a movement of that name as small groups known as "*Seekers*", gathered during the Cromwell peasant revolution "*Civil War*" against Charles I "*to wait upon the Lord*" for help, because they despaired of spiritual assistance either from the established Anglican Church or the other existing Cromwell Puritan-bodies such as Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, through which most of them had already passed.

George Fox and James Nayler were perhaps the most eminent of those known as "*Quakers*", but Edward Burrough, William Dewsbury, and Richard Farnworth also were active. Fox was a weaver's son in England who left home at twenty in a search for a "*deeper faith*". In a personal experience with God he had a revelation of an "*inner light*" which could transform an individual from within. This became the theme of his sermons on "*opening the doors of light and life*" which began a popular movement that soon

numbered thousands, nick-named “*Quakers*” because they were sometimes shaken with emotion during worship. They met in private houses without formal leadership, believing “*the power of God was over all.*”

The cradle of the movement was Swarthmore Hall in north-western Lancashire, which after 1652 became the centre of an evangelistic campaign by “travelling preachers.” Within a decade perhaps 20,000 to 60,000 Quakers had been converted from most social classes except the aristocracy and totally unskilled labourers. Heaviest concentrations were in the north, Bristol, the counties around London, and London itself. Though most Quakers had passed through varieties of Puritanism, they carried the emphasis on a direct relationship between the believer and God far beyond what Puritans deemed tolerable.

During the Civil War Oliver Cromwell’s “*New Army*” composed of Puritans and “*sectaries*” had fought side by side in the same cause of religious freedom and had become a serious weapon in the hands of the Reformers. In a rapid and striking reversal of fortunes both the Assembly that had drawn up the *Westminster Confession*, and the Houses of Parliament, were dissolved. The Commonwealth was established with liberty of conscience and of worship, with freedom of speech and publishing. The Council of State declared (1653) that none should be compelled to conform to the public religion, and

“ . . . that such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship or discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in, the profession of their faith and exercise of their religion . . . ”

A faction of Quakers left England for the new continent of North America and settled there, beginning what would become known as “*the Great Revolution*” —the converting and peopling of North America. In 1656 Quaker women preachers began work in Maryland and in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The magistrates of Boston savagely persecuted the visitors and in 1659 and 1661 after a sensational trial put four of them to death. Despite this, Quakerism took root in Massachusetts and flourished in Rhode Island, where

for a long time they were in the majority. Yearly meetings were established for New England (1661), Maryland (1672), Virginia (1673), Philadelphia (1681), New York (1695), and North Carolina (1698). The most famous Quaker colony was Pennsylvania, for which Charles II issued a charter to William Penn in 1681. Penn's "*Holy Experiment*" tested how far a State could be governed consistently with Quaker principles, especially pacifism and religious toleration.

While all this was happening in the emerging United States of America, in England an obscure individual who would not only influence his own generation but the world. He was John Bunyan, born in a small English village in extreme poverty as the son of a tinker, who became a soldier in Cromwell's army during the Civil War. When he married after the war he and his wife were so poor they had no dishes or cutlery, and only two religious books. Through reading these books Bunyan became a believer in Jesus as Messiah and a travelling preacher. His stubborn refusal to conform to the Anglican system had him imprisoned for twelve years, and while in prison he wrote what was to become an all-time spiritual classic, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It portrayed in allegorical form his—and *Everyman's*—spiritual experience from conversion in the *City of Destruction* to his entrance into the *Celestial City*. In his words the journey began:

"Now I saw in my dream, that the highway up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a Wall, and that Wall is called Salvation. Up this way therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. He ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from of his back; and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in and I saw it no more."

At the opposite end of the Christian spectrum was the experience of the French woman aristocrat, Madame Guyon, born Jeanne Marie de la Mothe. After her elderly husband died she travelled around France with an eccentric priest, preaching and teaching, until they

were imprisoned for heresy and immorality. They were eventually released with the help of an influential friend, Madame de Maintenon, and through her became well-known in royal circles. This led to what became a spiritual dialogue and dispute between Madame Guyon and the saintly Abbé Fenelon, and the book which made her famous to the present, *A Short and Easy Method of Prayer*.

