

# **Civilisation Judas**

**N. R. Scott**



# Chapters

1. The Other Aristocracy
2. Judas of the North
3. Juropean or Middle Eastern?
4. Ancient Avatars of the Medieval World
  5. Port of the Gauls
  6. Slavery Central
  7. Rent and Mortgage
8. Written Law vs Natural Law
9. Uncivilisation Jesus
10. The Mother vs The State

# Introduction

This book is essentially a revision of the history of western civilisation. Particularly with regard to the religions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. It's quite a speculative work, and should perhaps be considered as an "ideas" book.

Though I present an alternative view of world history I'm by no means presenting this as the definitive or "correct" version of history. In fact, as I state at times in the book, I don't really believe there ever can be any genuine sort of definitive history. Only more or less probable scenarios and timelines. Scenarios and timelines that we can only ever ascribe a *likelihood* to. A likelihood that to some degree will always be somewhat subjective to the person making it. I do however hope that the book presents some interesting and novel viewpoints, which readers will take value from.

I should also mention that, as ever with opinions and viewpoints, especially viewpoints about religion or culture, there will no doubt be some in the book that people disagree with. Or that even cause offence to some people. Though I don't mind people taking offence, it was never my intention when writing the book. So if you do take issue with anything written please bear that in mind. Again, these are just ideas and opinions, so it's perfectly fine if you disagree with them. Even strongly. However, it's important to remember the context. These are simply words on a page. An expression shared in the hope that it

will add something of worth to the collective human conversation.

# Chapter One - The Other Aristocracy

In this book I'll be covering a broad range of topics, all of which in some way relate to the development of western civilisation and its underlying core tenets. I should probably start by explaining the title though. It pertains to something I call *archetypal Christianity*, and alludes to my conjecture that the Jesus and Judas archetypes both have their roots, or at least some of their roots, in economic and political developments. As opposed to specifically religious ones. This may sound a little dry at first, but it actually offers a much more interesting and cohesive explanation for things. Economic forces are obviously a huge driving force in today's world, so it would be foolish to discount this influence when looking backwards.

The Jesus and Judas archetypes can in many ways be viewed as symbolic representations of Christians and Jews in general - and it's with these stereotypes that I'll begin. I'll start with the "Jewish" stereotype. We tend to have a relatively fixed definition of the word *Jew* (though even now the label is very vague and often subjectively defined). However, I believe historically the term was much more loosely used, and I think its general sense originally just implied a member of a particular economic group in society. This will no doubt sound a little controversial to many people reading, however I'll explain my reasons for this thinking below. It's a concept I refer to as *the other aristocracy*. It's this that links

Jewishness with city life, and by extension civilisation (the word *civilisation* having its roots in the Latin *civitas*, meaning city). Hence the title of the book; *Civilisation Judas*.

I can explain it as follows;

Imagine it's some distant point in the past (let's say the medieval period for argument's sake) and you have a bunch of lower class or common people living in a particular area. Now over time those people will largely remain lower class. However, some of these people, through their natural intelligence or craft, may rise up the social ladder. These people will likely be drawn more towards towns and cities, as city life offers more opportunity for employment and business. Whereas in the countryside roles are more traditional and fixed - the aristocracy own the land and the peasants work it.

So, over time, in cities and towns intelligence accrues towards the top end of civil society, as intelligent people take advantage of the social mobility it offers. This then results in two different types of aristocracy in wider society. One, the more commonly known *landed* aristocracy - a group or class we're all quite familiar with, the other a *city-based* aristocracy - a not so familiar concept. Like the landed aristocracy, this city-based aristocracy tend to marry amongst themselves (i.e. within their own social class). Which then helps to forge and cement trade and family networks within towns and cities, and also *between* towns and cities.

The core difference between the landed and city aristocracies can be summed up as such;

The landed aristocracy are tied to their land and derive their wealth and status from it. With their power resting largely on tradition and force (the force needed to defend their territory, raise militias, maintain law and order, etc).

However, the city aristocracy don't have vast areas of land, what they have is *transferable wealth* - money, gold, trade links, etc. Their power largely rests on innovation and intelligence. Unlike the landed aristocracy they are not tied to the land, but are in a position to move, and to move their wealth as well. However, in contrast to the landed aristocracy they also largely lack the force needed to defend themselves from violence, or to raise physical attacks upon others directly themselves. <sup>[1]</sup>

Thanks to these factors the landed aristocracy tend to have an interest in maintaining the state and the status quo. Whereas the city aristocracy tend to have a more internationalist outlook. These two forces at times come into conflict with one another. Though at other times their interests overlap. The hoi polloi generally switching their allegiance between the two forces depending on which worldview seems to be offering the better prospect at the time.

It's my general view that historians tend to overlook or even completely miss the importance of this *city-based aristocracy*. I think this may largely be due to the fact that most western historians tend to look at history as a *history of nations*. A history that the deep and complex



trading and cultural networks between "international" cities and towns doesn't fit neatly into. We tend to be given the following view of history;

Nations interact with each other as nations at the international level. Then within each nation there is an aristocracy at the top (generally synonymous with the aforementioned landed aristocracy), a peasant or labouring class at the bottom, and a middle class of some description wedged in the middle between the two.

Now I believe this model to be a vast oversimplification. One that downplays the function of cities and towns, and that also fails to take into consideration how wealth, particularly transferable wealth, can aggregate within such urban areas. It also fails to consider the consequence of what happens when people or groups acquire such wealth, but because of social norms or the fixity of wider traditional society can't acquire large tracts of land to become part of the landed aristocracy themselves.

It's in this "city aristocracy" sense that I believe the label *Jew* was often used throughout history, and that such conflicts between "Jews" and the wider populations of their "host" countries stemmed from this interplay between *city and country*. In fact, on the topic of transferable wealth it's interesting to note that the root of the word *jewellery*, wealth literally carried around on the body, is *jew*. There are also other English words associated with city-based professions that would perhaps suggest some kind of Jewish provenance. *Jury*, of course, associated with legal proceedings. *Due* or *duty*, meaning tax. Words like *judge*, *judicial*, etc. We also have the

*Temple* area of London. One of the main legal districts and a noted centre for English law.

Now at this point anyone reading may be feeling a little confused. *Is not Jewishness entwined with the history of the Jewish religion? Did not the European Jews arrive in Europe from the Middle East?*

Though I don't discount that these statements are somewhat true - in fact, it's something we'll be returning to later in the book - my general view is something quite different. I believe that what we think of as *Jewishness* is something that *emerges* from within our culture ..rather than something that arrives from somewhere foreign to it. I believe that the above described "city aristocracy" process is the driving force behind this, and that although we tend to view Jewishness predominantly as a religious or racial phenomena, originally it was actually a social and economic one. I believe that the religious and ethnic traditions grew out of this, rather than the other way round. In my next chapter I'll explain what led me to first explore these thoughts.

## Chapter Two - Judas of the North

In this chapter I'm going to explain what first led me to the thoughts in this book, as I feel this will be the quickest and most lucid way of providing context.

Strangely enough my original topic of interest was the history of red hair. <sup>[1]</sup> When I first began researching that history one of the things that struck me was the traditional depiction of Judas. In early art the figure of Judas was often depicted with red hair and red beard. He looked not only European, but stereotypically *northern European*. This struck me as quite odd at first. It didn't really fit with the biblical image of Judas that I had in mind at the time. *Why would the archetypal villain in Christian folklore come replete with red beard?*

I also discovered that many of the negative stereotypes associated with Jews in European folklore also had their parallels in stereotypes regarding red hair. For example, it was commonly believed that redheads were untrustworthy, and there were many traditional sayings and proverbs attesting to this idea. Take the following medieval proverb - "Si ruber est fidelis, diabolus est in coelis" (If the redhead is faithful, the devil is in heaven).  
[2]

As I looked into this history further I also discovered that red hair wasn't uncommon amongst Jewish populations in Europe, and that particularly in places such as Poland red hair was often more frequent amongst Jews than amongst

the native population. <sup>[3]</sup> I also found traditions concerning the "Red Jews" of Eastern Europe, often equated with the Khazars, who were believed to be so named because of their red hair.

All these unexpected overlaps between red hair and Jewishness led me to question the wider mainstream history. The generally accepted view is that the vast majority of Jewish people in Europe are descendants of people that arrived in Europe from the Middle East at some point in the last few thousand years or so. However, the odd relationship with red hair would perhaps suggest that this isn't entirely the case. After all, red hair is hardly common in Middle Eastern regions. It's also generally associated with areas of low sunlight.

If we look at European history from the medieval period onward, when the written record really starts to take shape (i.e. after the Dark Ages), we can see that Jewish populations existed in Europe alongside every other European group. In essence they're there in Europe from the beginning of the historical record. Now it's speculated that these populations arrived in Europe before this period, however no one knows quite when or how they arrived. With some historians speculating that they spread through Europe with the Roman legions, others stating that they came much later. Either way it's all just unevicenced speculation. I would flip this view and say if there's no evidence of them actually arriving from somewhere else then why not just assume that they've always been there? Or at least been there as long as any other group.

This leads to another interesting parallel that I noticed when looking at the history that may also play into all this, and that concerns similarities between the historical Jews and the *Druids*. This parallel may sound odd at first. However, when you look at the historical record it becomes much more apparent.

For a start medieval Jews were forced to wear pointed hats and stars on their clothes in order to differentiate themselves from the rest of the population. Again this would suggest that they didn't look sufficiently different enough that people could easily distinguish between Jew and non-Jew. For example, were they dark-skinned, a native Middle Eastern people, clothing tags would hardly be necessary for making the distinction between them and their white-skinned compatriots. Now were I to draw a picture of a man or a woman dressed in a pointy hat and a star-covered cloak what would immediately spring to mind to most people would be the classic image of the witch or wizard. Those archetypal figures from northern European folklore and tradition.

On top of this medieval Jews were often accused of utilising spells and magic by Christian folk, some of whom believed that all Jews possessed magical powers which they derived from making a deal with the Devil. These seeming overlaps between the traditions regarding Jewish people and traditions regarding druids and witches seem strange at first, but become impossible not to notice once the comparison has been made. A further overlap comes in the form of the "blood libel" - the accusation that Jews would murder Christians in order to

utilise their blood in religious rituals. This included the idea that Jews would actually drink the blood or bake it into bread. Again, the image of witches or Satanists drinking blood is a common motif that easily springs to mind when we conjure visions of people practicing dark magic. Of course, the druids were likewise accused of carrying out human sacrifice too.

Interestingly, the Star of David is also a common motif in pagan spellcraft. We intuitively associate the six-pointed star with Judaism and Israel, however we also commonly view it as a magical symbol. In fact, both the hexagram and the pentagram were often called by the name *Solomon's Seal*. This epithet is found in both Jewish/Islamic tradition and in western occultism. It was said that the symbol (both the five and six-pointed version, traditions vary) appeared on a signet ring possessed by King Solomon, which gave him magical powers. Including the power to conjure demons and to converse with animals. Again fittingly witch-like. It's also worth noting that medieval Scottish coins have been found which feature both six and five-pointed stars.

Now as you're reading this you may be pointing out the fact that druids were said to exist during the days of ancient Rome, long before the medieval period even began, and that any actual overlap between medieval Jews and ancient druids is simply a non-starter. This is a perfectly reasonable position to take if you're new to this sort of revisionism, and have complete faith in the current academic version of historical events. However, I would suggest that all these ideas need reassessing, and would

start by pointing out that the only real evidence we have for the druids even existing at all are Roman texts.

The story goes that in these ancient times Britain and much of north-western Europe was populated by people that were governed by such druids. In somewhat primitive, more naturalistic societies. Societies that lacked the art of writing, that taught their beliefs and sciences orally in the open woodland, and that were eventually wiped out (not without sentiment) by the highly civilised and literate Roman Empire.

This is said to be why there was no trace of them left, nor any continuation whatsoever of their culture in the parts they inhabited. However, there is one problem with this entire story. *The Romans only conquered Britain as far north as Scotland, and completely failed to conquer Ireland.* So where did all the Scottish and Irish druids go? It all makes very little sense when you actually challenge the logistics of the idea.

My favoured personal opinion is that these Roman texts are largely fraudulent or fanciful. In fact, I doubt they're even Roman at all. Or at least *ancient Roman* at any rate. They were probably written much later - perhaps around the medieval period itself. The "druids" depicted in the texts just seem to be a convenient placeholder to fill the gap before the dominant culture (whatever that was at the time these texts were written) arrived. In effect a re-writing of history, erasing the original or opposing culture and putting a straw man (i.e. the druids) in its place. A straw man with the general witchy-wizardy feel of the previous culture, but without any of the actual

substance. After all, this idea that the druids didn't possess any written language, and insisted on transmitting all their knowledge orally is a rather convenient trope in this regard. <sup>[4]</sup>

I would suggest that, in truth, we have very little idea what was actually going on before the medieval period - and when we get this far back in history we simply find Jewish people mixed in with the Christian people right from the get-go. So perhaps this "druish" placeholder is in some sense a cover for a Jewish tradition that's rooted in northern Europe just as deeply as any Christian or pagan tradition. Though no doubt very far removed from what we think of as being "Jewish" today.

This brings me nicely on to the final part of this chapter, which lends even more weight to this argument. Namely the similarities that can be found between Judaism and the ancient Celtic Christian world. Firstly, the Celtic Christians celebrated Easter at the same time as the Jews celebrated Passover. In fact, it was said to have taken the famed Synod of Whitby in AD 664 to finally put an end to this practice. This was when, if we're to believe the few textual accounts, King Oswiu of Northumbria agreed to celebrate Easter in accordance with the customs of Rome. However, even then it's said that the Scots in the north still continued to cling to the older custom.

Another curiosity is the name *David*. Scotland, like Israel, had a King David - or rather two of them, King David I and King David II. The Welsh also famously have their *Saint David* - or *dewy sant* as it's rendered in Welsh. On top of this we also have the feminine name



*Dhuoda* (or *Dhuada*) from the early medieval period. This name is said to be a variant of the name *David* - i.e. a feminised form of the name *David*. The most famous *Dhuoda* on record is the Frankish writer *Dhuoda*, Duchess consort of Septimania and Barcelona (*fl.* AD 824 - 844). Intriguingly Septimania, a historical region in the south of France, has often been referred to as a Jewish kingdom, owing to the large Jewish population it was said to have had. Though again the actual historical record is a little patchy.

What's interesting about the name *Dhuoda* is that it's not dissimilar to the word *druid*. In fact, the presumed male variant, *Dhuod*, would have been even more similar. Which would perhaps suggest a possible link between the names *David* and *Druid*. There's also the name *Drua*, a female Jewish name once in use in medieval England (quite a beautiful and unique name for anyone thinking of a baby name). It's similarity to *druid* is quite obvious. Lending weight to the notion that the "druids" in the historical record are simply ancestors or precursors to the medieval European Jews, with the apparent separation simply being a product of confusion or deliberate misrepresentation on the part of later writers.

After all, we do seem to have the current situation; *The Druids disappear during the "Dark Ages" without a trace. The Jews then appear in medieval Europe following these Dark Ages from whence knows where.*

The name *Jew* itself is somewhat interesting in this regard too. We have for instance the French word *Dieu* meaning *God*, which sounds very similar to the word

Jew, though it looks quite dissimilar when written down on paper. Likewise we have a bevy of other words sharing a similar root. For example, we have the god *Tiw* (or Tyr) - pronounced *tue*, where we get our word *Tuesday* from. We have the *Teutons*. Likewise the *Tudors*. In fact, the name Tudor is said to be a Welsh variant of the Greek *Theo* or *Theodore*, again meaning god.

We also have the *Tuatha Dé Danann* - the famed ancient race from Irish mythology. The Old Irish word *tuath* means "people" or "tribe" and the *Dé*, once again, is said to be the equivalent of *dios* or *deus* meaning God. Giving a loose translation of "tribe of god". The supposed added appellation of *Danann* gives things an even curiously turn as this was said to be used to help differentiate this Irish tribe from the ancient Hebrews. As Irish monks also used the term Tuath Dé to refer to the Israelites.

Added to all this we also have the fact that Ireland was once called by the name Iberion (Hibernia) and the Israelites were anciently called *Iberi*, derived from the name *Eber* or *Heber*. Hence the name Hebrew. <sup>[5]</sup>

Another curiosity worth mentioning concerns the English town of York. In Roman times it went by the name *Eboracum*. Now *Ebura* is said to mean *yew* - as in the yew tree. However, in Italian the word *ebreo* means Jew, which is obviously very similar, and both are quite close to the word *Hebrew*. The obvious similarity of the words Jew and yew is also impossible not to notice. Given the seeming links between all these words it makes one wonder if the name Eboracum perhaps betokens that in

earlier times York was predominantly a Jewish settlement.

There was also, of course, the famous massacre of the Jews in York in 1190. The story told is that the Jewish inhabitants of the city were accosted by Crusaders who were preparing to go on the Third Crusade. Their demand was that the Jews convert to Christianity. However, the Jews asked the warden of York Castle for refuge, which he agreed to, and they barricaded themselves into the castle tower. Surrounded and besieged by the mob most chose to commit suicide rather than face baptism. With the few Jews that didn't finally falling victim to the baying rabble outside. <sup>[6]</sup>

It seems a little strange that the Jews would take refuge in a castle stronghold belonging to the very Christian community accosting them. So perhaps the story is somewhat garbled and the Jews themselves possessed the castle from the outset. Something which would possibly be the case if Eboracum was indeed originally a Jewish settlement. It's interesting to note in this regard that there is a treaty from the same period between Alphonso, king of Castille, and Sancho, king of Navarre which expressly mentions castles belonging to Jews. In it Alphonso pledges "Nagara, a castle of the Jews" and Sancho pledges "Stella, which Peter, the son of Roderic, holds, being a castle of the Jews". So perhaps there were similar circumstances in England at this time as well. <sup>[7]</sup>

Incidentally, and finally for this chapter, it's also worth noting that yew trees are traditionally found in churchyards in Britain and northern France. The very

locus of druidic activity. So again, perhaps we have echoes of an ancient religious or cultural tradition lost in the mists of time. The yew tree was said to be associated with death - no doubt in part due to its toxicity. Making it poisonous to humans and animals. In fact, one theory for why it's so commonly found in churchyards is that it was used to keep animals away from burial grounds. The wood of the yew was also used to make bows, making it doubly associated with death.

Interestingly, Caesar himself, in his *Gallic Wars* noted that Cativolcus, the leader of the Eburones poisoned himself with yew rather than submit to Rome.<sup>[8]</sup> This has mild echoes of the above mentioned suicides at York. The Eburones were a Gallic-Germanic tribe that occupied the northeast of Gaul. Their name likewise has the "Ebur" prefix suggestive of the name Hebrew.

The tree was also associated with death in other ways. For instance, in folklore it was said that Jesus was crucified on a yew tree.<sup>[9]</sup> A traditional ballad titled "The Leaves of Light" contains the following verse;

*And they went down into yonder town  
and sat in the Gallery,  
And there they saw sweet Jesus Christ  
Hanging from a big Yew tree.*

Finally, it's also perhaps worth mentioning the *Dule* (or *Dool*) tree. These were trees that were used as gallows for hanging criminals in Britain. They were usually situated at prominent locations so that justice could be

seen to be done. Jesus, of course, was said to have been crucified alongside criminals, so the link is quite fitting. The trees were known as "grief" or "lamentation trees", a suitable theme. They also sometimes went by the name "Justice Tree". In this regard the duality is quite notable. What is justice from one perspective, may be a cause of sorrow and grief from another. Judas, similarly was said to have died by hanging from a tree. Though in that case under his own volition following the guilt he felt after his betrayal of Jesus. Various trees have been suggested as the one he used, including the Elder and the appropriately named Judas Tree, which produces flowers of a deep pink colouring. The figure of Judas seems to be an almost inverse image of the figure of Jesus. Their similar fates perhaps denoting two sides of a moral tale regarding the life of man, and man's final fate under the law.

## Chapter Three - European or Middle Eastern?

In the first chapter we discussed the difference between the *landed aristocracy* and a hypothesised *city-based aristocracy*. With the general theme being that "Jewishness" emerges from within culture via the development of cities. However, this idea somewhat clashes with the general idea that the Jews in Europe arrived from elsewhere, and originated in the Middle East. In this chapter I'll explain why these two ideas aren't mutually exclusive, and how the reality is probably something of an overlap between these two processes.

We may start off with a simple premise;

*Cities are more genetically diverse than the surrounding countryside.*

So if we take a modern example. Let's say England. Both the cities and the countryside are predominantly white native English. However, over time immigrants arrive. These immigrants have a general tendency to settle in towns and cities, as that's where the major opportunities are. As more time passes integration occurs to varying degrees, with native white people settling down and having children with the immigrant populations. Eventually leading to these immigrant populations blending into the wider population.

As a consequence, assuming the immigration isn't overwhelming, the towns and cities will remain

predominantly white English, however, they'll be slightly less so than the lesser-mixed people in the countryside.

Now this is something of an oversimplification of course. It's also perhaps a slightly poor example given how quickly the demographics of England are currently changing. So forgive me if you're reading this at some point in the future and the idea of a predominantly white England seems a little passé. The point is a useful one though, and highlights how cities can have a much more international make-up than the wider country they belong to. You only need to look at places such as London and New York, and then compare the make-up of those cities to leafier or more rural parts of southern England or east coast America.