The Reformation proliferation of denominational churches, gifted individual Christians and powerful spiritual literature in continental Europe, Britain and the emerging American colonies, created two new emphases: the *spiritual* millenarian expectations of an ideal kingdom of God, and the parallel *political* expectations of an ideal social utopia. The Calvinist Protestants gave birth to the Huguenots which, in France alone, had two thousand consistories and became a civil as well as religious and military organization.

Thomas More's works *On the Highest State of a Republic* and *Utopia* had opened the door in Europe to a series of similar books about "the New Christianity". These excitingly new ideas were viewed as exceedingly threatening by the beleaguered Roman Churchoid, which rightly interpreted the spiritual and political revolution taking place as the elimination of its own existence.

In 1623 a young French genius was born whose health was so precocious he was kept from attending school, yet in a youth he had already worked out the Pythagoras theorem on his own, made discoveries in mathematics and geometry, and become one of the leading mathematicians of his generation. He postulated the theory of probability, designed the first computer and discovered "Pascal's Law". He was Blaise Pascal who, after joining the reforming French Catholic *Jansenists*, had a "second conversion" in which he had a transformative spiritual experience of "certainty, joy and peace". After his death twenty-seven bundles of loose papers were found under various headings, which were published as *Pensées*, or "Thoughts", which became a Christian classic. One of them regarding the existence of God as a wager reads:

"Either God exists, or he does not. But which side shall we take? Reason cannot decide for us one way or the other; we are separated by an infinite gulf. A game is on, at the other side of this infinite distance, where

either heads or tails will turn up. Which will you gamble on? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in betting that God exists . . . If you win, you win everything; if you lose, you lose nothing. Do not hesitate, then; gamble on his existence . . .

"You want to come to faith, but you do not know the way. You would like to cure yourself of unbelief, and you ask for remedies. Learn from those who were once bound and gagged like you, and who now stake all that they possess. These are the people who know the road you wish to follow; they are cured of the disease of which you wish to be cured. Follow the way by which they set out; by acting as though they already believed . . .

Meanwhile, the powerful nation-states arising in Europe during this period of Reformation religious turmoil formed alliances to drive the Ottoman invaders out of Europe. The Ottoman decline accelerated in the 18th century, which saw the decay of rural administration into small, feudal-like states and increased unrest in the cities, disrupting food supplies and leading to widespread famine. Few of the innovations in technology that underlay Europe's post-Reformation prosperity made their way into the declining Ottoman Empire.

But in eighteenth century England an obscure Anglican clergyman was born who would impact on the restless political and social circumstances of the country for the rest of the century. He was an evangelist and founder, with his brother Charles, of the Methodist movement in the Church of England. John Wesley was the second son of Samuel, a former Nonconformist (dissenter from the Church of England) and rector at Epworth, and Susanna Wesley. After six years of education at the Charterhouse, London, he entered Christ Church, Oxford University.

John Wesley was the fifteenth son of a Lancashire clergyman and a devout mother, Susanna, who introduced him to books such as *The Imitation of Christ*.

He enrolled in Oxford University in 1720, where he and his brother Charles started a "*Holy Club*" for their fellow-students. But it was a profound spiritual experience which launched his career as an itinerant preacher and teacher in England and North America,

and which led to the political Industrial Revolution of trades unions and the Labour Party in Britain as well as the religious Methodist denomination worldwide. He wrote of his conversion experience:

“All the time that I was at Savannah I was beating the air. Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ, which, by a living faith in him, bringeth salvation ‘to everyone that believeth’, I sought to establish my own righteousness.

“In this vile abject state of bondage to sin, I was indeed fighting continually but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome, and was in joy. For as in the former state I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this of the comforts of the gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace, which now had continued about ten years, I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble; I had many sensible comforts, which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still ‘under the law’, not ‘under grace’.