If we follow the hypothesis that Jewish people are, or were, effectively a city-based class of some description, then we may surmise that they'll be especially influenced by this cultural and ethnic mixing that takes place in cities. Trade links develop between cities, and cultural links develop between the traders and financiers conducting this trade. This in turn may lead to intermarriages between families. As a consequence of arranged marriages for economic and social reasons, or simply as a consequence of personal relationships developing naturally. A trader may travel to another town or city to do business, and then meet the daughter or sister of another trader for instance. Leading to marriage and perhaps children.

Over time this process may lead to, say, English trading families, living in England, having a slightly more

diverse genetic make-up than the average English family. Due to the marriages and family ties that have developed with other trading families in other cities and towns. Perhaps even towns and cities in much more far flung places. Of course, to all intents and purposes they'll still look largely indistinguishable from most other English families. However, over time it's possible that small noticeable differences may accrue. In fact, we can see a similar thing with the traditional, landed aristocracy.

For example, the wealthy English upper-classes look to all intents and purposes like the rest of the English population. However, there are some slight noticeable differences that people will often make reference to. Either consciously or subconsciously. Such as the fact that aristocratic people tend to be taller than their poorer compatriots. People also often allude to the fact that aristocratic people tend to look a bit "horsey". This idea that the landed aristocracy look "horsey" in some way is a little bit silly, and it's a hard thing to quantify in any reasonable sort of way. However, it's something we all intuitively understand, even if it's just as a vague generalisation. We kind of understand what people mean when they point out this caricatured "horsey-ness".

So, are these slight, almost imperceptible differences a consequence of the intermarriages between European aristocrats over the centuries, and their relative separation from the lower classes of society? Or perhaps are they a consequence of the differing lifestyles these people have led over successive generations in comparison to the rest of the population? Or are they just figments of our



imagination - the result of our cultural stereotypes and prejudices? It's difficult to tell, yet we carry these stereotypes and prejudices nonetheless.

I would suggest that a similar process is perhaps partly responsible for the slight differences that are noted between Jews and the wider non-Jewish populations they often find themselves amongst. The "Middle Eastern" features of European Jews could be due to the trade links (and consequent marital links) reaching across Europe and into the Middle East. Leading to a gene flow across the continents. Likewise, some of the other Jewish stereotypes could be in part due to successive generations of Jews living in urban or city conditions. Such as the stereotype that Jewish people are less inclined to physical activity, and more suited to academic and legal pursuits.

Of course, city living and city professions tend to require lots of time indoors, as opposed to agriculture and other countryside pursuits. So perhaps centuries of exposure to such lifestyles could lead to a natural predisposition towards those type of things. Or at the very least a cultural bias towards such living. The wearing of glasses and the high levels of literacy in Jewish societies are other stereotypes that could be similarly explained. In fact, this literacy aspect is something I'll be returning to in later chapters.

Now the above are all quite crude stereotypes of course. Vague generalisations that may simply disappear under closer inspection. However, the stereotypes, like the ones regarding the landed aristocracy mentioned earlier, are all ones we can easily recognise. So perhaps there are some

grains of truth underpinning them. Though whether these grains be genetic or purely cultural is once again hard to tell. Either way, the stereotypes require an explanation even if they're wrong, and the explanation that they're a product of urban living is quite a rational one in many ways.

So, to summarise this brief chapter, and to answer the question its title poses, I would propose that European Jews are *both* Middle Eastern and European - though I would lean towards the idea that they are predominantly European, particularly with regard to the "Jewish" communities we see mentioned in medieval texts. A product of city living - a la the "city aristocracy" process - and the trade links and people flow between trading towns and cities. Trade links perhaps reaching from Europe to as far as the Middle East and maybe even beyond.

As for the commonly accepted version of history, and its view that there have been mass Jewish migrations into Europe from the Middle East, I would also consider this as a possible part of the explanation too. Though I would argue that this possible migration (of people, ideas, and perhaps also religions) is a consequence of a huge economic shift that is much overlooked. An economic shift that will require something of a revision to the commonly accepted historic timeline if its importance is to be appreciated and understood. All will be elucidated in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Four - Ancient Avatars of the Medieval World**

At the end of the last chapter I promised that I would explain the economic shift that precipitated the possible mass migration of people and ideas from the Middle East into Europe. However, I've decided I'll leave that until the next chapter, as I've realised it may be wise to devote a chapter to explaining how and why I can brush aside accepted history with a casual wave of my hand.

Now I tend to be quite open minded when it comes to the timeline of human history. It's not so much that I don't believe the established academic version, but more that there are other alternatives that I think are more likely. Or at the very least necessary tweaks that could be made to the generally established view. One case in point - and the case that's relevant to the themes touched upon in this book - is the apparent "Dark Age" which preceded the medieval period.

The official version of European history goes something like this; firstly you have the high civilisation of ancient Greece and Rome. This is then followed by a period of massive decline, generally called the Dark Ages. After this we then have the medieval period, following which we then have a return to high civilisation with the mighty Renaissance ..since which humans in Europe generally haven't looked back.

Now the Dark Ages are said to have been dark because very little happened, culturally speaking. Or rather, to put

it a little better, the historical record is somewhat blank for the period. We have a few textual accounts written by later writers of what was said to have been going on, but it's all very scant and iffy. Since we find ourselves with this badly illuminated, centuries-wide gap in the historical record academics simply assume that *there must have been something going on*. Consequently whole industries and disciplines have been built up with the sole purpose of filling this gap or speculating about it. However, the question arises, if there is so little evidence for anything actually happening, then why do we believe this period happened at all? What if we have hundreds of years of history simply inserted by hook or by crook into the historical record that were never there to begin with.

In short, what if the dating system itself is wrong?

Now this isn't a thought original to me, many modern writers have written on this topic suggesting various amendments to the current accepted timeline. With the idea that history is wrong or confused in some way becoming increasingly common in alternative circles - if not in the world of academia itself sadly. <sup>[1]</sup> In fact, when historians started compiling history into its current form about four or five hundred years ago the whole timeline was up for debate. The process being something of a jigsaw puzzle, with all the various pieces of history being allotted their various places in the grand scheme of things.

Today we just tend to assume that everyone has been using the same dating system from day one, but of course that was never the case. Historic texts were often dated

simply in relation to the king or ruler who reigned at the time, or often not even dated at all. People during the days of the Roman Empire weren't writing 250 A.D. at the top of their texts, nor was anyone else for hundreds of years after that. The practice of using Anno Domini itself was said to have been started by the monk Dionysius Exiguus in the 6th century, and then popularised by the famed Venerable Bede a few centuries later. Though again, with the darkness and sparseness of the Dark Ages it's impossible to know just how popular it was. Or if that was indeed the case at all.

In reality various calendars and dating practices were in common use all across the many cultures of Europe right up until the middle ages and beyond. So the process of amalgamating all the various texts, traditions and historic artefacts of European history into one coherent, flowing timeline was something of an onerous task for the Renaissance era historians who attempted it. A process that was made even more difficult by the task of getting that history to fit in with the wider history of the world in general, and with biblical history too.

Of course, the towering king-like figure in European history is Jesus Christ, and it's no coincidence that we ended up dating everything in relation to him. In fact, it's amazing that no one seems to find it the least bit odd that the Julian calendar was created just in time for the birth of Christ.

The Julian calendar was said to have been implemented by Julius Caesar in 46 BC, and then amended by his successor Augustus in the years following. It was the

dominant calendar in the European world until it was superseded by the similar, but slightly improved Gregorian calendar in the 16th century. <sup>[2]</sup> To me it seems just a little bit coincidental that the pagan Romans managed to create a whole new calendar just in time for the birth of little baby Jesus. This one fact alone would make me question the validity of the dating system we have, but nevertheless people seem to just accept that that's the way it all happened. Without the slightest thought, or even a pause for breath. Even science-minded academics seem to accept this Christ-centred calendar without question.

*Christianity is two thousand years old, the calendar we use is also two thousand years old - and it was implemented two thousand years ago by non-Christians.*

The odds are quite impressive. It's easy to imagine how Christians could put this down to divine providence of some description, but it's a little harder to forgive academics for their lack of curiosity. Surely it's at least worthy of investigation?

This calendar coincidence, along with the "no show" of the Dark Ages, does provide a wonderful opportunity for academic outsiders to revise things though. My general view is that we can simply dismiss anything pre the medieval period as largely "unknown" - or at best as "vaguely" known. So we can essentially deem the medieval period an event horizon, before which everything is darkness. This then means we can try to fit most of the written European history into the period of

the last thousand years or so - and that includes the writings of the "ancient" Greeks and Romans.

Now for clarity here I should say that this is by no means a fixed view I have, more just a bias towards that line of thinking. Nor, again, is it an original view. As I noted earlier many others have put forth a similar viewpoint. Most notably the Russian revisionist Anatoly Fomenko with his *New Chronology* series of books.

The idea that the works of ancient Greece and Rome are products of a much later time may sound an odd concept to those unfamiliar with it, however it appears much more rational once the novelty and heresy of the idea is overcome. For a start just consider that mainstream timeline once again. The high civilisation of Greece and Rome, then a thousand years of relative darkness, then high civilisation once again. This time courtesy of the Renaissance, itself inspired by the high civilisation of ancient Greece and Rome.

So, in effect, Europeans created high art, sculpture, architecture, literature. Then completely forgot how to do it. Then started remembering again a thousand or so years later. Compare this to European history after the medieval period. From the medieval period to the modern period there's a linear progression. In art, technology, music, architecture and everything else. For example, medieval art looks primitive in comparison to Renaissance art, and we see a gradual improvement in things such as technique and perspective from the medieval to the Renaissance period. Then following this things continue to progress in skill and technology all the

way through to modern photography and *Photoshop*. This is a progression that can easily be seen, that makes sense, and that has no large gaps in its record. One continual sequence of graded improvement. However, with the timeline from the ancient world to the medieval (and then into the Renaissance) that same progression is absent, and everything is jumping about back and forth. Art from ancient Rome looks massively superior to medieval art, and both of which put the lack of art in the Dark Age period to shame.

It's almost like if an extra century of time had been accidentally inserted between the 19th and 20th centuries. People looking back in a thousand years' time would see people with a high degree of technological advancement in the 19th century, followed by a century where people completely forgot how to utilise electricity and literacy. Then followed by another century where people immediately invented the aeroplane. It would be reasonable for those people looking back to suspect that perhaps their historic timeline was somewhat screwy.

Of course, that wouldn't necessarily mean that the inserted one hundred years definitely didn't happen. It's plausible and possible that societies can advance, then regress, then re-advance again. Just as it's perfectly plausible that a period of Dark Age regression could have occurred in the middle of European history. In fact, that's so plausible that for the last five hundred years or so plenty of intelligent men and women have believed just that. However, it does mean that the possibility that the timeline is messed up in some way is something worthy



of study and investigation. *It would be a reasonable thing to consider.*

The parallels are quite obvious once one begins to look. For starters the ancient Roman and Greek cultures have their later parallels in the Holy *Roman* Empire in the west and the *Greek* Byzantine Empire in the east. Then when we look further we often find that the evidence for the famous figures and ideas of the ancient world tend not to actually date back much further than the medieval period.

A good case in point is the famed astronomer and geographer Claudius Ptolemy. He was said to have lived in the 2nd century AD, however his famous text, the *Geography*, "disappeared" for a thousand years after its completion. No copies from his own time have survived, but it "reappeared" in 13th century Byzantium. On top of this there are no contemporary accounts of his life, nor any contemporary statues or depictions of him. <sup>[3]</sup>

It's a familiar story with most of our ancient texts. You may opine; "...but how could so many historians so badly misdate so much history?". However, the reality is that most modern historians haven't really consciously dated anything. Rather they have just repeated the datings handed down to them by the previous generation of historians. Who in turn were handed down their datings from their previous generation, and so on and so forth. Not especially different to the way all traditions and beliefs are handed down from one generation to the next. You are told Ptolemy lived his life in the 2nd century AD, so any text or idea attributed to the man must also date from that time.

As for *how* these individual texts or the various people who were said to have written them came to be thought of as "ancient" there are numerous possible explanations. Simple mistakes, accidents, acts of fraud and fakery, wishful thinking. <sup>[4]</sup> All these things can lead to items being misrepresented as something other than they are. Perhaps the most potent driver of such misrepresentation is the human tendency to put great value on things that are "old". Which often leads us to desire that the things we possess or put value in are much more ancient than is really the case. That look on a person's face when they're told on the *Antiques Roadshow* that their antique vase isn't quite as old as they thought it was is a classic example. It's still the exact same vase, but somehow it ceases to be as beautiful. The lack of heritage and prestige makes it less desirable, and likewise less expensive.

Similarly a written text, whatever its content, will have more value to people if they're told it was written by Aristotle in the world of ancient Greece, than if it was scribbled by Steve from Rochdale relatively recently. In fact, Aristotle is another great case in point. There are countless texts attributed to the Greek philosopher. All of which were, as a matter of fact, said to be the work of the great man when they were first in circulation in the Middle Age or Renaissance period. However, thanks to numerous anachronisms and inconsistencies, many are now deemed by historians to be the work of other authors. These works are now stated to be the work of various *pseudo-Aristotles* - a general cognomen given to the unknown authors to distinguish these works from the

works of the "real" Aristotle. A real Aristotle who was said to be the tutor of the famed Alexander the Great no less. <sup>[5]</sup>

It's similar with the works attributed to Caesar. He was said to have authored numerous works during his lifetime, though only five such have survived. All of which are war commentaries - essentially journals of his conquests. Modern scholars believe that two of these, *The Gallic Wars* and *The Civil War*, were written by the man himself. However, the other three works, though classically attributed to him, are now thought to be the work of other authors. <sup>[6]</sup> Now you would think that the doubt over three of the works would lead scholars to doubt the veracity of the other two, but no. For instance, were I to tell you that I owned five paintings by Rembrandt and you discovered that three were not Rembrandts at all would you be willing to put your faith (and your cash) in the provenance of the other two? Scholars, however, are not so cynical it seems. Plus everyone *wants* these to be the work of Caesar, so it would take a hard heart to come and spoil the party.

The art analogy is quite a good one actually, and the large amount of fakery in the art world is something we're all much more familiar with. The motive is obvious. You have art dealers and connoisseurs searching out lost works by the past masters. Likewise you have modern artists with abundant technical skill, but doomed to wallow in poverty painting their unwanted works. The temptation to paint something in the style of a dead great and pass it off as a genuine work is perfectly rational - if

not somewhat illegal and immoral. The artist makes some money and gets the smug satisfaction of seeing his work sitting in a gallery amongst the greats. The patrons get their much longed for masterpiece. The dealer gets his cut. The market forces alone make it rational to suspect, if not presume forgery when any new painting is miraculously discovered.

The same market exists for ancient texts and no doubt the same levels of forgery have abounded. The formula exactly the same;

*Famous name + very old = very expensive!*

It's perhaps reasonable to suspect that most of our historical artefacts are fake, or at the very least misdated and misattributed. I have a guitar in my attic that once belonged to Chuck Berry. You may not believe me, but someone else may - and they may be willing to pay good money based on that belief. Once they've bought it their faith will no doubt be further entrenched. Who would want to admit to themselves, let alone to others, that something they've invested so much time, money and emotion in was a simple act of fabrication all along? Is a statue or document in the British Museum any different to this? Is the emotional and financial investment not somewhat similar, if not even greater?

There's also another very human tendency that may play a large part in this confusion we see between the medieval and ancient world. This is the desire for anonymity. Imagine you're a writer expressing your opinions in the medieval world. Would you necessarily

want everyone to know that you were the author? Especially if you were living in a time of religious intolerance or persecution. It's quite likely you'd be tempted to use some kind of pseudonym. There's likewise the desire to have an attractive, impressive sounding name when you're publishing something. This is true both for the actual author, and for the publisher trying to sell the books. *Johannes Ferrarius* sounds a lot more impressive than *John Smith*, and no doubt would've sold a lot more volumes.

This *Latinisation* of names, along with the other various pseudonyms people may have used, could have often led to confusion on the part of later readers and historians. For example, it would be quite easy for someone to find a "John Smith" in the historical record, living in let's say rural England, and simply not realise that that seeming rustic bumpkin also wrote texts under the fancy-sounding name *Hermeticus the Great*, or whatever the case may have been. It would be easy, and perhaps quite likely, that a person would just assume that these two names found in the historic record were two completely different people. Perhaps even two people living in completely different centuries.

It's much like with the internet today. People often use various exotic-sounding avatars when they're gaming or expressing their opinions online. *DominatorX339* on Twitter may in fact be Greg the accountant from down the road, but you'd never know this from simply viewing his profile. This anonymity allows us to express our views with less fear of repercussion. It also allows us to

present an image of ourselves to the wider world that we feel will be more successful or appealing. Or that just looks and feels *cooler*.

Avatars also allow us to indulge our fantasies to some extent. In fact, you could argue that the ancient world was in some sense a fantasy world created in the text books of medieval and Renaissance writers. A virtual world where novel and controversial ideas could be expressed and explored without fear of repercussion. Where social and political structures could be shared and envisioned, and where personal fantasies could be enacted out. A humanist precursor to the fantasy worlds we indulge ourselves in online today. Perhaps these humanist authors then helped make these fantasies become political reality to some extent in the heady days of the Renaissance and thereafter.

Today it seems we place our visions for society in the future. We create our futuristic science-fiction stories, then chase those utopian, technological visions in reality. In earlier times it seems they placed their visions in the past as examples to be copied. Did ancient Greek democracy really exist the way we're told it did? Maybe not. Yet by the same token we could also ask; would we have democracy today if such a vision wasn't set out and explored in these supposedly ancient texts? Perhaps the belief people had in the reality of these ancient, more enlightened times gave them the confidence to believe that such worlds could be recreated in the present.

In a way it makes perfect sense. You could perhaps even describe such faked history (if indeed it was faked) as a

*noble lie*. If you tell someone they should fight for their liberty they'll do it all the more readily if they feel they have an ancient tradition pertaining to that liberty. It sets a precedent that proves *it has been done*, therefore it can be done again. Without which the task may just appear as a hopeless dream.

If people feel like they've had something stolen they'll fight for it back, but if they never had it to begin with they'll lack the confidence that they can ever have it. It's like if you tell someone who's earning £15 an hour they should ask their boss for a pay rise. They'll feel like they're taking a liberty and will balk at asking for an increase. However, if you tell them that the guy doing the job before them was getting £20 an hour they'll feel smited and demand parity. This is perhaps why inflation is such a grand illusion. It gives us all the impression that we're earning more money than our forebears, though quite often the opposite may indeed be the case.

Returning to pseudonyms, it's also worth noting that today authors often write under pen names for similar reasons. In fact, I could be writing under a pen name right now. The question would then be how would someone reading this know if I was or wasn't? Would they be bothered, and would they bother going to the effort to find out even if they were? Most people generally take things on face value, simply because it's much easier and much less time consuming. This is another tendency that makes it easy to fool people, either accidentally or on purpose. It stands to reason that the whole of history is filled with such misunderstandings

and twisted knots. So once again, it's always reasonable to try to have an open mind. It's far too easy to be wrong about something.

Just for the record I'm not writing under a pseudonym ..nor would I ever mis-sell a guitar as once belonging to Chuck Berry.



## Chapter Five - Port of the Gauls

So, after the detour of the last chapter I can return to the current task at hand. Namely the economic shift from the Middle East to Europe. We may start by noting how everything in history, and I mean everything, seems to have its starting point in the Middle East. The three major Abrahamic religions have their origins there. Even civilisation itself is said to have begun there. First with the advent of farming in the fertile crescent, or the Neolithic Revolution as it's called, and then with the subsequent rise of ancient Mesopotamia. Likewise the earliest literature, the birth of which is synonymous with the beginnings of civilisation, is found there in the form of ancient Sumerian texts. It's even often stated that the wheel was invented there. It seems everything that we deem a hallmark of civilisation gets traced backwards to the Middle East in a similar progression.

It's a well known timeline - we got our civilisation from the Greeks, who in turn were preceded by the Egyptians, who likewise followed on from ancient Sumeria. In fact, even the Garden of Eden, the very origin point of all Abrahamic tradition is often said to have had its "real" location in Mesopotamia.

In the west we seem to have this in-built desire to find our origins in this "middle" area of the world landmass. It has a similar outpouring in new age obsessions over ancient Egypt and its various mysteries. In alternative circles it's popularly stated that Freemasonry and other secret societies can trace their lineage back to Egypt.

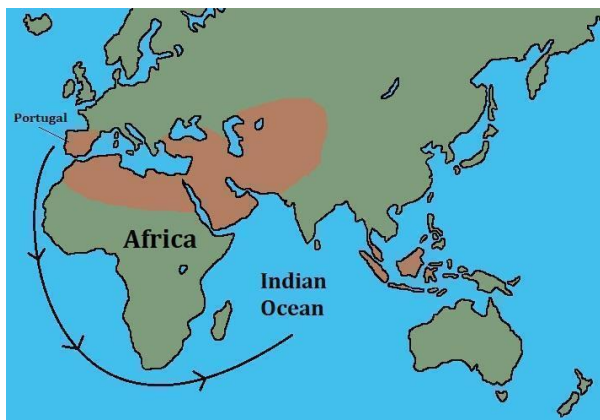
Though even in the case of the lofty Freemasonry the official and recorded history dates back no further than a few centuries. As in the previous chapter, we like things to be old, and whatever tradition we ourselves believe in we like to know it's as ancient as possible. For people consciously or unconsciously thinking within the constraints of our western paradigm "a long, long time ago in the Middle East" is the furthest back any tradition can go. So it's the obvious place for people to root their myths. Be they religious, academic or otherwise.