“In the evening (of Wednesday May 24th), I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while describing the change which God worked in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death”.

Graduating in 1724, he resolved to be ordained a priest; in 1725 he was made a deacon by the Bishop of Oxford; and the following year was elected a Fellow of Lincoln College. After assisting his father at Epworth and Wroot, he was ordained a priest on Sept. 22, 1728. Among his friends were the contemporary powerful preacher, George Whitefield, and William Law whose influence was mainly in his writings. Wesley’s reaction after reading Law’s *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* was: *“The light flamed so mightily upon my soul that everything appeared in a new vision”*. In Law’s seminal work he attacked the formal hypocritical religion of the time in a series of satirical *“portraits”*. He refused to swear allegiance to the King

George I as head of the Church and was barred from any church or university post. He retired to his home town and set up a small community of prayer, Bible studies, and charity works such as schools and libraries.

Although Wesley never ceased to be an Anglican, despite English Churchoid persecution when refused pulpits in the churchoids, he appeared to be a “*modern Paul*” as he continued to preach in homes, market-places and fields. But, unlike the Apostle Paul, Wesley saw his evangelistic mission in structural terms and he organized his multiplying converts—first in England then in the United States—in planned and regular fashion. These he introduced at a “*Methodist Conference*” as itinerant gatherings, to make converts, and instructing them in district meetings under class leaders, stewards, trustees and preachers. There was strict personal and congregational discipline, regulations about dress, food, conduct, use of money, manner of speech, and offenders were to be excommunicated.

Methodism’s impact on contemporary religion in England and America, with its infusion of passionate evangelical belief popular with the masses in England, not only changed the indifferent conformist Churchoid influence, it gave birth to a new “*Evangelical Revolution*” both inside and outside the Roman and Anglican Churchoids—a world-wide expansion of missionary outreach by both Roman and Reformation Churchoids, and their offshoot denominations and sects.

The first flight of immigrants from Europe to America was not missionaries but commercial entrepreneurs, although many of them happened to have strong Protestant convictions. The first successful colony in North America was established in Virginia in 1607 by a group of London businessmen accompanied by an Anglican priest. It was thirteen years later that a group of Puritan pilgrims left Plymouth in England, after a Boston-based *Massachusetts Bay Company* was operating successfully, with the intention of settling the new country. The pilgrims were dissenters fleeing from persecution in Europe in search of a place where they could freely practice their religion.

The Anglicans were the first to be established as a legal entity in Virginia, but as the number of colonists multiplied and pioneered other territories more Protestant groups emerged. The most successful of these were the Puritans in New England who acquired a “colonial charter” which gave them great independence from the English king and Parliament. The other major group was the Quakers who established themselves in Pennsylvania as “*the Society of Friends*” through the preaching of George Fox, with the intention of creating a “*just society*” in which people of many beliefs could co-exist. The monarchical Anglicans of the Southern States eventually clashed with the republican Calvinists of the Northern States, and erupted in what became known as the “*First Great Awakening*” of evangelicalism of the 1730s which in time precipitated the “*American Revolution*”.

It was the emergence of several notable evangelicals that made the greatest spiritual and social impact in North America, especially Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney. In the mid-eighteenth century North America was a collection of disparate colonies with little contact with each other except through commercial enterprises and economic ties with Europe, and it was the passionate evangelistic campaigns of these three men which swept the nation in the spiritual “*Great Awakening*” and contributed towards its formation as a united nation.

Mather belonged to an eminent Boston family whose father, Increase Mather, was the President of the prestigious Harvard College and the foremost cleric of his time. Mather entered Harvard at twelve, could already speak Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and had mastered most of the *Greek New Testament*. He wrote over four hundred books, but had a reputation for being autocratic and an unsavoury participation in the notorious Salem witch trials.