To anyone free from this way of thinking this focus on the Middle East can seem a little odd, especially with regard to the religious mania focused on the region. Three major religions all fighting to place their flag in what otherwise looks like a barren desert can seem a little deranged at times. Particularly when so little of modern civilisation can be found there. What makes this region, so unattractive in many practical and aesthetic ways, so valuable to people of a religious persuasion? Of course, people will state that the value is found in the fact that these religions *began there*. However, this then begets the question why were these three huge religions started there? Why was this region so busy with new religious ideas and philosophies in comparison to everywhere else, and what led to these ideas spreading to the rest of the world in such a dominant way. Again, I guess some would give the answer "because God willed it", but again, the reply would come back "but why would God will it there in particular?". There must be some rational reason.

Personally, I believe there is a rational reason, though as per the ideas discussed in the last chapter it may require some un-belief in the accepted version of history. I believe that rational reason can be found in economics.

First you have to imagine a world before the advent of major oceanic sailing. A world preceding *the Age of Exploration*, which saw European sailors venture out onto the "world ocean" and into dark areas of the map labelled simply "unknown". An era which saw two major discoveries in particular. The most notable being the discovery of the American continent by the Spanish. The other, and perhaps more important in regard the argument I'm about to make, being the successful navigation around the southern tip of Africa by the Portuguese in the 15th century.

Now when the Portuguese succeeded in making this trip around the tip of Africa (and then into the Indian Ocean) it meant that there was now, for the first time in history, a way to trade with the east via a single oceanic voyage. A feat that we unthinkingly take for granted today, but which must have seemed something of a world changing revelation at the time. Just envision the world economy before this possibility was opened up. All major international trade would have been via land journey and/or much shorter seagoing journeys. Therefore, the centre of world trade will have been the centre of the world landmass - i.e. the Middle East.



*(By sailing around the tip of Africa the Portuguese managed to circumvent the inland trading routes)*

All major trade between east and west will have come through this crucial region. The items coming back and forth along these trade routes coming via numerous hands and being taxed at numerous points along the way. Making the people in control of these trade hubs very wealthy and powerful. So when the Portuguese started to bypass this they managed to undercut the whole operation. You can imagine how unhappy their Middle Eastern trading rivals were. A virtual monopoly on trade brought crashing down by a single voyage of discovery. [1]

So let us imagine this world before the Portuguese brought it all tumbling down. Vast journeys to far flung places via the world ocean are not an option. Let alone a trading option. As a result, the impetus for trade has an inward focus. Most the people just trade locally, and any trade of a larger scale has to look inwards to the land, not

so much outwards to the sea. Consequently, the central areas and the inner seas of the world map become the areas of real action. The melting pot in the middle where everything meets. Where the most exotic goods can be found, and where wealth can be most easily made and accumulated.

This is why the three major Abrahamic religions have their seat in the Middle East. Not because of divine selection, nor historical accident, but because this is where the focus of the world economy was at that time. Just as how now the wealthy capitals of our modern world economy, such as New York, Tokyo and London, tend also to be the places where cultural trends are set and where political ideas are put into action.

A good example of how economic opportunity leads to the spread of religion is the USA itself. The USA is primarily a Christian country, and countless European Christians arrived in the Americas with the dream of starting a new life there. However, the primary reason why Christians arrived en masse in what is now the USA was not Christianity itself, but the economic circumstances. The newly discovered Americas provided a huge opportunity for any Europeans willing or desperate enough to make the journey. This was what provided the main impetus for people choosing to go. They left mainly for economic reasons, and when they left they took their Christianity with them. Without this economic opportunity things wouldn't have turned out quite how they did.

Of course, their religious and political beliefs may have had some bearing on their decision to leave or not to leave, and it's worth noting as a counterbalance that at times a few hardy souls may make a difficult pilgrimage to some ungodly place for purely spiritual reasons. However, the prospect of poverty is generally quite unappealing to the average person, no matter how spiritually inclined they may be. Plus without at least some kind of economic success it's unlikely any religious message or purpose will endure anyway. Nor would it be possible to raise a family and ensure the success and happiness of successive generations if people ignored the basic economic necessities. So the economic factors always tend to be the most overriding ones for people. They dictate human migration patterns, and likewise the flow of ideas and cultures.

It's similar now with the modern immigration of Muslim people into western countries. They're making these journeys primarily for economic reasons. This is easy to understand and obvious to see from our point of view witnessing it. It also makes perfect sense given the difference in living standards between the countries they're leaving and the countries they're arriving in. It's a perfectly logical thing to do, and it has little to do with religion in actuality. So it would be silly for us to try to explain today's mass migrations, and likewise the spread of religion in our era, by ignoring these everyday factors and practicalities. However, we tend to ignore these things when we look back at history. We try to explain the development of religion in purely religious terms. As if all the various figures involved didn't have to pay bills

and make ends meet like we do. Fortunately with the American example, the history is so recent that we don't have to guess at how and when Europeans arrived in North America. The basic circumstances are all on record. So it's easy for us to understand how and why so many white European Christians ended up living so far from Europe.

Imagine this wasn't the case though, and our recorded history only stretched back a century or so. Imagine the countless wacky and bizarre theories that people would put forth to explain why white Christian communities could be found on both sides of the Atlantic. It's worth picturing the potential scenario. Without documented evidence how would anyone know when Europeans arrived in the Americas. Or even if they arrived at all. Perhaps people would speculate that Europeans had always been there, or even that the Europeans in Europe had originally come from the Americas. Of course, there would be nothing wrong with such speculation given the lack of sufficient historical evidence. It would even be difficult for people in possession of the correct answer to prove and *know* that they were right with categorical certainty. Sometimes we just have to accept that we simply don't know, and that all we can do is offer a "best guess". However, with such an absence of evidence it's always better to assume that whatever happened in the past happened due to the same forces that drive human behaviour today. Rather than to ignore the daily necessities of life, and invoke more fanciful reasons. [2]

Returning to my original purpose, which was to simply highlight the role trade played in making the Middle East the religious centre of gravity. I guess I could simplify the whole argument by stating the general rule;

*Where you have economic opportunity you get concentrations of people. Where you get concentrations of people you get the blossoming of culture.*

Think of a situation where a hill or mountain is discovered to contain gold. First you have prospectors turning up, then you get miners. Then you get taverns opening up to service the miners. Then you get musicians and showmen playing in the taverns. Then you get inns for such visitors to stay at. An entire town or village can spring up around this single discovery. Perhaps this town or village will then go on to have a huge influence on the wider world, perhaps even producing great men of history, who influence the wider world in some important way or other. These figures, their ideas and endeavours may become much more famous than the original discovery of "gold in dem hills". However, none of this impressive wellspring of civilisation would be present were it not for this original economic pull.

It's much the same with the Middle East prior to the Age of Discovery, only to a much, much greater degree. The Middle East, the Mediterranean, Anatolia and the Indian Ocean were all swimming with economic activity at this time. They were the busy high streets of the world economy. The marketplace of the world, and consequently also a marketplace for ideas and



information. Not to mention the very centres of wealth and power.

So I would wager that all the migrations we witness in history as coming from the Middle East to Europe are in effect echoes, or garbled traditions relating to this economic shift that occurred following the explorative exploits of the Portuguese, and then later other sailors. Things we think of as occurring deep in antiquity in all probability happened much more recently, in the centuries preceding the Age of Exploration. I would include in that everything in regard "biblical" history, and also even perhaps the flow of civilisation from places such as ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. In effect, we've mistaken an economic shift in human history for the human story as a whole.

Or to summarise it;

- *The world economy was originally focused on the Middle East - the centre of the world landmass.*
- *The discoveries of European sailors then shifted this focus away from the Middle East and to areas facing outwards, towards the "world ocean" - i.e. areas on the edge of the world landmass. Especially so Europe.*
- *Consequently the focus of civilisation and culture shifted from the Middle East to Europe.*

Then furthermore;

- *The historical evidence of this shift - i.e. the evidence of extensive civilisation in the Middle East, preceding the more recent extensive civilisation found in Europe - became misconstrued as evidence that civilisation gradually developed. Beginning in the Middle East deep in history and then slowly reaching Europe and elsewhere over the course of many centuries.*
- *When in actual fact that evidence was just the effect of a vast economic shift. Precipitated by these new oceanic discoveries.*

To take an overview it seems all we really have is a fairly well recorded European history, preceded by a much more murky Middle Eastern or Mediterranean history. Before which we have very little at all. Everything lost beyond some dark historic event horizon, as per the last chapter. Much like how our vision is limited the further into the distance we look.

This grand economic shift may also in part explain the flow, or perceived flow of Jewish peoples from the Middle East in history. As we mentioned in previous chapters Jews could be viewed as being a product of city-based living. A class of people naturally emerging from wider society as towns and cities grow and proceed to trade with each other. Presumably, given that the Middle East was once the centre of world trade, such a class of people would be in abundance there. Once the shift occurred though, and the focus of world economics

moved to Europe it naturally follows that Europe would now become the natural centre for such a class. No doubt some traders will have migrated from the Middle East to follow this shift in trade and opportunity. Perhaps even in large numbers. It may also be possible that the change in economic fortune of the regions now being undercut by European traders led to various social and political upheavals in these areas. Forcing people to leave en masse.

From our vantage point looking back it would be easy to underestimate how world changing the discoveries of European explorers were. The knowledge and opportunity these discoveries yielded led to a shift in power hard to comprehend. When the Portuguese began their endeavours to explore the world ocean in the 15th century, largely thanks to the patronage of the famed Prince Henry the Navigator, their view of the world was quite different to the view we have now. Their knowledge was so limited that many sailors believed that as they sailed closer and closer to the equator the oceans would begin to boil, and that it was simply impossible for humans to pass beyond this fiery terminus. The revelation of what was found beyond these limitations therefore represented a huge leap in understanding and possibility.

The Portuguese kingdom was found at the very end of the European landmass, and this breakaway kingdom, by exerting its independence and spirit of adventure started a revolution not only political and economic, but also in thought and understanding. Looking at the very name

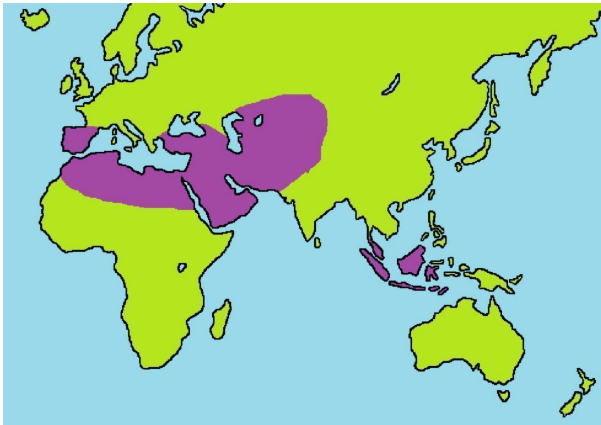
Portugal it's also interesting in regard the idea that "ancient" and medieval history are much more merged and entwined than is generally allowed for. Some have speculated that the name simply means "port of the Gauls". If we took this literally we could therefore view Portugal as the entrepôt for the entire body of people in north-western Europe. The Gauls of course being the numerous Celtic and Gallic tribes that the ancient Romans encountered to the north. So perhaps we once again see echoes of the now obscured clashes of civilisation that happened prior to and in consequence of Europeans trying to break out from Middle Eastern and Mediterranean dominance.

Again, it's difficult to know exactly what happened so deep in history, but nevertheless we once again see similar and overlapping themes when we look back at both the ancient and medieval narratives. Very much running counter to the idea that centuries of dark age barbarianism separated these periods of complex civilisation.

## Chapter Six - Slavery Central

The economic shift spoken of in the last chapter brings me to another neat little detour on our journey.

Something that is perhaps purely coincidental, but something nevertheless worthy of pointing out. Namely that the map of the economic heartland of the world, pre the Portuguese kibosh, is pretty much identical to the map of the Islamic world at its height.



*(The Islamic Empire, mirroring the world economic heartland prior to the Age of Discovery) <sup>[1]</sup>*

The Islamic Empire covered much of the Mediterranean coastline, including what is now Spain and Portugal. It included all of North Africa, large parts of Eastern Africa, the whole of the Middle East, and stretched right the way through to as far east as India and China. It even included many of the much prized (and later much fought over) islands of Indonesia. In short, wherever valuable

trade was to be had, Islam was to be found - and its centre was found at the very heart of that great network of trade, namely the Middle East.

This similarity of the two maps is quite a curious concurrence, and something I wasn't expecting to find when I first started thinking about the world before and after the Age of Discovery. It now leads me to speculate that perhaps the Islamic Empire was more a project in controlling trade than an empire driven by religious ebullience. Was Islam used, or conceivably even created, to facilitate the control of this important locus of world trade? Alternately, could the religion have even "evolved" over time to meet the needs of the various rulers and groups holding sway in the region?

One thing worth noting is that Islam seems a very useful tool in regard keeping social order. Likewise it seems especially good in regard managing a soldier class. The prohibition of alcohol in particular would obviously be very useful when it comes to keeping order amongst soldiers. What with drunkenness making it difficult to maintain discipline. The prospect of multiple wives is also something that would perhaps be a boon to the managing of young military men or warriors. *If you attack and defeat the enemy you can take your pick of the women ..even if you already have one ..or two ..or whatever the case may be.* <sup>[2]</sup>

This freedom to have multiple wives is something that would also be appealing to the ruling elites themselves of course. It would no doubt be quite useful in winning over other rich traders and leaders to the faith too. *Who with*

*the money and/or power to openly have an entire harem of women would not at least be tempted?*

The strictness of Islamic law is another thing which would potentially be useful in establishing top down control over society. Strict punishments, such as the amputation of the hands of thieves for example would no doubt help keep the population firmly in line. <sup>[3]</sup> Likewise laws decreeing strict punishments for adultery and other such behaviour would also keep the social parameters strictly defined. <sup>[4]</sup> As a system of social control it's hard not to imagine some kind of Middle Eastern, trade-based *New World Order*. Which in turn leads me nicely, or perhaps unnicely, to one very noticeable function of this Middle Eastern trading empire - namely the trade in people.

The slavery within this Islamic world was by all accounts pretty brutal. The types of slave used can be set into three categories if we look at things in a very general way. Slave soldiers, female sex slaves and household slaves. The Mamluk slave soldiers common to the Islamic world (*mamluk* meaning owned or property) were often drawn from Eastern Europe. It's speculated that this is where we get the term *Slav* from - i.e. slave. They were often taken from their families as children and raised with this specific purpose in mind.

The household slaves were treated even more brutally. Generally drawn from the African continent, they were usually castrated in transit. The process of which often resulted in death. The purpose and benefits of castration are fairly obvious. At least for the slave holder, if not the

slave. The removal of the genitals meant that male slaves could be kept in-house without the danger that they would liaise with the female house members. It also meant that they wouldn't be able to produce offspring, meaning a lack of investment in the future - and hence less reason to fight and rebel.

The added benefit of castration was that it also reduced testosterone, meaning that slaves would have less physical strength and aggression. Again, making them more suitable for the employments they were put to, and likewise less likely to start a revolt. Though these slaves were generally drawn from Africa they also often came from numerous other parts of the world. Even as far as Northern Europe. In fact, there are stories on record of people being snatched from European villages and coastal towns by pirates and then sold into slavery in the Middle East. Again, with castration often being an added horror.

It's been suggested that during the period from the 16th to the 19th century over a million European Christians were captured and sold into slavery by Barbary pirates. <sup>[5]</sup> Slaves were even taken from as far afield as places such as Iceland and North America. For example, in 1690 a Virginian resident by the name of Daniell Tyler was said to have been *"taken by the Turkes & carryed to Algeir & hath not for at least 7 years past been heard of soe that he is esteemed dead"*. <sup>[6]</sup>

The female sex or household slavery needs even less explanation. The stereotypical vision of the Middle



Eastern *harem* being enough to serve the story. In fact, in the 19th century the writer T.P. Hughes wrote;

*"there is absolutely no limit to the number of slave-girls with whom a Muhammadan may cohabit, and it is the consecration of this illimitable indulgence which so popularizes the Muhammadan religion amongst uncivilized nations, and so popularizes slavery in the Muslim religion."* <sup>[7]</sup>

Again these slaves were drawn from as far as the empire could reach, with fair haired Europeans said to be especially prized. Many women sold into this life were treated with severe brutality, but others through their wit or beauty could climb their way into senior female positions within families. Becoming favoured wives, concubines or mothers.

It's difficult to imagine how such a horrific and sophisticated trade in human beings could arise alongside the development of "civilised" living. It seems that often our morals lag behind the other, more practical developments we make though. A good example can perhaps be seen today. The cold factory slaughter of animals that takes place in modern civilised countries is much more brutal than the savage, yet more natural and isolated animal killings carried out by "backwards" tribesmen. However, we often fail to see the horrors we live amidst ..or perhaps see them and choose to turn a blind eye.

Returning to the idea of castration (which in many ways equates to treating humans like animals) there's another

very interesting avenue worth exploring. Notably the links between castration and *debt*. The idea being that in former times, if someone couldn't pay their debts they were sold into slavery. It also provides a novel way of looking at the concept of the "pound of flesh". Famous from Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*. Though the idea, like many of the themes in Shakespeare's plays, has precedents in other earlier tales and stories. <sup>[8]</sup>

In *The Merchant of Venice*, where the moneylender Shylock demands a "pound of flesh" in return for his unpaid loan, the pound of flesh isn't specifically said to be the castrated genitals. It appears to be more a symbolic demand for bloody restitution. <sup>[9]</sup> However, the link seems a reasonable one to suggest. What other portion of flesh could so easily be taken? Plus what would be the literal benefit to an unpaid moneylender if say, an arm or leg belonging to the defaulter was taken off? Other than that it would act as a deterrent to any future borrower of money with a blasé attitude to repayment of course.

Equating it to castration though suddenly makes much more sense of things. You've failed to repay your loan, so now the person you borrowed the money from takes all you have left - *your person*. You then take the mark of a slave - *castration* - and then continue your life as the property of another. It's also quite interesting in this regard that the term mortgage literally translates as "death pledge". Something I'll be returning to later in the book which ties in quite nicely with all this. Or scarily as the case may be.

The act of circumcision is something that seems to have parallels with this. Though not quite on the same level as castration, it's still nevertheless in a similar area of the body ..and likewise requires the removal of flesh. It's also often seen as a pledge. In the Jewish tradition a covenant with God. <sup>[10]</sup> In biblical times, agreements or pledges were often sealed by the sacrifice of an animal.

Supposedly the idea being that whoever broke the agreement would then suffer the same fate as the animal. So it's been speculated that circumcision carries a similar sentiment.

In the Islamic world, and in African tribal cultures, circumcision is often viewed as a ceremony that marks a boy's transition into adulthood. In fact, it's often the case that males aren't allowed to get married until they've been circumcised. In this regard it's almost like a token of citizenship, where a man can't fully take part in adult society unless he's been through this ordeal.

Returning to the Old Testament we also see circumcision being required in a similar sense. In the story of *Dinah and the Shechemites* (Genesis 34) it's demanded that Shechem and all his fellow male townsfolk be circumcised if he's to take Dinah, the woman he's unlawfully slept with, as his wife. Similarly the Romano-Jewish scholar Josephus wrote that when the Idumeans were subdued by force, they were only permitted to remain in their country "if they would circumcise their genitals, and make use of the laws of the Jews". <sup>[11]</sup> Again, suggesting circumcision was a

precondition of social involvement, and a visible, sincere showing that one was prepared to submit to the law.

Circumcision was also common in ancient Egypt, where wall reliefs depict the procedure being carried out. In one written account, said to be from the 23rd century BC, an Egyptian named Uha tells of being circumcised on mass with "one hundred and twenty" other men. <sup>[12]</sup> The Jews were said to have come from Egypt. With the added theme being that they were escaping slavery. So it all ties in quite neatly.

Egypt, of course, is also right bang in the middle of the very Islamic or Middle Eastern empire we've been discussing in this chapter. In the conventional historic timeline the world of ancient Egypt is quite far removed from the much later Islamic empire. However, as discussed in Chapter Four, there are valid reasons for considering the possibility that the accepted timeline may not be entirely correct. So perhaps the very distant world of "ancient" Egypt overlaps more heavily with later Middle Eastern history than is commonly thought. Either way the themes of slavery and circumcision are quite consistent throughout.

In a similar regard it's also worth considering the timeline of Islamic history. Is it something of a misnomer to refer to this trading empire, centred on the Middle East, as an *Islamic* empire? Perhaps the empire came first and Islam then spread through it later. Again, even within the constraints of the accepted conventional timeline, we have no way of truly knowing how and when things such as slavery and circumcision began. Nor if they were

helped or hindered by the advent of Islam, Judaism, or any other concurrent religion.

Some writers have speculated that Islam helped fuel the rise in slavery, others that it did the exact opposite, mitigating against its effects. One idea commonly put forth is that the rise of Islam prohibited the enslavement of fellow Muslims. Which in turn then led to the further enslavement of non-Muslims, creating an expansion of the slave market. The scale of slavery in the Islamic world is hard to ignore, though it's perhaps unfair to specifically link the two. In eighteenth century Mecca many eunuchs worked in the service of mosques. <sup>[13]</sup> However, by the same token castration is generally considered *haraam* (forbidden) in Islam. Likewise the Qur'an states that it is righteous;

"to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, *and for the ransom of slaves* [my emphasis]" <sup>[14]</sup>

Suggesting an antipathy to slavery itself. The Qur'an also states that it is "forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness". <sup>[15]</sup> Again, suggesting that Islam would be averse to the forcing of women into sex slavery. However, conversely there are numerous references in the Qur'an to those whom "your right hands possess". Generally taken to mean slaves. So it's difficult to know if Islamic culture was a driving force behind slavery, or a victim of it, subservient to the wider socio-economic trends it existed amongst.