Jonathan Edwards, on the other hand, was also precociously brilliant as a youth and a humbler disposition, having at eleven years of age already written papers on spiders and the rainbow. But following a considerable spiritual revival from his preaching during 1735-1737 in New England he had a disagreement with his church over the issue of membership. Edwards wrote of the

tremendous spiritual impact during the revival:

"There was scarcely a single person in the town, old or young, left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world. Those who were wont to be vainest, and loosest; and those who had been most disposed to think, and speak slightly of religion, were now generally subject to great awakenings . . ."

He withdrew from the subsequent church dispute and went as a missionary to the American Indians, and during this time he wrote his famous treatise *Freedom of the Will*. His influence for a century after his death was pronounced, combining intellectual rigour with deep spiritual commitment, moral earnestness, faith and love at all times.

Another leading figure in the North American "*Great Awakening*" at this time was David Brainerd who also went as a missionary to the American Indians. Following a dispute with his professor at Yale University he was sent with a license, but without experience and no knowledge of the language, to preach to the American Indians. On one occasion he preached through an interpreter who was so drunk he almost collapsed, yet even that sermon was used by God to be the means of spiritual conversions. He died at the age of twenty-nine, the inspiration for the later great missionaries—John Wesley, Jonathan Edwards, William Carey and Henry Martyn—fired by his example and his *Journal*. He recorded one instance of a sermon to the Indians:

"There was much visible concern among them, while I was discoursing publicly; but afterwards, when I spoke to one and another more particularly, whom I perceived under much concern, the power of God seemed to descend upon the assembly 'like a mighty rushing wind', and with an astonishing energy bore down all before it.

"I stood amazed at the influence, which seized the audience almost universally, and could compare it to nothing more aptly than the irresistible force of a mighty torrent, or a swelling deluge, that with its insupportable weight and pressure bears down and sweeps before it whatever comes in its way.

"Almost all persons of all ages were bowed down with concern together,

and scarcely one was able to withstand the shock of the surprising operation. They were almost universally praying and crying for mercy in every part of the house, and many were out of doors, and others could neither go nor stand..."

This divine impulse to carry the gospel to un-evangelized regions and peoples of the world was further expanded by the Englishman William Carey, who was not discouraged when told by his local Baptist minister: "*Sit down, young man! When God wants you to convert the heathen he'll do it without your help or mine*". Carey then published a booklet with the cumbersome title *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*. In it he wrote:

"The missionaries must be men of great piety, prudence, courage, and forbearance; of undoubted orthodoxy in their sentiments, and must enter with all their hearts into the spirit of their mission; they must be willing to leave all the comforts of life behind them, and to encounter all the hardships of a torrid or a foreign climate, an uncomfortable manner of living, and every other inconvenience that can attend this undertaking. Clothing, a few knives, powder and shot, fishing-tackle, and the article of husbandry above mentioned, must be provided for them, and when they arrive at the place of their destination, their first business must be to gain some acquaintance of the language of the natives (for which purpose two would be better than one) and by all lawful means to endeavour to cultivate a friendship with them, and as soon as possible let the know the errand for which they were sent . . ."

It was the eruption of the French Revolution of 1776 in Europe which exploded from the boiling pot of religions and politics, the universal battle between allegiance to God and responsibility to State, and precipitated the American "*Declaration of Independence*". The *Declaration* and subsequent *Constitution* was unique in that, for the first time since the "*dark ages*" a clear division was defined between Church and State by a combination of Churchoid denominational and political leaders, which was described by the Frenchman De Tocqueville in his *Democracy in America* as:

"In France I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom pursuing courses diametrically opposed to each other; but in America I find that they were intimately united, and that they reigned in common over the same country."