As mentioned earlier I tend to favour the idea that economics tends to be the primary driving force. However, this then begs the question did Islam evolve to serve this driving force? Or did it come into being as an antidote to the problems caused by it? Anyone reading the Qur'an who is already familiar with the New Testament will notice the many similarities Islam has with Christianity. Particularly with the Christianity as expressed by the apostles later on in the New Testament. In fact, the Qur'an, with its various apostle-like "messengers" spreading the word of Islam is notably similar in this regard. The focus on ideas such as hell and final judgement, and the distinction between believer and non-believer are likewise noticeably similar.

The official timeline places a gap of approximately six centuries between the rise of Christianity and the rise of Islam. However, again, as mentioned before it's tempting to reappraise this commonly accepted timeline and place all these events much closer together. If this was the case it could be that Christianity rose in opposition to this Middle Eastern empire, and that the rise of Islam which followed was a continuation of this trend. With Islam spreading these ideas throughout this Middle Eastern trading empire, only in a way much more acceptable to the pre-existing culture. With Islam essentially attempting to manage the mass slavery which already existed. Though again this is speculative. Either way the overlap between the map of Islam and the map of world trade prior to the Age of Discovery is pretty striking.

Returning to the economic aspect, it's interesting to note that circumcision is also common amongst Australian Aborigines, and likewise it seems to carry the same connotations. For instance, in the Walbiri society if a male doesn't pass through the rite of circumcision he cannot obtain a wife, enter his father's lodge, or participate in further religious ceremonies. In essence he remains socially excluded. <sup>[16]</sup> This is similar to what we see in Africa and the Middle East and leads one to wonder if perhaps this Middle Eastern empire stretched as far as Australia at some point in the past. It's also tempting to wonder if these links explain the similarity, both in appearance and in custom, of Africans and Aborigines. Perhaps both are more closely related than the current scientific model of human migration allows for.

It should also be noted however that the practice of circumcision was said to be found in the New World too. In fact, it's reported that when Columbus reached the New World he found that the Native Americans practiced the custom. So this perhaps puts paid to my idea that circumcision was in some way a token of this larger Middle Eastern empire. Unless the official history is really messed up that is, and there was some degree of traffic to the New World before the advent of Columbus. <sup>[17]</sup>

The evidence that Native Americans practiced circumcision does seem a little tenuous though. There are some written accounts attesting that the practice took place, but there are also others that are much more

sceptical. Most of the textual sources attesting to it seem to be quite speculative, and oftentimes it seems that other ritual practices are being mistaken for circumcision. One 19th century publication relates the following anecdotal account from a person by the name of Doctor Beaty;

*"an old Indian informed him that an old uncle of his, who died about the year 1728, related to him several customs of former times among the Indians, and among the rest, that circumcision was long ago practised among them, but that their young men made a mock of it, and it fell into disrepute and was discontinued."* [18]

Another states;

*"There are no traces of the rites of circumcision ..Circumcision was reported as existing among the Sitkas, on the Missouri; but a strict examination proved it to be a mistake"* [19]

There's also the following account, which sounds a little apocryphal;

*Las Casas and Mendieta state that the Aztecs and Totonacs practiced it [circumcision], and Brasseur de Bourbourg had discovered traces of it among the Mijes. Las Casas affirms that the child was carried to the temple on the twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth day after birth; there the high-priest and his assistant placed it upon a stone, and cut of the prepuce at the root; the part amputated they afterward burned to ashes.* [20]

However, in the footnotes to this vivid account the author also relates several other authorities which cast doubt on



the prevalence of the custom. Expressing the belief that most accounts were mistaking other rituals, such as bloodletting rites for the act. On top of this Brasseur de Bourbourg in a later work acknowledged that his claim to have found "traces" of circumcision had been mistaken.

All in all it seems difficult to know with any degree of certainty whether the custom was or wasn't practiced by the natives of the Americas. So without further research it remains an intriguing maybe. Regarding the supposed account of native circumcision by Columbus that we began with, I actually have some doubts about that entire story as a whole. In the previous chapter I mentioned the various discoveries made by the Portuguese during the Age of Discovery. However, I only briefly mentioned the important, epochal discovery of the New World made by the Spanish.

The first thing worth nothing is the name *Christopher Columbus* itself. It's quite curious as the word *columba* means dove, and the given name Christopher comes with obvious connotations of the name *Christ*. Given that the Spanish were bringing Christianity to the New World it's therefore possible that the name could simply translate as "dove of Christ", or something to that effect. <sup>[21]</sup>

Interestingly, the Portuguese were also said to have discovered the Americas too. Though in their case it was an accidental discovery, as opposed to the more deliberate voyage said to have been taken by Columbus. The Portuguese were gradually exploring the western coast of Africa and the various islands of the Atlantic Ocean, so it would perhaps make sense that through a

stray voyage they would alight upon the east coast of Brazil. The most easterly part of the Americas, and the very part colonised by the Portuguese. This all leads me to wonder if perhaps it was only the Portuguese that made the discovery, and that the Spanish version was simply something of a retelling. Maybe a retelling contrived for political or religious reasons. Whatever the truth, given that the New World was a destination for African slaves, the very mention of circumcision in this part of the world is worthy of note. So it remains an interesting avenue of investigation.

Another point to consider in regard circumcision is the possibility that it perhaps was something that was changed from a negative to a positive marker by the peoples that were subjected to it. As mentioned earlier the Jews were said by some to have originally been slaves in Egypt. In leaving Egypt did they carry the act of circumcision with them, and in doing so turn a negative act into a badge of religious forbearance? Perhaps in a similar way to how in modern times members of the black community have reclaimed the "N-word" from its original use.

According to the Book of Joshua the Jews that fled Egypt were all circumcised. However, those that were born in the wilderness were not. It was Joshua himself who was commanded by God to circumcise them once again;

*At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. - Joshua 5:2, King James Version*

Once again, reading this we get the sense that circumcision is a prerequisite for joining "civilisation" and that to be in a state of uncircumcision is to be in the wilderness, outside of the fold. It's often speculated that Moses, the predecessor of Joshua, forbade circumcision whilst he was leader of the Israelites. There's even a strange passage in the Book of Exodus where God threatens to kill Moses, but then spares his life after his wife circumcises their son;

*And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision. - Exodus 4:24–26, King James Version.*

It's hard not to read this as the story of a man leading his enslaved people to freedom, only to see them dragged back towards the very civilisation they were leaving. With circumcision being the totemic mark of belonging to it. Though again this is highly speculative.

As suggested earlier, perhaps in these religious traditions we see a negative act enforced upon a people being rebranded as a mark of religious devotion. Today circumcision is generally viewed positively by the cultures who practice it. However, throughout history it's often been used in a more adverse way. For instance, in the 7th century, in Visigothic Spain, it's recorded that King Wamba, following a period of warfare, ordered the circumcision of everyone who had committed atrocities

against civilians. <sup>[22]</sup> Showing that at that time, in that part of the world at least, it was viewed as a mark of defilement. A punishment for a crime.

Also, in the Old Testament it's said that the future King David slew two hundred Philistine men and collected their foreskins to give to King Saul as a dowry for his daughter Michal. So even within the biblical tradition it seems there was at times a sense that the removal of the foreskin could be viewed as a display of power over an enemy. In this particular example it's not too dissimilar to an Indian scalp following an act of warfare.

Another interesting element to add to all this is the *Pondus Judaeus*. <sup>[23]</sup> This was a device used in the ancient world to restore the foreskin. Essentially a weight that was attached to what was left of the foreskin with the aim of stretching it to once again cover the glans. The term *pondus* is also perhaps suggestive of the "pound of flesh" mentioned earlier. It's generally thought that the main cultural factor leading to the use of such devices was the desire on the part of Jewish men to fit into Greek culture.

For Greeks it was common to display the naked body publicly during athletic contests and at public baths. However, it was considered unseemly to show the uncovered head of the penis, which makes sense as normally this would only be on display during sexual arousal. In fact, it's said that the Greeks only considered someone to be truly naked when this was on display. Consequently it became desirable for circumcised people who wanted to fully take part in Hellenistic culture to try to reverse or hide the procedure of circumcision.

Interestingly, the original act in Jewish custom only involved cutting a part of the foreskin off. A procedure called the *milah*. However, because of the frequent attempts made by circumcised men to restore their foreskin, rabbis decided to introduce a more radical version of the act which removed the whole of the foreskin. Making it almost impossible to reverse the procedure. This type of circumcision is referred to as the *periah*.<sup>[24]</sup>

The fact that many Jewish men in the ancient world were eager to reverse their circumcision would suggest that the act was far from voluntary in many cases. That those doing the circumcising were also eager to make it irreversible likewise lends weight to this argument. In many ways it brings to mind the idea of *branding*. As in cattle branding or the branding of criminals. The idea being to mark a person in such a way that it would be impossible for them to then hide their denoted status. It's hard not to wonder if perhaps circumcision in many cases was deliberately intended to be a visible marker. Denoting belonging or ownership - maybe to a tribe, caste or religious grouping. Or again, as some kind of token of "citizenship".

In the biblical story where God makes his covenant with Abraham slaves are specifically mentioned. Illustrating that slavery was common at that time, but likewise illustrating that both slaves and non-slaves in Jewish culture were expected to be circumcised. Suggesting that if circumcision was originally a marker of slavery or serfdom it wasn't thought of as such by the Jewish

people retelling these religious stories. In *Genesis 17* God states to Abraham; "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." The fact that God seems a tad blasé about people owning other people doesn't quite sit well with my own tastes, but then again these are allegorical stories that aren't necessarily meant to be taken as hard factual history. Nor the verbatim word of God almighty.

Just how linked or otherwise the concepts of circumcision and castration were in the past, the ubiquitous nature of slavery in the Middle East is nevertheless highly apparent. With the above Bible passage highlighting that. This leads me to the final section of this chapter.

We often have the view that it was Europeans that went out, built empires, and enslaved the rest of the world. However, if we look at European history as taking its lead from the Middle Eastern empire it usurped, we can see that this is only half true. Many European countries actually began by defending themselves from the threat of slavery, and in a sense only inherited the trade in flesh when they overturned the previous dominance of the Middle East, following the discoveries made by the Portuguese.

This doesn't excuse the European involvement in the slave trade of course, nor does it excuse the brutal exploitation of it. However, it is worth mentioning how

unnaturally the trade in people often sat with some Europeans, and with some aspects of European culture.

Firstly the doctrine of Christianity, with its emphasis on charity and forbearance, made the hypocrisy of the slave trade a little too obvious to ignore. Leading to many Christians being at the forefront of movements to end the trade. Then on top of this there is the tradition of individual liberty that is often found in Europe, particularly in Northern Europe. Which can be seen in both the strong legal traditions found in places such as Britain, and also in the wild drunken disorderliness common to Northern European cultures. Think the *Wildlings* in *Game of Thrones* with their free, but rowdy style of living.

For example, in 1569, after a slave was brought to England from Russia an English court ruled that English law couldn't recognise slavery. Sadly this didn't stop England's subsequent involvement in the shipping of slaves with its rise to empire status. However, it did at least act as a precedent, and by as early as 1701 the Lord Chief Justice had ruled that a slave became free the minute he stepped foot on English soil. Not much use for slaves elsewhere in the empire, but nevertheless a sign that slavery troubled the conscience and tastes in Britain perhaps more than it did in other slave-owning cultures.

This attitude probably also owes something to the fact that Britons were sometimes in fear of being dragged into slavery themselves, as mentioned earlier. For instance, John Rawlins, an English sailor, described how he and his crew were kidnapped by Barbary pirates in 1621. He

stated that two younger men were "by force and torment" made to "turn Turks" - i.e. they were circumcised.

Continuing the theme from above. <sup>[25]</sup> In fact, a similar example of forced circumcision comes in regard the 1780 Battle of Pollilur (in present day India). After which many British soldiers were taken captive, several hundred of whom were circumcised against their will. One victim lamented "I lost with the foreskin of my yard all those benefits of a Christian and Englishman which were and ever shall be my greatest glory." <sup>[26]</sup> So Britons were never truly free from such threats themselves in these earlier times.

Indeed, the famous song *Rule, Britannia* with its famous refrain "Britons never, never, never shall be slaves" was in fact just that. <sup>[27]</sup> A cry against slavery. Stating that never again would Britons be under the rule of tyrants, or victims to slavery. <sup>[28]</sup> Historians often deem the song's lyrics to be simply in reference to the threat of *European* tyranny. However, at the time the threat of actual slavery was very much a real thing, and there was a very blurred line between the Middle East and the European continent from a British perspective. Though this sense is now lost and forgotten these days. Now when people hear *Rule, Britannia* they tend to see it as an *imperial* anthem - with the feeling being that Britain was intent on enslaving everyone else, but in many ways the British Empire began precisely in opposition to slavery.

Now this is a little bit of a rose-tinted view of Britain's history of course. However, all this did help to set the tone for the political reforms that would eventually lead



Britain to abolish slavery with the *Slavery Abolition Act* of 1833. Following which Britain then went on to use her Royal Navy to help enforce the abolition of slavery around the world. So, once again, though there's no excuse for Britain's involvement in the trade, nevertheless she did abolish the practice whilst at the height of her powers. A practice that had long preceded Britain's involvement in it, and that at one time had plagued the people of Britain itself. So the general perception of the British Empire as the leading culprit is a tad unfair. Then again though, I'm British, so perhaps I'm a little biased :)

# Chapter Seven - Rent and Mortgage

The last chapter was concerned with slavery, and we ended by discussing its abolition - which in turn helped lead to its near total demise in today's modern world. Consequently it's now something we tend to see as existing largely in the past, with just a few pockets of it remaining in "backwards" cultures, and in a few dark, criminal parts of society. However, this view has left us with a bit of a misconception about what slavery is and where it comes from. So it's maybe worth having a little look at this.

We tend to think of slavery these days in a very basic, binary way.

People who get paid for their employment are *free*.  
People who don't get paid for their employment are *slaves*.

We generally see it as about being paid or not paid for work. Now, of course, being paid a wage for work is a huge step up from being in actual shackles, but it's still, nevertheless, a bit of a false dichotomy. Which only really gives us part of the picture.

To understand this larger picture we need to look at how slavery arrived in the Americas. For the example to work we'll have to assume that the accepted history regarding the discovery of the Americas is correct. We'll also have to take a somewhat romanticised view of life in the

Americas before the arrival of Columbus and his various old worldly counterparts. So I'm taking a bit of a liberty in setting the scene to get my story across, but the importance is more in the idea than in the factual history in this chapter.

Anyway, when Europeans arrived in the Americas they brought "civilisation" with them. A "civilisation" we'll be discussing in more detail in the next chapter, but which for now we don't have to worry about too much. The general "civilised European/savage native" motif will suffice to paint the picture.

Now when Europeans arrived with this civilisation they imposed it on the newly discovered continent in two ways. Firstly, by actually building it there - i.e. by settling and living and building towns, etc. Then secondly, by foisting its economic systems upon the people already living there.

So, when Europeans began attempting to make their fortunes, be it by mining gold and silver, or by farming exotic crops, they needed people to work on these plantations and down these mines. However, the natives didn't want to do this - and it wasn't because they weren't being offered pay. It was because they didn't want to work *at all*. They didn't need to work no matter what the pay was. They simply had no need for it, and the primary reason they had no need was because they didn't have to pay rent or mortgage.

It's hard for us to imagine this from our current perspective - we think it's perfectly natural to pay rent or

mortgage every week or month simply for the luxury of having somewhere to go to bed at night. However, this wasn't the case for people living "outside of civilisation". They lived where they lived, not unlike a squirrel in a tree, without the worry of having to pay another human being just to have somewhere *to be*. Paying just to have somewhere *to exist*. To breathe in and out. All these people really needed to worry about was finding food and water. Apart from that they just had to maintain their "rent-free" homes - be they temporary movable shelters or fixed settlements.

So given their state of life why would they want to choose to spend hours every day down a mine pit, or on someone else's plantation? Even if they were being paid handsomely for it? Unlike us they didn't have rent or bills to pay. So what exactly would they have been working for?

For most people today their biggest bill is their rent or their mortgage. It can consume more than half a person's entire wage. So people are largely working just to have somewhere to exist - in the evenings and at night-time when they're *not working*. It's like spending a lifetime in a hotel room. We just accept that this is normal because we have no other experience or concept of living, but to someone from outside our civilisation it wouldn't look like such a great deal.

So this is why slavery began in the Americas. Not because the slave owners didn't want to pay the natives a fair day's pay, but because the natives didn't want to work for these people full stop. Consequently, these newly

arrived European speculators had to literally hunt down natives and force them at gun or knife point into working. The term "headhunting", commonly used in business parlance carries echoes of this idea. It was also why countless slaves had to be imported from the African continent to do this work.

So in a way it's our need to pay rent or mortgage that *forces us to work* - or at least work as much as we do. In fact, it's said that even today tribes in the Amazon only spend a few hours a day working to gather and hunt their food, and to do their various other necessary tasks. Whereas in the *civilised world* it's often 8, 9, 10 hour days - and that's excluding all the other work we're not paid for. Such as doing the shopping, or the laundry and all the other little things.

Earlier in the book we noted how the word *mortgage* translates as "death pledge" (*mort* meaning dead, as in *post-mortem*, and *gage* meaning pledge), and we looked at some of the links between debt and slavery. Having to pay another human being for the privilege of having somewhere to exist seems not entirely dissimilar to slavery in many ways. Again, it's a huge step up from actually being *owned* by another person, and I certainly wouldn't want to swap places with any of the countless desperate victims of slavery we've mentioned previously. However, I think I'd be pretty tempted to swap with the "backwards" natives in their rent-free wilderness.

## Chapter Eight - Written Law vs Natural Law

In the last chapter "civilisation" was portrayed in a somewhat negative light. In grim contrast to the idyllic paradise I was imagining when I was thinking of escaping the city and going back to the wilderness. However, there are many benefits to civilisation too, and I would probably long for those as well were I to leave them all behind. In fact, this sums up all of human history really. Within ourselves, and within wider society, there's an ever ongoing battle between our longing to return to nature and our desire to *civilise* the world.

To civilise essentially means to refine or advance. To soften and tailor the natural world. To cultivate - hence the word *cultured*. It's generally associated with *city living*. The word civilisation sharing its root, as noted earlier, with Latin words such as *civis* (citizen) and *civitas* (city). Civilisation or advanced culture tends to generate into existence through cities, or through other *aggregations of people*. Which is essentially what towns, cities and settlements are.

Wherever you get large numbers of people gathered together you get the sharing of ideas, and also the division of labour. Leading to the blossoming of culture. If you're an intelligent person living out in the middle of nowhere your natural intelligence may give you a hand in overcoming the problems of survival. However, if you're an intelligent person living in a town or city, exposed to

other people, other ideas and information you can advance all the more further. Standing on the shoulder of giants so to speak.

We tend to think in terms of civilised *countries* today. However, if you consider how civilisation arises it becomes apparent that city states must have come first, then larger nation states much later. If you imagine a vast area of land with nomadic or semi-nomadic native peoples spread across it - perhaps like the pre-Columbus native America we imagined in the last chapter. Then on this vast landscape there may be certain areas where humans naturally begin to gather and settle in greater numbers. Perhaps because of the natural resources of the area - fresh water, abundance of food, etc. Or maybe because it's situated at a crossroad for travel or migration. Or likewise because it's a convenient meeting place for people to trade goods - becoming a natural marketplace or trading centre.

However it comes into being, once people start living there in increasing number a culture of some description will begin to blossom. It'll become a centre for trade, ideas, people and information. In effect a city or town will start to develop. Now if several cities or towns begin to develop it'll perhaps become the case that these settlements, though separated by many miles, come to be more similar in their way of living to each other, than they are to the vast swathes of people living in the areas of wilderness in between them. A similar thing can be witnessed today. For example, where people living in New York and London have more in common with each

other than either do with the rural bumpkins living out in the American or British countryside.

Once you have the rise of towns and cities it then becomes in many ways much like the internet. A spider's web of cities - all acting as nodes, linked by trade routes, transferring goods and information. Largely bypassing all the offline natives in between. Some of whom may have some links (perhaps you could say a limited Wifi connection) to these towns and cities, and therefore take some part in this vast flow of information. Others completely unplugged, cut off and completely offline in the wilderness.

When we think of things this way it becomes clear that nation states, or "countries", would've originally began as loose confederations of these civilised city states. Only really becoming something approximating a modern political nation once the uncivilised bits in between became sufficiently civilised to make the process possible. Natural tribal and racial divisions will have also played some part in this process of country building too of course. Not to mention geographical barriers such as rivers, mountains and oceans. However, originally you will have just had civilised cities or urban areas - replete with their increasingly sophisticated cultures - surrounded by the uncivilised or semi-civilised hoi polloi. The city with its laws, mores and social structure. The surrounding area, perhaps controlled and exploited in some way by the city folk, but nevertheless largely ungovernable. Except that is by force and coercion.



Now the two important advances of civilisation we're particularly interested in here are the development of literacy, and the development of sophisticated law/religion. I've put law *slash* religion because it would seem that originally there was no clear separation between the two. Which we can see when we attempt to search for the origin of such practices.