What this meant in theory at least was that the State was responsible to defend the proper interests of the Church; and the Church was responsible to defend the interests of religion. Unfortunately, what it ensured was that the American Churchoid of Satan expanded its multiplying institutional interests in collaboration with the State, while sacrificing its moral authority in the lives of its citizens. The "*mini-churchoids*" of every denomination became "*mini-papacies*" with their institutionally certificated pastors presiding over quiescent congregations with the assistance of selected elders or committees whose loyalties were to the denomination rather than spiritual direction from God. Like all earlier forms of the Churchoid of Satan the American Churchoid became a hell's brew of contesting religious tensions and practices bearing little or no resemblance to God's Church of the Messiah.

The idea of a modern secular State was gaining increasing support in Europe, and the heightening persecution of its proponents precipitated a period of "*missionary expansion*" as the persecuted believers carried their ideas from Europe to Asia and Africa and the newly discovered continents of North and South America. Spain led the way with its discovery and conquests in South America, and Portugal with its explorations and proselytizing in Asia, the missionaries as well as immigrants following explorers and armies with Roman and Protestant Churchoid zeal in creating new religious and social utopias. They also opened a "*Pandora's Box*" of generating potential wealth and commercial exploitation as rapid development of sailing vessels increased the possibilities for trade with newly discovered territories that would corrupt and polarise even more the mounting divisions between Churchoids and States.

The flash-point of that battle between the two concepts of religious and social utopias occurred in Europe with the French

Revolution. It began in 1789 and reached its first climax in 1799 with the French King Louis XIV's decision to convene the "*Estates General*," when he invited his subjects to participate as to how they should be governed. The conventional term associated with the revolt is "*Revolution of 1789*," denoting the end of the *ancien régime* of aristocrats in France, and to distinguish that event from the later French Revolutions of 1830 and 1848. The issues were roughly divided between : (i) France had the largest population in Europe and could not feed it adequately, (ii) the rich and expanding bourgeoisie was excluded from political power by the aristocracy more systematically than in any other country, (iii) the peasants were acutely aware of their situation and were less and less inclined to support the anachronistic and burdensome feudal system, and (iv) French participation in the American Revolutionary War had completed the ruin of the state's finances.

The American Revolution (1775–83), after the successful conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763, gave to the North American colonies political independence, and they went on to form the United States of America. The American colonists resented the trade regulations by which Britain utilized American economic resources to its own advantage, and they also resented their lack of representation in the British Parliament. The conflict began as a civil war within the British Empire over colonial affairs, but, with America being joined by France in 1778, Spain in 1779, and the Netherlands in 1780, it became an international war.

The bizarre roots of this explosion were in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the birth of a mystical movement from Spain called *Alumbrado*, meaning "Enlightenment" or, in Italian plural form, "*Illuminati*". The Illuminati were a fanatically secret society, like the Freemasons, but with a philosophy of "*reason*", or rationalism, which was later imitated by the Spanish *Inquisition*. Its adherents claimed that the human soul having attained a degree of self-perfection was given a vision of the divine and secret communication with the Holy Spirit. At least, that was their theory, because their subsequent casuist contention was that the initiate having attained the "*light*" were thereafter absolved from the

exterior forms of religious life. The *Illuminati* became a favoured weapon of the aristocrats, creating the nucleus of the notorious *ancient regime* who bitterly opposed both republican State and liberal Roman Churchoid that would result in the end of the monarchy.

This dichotomy intensified the political, social and religious struggles as religious Churchoid, secular State, the Churchoid's Inquisition, and the *Illuminati ancient regime* all competed with unprincipled ambitions and venomous methods for domination. The situation was further complicated because the most influential positions of authority in the Roman Churchoid were drawn from the *ancient regime*, and were closed to the lower clergy because of their inferior class. On the other side of this devil's brew the theological and ecclesiastical parties most closely identified with opposition to the Roman Churchoid elite were mostly from, or were supported by, the laity – who were republican in their sympathies.