Even primitive societies have their values, which guide and set the boundaries for their members. These values may come as spoken or unspoken general rules, perhaps imposed by force or threat upon the rest of the group by the dominant members of the tribe. Or they may come in the form of stories and myths. A tale about a monster or spirit in the woods may take the form of an oral myth, but it may also serve as a warning about the dangers of heading out into the woodlands alone or unprepared. It's difficult to imagine how such beliefs and social behaviours truly developed and came into being over the course of man's advancement. However, from observing modern indigenous tribes we can see that even primitive groups of people have their customs and rituals. More so we can see that these customs and rituals - though they may look odd to modern eyes - often have some kind of practical benefit. The idea that the gods demand that the crops be sown on a certain date may sound a little silly, but it does at least make sure the crops get sown at the right time of year. Likewise ritually washing items may take the form of a religious rite, but the practical benefits in regard hygiene are also clear to see. Though the person practicing and insisting upon the rite may not understand

the concept of germs and cleanliness in the same way that you or I would.

When it comes to city living, with its more developed social structure, it seems more complex religious practices developed to fill the more complicated needs. With the advance of literacy it also meant that such rules and rituals could be recorded and written down. Setting them in stone in a way that made them easier to remember and retain, but also perhaps harder to abandon or bend to one's will. More advanced, but less organic. It's still a case that "the gods demand it", but now it's written down, reduced to a fixed statement.

Looking at organised religions such as Islam, Christianity, Judaism and so forth we can see that they are, in many ways, largely bodies of rules and regulations. These days we tend to think of such institutions as being created purely to service spiritual needs. Especially in the west where we're so used to the separation of church and state. However, it appears that in the past such religions literally were the state, and that all law was by its nature *religious law*.

I would suggest that in a sense all organised religions are essentially dead or redundant political systems. Or socio-political systems to put it a little better. A good example today is perhaps the *Sharia law* of Islamic tradition, and its battle for supremacy with secular law in Islamic countries, or in other areas with large Muslim populations. Islamic law was, and in some cases still is, the state law. However, for civilisation to march on it has to be relegated from state status to a purely religious set

of guidelines. A fate that western religions such as Christianity have already succumbed to.

While I'm using the word *relegated* it's perhaps worth noting its similarity to the word *religion*. Suggesting that the original meaning of the word religion came with connotations of being subservient to a higher power - be it the power of the law, or the power of the lord. It's also said to be related to Latin words such as *religare*, meaning *to bind*, and also *relega* meaning *banishment*. Again, both coming with suggestions of restraint under the law.

The Jewish religion is especially legal with its multitude of laws and observances. From the clear and broad commandments of Moses to the much more specific and finicky requirements of kosher food preparation. In the first chapter I mentioned the idea that "Jewishness" evolved out of city living, and noted many of the legal words that could be equated with the word *Jew* - such as *jury*, *judge*, *duty*, etc. I would also proffer the idea that many of the laws and regulations found in Jewish religious tradition originally evolved to deal with the management of city living. Or to put it more succinctly; *to manage civilisation*.

In fact, just looking at the laws regarding kosher food this seems like something that could only come about where large numbers of people are living in close proximity. Such rules wouldn't be especially necessary in a practical sense for small farming communities, or more native peoples. However, in the city where lots of people are eating and living in a limited area of space things like

hygiene then become an issue, and the management of such practices necessary. In this regard Jewish *kashrut* dietary laws seem not dissimilar to our modern laws regulating food production in bakeries, restaurants, factories and elsewhere.

It's interesting to note that in the New Testament Jesus and his followers are chastised for not washing their hands before eating bread;

*Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.* - Matthew 15, King James Bible

From a hygienic point of view it's perfectly sensible and practical that someone should wash their hands before eating, and again it's not too dissimilar to secular laws we have now requiring bakers and other food preparers to wash their hands. However, in the bible story Jesus was less concerned with the practicalities and the letter of the law, and more concerned with the *morality* of the law. In fact, it could be said that in many ways the doctrine expounded by Jesus, and the rise of Christianity, was in effect a reaction or rebellion against the *excesses of law*. A rebellion against, or a correction of *civilisation* itself. This will be the theme of the next chapter, and we'll return to Jesus washing, or not washing his hands later on there.

Regarding the excess of written law, it can often leave less room for moral choice, and consequently can sometimes have a dehumanising effect on society.

Regulations and laws, for all their benefit, can come at the cost of genuine freedom. *The law of the jungle* - in effect the absence of law - representing freedom with all its dangers. The law of the city, or *civilisation* - with all its legality - symbolic of both captivity and comfort.

The people situated outside of the city, the natives or country-dwellers, often lie somewhere in between these two extremes. Their cultural values and traditions, generally oral and changeable - i.e. *not written down*. Combined with, or existing alongside, an inbuilt sense of right and wrong. What could be called *natural law*.<sup>[1]</sup> If they have some links to town or city life then they may have some degree of interaction with, or use of written law, but such law only reaches such places via the spread of civilisation itself. So to have it they must become *civilised* to some extent.

Coming to the development of written language itself. Though it's a symbolic concept, it still needs technology for its use to spread. For someone to become literate it requires not only that they have interaction with other literate people, but also access to the tools required. Be they books, pigments, clay tablets or whatever the case may be. The problem of illiteracy in many ways is a problem of poverty and not one of education. For example, it's hard for someone to be mobile phone literate if they don't have access to a mobile phone. However, once people become wealthy enough to have access to mobile phone technology they pick it all up pretty quickly. A child with access to a mobile phone or tablet will soon become a wizard with it in no time. They

don't require formal *lessons* to use the things. I would imagine it was quite the same with the advent of literature. This is another topic we'll return to in a later chapter.

What's highly interesting in regard this difference between city dwellers, with their written law and organised religious practices, and the country dwellers with their lack of such formal organisation, is the dichotomy found in the New Testament between *Jew* and *Gentile*. Jesus, along with most of the protagonists in the New Testament appears to be Jewish. One of the questions often posed in the gospel texts then being whether these Jewish rebels should share their new-found Christian doctrine with the Gentiles (a question answered in the affirmative).

Looking at the issue through the lens of Jewish civilisation it's not hard to see the difference between Jews and Gentiles as being the difference between city dwelling urbanites and country dwelling uncivilised folk. Or rather *citizens* of cities, and *non-citizens*. If we see circumcision as a token of citizenship this would add weight to the view. Likewise the ensuing debate over whether Gentiles should be required to undergo circumcision in order to join the new faith.

An interesting fact that lends further weight to this view comes via ancient Rome, and their similar way of differentiating between citizen and non-citizen. The 2nd century Roman jurist Gaius wrote the following about the law;

*Every people (populus) that is governed by statutes and customs (leges et mores) observes partly its own peculiar law and partly the common law of all mankind. That law which a people established for itself is peculiar to it and is called ius civile (civil law) as being the special law of that civitas (state), while the law that natural reason establishes among all mankind is followed by all peoples alike, and is called ius gentium (law of nations, or law of the world) as being the law observed by all mankind. Thus the Roman people observes partly its own peculiar law and partly the common law of all mankind.* <sup>[2]</sup>

From this we can see a clear distinction between the law of the city (*ius civile*), and the law beyond the city (*ius gentium*). A law common to all men, which is *established by natural reason*. The Latin words themselves are also quite revealing. *Gentium* translates as *people*, but is generally used in the sense of tribe or nation. If you've noticed its similarity to the word *gentile* that's because they both share the same root. *Gentile* being a Latin derived word, rather than a word of Greek or Hebrew origin.

Incidentally, the word commonly used to denote gentile in the Hebrew is *goy*. This term can be a little controversial today, with it sometimes being said that the term carries an implication of prejudice towards non-Jews. The idea being that the *goy* are afforded a lesser status by Jewish writers, or even equated with cattle or animals. However, this all makes more sense when considered in regard the idea that the Jews are a civilised or city based people. It's not uncommon for

people from the civilised world to describe the behaviour and way of living of less civilised people as *animal-like*. Even today people may often speak this way of other cultures, especially when there are stresses on society. For example, when first world people complain of the crime or social degradation caused by immigrants from lesser developed countries.

In fact, looking at the use of the term goy in Jewish literature this is precisely the sense that one gets. With some Jewish writers speaking with high esteem of the gentiles, and urging integration and interaction. While others, more wary, complaining of the uncivilised barbarism of the gentiles and urging complete separation. It's very similar to modern *left versus right* debates about immigration and "foreigners".<sup>[3]</sup>

Ironically, it could be said that modern inhabitants of western civilisation now look at Orthodox Jews in a similar way. Viewing their religious traditions as thoroughly tribal and out of keeping with the modern secular world. Perhaps illustrating how Jewish law, like western religion in general, has went from being the very driver of civilisation, to being a cultural cul-de-sac on the outskirts of it. The seeming contradiction of these religiously strict Jews living in contrast to the many secular Jewish people that are often at the very forefront of modern civilisation and technology is another thing that sometimes seems odd to people. However, again, this dichotomy is caused by the struggle for civilisation *against* tradition. A consequence of the battle between our desire to civilise the world and our simultaneous



disdain for the trappings of civilisation. Which Jewish people, like all other people, are somewhat lost in. Some looking forwards, others looking backwards. With most simply trying to marry the two together in some unconscious way as best they can.

Returning to the words *gentile* and *gentium* it's clear that both just mean *the people* - the multitude of non-citizens out in the country (or nation). Some of whom perhaps also live in and around the cities, only with "non-citizen" status. The overlap between the Jews and the Romans, and the relationship they both have to the *less civilised* peoples they find themselves living amongst is quite apparent.

The word *ius* itself is also of interest. Meaning essentially *law* or *justice* - hence the root of the word justice, *jus*.<sup>[4]</sup> It's another word we can add to our list of legal words that sound similar to the word *Jew*. So once again we see this idea of Jews being associated with law-giving. In fact, another similar etymological example comes from medieval Sardinia. In the 11th century Sardinia was ruled by the *giudicati*, which translates as *the judges*. During which period the island was divided into separate kingdoms, each of which being ruled by a judge (or *judike* in the Sardinian). So once again we find this *jew/ju* sound associated with words betokening law and rulings.

In Chapter Two we mentioned how in Italian the word *ebreo* meant Jew. Interestingly another word for Jew in Italian is *giudeo*, translating as Jew or Judean. With this word we also see the same root we saw in the above *giudicati*. We likewise mentioned in Chapter Two the

multitude of other words with the same root - *teuton, tiw, dieu, tudor, tuatha*. These words, as with the word Jew, come with connotations of *godly*, or alternately *godly people*. Given how intertwined religion and law were in earlier times perhaps all these names in some way denote law-giving priest or leadership classes.

Another interesting parallel worth noting is the apparent similarity between the concepts of Jehovah and Jupiter. Jehovah, or Yahweh, is the name of God in the biblical tradition, and Jupiter is the sky or father god from Roman mythology. Jupiter is often known by the name *Jove* or *Jovis* (the Latin for Jupiter being *Iovi*), which isn't too dissimilar in sound to the word Jehovah. In fact, when English speakers say the common phrase "by Jove" the general meaning is simply "by God". Likewise in Italian the words for both are remarkably similar. *Giove* meaning Jupiter and *Geova* meaning Jehovah. There are also various renderings of the name Jehovah from history which are likewise similar to Jove such as *Ieve, Jova* and *Jovae*.<sup>[5]</sup>

The word Jovis also shares its root with the word *jovial*, which perhaps brings with it notions of the Jewish/Christian idea of "rejoicing" in God. Curiously the noted seer Nostradamus referred to Protestants as "Jovialists" in his writings. This is something which makes little sense on face value. However, if Jovis is just a synonym for Jehovah then this makes much more sense. Interestingly, the Roman scholar Varro (116 - 27 BC) also equated the god Jupiter with Jehovah. St

Augustine of Hippo in his work *Harmony of the Gospels* wrote;

*But their own Varro, than whom they can point to no man of greater learning among them, thought that the God of the Jews was Jupiter, and he judged that it mattered not what name was employed, provided the same subject was understood under it.* <sup>[6]</sup>

It's also perhaps worth noting, on a more superficial level, the similarities in how God with a capital G and Jupiter are depicted. Both being commonly envisioned as bearded father figures.

A final parallel comes regarding their respective temples. The ancient Temple of Jupiter was destroyed and rebuilt on several occasions. The first temple burned down in 83 BC. The second burnt down in 69 AD. The third in 80 AD. With the fourth then being rebuilt in the reign of Emperor Domitian not long after - gradually falling into disuse centuries later. The story of the Temple of Jerusalem is somewhat similar. The First Temple was said to have fallen in 586 BC. The Second Temple then destroyed in 70 AD. The Third Temple still awaiting to be rebuilt. A controversial hope of many Orthodox Jews, and often equated with the coming Messianic Age in Jewish eschatology.

Whilst reading the above dates you may have already noticed how closely in time the destruction of both second temples occurred. The Second Temple of Jupiter burnt down in 69 AD, the Second Temple of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Quite a coincidence. Similar in tone to the

coincidence previously mentioned regarding the advent of the Julian Calendar and the birth of Christ. The similarity of the two temple stories would suggest that maybe it's a case of *duplicate history*. Or rather the same story, with the same origin, but being told by two different cultures in divergent traditions. <sup>[7]</sup> Perhaps a split maybe, where one group went one way, and the other down a different path. Consequently it's tempting to wonder if ancient Jewry and the ancient Romans were one and the same people in some sense. All part of an emergent, city-driven civilisation, but then branching off due to various accidents of history - each with their own garbled version of events.

Of course, it could be the case that one tradition is right and the other wrong. Or one *more right* than the other. However, it's difficult for us to truly know being so far removed from the events. So it's another question of faith. All we can really do is note the similarities and ponder. Likewise whether the temples were destroyed in Jerusalem or Rome, or maybe even somewhere else completely, is difficult to say. Again though, I guess we have to also accept that it's plausible that both traditions are correct, and that both temples actually did exist. With both meeting their demise as recorded. All we can really say is that, given the coincidence, it's a little *improbable*.

The coincidences don't stop there though, one further being the fact that Jews had to pay the exact same tax to both temples. Following the destruction of the Second Temple of Jerusalem Jews were then required by the Romans to pay two denarii to the Temple of Jupiter,

equivalent to the half a shekel they'd previously paid towards the upkeep of the temple at Jerusalem. <sup>[8]</sup> Adding further intrigue, the oldest depiction of the sacking of the Temple of Jerusalem is actually found in Rome. On the *Arch of Titus*. Where the Romans who are supposedly sacking the temple are carrying out a menorah as part of their spoils. Holding it aloft in such a way that would suggest a degree of reverence rather than contempt for the item.

Finally, it's worth breaking down the word *Jupiter*. It could be read as *Ju-pater - father of the Jews*. <sup>[9]</sup>

# Chapter Nine - Uncivilisation

## Jesus

According to the New Testament the story of Christ occurred within the world of Roman, Jewish and Greek society. In fact, in the *Gospel of Saint Luke* it's stated that the sign placed above Jesus, mocking him as "king of the Jews", was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. <sup>[1]</sup> It's quite interesting how all three of these cultures, each essential in the development of western civilisation, seem to overlap in this melting pot of the New Testament. As per the last chapter it may be the case that all three are simply different versions of the same story. Strands of history telling the tale of the rise of city-driven civilisation. Jewish life with its laws, trade and literacy. Greece with its various city states. Rome, the ultimate city state.

When we read the New Testament this is precisely the sense we get, though most readers often miss it. In Christianity we see a rebellion or an amendment of civilisation. In many ways it's more a political movement than a spiritual one. Though again, in these earlier times the two are thoroughly intertwined.

The social and political dimensions are quite easy to see once you start looking. For instance, one of the overriding themes of the New Testament is the difference between rich and poor. In it the wealthy are "hypocrites". The poor; suffering and ennobled. Very similar to the modern *haves versus have-nots* political debate we often

witness now. Again, as with the Jewish or Roman attitude to foreign peoples found in the last chapter, it all seems mundanely similar to modern life once you strip back the ostentation. When indulging in the romance of history we often forget the humdrum reality it must have all, like ourselves, existed in.

In the *Gospel of Saint Matthew* we find the following quotes;

*"No man can serve two masters ... Ye cannot serve God and mammon."* [2]

*"What shall it profit a man, though he should win all the whole world, if he lose his own soul."* [3]

*"..it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And moreover I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."* [4]

The poor and needy are failed by civilisation. Suffering in destitution. Meanwhile the priests and leaders make a show of their piety with their rituals and public display. Yet, in their hearts, they're more concerned with grandstanding, material wealth and self-interest.

*"Whensoever therefore thou givest thine alms, thou shalt not make a trumpet to be blown before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, for to be praised of men."* [5]

These days we would call this *virtue signalling*. Doing a good act to be *seen to be good*. To be praised and

rewarded, rather than from a genuine desire to help. It's similar to modern arguments about the hypocritical rich. Be it celebrities in their private jets preaching about climate change. Or wealthy politicians, from their relative comfort, preaching austerity and other such things. It's in many ways identical to today's left versus right arguments over the excesses of "capitalism" and the failings of the system we're living in. <sup>[6]</sup> In fact, Jesus throwing the money changers from the temple could be viewed as the ultimate symbol of man railing against crony capitalism "*...my house shall be called the house of prayer. But ye have made it a den of thieves*". <sup>[7]</sup> The system is corrupt. Its institutions misused. For all the laws and showings of civilisation it has lost its true moral compass and soul. However, Jesus goes even further than the modern left/right blame game and suggests that we're all guilty to some extent *..we're all sinners*. It's a problem embedded in us all. In all human society.

In Jesus we essentially see a figure coming from within civilisation - a Jew from within the Jewish tradition. An inhabitant of the Roman world. Trying to simplify and correct the excesses of legal and civil advancement. In fact, it's notable that the apostle St Paul, in *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, attempts to compel his fellow Christians to stop going before the law courts with their problems. Imploring them to solve things amongst themselves in a spirit of compassion;

*"How dare one of you having business with another, go to law under the wicked, and not rather under the saints? ..are ye not good enough to judge small trifles? ..is there*



*utterly no wise man among you? What, not one at all, that can judge between brother and brother?"* [8]

This all returns us to the "washing of hands" of the last chapter. In response to questions as to why the followers of Jesus did not do this;

*"Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread."* [9]

Jesus responds, not with an appeal to the written law, but with an appeal to higher morality;

*"Hear and understand. That which goeth into the mouth defileth not the man; but that which cometh out of the mouth defileth the man."* [10]

Elaborating further;

*"..those things which proceed out of the mouth, come from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart come evil thoughts: murder, breaking of wedlock, whoredom, theft, false witness bearing, blasphemy. These are the things which defile a man. But to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man."* [11]

Essentially saying, if I may paraphrase Jesus, that it doesn't matter so much whether a man obeys the law or not. What matters is that he has good intentions, and by extension does good actions. It probably would be better in a practical sense if the disciples of Jesus did wash their hands ..I certainly wouldn't like to shop at a bakery ran by Jesus (!). However, from a moral point of view he's

perfectly correct. If someone chooses to not wash their hands before eating that's *their choice*. Whereas the person using the law to enforce their will upon another, they're the one in the wrong.

This moral underpinning is something that can often get lost when people get bogged down in the technicalities of the law. It must always be remembered that laws are at best *necessary evils*. To arrest someone is to use physical force against that person. Something in of itself an infringement of that person's rights, and a moral injustice if taken in isolation. However, we may deem it necessary at times to do this in order to protect the rights of *other people*. If the person being arrested is abusing the rights of others through theft, violence, or some other *criminal act*, then we deem this use of force justified. It's an unsavoury, but necessary tool we must give society in order to protect the good from the bad, the law-abiding from the criminal.

However, when we forget that it's only ever a necessary evil. Or the people making the laws simply don't care, or deliberately misuse the law. Then the legal system and its enforcement becomes a threat to the very freedoms it's supposed to be upholding. The law then being used to force people to live and behave in a particular way. Perhaps being used by a majority to force their will and way of life upon a minority. Or abused by the most powerful group in a society to manage and control the rest.

Again, the "washing of hands" example from above serves us well. To use the law to force someone to wash

their hands before eating would be an injustice, as it would be an evil carried out against one person, who had posed no threat, nor carried out no crime towards another. However, if that same person had, under false pretences, sold or given bread made with unwashed hands to another, then maybe the force of law would need to be involved. As in that case they would be carrying out an act that would possibly infringe or threaten another, and therefore the necessary evil of the force of the law would be needed to protect this potential other victim. The confusion surrounding this simple concept continues to this day. A classic example is governments today using the law to micro-manage how people live - stating what they can and can't do, what they should and shouldn't eat, etc. Instead of doing their job, which is to protect the individual's freedom to live and *to choose*. Though to be fair, things are never quite as simple as this in reality. <sup>[12]</sup>

In the New Testament Jesus sums all this up incredibly simply. When asked which is the chief commandment (i.e. law) Jesus states;

*"Love the lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and chief commandment. And there is another like unto this. Love thy neighbour as thyself. In these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* <sup>[13]</sup>

The sentiment may seem a little opaque to anyone blinded by the religiosity of the statement. However, it essentially boils down to this - if you view the world with love and good intent, and you care for others the way you care for yourself then you can't go far wrong. It's a

practice that works regardless of belief in God, unbelief or agnosticism.

Again, in essence he's saying, it doesn't matter if you have *technically* broken the law as long as you haven't committed an immoral act. As the law itself can be morally wrong if it isn't operating upon moral foundations.

If we return to the themes above we can see that the legal system, though in principle there to protect the individual and uphold justice, can often through its sheer complexity or misapplication lead to suppression and injustice. Be it minor infringements of freedom - such as a forced compliance with an over-zealous *health and safety* law. Or a more serious injustice. Such as the deliberate use of a legal technicality to suppress free speech. Or the imprisonment of a political dissident by the use of laws crafted to work in favour of the state power against the individual.

In the New Testament we see Jesus and his followers echoing a similar sentiment to this. Urging a return to the simplicity and humanity of basic moral, emotive judgement, and a break with the complexity of technical written law. Be it Jewish or Roman. Therefore the story of the New Testament could be read as the story of people *from civilisation* urging a return to nature. Or at least urging a realignment of civilisation so that it operates more harmoniously with human nature. Christianity in this regard being a check on the madness of civilisation. A return to simplicity. A putting on of the

breaks, and a re-evaluation of the overall societal situation.

Once again, this is something that most of us can appreciate today. That feeling of being "trapped" by civilised living and its endless demands. With a wish to escape to the country or some other remote wilderness. The feeling that this way of living *isn't natural* ..that this isn't *true freedom*. In fact, often at the fringes of society we see people attempting to "drop out" of civilisation altogether. The stereotypical "hippy" commune being a classic example. Likewise the homeless too. For instance, though many homeless are often forced into homelessness for reasons completely beyond their will, some choose to drop out of the system as they simply can't bear living within it anymore. Sadly however, in most parts of the world, leaving civilisation in any sort of real sense is just not an option, and there's no way of ever returning to true freedom by simply "dropping out".

If a homeless person follows his or her natural instinct and tries to build a shelter or start a fire. Then someone "from civilisation" (a law-enforcement officer or another "official" of some description) will come and put a stop to this behaviour. If you want to build a house it has to be officially sanctioned by civilisation. If you want to start a fire it likewise requires permission. If you want warmth, food and shelter you have to play by the rules, no matter how fair or unfair they may be. Or how overly complex or unnecessary they are.

In uncharted places far from the reach of civilisation this wouldn't be the case, and man would be free from any

such prohibitions, but as civilisation has spread those uncharted places have increasingly rescinded. Therefore the bearded homeless person on our streets is the closest we ever come to seeing the true face of natural man in our modern everyday life. A mirror we tend to avoid looking into, but that's nevertheless ever present and deeply relatable.

In fact, the beard itself is in some sense a symbol of the outside world and of natural man. Since for a man to be clean shaven he needs to have the trappings of civilisation to some extent. A few weeks trekking through the jungle or out on the high seas, without the facilities to shave the face every day, quickly reduces man to his natural, bearded state. Therefore, clean-shaven equals civilised, and fully bearded equals outsider - the barbarian at the gate.

The word *barbarian* itself is also interesting in this regard. The general explanation for its etymology is that it stems from ancient Greece. The story being that to the civilised Greeks all foreign languages just sounded like "bar bar bar" - leading to the term barbarian being used as a catchall for all uncivilised outsiders. We also have words like *babble* of course, which seem to play into this sentiment. <sup>[14]</sup>

However, it's also worth noting that the word barbarian is similar to words like *barbarossa* - meaning "red beard" (*barba* + *rossa*). So perhaps barbarian simply means "bearded". Which would make slightly more sense, what with uncivilised people generally being bearded by nature. So the "barbarian at the gate" theme from popular

history, in a very literal sense, is in essence symbolic of the wilderness at the gates of civilisation. The bearded homeless man at the gate, or in the shop doorway perhaps, being a modern manifestation of this dichotomy.

Jesus, of course, is likewise generally depicted as fully bearded. In keeping with this clash of worlds. Furthermore he's often shown with long *free-flowing* hair. Such aspects of the male appearance are in many ways incidental and superficial, however they help tap into a recurring archetype in the collective imagination. Often in modern times the *outsider* figure, the threat to the social order, takes on this appearance. Whether it be foreign threats to western civilisation, such as Che Guevara, Osama bin Laden or the Ayatollah Khomeini. Or by people threatening to change our world from within, such as John Lennon in his bearded "Bed-In For Peace" phase. Or the numerous other hairy hippies, rockers and revolutionaries.

Another interesting avenue regarding the etymology of the word barbarian is that it also comes with connotations of cutting. Barb meaning "to cut", as in *barbed wire*. There's an obvious relation to hair here too. As in the word *barber*. It's said that in former times barbers would also perform other cutting procedures, such as the aforementioned castration. Bringing us back full circle to earlier themes. In fact, the classic red and white barber's pole commonly displayed outside a barber's shop is said to have its origins in the blood soaked rags that barbers would hang up outside their premises. So it would seem that civilisation is associated with cutting in general.

With both cutting of the hair and cutting of the foreskin being totemic of belonging to the civilised order.

Returning to the topic of circumcision it's worth noting here that according to *The Gospel of Thomas* (part of the Nag Hammadi texts discovered in Egypt in 1945) it's stated that Jesus believed circumcision to be unnecessary;

*His disciples said to him, "Is circumcision useful or not?" He said to them, "If it were useful, their father would produce children already circumcised from their mother. Rather, the true circumcision in spirit has become profitable in every respect."*

Again, if this account is to be trusted, it would further add to the theme of man returning to his natural state, and turning back, away from civilisation. The sentiment is likewise echoed in the *First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, where it's stated; "*circumcision is nothing, uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God is all together.*"<sup>[15]</sup> Paul then further mentions circumcision in the *Epistle to the Galatians*;

*"Behold I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing at all. I testify again to every man which is circumcised that he is bound to keep the whole of the law. Ye are gone quite from Christ, as many as are justified by the law, and are fallen from grace. We look for and hope in the spirit, to be justified through faith."*<sup>[16]</sup>



Further strengthening the sentiment. Though in this sense also suggesting a strong tie between the act of circumcision and the state of being under the law itself. Perhaps indicating a very real link between circumcision and the state of *citizenship*, as per earlier chapters. He prefixes this statement with the following; "*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and wrap not yourselves again in the yoke of bondage.*" Again, likening being subservient to the law to being in a state of slavery in respect of it. Though we should once again remind ourselves that when we talk of law during this period we're also talking of religion in the same breath. The two being so imperceptibly intertwined.

[17]

It's also perhaps worth noting here the attitude Jesus conveys towards things such as work, placing an emphasis on allowing nature, or God, to organically provide for man's needs. Ask and ye shall receive so to speak.

*"Behold the fowls of the air; for they not sow, neither reap, nor yet carry into the barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?"* [18]

*"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They labour not, neither spin."* [19]

We could read this as impelling one to return to an almost animal state of naturalism. An absolutist return to the wilderness. It also ties in with the emphasis Jesus constantly places on *faith* in the New Testament. The importance of which he also frequently stresses whilst

carrying out the many faith healings or exorcisms he performs in the gospels. A thing that may seem something akin to charlatanism to the more rationally-minded reader, but that perhaps has a deeper resonance when one considers the psychosomatic factors that can often be at play in regards illness. As too with things such as the placebo effect. Again, something that seems to work *because of faith*, regardless of a person's wider religious leanings.

In regard the stress of civilised living, it could likewise be hypothesised that much of the depression, anxiety and ill health we see in today's world could be a consequence of our *lack of faith*. Our God-less, materialist atomic-soup world, where nothing has any purpose or deeper meaning. Which leads us to have confidence in nothing but the certainty of our own death. Sometimes it's nice for someone to come along and say "don't worry, everything's going to be okay" - it can have an incredibly powerful effect, both mentally and physically. Especially if it's said with genuine confidence, or *belief* in fact, as per the case with Jesus. However, in our rational and sceptical world such confidence and faith is assumed folly. Though the wonders of it, again as with the placebo effect, are clear to see.

The worldview in the New Testament even has an almost Buddhist lilt to it at times;

*"Care not then for the morrow, but let the morrow care for itself; for the day present hath ever enough of his own trouble."* [20]

Again, perhaps an antidote to the stress and worry that comes with living a planned and micro-managed life in the city. Likewise we see a similar attitude with regard to material possessions;

*Freely ye have received, freely give again. Possess not gold, nor silver, nor brass in your girdles, nor yet scrip towards your journey; neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff. For the workman is worthy to have his meat. Into whatsoever city or town ye shall come, enquire who is worthy in it, and there abide till ye go thence.* <sup>[21]</sup>

The parallels with the above referenced homelessness, and this idea of leaving civilisation is easy to observe. It doesn't seem like very practical advice to forego money and the comforts of civilisation, but then again perhaps it really is a question of faith. The sentiment is also markedly similar to the sentiments expressed in the doctrine of communism. The idea of abandoning material possessions and keeping things in common. It's very Christian in ethos. Perhaps unsurprisingly, like Christianity, communism is another thing that also has deep ties to *Jewishness*. In fact, the bearded Karl Marx could be another "barbarian at the gate", threatening the civilised social order with his Communist Manifesto.

This overlap is also something we see in regards Israel too, with for example the Kibbutz collective farming communities. One of the early main drivers for Jewish people wanting to return to Israel was their desire to leave the "Jewish" professions (such as law, accounting, pawnbroking, etc) which was their allotted life in the western world, to return to a more natural, agrarian

lifestyle. In essence a return to the land. Ironically expressing the same urge back to nature that the Jewish Jesus expressed in the New Testament. In fact, both of these could be said to be manifestations of the same *Jewish spirit*. A spirit wrestling with the twin forces of the pull to nature and the pull to civilise. Of course, this Jewish spirit is identical to, or just another strand of, the spirit common to all civilisation in general. Likewise for the "Jewish professions" above you could just as easily read *city* professions. Therefore, in many ways Israel, with its bearded rabbis and clean-shaven tech wizards, is a microcosm of the wider human struggle to divine the best way forward for society.

Returning to the New Testament it's clear that the archetype of the figure of Christ is something that we can all recognise and embrace to some degree. Nor does it require absolute belief to understand and see these themes. It seems that both Christians and non-Christians often get bogged down in the *ifs and whens* of the story. As is often the case with discussions about all religion. However, this misses the point in many ways. The meaning remains regardless of whether or not the story is historically or factually true. *Let he who is without sin cast the first stone*. The sentiment holds regardless who said it, or when it was first uttered. In fact, what sincere *believing* Christian would throw this doctrine out and stop subscribing to its tenet upon learning that Jesus never actually said it?

This finally returns us to what was mentioned in the first chapter regarding what I call *archetypal Christianity*. In

many ways the character of Jesus can be viewed as an archetypal man. Symbolic of *all* men, including each of ourselves. Likewise the various biblical Mary figures can be viewed as archetypal women (as we'll cover in the final chapter). This doesn't mean that the actual stories are untrue. Perhaps they are completely verbatim. It just provides a broader way of looking at things. A way that doesn't require absolute literal belief in the stories to find personal value in them. It also allows the character of Judas to be viewed through a slightly different lens. In this regard Judas simply becomes the mirror image of the male Jesus archetype. Jesus is the hero. The ultimate version of man. A man who sacrifices himself for all humanity. Whereas Judas is the anti-hero. The man who through fear and self-interest "sells out", takes the money (or "thirty pieces of silver"), and betrays Christ (his fellow man, and by extension the whole of humanity).

Having both sides of the story allows us to visualise the processes and emotions involved in both journeys. Journeys resulting in the same outcome. Jesus hung on a cross (or a tree) for his willingness and bravery to become a martyr. Judas hanging himself from a tree because of his feelings of guilt and shame. Both are extreme aspects of *ourselves*. Archetypes of man that we can empathise with and learn lessons from.

Returning to the politics of the New Testament, and how it has themes in parallel with the modern political or economic world. We can see that Judas can stand in for the modern "capitalist" *shill* or greedy fat cat. The person putting money or their career ahead of the wider moral

concern. Judas is the embodiment of the self-interested materialist. A caricature or archetypal figure representing *civilised man at his worst*. In opposition to Jesus, the self-sacrificing and conscientious moral crusader. We may view Judas as the enemy, as the bad guy. However, he is part of *ourselves*. A higher-self or storybook avatar, representing our pragmatic, materialistic and fear-based aspects.

Like it or not we're all on a spectrum somewhere between Judas and Jesus.

## Chapter Ten - The Mother vs The State

The last chapter focused on the male archetype in Christianity. Here we look at the female aspect. Given the power and prominence of the Mary figures in Christian iconography, particularly the classic image of the Virgin Mary, it's worth first of all noting how relatively minor their roles are in the New Testament in comparison to that of Jesus. The four gospel texts, as expected, are dominated by the story of Christ, with the various female figures playing important, but supporting roles. Likewise the *Acts of the Apostles* and the various *Epistles* give little mention of the Mary figures, and are dominated by males, such as Paul and Peter. Who in turn speak heavily of Christ himself. However, in contrast to this, in Christian artwork and iconography both the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene appear almost on an equal billing with Christ himself. Expanding, in spite of their lesser game time in the New Testament, to reach parity in the wider cultural landscape. Vastly outshining all the other male figures with the exception of Jesus himself. So it seems the archetype is much bigger than the text alone would allow. Perhaps filling a natural need for such a companion female archetype in our collective psyche.

It's also worth noting just how many Marys appear in the New Testament. As well as Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus, we also have *Mary of Bethany*, *Mary of Rome*, *Mary of Clopas*, *Mary mother of James*, and *Mary mother of John Mark*. I would argue that the reason

for this bevy of Marys is the confusion over the name Mary itself. My view being that all these Marys are simply echoes of the same female archetype. The mother figure. Either that or that the name is simply a title rather than a given name. For example, take the modern title *mrs* - someone not familiar with this term, on coming across several mentions of women titled as such, would maybe assume that *mrs* is actually their given name rather than simply a title common to all married women. Again, this serves as another example of how history can easily become confused and mistranslated.

The name Mary is very similar to the word *marry*, and I would suggest that the title Mary probably just signifies a married woman. In this regard it would make much more sense of the names given to both Mary Magdalene and the Virgin Mary. *Virgin Mary* would quite literally translate as *married virgin*. This would help to explain the story of the supposed "virgin birth". The mother of Jesus being not a virgin who gave birth, but rather *a virgin who got married and then gave birth*. Likewise the name Mary Magdalene would render similarly. *Magdalene* is generally thought to derive from *Magdala* - a settlement on the Sea of Galilee where Mary was thought to hail from. A name which in turn is generally said to derive from the Hebrew word *migdál* ( מגדל ) meaning *tower*. However, a variant of the name Magdalene is *Madeleine*, and in German this means "little girl" (*mädelein*). It's also very similar to the word *maid* or *maiden*. So we could speculate that Magdalene simply means *maiden*. Which would then give the name Mary Magdalene the meaning of *married maiden*.



Another identical concept. We also have the motif from history of the *maiden* locked in a *tower*. Common to fairy tales and ideas of marriage and chastity. So the double meaning of *tower* and *maiden* could have a deeper overlap in that sense too.

Interestingly, these *Mary* names are also very similar to the name *Maid Marian*. Another traditional female figure from history. Likewise associated with similar concepts. In her case May Day ceremonies and marriage rites. Again, her name could be similarly rendered as simply denoting a *maid marrying*. In fact, along with all the various *Marys* in the New Testament we also have the figure of Martha, the sister of Lazarus. With her name sounding very similar to the word *mother*. So it would seem that in the New Testament traditions we simply see a repeating, archetypal theme.

Incidentally, we also have another Jesus duplicate in the New Testament in the person of *Barabbas*, a criminal set to be crucified alongside Jesus. Who was then released by Pontius Pilate. The name *Barabbas* is said to translate as "son of the father", which has clear echoes of the "son of God" or "son of man" epithet often used in reference to Jesus. In some early gospel manuscripts his full name is even given as *Jesus Barabbas*. It's almost as if multiple folk traditions regarding these archetypal male and female characters have been amalgamated into one overarching canon of work. Leading to numerous duplicates and inconsistencies.

Returning to *Maid Marian* and the various *Mary* figures it's also striking that the "M" sound is so common in all

these names. The sound of the letter "M" is made by simply opening and closing the mouth, and as a consequence of this we have many onomatopoeic words associated with eating - something that naturally involves the opening and closing of the mouth of course. Words such as "Mmm", "chomp" or the text speak favourite "nom". We also have words like *mouth* and *milk*. This all perhaps helps to explain the almost universal use of this sound in words signifying mother. As in *mam*, *mummy*, *mater*, *madre*, etc. We also have the similarly derived word *mammary*. So it makes sense that words containing this "M" sound would be associated with feeding and nourishment, and that likewise they'd be used for names signifying the female archetype in wider culture. It's also of interest that the word *mermaid*, another traditional female figure - often shown bare-breasted in folk art - similarly contains this double "M" sound. A name which is likewise a compound comprising of the *mer/marry* and *maid* components of the aforementioned Mary names.

The double "M" sound is also quite common in popular culture. For example, names such as *Marilyn Monroe* or *Mickey Mouse*. We also have the now ubiquitous word *meme*. It appears equally significant in eastern cultures too. Such as the famed "Om" sound utilised during sessions of meditation, and considered sacred in religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism. We also see the sound appearing in the titles used for religious leaders. Such as the Sanskrit *Mahatma*, meaning "Great Soul", or the Muslim title *Imam*. In fact, in Islam there seems to be an abundance of these "M" words. *Muhammad*, *Muslim*,

*Mecca, Medina*, variants on the name Muhammad, such as *Ahmed* and *Mahmud*. The word *Islam* itself.

In Jewish history we have the noted medieval scholar *Maimonides*, who also has a name containing this double "M" sound. Or triple if you consider his full name; *Moses ben Maimon*. The biblical Moses of course is another towering religious figure whose name possesses the sound. In more modern times we even have the *Mormons* - an appellation that once again contains this repeating "M" sound. Not forgetting the word *mammon* too, meaning wealth or *money* - the milk of economic life. It may be that all these various words are so common simply because they sound pleasing to the ear, and so therefore get repeatedly used. Which in turn perhaps stems from the positive and comforting feelings we naturally associate the sound with from motherhood and breastfeeding.

Going back to the Virgin Mary, or *Madonna* - another "M" name, we can see that her iconic image also imbibes feelings of comfort and reassurance. The similar connotations of motherhood and breastfeeding being obvious. There's generally a natural and familiar beauty to her depictions. As there often is with the various other "mother" figures from tradition and culture. Again no doubt because of the natural associations they come with. It's an image we can all intuitively relate to. The image of *the mother* is the image of *our own mother*. No image or symbol can induce greater *empathy* in us. The symbol of the mother with child is in many ways the anchor of all human culture. Childbirth the natural cornerstone of all

human society. Consequently the symbol of the mother and child is a powerful and emotive image. The image at the heart of family life, at the very heart of society.

The importance of the mother/child relationship, both symbolically and in actuality, brings me to the final focus of this chapter, and of this book. Namely the battle for custodianship of the child between nature (the mother) and civilisation (the state or social order). This is perhaps the key battleground and deciding conflict regarding the ultimate fate of society. Yet one that is generally missed when people contemplate the progress and aims of civilisation.

What's all too often overlooked by adults with their adult concerns is the life allotted to children in *civilisation*. Particularly in the school system, or the various other institutions of state or social care. It could be said that in many ways the state or school system removing a child from its mother is the very apotheosis of civilisation. The state, its rules and sophistication intruding into the most sacred and *natural* area of human life. Severing and overpowering the foundational bond that the entire social *family* rests upon.

School - the educator, *the civiliser* - yet also the jailer and suppressor of the child and its natural impulses. This lack of freedom children have in regard school is symptomatic of the wider lack of freedom civilisation has brought to all humanity. That stress of civilised living mentioned earlier. The stress which sometimes drives adults to walk away into homelessness, or to dream of some secluded desert island far away from it all, is not spared the child.

In fact, the workaday week adults endure is imposed upon children in perfect imitation, specifically to prepare and subdue them into this adult life that awaits. The hours of a child's life not valued by the child's enjoyment of them, but by the value they have as a commodity to be used by civilisation, to further civilisation.

This may all sound a little overdramatic or grandiose, a bit of an exaggeration perhaps, but deep down we know it to be true. If we stop, ponder for a moment *..and remember*. That feeling on a Sunday night before school. We can all recollect it quite easily. It still lingers upon our Sunday evenings in ghostly form even now. Yet we consciously forget it, push it to the back of our mind and just decide to accept it as an unavoidable part of life. *That it probably wasn't really as bad as we remember it*. That it's perfectly acceptable and normal that all later generations must also live through this. Yet deep down, when we pause, it's still profoundly vivid. You enjoyed the Friday night. A sheer relief; *no more school this week*. Enjoyed the Saturday *..but then*, as Sunday evening crept forward. *That feeling*. "I'm back at school tomorrow." Five solid days of school, then just two days break. One of which being a Sunday ruined by the *dread* of the following Monday to Friday.

As a child you questioned why it had to be like this. Why five days out of seven? Who decided this? Why such an imbalance between freedom and work? But by adulthood it just gets accepted as a fact of life. Much like how the rent and mortgage mentioned in earlier chapters is also

deemed a fact of life by everyone. Everyone that is, except those born *outside of civilisation*.

So, is this just the price of civilisation? Does there really have to be this trade off between freedom and civilised living. Is it not beyond the will of man to create a civilised world that also acts in harmony with our nature? That allows us to avoid such dread and anxiety. Giving true individual freedom, but with all the benefits of human advancement too. Perhaps it's the destiny of *civilisation* to redeem this situation by *marrying* nature and progress together to create something with the best aspects of both?