Opposed to this mélange of religion, monarchy, aristocracy, mysticism, and ruthless criminality, were the so-called “forces of reason.” “Enlightenment rationalism” became the militant policy slogan of the secular intellectuals advocating militant political revolution for “Secular Democracy” against Churchoid, monarchy and the *ancient regime*. Inevitably, the forces of secular “Enlightenment” came into conflict with the Messianic beliefs in revelation and the supernatural, and the evangelical Protestant Reformers were contemptuously isolated and excluded from all influence in the violent issues escalating to national and international catastrophe.

As the eighteenth century drew to a close the whole of Europe was convulsed with unrest and rebellion, with unresolved political, religious and social issues further complicated with the emergence of the influential European atheistic movement known in France as *Siècle De Lumières* (“Age of the Enlightened”), and in Germany as *Aufklärung*, in which ideas concerning God, reason, nature, and man were synthesized into a world view that gained wide assent and that initiated revolutionary developments in art, philosophy, and politics. The central tenets of *Enlightenment* thought were the use and

the celebration of reason, the power by which the new man—comprising only the “duality” of body and mind, and not a “trinity” of body, mind and spirit—understands the universe and improves his own condition. The goals of this rational man were considered to be knowledge, freedom, and happiness.

A “*Festival of Reason*” was held in Paris, with a “*Temple of Philosophy*”, and even the Roman Churchoid of Satan was declared to be a “*Temple of Reason*”. The Voltaire/ Marat/ Rousseau Revolution greatly exceeded the parallel Locke/Hobbes/ Hume political and social revolution in England and Scotland, but they gave birth to a system of “*Secular Democracy*”, which, together with the contemporary Descartes’ philosophy of “*mind and body*” dualism excluding the “*spirit*”, effectively isolated both Churchoid of Satan and the Church of the Messiah from the State, except for ceremonial purposes.

“*Liberty, Equality and Fraternity*” became the new idolatrous trinity of the socio-political State god of “*Secular Democracy*”, with its slogan “*vox populi, vox Dei*” (meaning “*The voice of the people is the voice of God*”), despite Plato’s caveat that “*one man, one vote*” without appropriate education would mean tyranny by the ignorant masses, who could elect individuals most likely to provide things and not values.. The State had the responsibility to defend popular religion as practiced by the Churchoids; but the Churchoids had no authority to interfere with the rights of the people-elected State. This was later enshrined in the Puritan-led *Constitution* of the United States of America.

It was at this point at the close of the eighteenth century that Napoleon Bonaparte appeared on the scene. He emerged from the obscurity of the army with a reputation for courage, daring and success. The commissioner of the army was the brother of Maximilien de Robespierre, one of the leading figures in the republican “*Reign of Terror*” recommending Napoleon worth recognition for “*transcending merit*”, and eventually he became commander-in-chief of the army in 1792 and a figure of destiny. With dreams of creating a French empire he planned an attack on Egypt and the route to India to strike at Great Britain’s imperial

interests but Great Britain, Austria, Russia and Turkey formed a coalition against France and Napoleon was defeated at the battle of the Nile in 1799.

Twelve years later, in July 1801, the deflated but still ambitious Napoleon concluded a concordat with Pope Pius VII recognizing that the Roman Church was the faith of France, but all bishops had to resign and be replaced by Napoleon nominated bishops, the entire Church was reorganized, and most of the temporal holdings of the Church in Europe had to be surrendered. The intention of this was that the Vatican City should become a distinct political entity, and this eventually was realized during the unification of Italy in 1869-70.

The nineteenth century opened with a series of wars that ranged from a failing Roman Church France against the increasingly secular Protestant rest of Europe. With Napoleon's grasp for absolute power France increased its imperial ambitions to expand its influence as well as territory in Europe, Africa and the dying Ottoman empire. Napoleon's ambitions were ended by the English Admiral, Lord Nelson, in 1805, and finally ended with the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.

But in North America and Britain a new spiritual wind was blowing through the spiritual and political corridors of both Roman and Protestant Churches with the "*Second Great Awakening*" mentioned earlier.

Chapter 8

will be available on this site on the 1st May 2012