Looking more specifically at education, in Chapter Eight we briefly mentioned how literacy is more a consequence of access to technology than access to formal education. You may remember the mobile phone example. No one requires hours sat in formal school lessons to master the use of a mobile phone ..or a laptop, or a tablet, etc. Though such things can sometimes be quite complicated to use all people really require is access to the technology itself, and a *desire* to use it. Given this each person will then in turn learn to use the technology to meet their own particular needs. For example, one person may simply want to use a mobile phone to make basic calls and receive texts. Consequently they'll learn only to the most basic level. Another may want to do all manner of things, from gaming to god knows what else, and as a consequence may become quite an expert in the art. It's a completely organic process. Some may learn quickly, some will have more difficulties. Some at times may

need the help and guidance of others. In essence, the tech literacy across society has just sort of happened - without the need for any form of structured education. It would therefore be silly, time-consuming and maybe even counter-productive to force everyone to sit through a formal education on such topics.

Such an imposed formalisation of the education process would also lead to a severe lack of *enjoyment*. The people with little enthusiasm for using mobile phones would not enjoy being forced to sit in a room and suffer the torture even more so. Likewise the more tech-savvy would resent having to endure the slow pace and formality of dull, compulsory lessons.

I would speculate that it was much the same with the advent of the printing press. Once such mass production made books and other reading material available to a wider section of the population the literacy took care of itself. People *wanted to read*. They wanted to use and enjoy this new technology. So they learnt in a similar organic way. Choosing to freely buy, borrow and share such books and pamphlets, and choosing to educate themselves in how to read and take advantage of such new developments in technology. This is perhaps why we tend to find literacy in towns and cities, and illiteracy in more rural areas. People in rural areas simply having less access to the technology. Again that dichotomy of civilisation and wilderness.

The school system often takes credit for the overall rise of literacy. However, I would proffer the argument that literacy is largely a consequence of access to technology

and interaction with other people that are using it. Therefore the school system is just an organised state or civil management of an already existing occurrence. The school system is not education itself, but rather *the regulation of education*. Education is something that happens naturally. It would no doubt be much more effective if this was recognised.

It's also worth noting that the human mind works effectively not just by remembering, but also by forgetting. We remember the important things and forget the unimportant. It's not much use remembering every pattern in the clouds you've ever seen. Or every single blade of grass you've ever stepped over. You may have walked past your next door neighbour's front door every day for the last ten years, but may still not recall the colour of it when asked. This is not because of some failing of the mind or memory, but because the colour of the front door *isn't important* ..unless you have a particular interest in front doors that is.

We tend to remember important things that we *need to know* - like how to tie our shoelaces, or the route from our home to school or work. We likewise tend to remember things that we have an emotional investment in, or a passion for. Such as the eye colour of the person we fall in love with, or our favourite piece of art or music. Anything that isn't valuable to us in one of these ways tends to get cast aside. This is why a schoolchild may have an encyclopedic knowledge of their favourite pop star or football team. Yet at the same time completely fail to remember what you've just been trying to impart to



them regarding Henry VIII or the Battle of Hastings. It's all just *information*, but they have no everyday use for the information you're imposing on them, nor a passion for it. So very little sticks.

This is why the average person leaves school with basic maths, basic English and very little else. They *need* the basic maths and English to function in everyday *civilised* life - and both are things they would have learnt anyway to some degree completely regardless of schooling. The rest is just fluff.

Basic mathematics and numeracy is needed for such everyday things as using cash or telling the time. This is why virtually everyone in the civilised world can do maths to the basic level needed to get the shopping done or understand the times in the TV guide. As learning how to do these things has a *practical use*. In fact, in regard more complex mathematics, such as Pythagoras' theorem for example, you'll often hear children complain to their teachers; "*..but when will we ever need to know this in real life?*". The teachers will sigh in despair, but it's a perfectly sensible question to ask. Most people will never use such mathematics in their normal everyday life. Consequently most, intuitively understanding this, will never learn it in school, no matter how long you sit them down for in a classroom trying. The ones that do learn either having a natural aptitude and/or a *genuine passion* for the subject.

It's the same with reading and writing. Basic English is obviously needed to read letters, newspapers, signs, menus, to communicate with others, and so on and so

forth. *You need it to function in civilised society.* It is therefore desirable and useful for a person to learn how to do this. Just as when you go to live in a foreign country you need to learn to speak, read and write the language in order to function and thrive there.

In fact, the learning of foreign languages is a good example to use to highlight the failure and pointlessness of formal education. Pupils spend hours every week in schools learning French or German, or whatever the preferred language of the state syllabus is. For instance, in Britain we tend to learn French at school. With successive generations each spending hours and hours of their life, as well as countless pounds of taxpayer's money, in this quest to make British people fluent speakers of French. However, in spite of all this time and money and effort almost every British person that has been through this process *isn't* fluent in French. Not even close. Again, most people leave school with very little. In spite of perhaps five years of solid French lessons they leave with just *bonjour, au revoir*, the French numbers one to twenty, and perhaps if they were really clever a few lines asking which way to the bakery. Basically the bits they learnt in the first few weeks of French lessons before the fun and novelty wore off. Again, that *passion* thing. The importance of having a *genuine interest* or *enjoyment* in something.

In stark comparison we can see that if a British child goes with their family to actually live and settle in France they will soon pick up the language - *because they have to* - i.e. it becomes *useful* for them to do so. When you think

about this it makes perfect sense. It's how a mind is supposed to function. *What is the point in learning French if you don't regularly interact with French speakers?* Or again, if you don't have a genuine passion for French language and culture.

Taking note of this we can therefore see that it's largely pointless trying to teach people things they have no need or desire to learn. It's fruitless trying to beat nature. Reading a book can be very rewarding, but no one enjoys reading a book they're forced to sit and read. Nor will they absorb much information from it under such circumstances. Therefore it stands to reason that if there was more freedom for children (and for adults) they would become much happier ..and by extension much brighter. However, civilisation's desire to regulate human life doesn't allow for this. So we only ever see increasing management.

It's the uprooting of the child from the mother, or rather the failure to appreciate the importance of this bond between mother and child, that is in large part responsible for this onward creep towards *human management*. The obvious remedy would be a return to the veneration of the mother and child. Not necessarily in a religious sense, but at least in a way that reminds society of the sheer importance of this relationship. That makes sure civilisation remains rooted in the needs of the people, particularly the needs of its children. Rather than rooting the child in the needs of civilisation. A mother *naturally* wants *happiness* for her child. The state snatching the child from the mother, or overruling the authority of the

mother, is therefore in many ways the ultimate rejection of, or act against nature. When we allow ourselves to forget this misery ensues.

Today we find ourselves in an age where parents are threatened with legal action for daring to take their child out of school for a week of holiday. The state decides what's best for the child and the parent must reluctantly follow. Many parents in response now want to *homeschool* their children, but again the constraints of work and civilisation itself make this difficult. If not impossible. With even those parents in a position to do so still having to be under the watchful eye of the state, following the state curriculum. In a truly free society parents would be able to choose the hours their child spends at school or the curriculum they follow - after all they are the ones that are paying for it.

Surely it's not beyond us to make school more flexible. If a parent, remembering the misery of those long school days and weeks, decides that their child would be happier spending less time in school, then why is that not possible? It would also be perfect for parents wanting to homeschool, but not having the opportunity because of work constraints. They could, for example, send their child to school on the days/mornings/afternoons when they work, then homeschool when they have free time. Currently the only choice available is to homeschool - if they even have that option - separating their child completely from interaction with other school children. Or to subject their child to the complete full force of the state. With no way of mitigating against its effects or

excesses. Even a wholesome family holiday during school term is forbidden.

Finally, as well as that feeling on a Sunday evening before school there's also another familiar feeling from childhood that's worth remembering - *that feeling we had at the beginning of the summer holidays*. Those seemingly endless summers are for many people the happiest times of their life. Their fondest memories. It was such a happy time because it was *free* time. Not to mention the beautiful weather of course. You knew that for a full six weeks there was no school. Complete freedom. No constraints or compulsion. A heady carefree feeling of abandon that was only dampened in the final few weeks when you realised that school would soon be back upon you, and that your days of freedom were dwindling away. In fact, that day in the final week where your parents took you to get your new school uniform was especially depressing. Wasting a precious day off school, getting something needed *for* school, which in turn reminded you *of* school.

The summer holidays are generally the one time in life people taste real freedom. No worries, no clock watching. Real happiness. Sadly however, in the civilisation we've created even children only get six weeks of that freedom a year. With the odd other free week or two separating the endless grind at a few other points in the calendar. Why can't life always be like those summers? If not for adults then at least for children before they enter adulthood. Why has civilisation resulted in so little freedom? So little freedom for everyone, from the top to

the bottom. Such a limited taste of *that feeling*. It makes little sense on face value. Imagine if we had more of it. Surely it must be the aim of civilisation to build that into existence, and to make civilisation work in the interests of increasing that feeling. Not just in the interest of increasing civilisation for the sake of civilisation.

We mentioned earlier in the book the word *cultured* in regard this *civilising* effect, and its relative meaning; *to cultivate*. Maybe the end goal of this quest to civilise the world is to create a garden paradise in some way, a tailored version of nature. Where civilisation enhances our experience of nature, instead of severing us from it. Maybe to refind the Garden of Eden in some sense even. *To tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.* <sup>[1]</sup> That freedom, and *those feelings*, perhaps should be the very fruits of civilisation.

## Notes/references.

### Chapter One.

[1] To further explain this idea. There's a slight paradox when it comes to owning vast tracts of land. A man (or small group of people) can only travel so far in a single day, so there's a limit to how much land he can cover and defend. If he's off defending one part of his territory he can't be there to defend another. *You can own two chairs, but you can't sit on two chairs at the same time.* So owning a lot of land and maintaining that ownership requires a degree of cooperation with the wider population.

Whereas with transferable wealth, though similar practicalities apply, it's still slightly easier for a single person (or small group) to hold and protect it. It can be carried away and kept with the person, it can be hidden away. Or it can all be kept in a single safe or stronghold.

### Chapter Two.

[1] I have another book available covering this history, *An Esoteric History of Red Hair*. N. R. Scott, 2018.

[2] This proverb is noted in a work titled *Nero su nero* by the Italian writer Leonardo Sciascia, published 1979.

[3] From the paper *Red Hair: A Mutation, A Royal Trait, and Sometimes a Curse* by Aminah Sheikh, supervised by Dr. Rashid Alam. The paper quotes from a much older article titled *On the Racial Characteristics of Modern Jews*.

*"In an article titled, "On the Racial Characteristics of Modern Jews," researchers found that there were ".thrice as many red-haired individuals as either Poles, Russians, or Austrians, and half as many again as Germans." Although this is quite an old article from 1886, it suggests to us the high amount of red haired Jews in Europe."*

[4] You can almost imagine the conversation;

Medieval Person A: *"So how come we have no idea what these people believed?"*

Medieval Person B: *"Well, they just insisted on never writing anything down, their beliefs simply wouldn't permit it, shame really."*

[5] I came across this piece of information in a very interesting book titled *When Scotland Was Jewish* by Elizabeth Caldwell Hirschman and Donald H. Yates. A book filled with curious pieces of information linking medieval Scotland with Jewishness. I highly recommend it to anyone interested in exploring the topic further.

[6] An account of these events can be found in the works of the 12th century English historian William of Newburgh. A further source is the 12th century chronicler Roger of Hoveden (or Howden).

[7] Likewise found in *The Annals of Roger of Hoveden*.

The full passage..

*"These are the treaty and covenants which were entered into between Alphonso, king of Castille, and Sancho, king of Navarre, his uncle, for submitting the points in dispute between them to the judgment of the king of England. For this purpose each of these kings gives three castles in pledge, that he will*



*receive and fulfil the award of Henry, king of England, son of the empress Matilda, and father-in-law of king Alphonso ; and he who shall fail so to do, is to lose the castles underwritten. For this purpose king Alphonso gives in pledge Nagara, a castle of the Jews, Arnedo, a castle of the Christians and a castle of the Jews, and Celorigo. In like manner, Sancho, king of Navarre, gives in pledge the castle of Stella, which Peter, the son of Roderic, holds, being a castle of the Jews, as also Funes and Maranon."*

[8] *The Gallic Wars. Book 6. Julius Caesar.*

Later in the book I question whether Caesar actually wrote this text. So I'm being a little cheeky in quoting from it here too :)

Incidentally, the use of poison from the Yew tree as a form of suicide was said to be quite common in the ancient world. A further example comes from the works of the Roman writer Florus. Where in the work *The Epitome of Roman History* it's stated that the Cantabrians, under siege from the Romans, chose to take their own lives ..by sword, fire or a poison extracted from the Yew tree. Rather than submit themselves to captivity.

[9] In the Qur'an it states that Jesus was born under a palm-tree. So it seems trees abound in these tales.

*So she [Mary] conceived him, and she retired with him to a remote place. And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree: she cried (in her anguish): 'Ah! Would that I had died before this! Would that I had been a thing forgotten and out of sight!'*

*Sūrah 19 - Maryam. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

### Chapter Three.

[1] In this chapter I mentioned how it's often said that the aristocracy look "horsey". This is quite a silly idea, and I felt a little silly including it in the text, but it carries with it an inherent relatability. Oftentimes in life we recognise a concept, but can't quite articulate it in plain language to another person. Perhaps something we understand, but where we can't quite put our finger on what it is exactly that we understand, or how exactly we understand it. For things like this examples often serve as the only practical way to communicate what we mean to other people. This may be one of those things.

As I say in the text, the idea that upper class people often have a "horsey" look is something that we all intuitively understand. However, I say *we all understand this*, but I run the risk that this may not be the case, and that some people may be reading thinking "*What on earth is he going on about?*". Like a joke you either get, or don't get. Perhaps one we laugh at, but can't explain *why* we're laughing at it. Nor explain the joke to the people that aren't laughing. So I hope anyone reading the chapter that finds this "horsey" notion a bit of a bizarre concept at least understands what I'm *attempting* to do.

I must also admit that I felt a little uncomfortable discussing supposed racial traits in general in this chapter. It's a topic that can sometimes be controversial for obvious reasons, and to be honest I'd rather have just avoided it because of this. However, I don't really think it's good or helpful to do that. It's not a bad thing if there may be differences between people, or groups of people, it's only bad if people *behave badly* towards others because of this. So likewise I would hope that people forgive me if anything in the text comes across the wrong way or gives the wrong impression.

Returning to the "horsey" theme I must admit that I do find it fascinating how we seem to naturally ascribe animal attributes to humans, and vice versa. It seems in all cultures we find *a language of animals* - where animals serve as a set of reference points for human traits and behaviours. Be it tribes having their totemic animals, moralistic tales such as Aesop's fables, or the various animals of the Chinese zodiac. Even in our modern scientific age we seem to fill this need by relating ourselves to monkeys and other animals on the genetic or evolutionary tree of life.

We describe people as being "greedy as a pig" or "wise as an owl". As looking "mousey", or "sheepish" or bird-like. I remember a friend half-jokingly describing my own appearance as ferret-like (!) It wasn't the greatest compliment I've ever had, but again, as with the "horsey" aristocrats, I could see exactly what was meant. There was a kind of accuracy in the comparison. In fact, I probably remember it so well now precisely because it was so stingingly accurate. It's a strange thing. The classic, almost clichéd Native American names such as "Sitting Bull" and "Black Hawk" also spring to mind. Do these similarities or appellations hold truth in any real objective way? Or are they more just cultural memes and associations?

Even in our most basic language this animal association seems present. Take the snake-like "S" symbol in the alphabet, with its hissing "sssS" sound. The letter makes instant sense when we first start learning the alphabet in childhood. It's almost like there's a primordial link between the sound and the symbol. We also have an endless stream of words utilising this sound suggesting snake-like characteristics or behaviours - *sly*, *slither*, *slide*, *sneak*, *sneaky*, the word *snake* itself. *Hiss*. Again, is the snake *sneaky* and *wise* in some real tangible way? Or is it just a cumulative mythology we've built up, that we could have just as easily built up around any animal?

*Was the snake in the Garden of Eden a human exhibiting the traits of a snake, or a snake taking on the attributes of a human?*

This seeming impulse to anthropomorphise animals. Seeing human traits in their behaviour. It's another familiar and hard to pin down concept. The countless cat and dog videos on the internet, complete with their millions of views, highlighting a *humanness* we can all naturally understand, adore and relate to. Are these pets of ours genuinely expressing such traits, or again, are we projecting something of ourselves on to them? Later, in the notes to Chapter Seven, I use the example of a squirrel to make a point in regard the human life experience. It's so easy and natural to pluck these common examples from nature. The squirrel collecting its nuts. The bird making its nest. The spider weaving its web.

The *horsey-ness* example is likewise so perfectly apt and easy to reach for. Horses throughout history for practical reasons have always been a symbol of wealth. The ability to travel and cover ground quickly and easily. Their value in waging war. *The height advantage it gives you over people on foot.* The wealth and land required to train and stable them. Do we associate horses with aristocratic people purely for these ingrained cultural associations. Or do upper class people *actually* look horsey in some way? Or is it some strange combination of the two?

It really is quite hard to tell.

#### **Chapter Four.**

[1] As I go on to mention later in the text, the most noted proponent of this idea is the Russian mathematician and

historian Anatoly Fomenko. In his *New Chronology* theory he essentially compresses the last three thousand years or so of history into a much shorter period of time. Claiming amongst other things that Jesus Christ was actually crucified during what we now call the medieval period. Some of his claims are highly unorthodox, but it's fascinating stuff, which I highly recommend. Though I should warn some of his books can be quite heavy going.

A further such proponent of timeline revisionism, though not quite to the same extent that Fomenko goes, is the German historian Heribert Illig. He claims that 297 extra years were artificially inserted into the calendar, covering the period from AD 614 - AD 911. An idea generally now known by the moniker *phantom time hypothesis*. Again, an idea well worth investigating.

The writer I would probably most recommend on such topics is the British author M J Harper. His works *The History of Britain Revealed* and *Meetings with Remarkable Forgeries* are perhaps the most relevant ones in regard this chapter. *The History of Britain Revealed* in particular highlights some of the problems with the accepted history vis-à-vis Roman Empire to Dark Age to medieval period. Though in this case in regard the evolution and history of the English language. His books are also highly readable, so they're quite an enjoyable ride too.

[2] To give a quick *Wikipedia* style overview. The Gregorian calendar was first introduced in the year 1582. It was named after Pope Gregory XIII, under whom it was introduced. It corrected the Julian calendar by shortening the average year by 0.0075 days. Stopping the calendar from falling out of sync with the natural yearly cycle. To correct for the drift the Julian calendar had already accumulated the calendar was advanced 10 days. So the 4th October 1582 was followed by the 15th

October 1582. Adding a further layer of complexity to the historical record.

[3] I came across this particular example in a very interesting and useful book titled *A History of the World in Twelve Maps* by Jerry Brotton (page 20);

*"After its completion, Ptolemy's Geography disappeared for a thousand years. No original copies from Ptolemy's own time have survived, and it only reappeared in thirteenth-century Byzantium.."*

Continuing further;

*"Turning to Ptolemy's biography to try to understand the significance of his book offers little help. Virtually nothing is known about his life. There is no autobiography, no statue, not even an account written by a contemporary."*

[4] Another factor worth mentioning, which I alluded to slightly in Chapter Two, though have avoided in this one, is political motive i.e. the deliberate falsification or destruction of history for reasons of realpolitik. This is quite a commonly understood theme. Be it royals and rulers commissioning works of history that legitimise their reign, or the stifling of dissident opinion and burning of heretical books. In fact, the concept is so familiar in the wider public consciousness that one would expect to find more scepticism of the historical record in general. Many people deem today's news to often be little more than propaganda, so why so readily believe yesterday's news? It's nothing new to note that often the practicalities of power and politics mean the truth takes a back seat.

[5] Aristotle was said to have lived from 384 BC to 322 BC. The texts falsely attributed to him are numerous and could fill a

chapter in of themselves. Notable ones include *Aristotle's Masterpiece*, now dated to just the late 17th century. *De Proprietatibus Elementorum* (On the Properties of the Elements), now believed to date from the 9th or 10th century, and to originally have been the work of an Arab author. The *Secretum Secretorum* - a treatise purporting to be a letter from Aristotle to his student Alexander the Great, a cherished theme in Aristotelian lore. Modern scholars believe it likely that this one also began life as a 10th century Arabic work, which was later translated into Latin ..and so the list continues.

[6] These other three works are *De Bello Alexandrino* (On the Alexandrine War), *De Bello Africo* (On the African War) and *De Bello Hispaniensi* (On the Hispanic War). Oddly, amongst Caesar's now lost writings were said to be works of poetry - he had a sensitive side apparently. This is in keeping with the above noted high culture and literacy of Alexander the Great. Perhaps suggesting that we're in the realms of fiction and romance here, rather than actual historic record. Again though, it may be the case that all these figures existed as written. Or a question of something in between. Either way it's not unreasonable to doubt such things.

## **Chapter Five.**

[1] Fretting over the danger these Portuguese discoveries posed to the Venetian economy the nobleman Girolamo Priuli wrote;

*"..all the people from across the mountains who once came to Venice to buy their spices with their money will now turn to Lisbon.."*

He noted the situation in regard goods coming through Venice as follows "*..with all the duties, customs, and excises between the country of the Sultan and the city of Venice I might say that*

a thing that cost one ducat multiplies to sixty and perhaps to a hundred".

Illustrating just how much cost could be shaved off goods by the newly found Portuguese trade routes.

These quotes can be found in the aforecited book, *A History of the World in Twelve Maps*, Jerry Brotton, pp 188-189. Who in turn referenced the work *Ambassador from Venice: Pietro Pasqualigo in Lisbon, 1501*. Donald Weinstein (ed.), (Minneapolis, 1960), pp. 29-30.

[2] In the notes and references to Chapter Four I mentioned the book *The History of Britain Revealed*. In that work a similar though more succinct sentiment is expressed - "What is is what was - unless you've got bone-chilling evidence to the contrary." I won't try to explain it for fear of bastardising it, but it essentially states that it's best to assume that the situation in the past was the same as it is today, unless there's good evidence suggesting otherwise.

## **Chapter Six.**

[1] This map just gives a vague approximation of the Islamic Empire at its height and is only designed to provide a visual reference for readers. In reality the influence of Islam ebbed and flowed over the centuries. At one time even including Sicily and parts of mainland Italy under its sway. It likewise spread deeper into Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe than the map depicts.

[2] *Sūrah 4 - An-Nisā' - The Women. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*



"If ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess."

[3] *Sūrah 5 - al-Mā'ida - The Table Spread. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

"As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands"

[4] *Sūrah 24 - An-Nūr. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

"The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication - flog each of them with a hundred stripes: let not compassion move you in their case"

[5] According to the writer Robert Davis, in the period from the 16th to the 19th century, between 1 and 1.25 million Europeans were captured by Barbary pirates and sold into slavery.

*Robert Davis. Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500–1800.*

[6] *Faith in the New Millennium: The Future of Religion and American Politics* edited by Matthew Avery Sutton, Darren Dochuk. Who in turn referenced the source; *York County Court Records [Virginia], vol. VIII, fol. 441-442, May 26, 1690, "Daniell Tyler Taken by ye Turkes."*

[7] *Hughes, T.P., Dictionary of Islam.*

[8] The "Pound of Flesh" theme can be found in earlier works such as the 14th century Italian novella *Il Pecorone* by Giovanni Fiorentino and the 16th century work *The Orator* by

Alexandre Sylvane. The concept of the flesh-bond is also found in numerous folk tales.

[9] It's perhaps worth noting that in *The Merchant of Venice* Shylock makes mention of slavery when decrying the hypocrisy of the Christians he's living amongst;

SHYLOCK: What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?  
You have among you many a purchased slave,  
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,  
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?  
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates  
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer  
'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you:  
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,  
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine and I will have it.  
If you deny me, fie upon your law!  
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.  
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

As a further note here, whilst on the topic of Venice, we mentioned in the notes to the last chapter the impact Portuguese discoveries had on the economy of the eastward facing Venetians. The name *Venetian* is very similar in sound to the name *Phoenician*, and both groups were Mediterranean powers noted for their trade and seafaring exploits. So maybe we see here another example of ancient history overlapping very heavily with medieval history.

[10] In Chapter Two we talked of the apparent links between druidic tradition and Jewishness. The word *covenant* is another case in point. The term is commonly used in Protestantism, especially with regard to Scotland. For instance, the National

Covenant of 1638. This was where Scottish nobles and ministers, along with thousands of ordinary Scots, signed a covenant (essentially a pledge) to defend their "true", reformed Christianity from outside innovation and interference. The word also shares its root with the word *coven*. Meaning a close knit gathering, or a meeting of witches. Again suggestive of some kind of compact or confederacy. Very druidic.

[11] *Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews. Book XIII. chapter 9.*

[12] *The Offering of Uha, c. 2400 BCE. Source: D. Dunham, Naga-ed-Der Stelae of the First Intermediate Period, (London, 1917), pp. 102-104.*

[13] *Encyclopedia of Islam. E. J. Brill. Leiden.*

"Eunuchs were imported already castrated; in Mecca, the majority of them were in the service of the mosques."

[14] *Sūrah 2 - Al-Baqarah - The Heifer. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

[15] *Sūrah 4 - An-Nisā' - The Women. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

"Ye are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should ye treat them with harshness, that ye may take away part of the dower ye have given them - except where they have been guilty of open lewdness; on the contrary live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If ye take a dislike to them it may be that ye dislike a thing, and Allah brings about through it a great deal of good."

[16] *Circumcision of Male Infants Research Paper. Queensland Law Reform Commission. Brisbane, 1993. Who in turn cited; Meggitt MJ. Initiation among the Waibiri in Religion in Aboriginal Australia: An Anthology (1986).*

[17] The idea that there may have been such a traffic before the advent of Columbus will be a familiar concept to anyone well versed in alternative history. Plenty of possible links between Old and New World have been noted by various writers and theorists. Suggesting traffic both across the Pacific and across the Atlantic Ocean. In regard possible links between the Americas and the Middle East the most famous example is perhaps the claim that traces of coca and nicotine have been found in Egyptian mummies, suggestive of trade links between Egypt and the American continent. The fact that the Aztecs and Mayans also built pyramids, similar in style to those of Egypt, is also often noted as further evidence of this.

[18] *Light and Truth: Collected from the Bible and Ancient and Modern History, Containing the Universal History of the Colored and the Indian Race, from the Creation of the World to the Present Time - Robert Benjamin Lewis, 1844.*

[19] *The native races of the Pacific states of North America, Volume 5 - Hubert Howe Bancroft, 1876.*

[20] *Civilized Nations, Volume 2 - 1875, Hubert Howe Bancroft.*

[21] I was first made aware of this possible interpretation of the Columbus name on the *Applied Epistemology Library* web forum. On the thread *A Dove Tale*. Where the poster Ishmael noted;

"*Columbus* might be a kind of generic name for a mariner: Someone who sends forth the dove to find new land, as did Noah. Stretching the concept further: Christopher literally means Christ-bearer. So Christopher Columbus is a sea-explorer who bears Christ to a new world."

[22] *Julian of Toledo (642 - 690). Historia rebellionis Paulli adversus Wambam Gothorum Regem.*

[23] Sometimes written as *Judeum pondum*.

[24] Given that circumcision appears to be a social marker of sorts it's perhaps worth noting the similarity of the word *pariah*. The words *periah* and *pariah* are said to be unrelated. Pariah coming from a Tamil word meaning drummer, and denoting a member of an indigenous caste in southern India - it being said that this lower caste originally functioned as ceremonial drummers. They're also both pronounced slightly differently. With *periah* generally being pronounced to sound more like *priah* (also incidentally how it's sometimes written as well).

However, taking into account this "caste" sense of the word *pariah*, and the fact that it's used to denote an *outcast* in common English, it seems worth making mention of.

The word *caste* itself is also of interest. It brings to mind the similar theme of *castration*. No doubt sharing in its roots connotations of *cutting*, or *to cut off*. As in terms like *cast away*. The official etymology gives its root as the Latin *castus*, meaning clean or pure. Which gives a similar sense of being cut off or separated. This Latin *castus* is said to be the root of the English/French word *chaste*.

So it seems being cut off comes with a double meaning. To be cut off as in being excluded or exiled from a wider group for negative reasons. Or conversely to be cut off as a marker of purity or special standing.

[25] *The Famous and Wonderful Recovery of a Ship of Bristol, Called the Exchange, from the Turkish Pirates of Argier. John Rawlins. (London, 1622).*

[26] *Diary of Col. Cromwell Massy, Late of Hon'ble East India Company's Service Kept While a Prisoner at Seringapatam Bangalore. Mysore Government Press, 1876.*

[27] There was just one "never" in the original version. "Britons never will be slaves" morphing into the more recognisable and easier to sing "Britons never, never, never shall be slaves".

[28] "The nations, not so blest as thee,  
Must, in their turn, to tyrants fall;  
While thou shalt flourish great and free,  
The dread and envy of them all"

A verse referencing tyrants from *Rule, Britannia*. Lyrics by James Thomson (1700 - 1748). Set to music in 1740 by Thomas Arne (1710 - 1778).

## **Chapter Seven.**

[1] In this chapter I mentioned living rent or mortgage free and likened it to a squirrel living naturally in a tree. If we take this example further it can be especially enlightening in regard how humans in our civilised state currently live.

*I give the fable of the Squirrel-King.*

If we imagine that there's a squirrel king or landlord, who owns all the trees in a particular area, and requires rent from all the other squirrels for the luxury of being in said trees. We can then imagine the mindset of a particular squirrel living under that system.

Normally this squirrel would only have to worry about collecting enough acorns to feed himself, and maybe a few

more to hide away for winter. He'd be completely at his own leisure. With only his own hunger to satiate. However, let's say he also has to pay this squirrel king or landlord a certain number of acorns every day just to be up in the trees in the first place. Let's say for the sake of argument that this amount is five acorns a day. All of a sudden he'd be in a position where he would have to find five acorns every day before he even begins to think about his own needs.

Now imagine the extra work and stress this would cause. Imagine the constant state of anxiety this squirrel would be in. Knowing he needs to find five acorns every day just to have somewhere to exist and to be, before he can even consider his own happiness and desires. If he falls behind the acorn debt then mounting up even more. Maybe he only managed to give the landlord two acorns yesterday, so now he needs to find an extra three today just to make parity.

*This is the state humans live in.* This is why we live in a constant state of anxiety, as we're constantly having to work for our right *to be somewhere*. In stark comparison to all the other animals living timelessly and at one with nature. This is why we can't just *live in the moment*. We're constantly worrying about finding the money to pay the rent (or mortgage) just to be in the tree, or in nature, in the first place.

Again, as per the chapter in general, we just seem to accept this as natural, because we know no other experience. We therefore don't even correctly recognise it as a problem, nor seek any solution to the situation. In fact, we're trapped in a political false dichotomy. With people on "the left" tending to think that the solution to housing lies in *state ownership* - which generally means people paying rent to live in state owned housing. And with people on "the right" recognising the great benefits that come from people owning *their own home*, but with such an obsession with high house prices and this idea

that someone must *earn their home*, that the prospect lies truly out of reach for most people. Or perhaps in reach, but only through decades of mortgage payments which are little different to payments of rent.

Really we should be trying to create a system where buying your first home is as easy and as cheap as buying your first car. This is something that no doubt sounds a little radical to anyone reading ..but again, that's only because it's so removed from the experience we were all born into.

Finally, there's one more thing worth noting. When it comes to wealth, the two major expressions of it are the ownership of land/property, and also the power to coin or lend money. Interestingly, this neatly coincides with the ideas discussed in the first chapter. As the landed aristocracy tend to derive their power from owning land. Whereas in the city, or amongst the "city aristocracy" as I would put it, power tends to derive more from banking and finance. This is something that can be witnessed in today's world quite readily. With the most powerful people in society tending to derive their wealth through either land/property ownership, or through banking. In essence, through rent or mortgage.

## **Chapter Eight.**

[1] I use the term *natural law* in a very general sense. The idea asserts that certain rights are inherent as a consequence of human nature, and can be understood universally through human reason. Established by God or some higher transcendent source, and therefore of a higher authority than any laws created by any state or polity.



[2] *The Institutes of Gaius 1.1*. Quoted from Winkel, L. *The Peace Treaties of Westphalia as an instance of the reception of Roman law*.

[3] The 1906 *Jewish Encyclopedia* entry for the term *gentile* states the following;

*The word "Gentile" corresponds to the late Hebrew "goi," [...] signifying "stranger," "non-Jew."*

Affirming the stranger or *foreigner* sense of the word. It then continues, stating how the term was often used in reference to nations that were distinct from Israel;

*In the Hebrew of the Bible "goi" and its plural "goyyim" originally meant "nation," and were applied both to Israelites and to non-Israelites [...] "Goi" and "goyyim," however, are employed in many passages to designate nations that are politically distinct from Israel.*

Again, further illustrating the fact that the word was used in much the same way that we use the term foreigner. In many ways it's similar to the Greek appellation *barbarian*, which we discuss in Chapter Nine, used by the Greeks to describe all *uncivilised* people foreign to the Greek world.

The *Jewish Encyclopedia* entry also gives examples of the mixed attitudes rabbinical writers had towards the gentiles. For instance, the scholar Eleazar of Modi'im wrote that Jews, though guilty of the same sins as Gentiles, would not enter hell, while the Gentiles would. However, conversely, the Rabbi Joshua b. Hananiah believed that there were righteous men amongst the Gentiles, and that they would share in the world to come.

Likewise the Jewish sage Jose the Galilean chastised Israel for its inconstancy, and in comparison praised the Gentiles for

their faith. Yet in contrast other writers believed the Gentiles to be uncivilised and lawless. Such as Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, who saw in the Gentiles nothing but idolatry. Or Simon ben Eleazar who urged against social interaction between Jews and non-Jews.

A further useful example comes in the fact that the Rabbi Ashi, the first editor of the Babylonian Talmud, declared that any Jew who sold to a Gentile a property that bordered another Jew's property should be excommunicated. His reasoning being that firstly, Gentile law didn't provide adequate provision for settling disputes, and that secondly the Jewish neighbour affected may claim "thou hast caused a lion to lie on my border."

This has clear echoes of modern disputes and fears that sometimes come when foreign people from different cultures move into an area to live alongside a different set of people. The different legal (or rather religious/legal) provisions which existed between different groups and cultures at the time will have only heightened such problems. The judgement also of course shows that there were Jewish people that were perfectly happy to deal with and sell property to Gentiles, alongside those fearing the potential negative consequences of such interaction.

[4] Taking into account the *y* or *j* pronunciation of the letter *i*. Think *Iulius Caesar*.

[5] The medieval writer Petrus Alphonsi, a Spanish Jew who later converted to Christianity, used the name *IEVE* as a form of Jehovah. It can be seen in his influential tetragrammaton diagram, which renders the word as a triangle symbolising the Holy Trinity. This usage is said to be a variant of the form YHWH - the more commonly known tetragrammaton, or four letter name of God.

Examples of the Latin renderings *Jova* and *Jovae* can be found in *Scholia in Vetus Testamentum*. Ernst Friedrich Karl Rosenmüller Barth, 1829.

Sir Godfrey Driver noted that *Jova* was in use as a variant form of *Jehovah* in the 16th century;

"..the shortened *Jova* (declined like a Latin noun) came into use in the sixteenth century."

*Introduction to the Old Testament of the New English Bible*. Sir Godfrey Driver.

[6] *St. Augustin: The Harmony of the Gospels*. Translated by the Rev. S. D. F. Salmond, D.D., Free College, Aberdeen. Edited with notes and introduction by the Rev. M. B. Riddle, D.D.

[7] The phrase *duplicate history* will be familiar to any readers of Fomenko, but may need a little elucidation for anyone who isn't au fait with such things. It's basically the idea that historic events, or even complete historical timelines, can get repeated in the historical record due to mistake or deliberate misrepresentation.

Let's say you have a major battle that occurs at some point in history. This great battle may be recorded in the traditions of multiple different groups or cultures that took part in or witnessed the battle. However, due to language differences or other variations in the stories told by these groups it may, over time, become difficult to see that all the stories are simply different retellings of the same event. Later, when historians come to place these seemingly different tales into the overall timeline of human history they may then end up with multiple versions of the same story appearing. Warping the timeline to fit all these extra jigsaw pieces.

The language issue can be particularly tricky. What an English speaker calls *Germany*, a French speaker calls *Allemagne*. If you weren't aware that both were names for the same part of the world you may assume each were speaking of a different region. When one considers the endless number of languages. Not to mention the countless mutations that can accrue when a story is retold again and again, it's easy to see how a single event can take on multiple forms. Or how complete histories can get repackaged by different cultures. The fact that documents and historical accounts are often undated, or dated according to different dating practices only adds to this potential for confusion.

It's similar to the ideas discussed in Chapter Four, where we noted how easy it can be to confuse or misdate things due to simple error or acts of fraud. For example, let's imagine that someone in today's world writes an account of an event that's recently taken place in Birmingham, in the UK. Someone reading that account in five hundred years time, due to a lack of context, may assume that the event took place in *Birmingham, Alabama* - in the United States. You may then end up with two versions of the same story written into the historical record. One placed in Britain, the other in the US. In another five hundred years someone else may then notice the similarities between the two accounts, and perhaps go on to question the validity of one or both of the stories. However, by then the history may be so well established that it becomes difficult to dislodge the false version. Or even to decipher which is the false account and which is true.

[8] "This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary - the shekel is twenty gerahs - half a shekel for an offering to the LORD." - *Exodus Chapter 30. 13.*

"Thus was Jerusalem destroyed on the very day of Saturn, the day which even now the Jews reverence most. From that time forth it was ordered that the Jews who continued to observe their ancestral customs should pay an annual tribute of two denarii to Jupiter Capitolinus." - *Cassius Dio. Roman History LXVI. 7.*

"..he [Caesar] also laid a tribute upon the Jews wheresoever they were, and enjoined every one of them to bring two drachmæ every year into the capitol, as they used to pay the same to the temple at Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jewish affairs at this time." - *Josephus. The Jewish War. Book VII. 6.*

[9] *Pater* meaning father in Latin of course.

## **Chapter Nine.**

[1] *The Gospel of Saint Luke. Chapter 23. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.* - "And his superscription was written over him, in Greek, in Latin and Hebrew. This is the king of the Jews."

[2] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 6. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[3] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 16. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[4] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 19. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[5] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 6. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[6] I've put capitalism in inverted commas because really what's generally meant when people complain of capitalism is not so much trade and commerce itself, but rather the crony capitalism and unfair banking practices that often seem to go hand in hand with it. The right to own and trade goods or property is something that most people would agree is a good thing, however it's easy to throw out the baby with the bath water when considering the failings and unfairness seen in wider society.

It's interesting to note that in the Qur'an usury is forbidden, but trade encouraged. This would lend weight to the idea that the Islamic Empire was in some sense a trading empire. Yet also suggests it had an astuteness in recognising the unfairness inherent in interest based money lending.

*Those who devour usury will not stand except as stands one whom Satan by his touch hath driven to madness. That is because they say: 'Trade is like usury,' but Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury.*

*Sūrah 2 - Al-Baqarah - The Heifer. The Holy Qur'an. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2000.*

[7] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 21. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

*"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and*

*said to them: It is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer. But ye have made it a den of thieves."*

[8] The First Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians. Chapter 6. *William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

*"How dare one of you having business with another, go to law under the wicked, and not rather under the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? If the world shall be judged by you, are ye not good enough to judge small trifles? Know ye not how that we shall judge the angels? How much more may we judge things that pertain to the life? If ye have judgements of worldly matters, take them which are despised in the congregation, and make them judges. This I say to your shame. Is there utterly no wise man among you? What, not one at all, that can judge between brother and brother, but one brother goeth to law with another, and that under the unbelievers?"*

Likewise in *The Epistle to the Galatians, Chapter 3*, it states;

*"That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident. For the just shall live by faith. The law is not of faith, but the man that fulfilleth the things contained in the law (shall live in them). But Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the law, and was made accursed for us."*

Suggesting the rigours of religious law had become a "curse" or burden to man.

[9] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 15. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] It's perhaps worth adding here a point regarding the difference between legal and moral wrongs. This is quite a simple concept, but again, it's another thing that often gets forgotten in the hubbub of social and political discussion. It seems oftentimes there's a natural clamour for anything deemed *immoral* by wider society to automatically by extension also be deemed *illegal*.

Ideally an action should only be deemed illegal if that action directly infringes upon the rights and freedoms of another. However, forgetting this basic rule, people will often use the law to impose *their* morality or codes of behaviour on others.

For example, take drug use. Let's say cannabis. The general argument tends to be a simple binary one. On the one side we have people arguing that cannabis use is bad, and that it should therefore be illegal. On the other hand we have people stating that cannabis is great, and that it should therefore be legal and widely available.

However, if we separate out the legal judgement from the personal judgement, we really have two different questions that can each have a different answer.

- 1) Should people be allowed to use cannabis?
- 2) Is cannabis use good or bad for an individual?

It's therefore possible to believe that cannabis use is bad, and urge against it. Yet at the same time advocate for a person's freedom to choose as an individual whether they use it or not. After all, the decision taken only affects the person choosing to use it, and doesn't directly infringe upon the rights of anyone else. People so confuse personal judgement with legal judgement though that it's often hard to make such subtle



arguments in the public sphere. In fact, one of the things that makes it so hard to legalise cannabis is that people are so ingrained with this sense that the law is their moral father or guardian. So much so that legalisation would not just be seen as a permission to use it, but also as an advocacy of its use.

People would say; "It must be good for you, otherwise it would be illegal". Potentially in turn then leading to hoards of people engaging in something that may potentially have negative consequences. If these negative consequences then become apparent the cry would then come; "...but why aren't the government doing something about this?!". So we complain about the nanny state, but we also beg and plead for it to make our judgements for us.

In the debate about sexual freedom this confusion is particularly apparent. For instance, most people across society generally deem adultery to be an immoral thing, and will chastise a person for committing it. However, in the west, we generally see this as a purely moral issue, and would never countenance jailing a person for such behaviour. This is not the case in other parts of the world though, such as places under Sharia law. Likewise attitudes were quite different in western countries in earlier periods.

Now such *legal* prohibitions on things like adultery seem obviously antiquated from our western perspective. However, in substance it's no different to the cannabis debate. The logic is the same; adultery is deemed immoral and is believed to have a negative impact, it therefore needs legal prohibition. Otherwise the law (*slash* religion) would appear to be giving such behaviour the green light, which would then lead to more adultery and more negative consequences.

In this regard the modern "nanny state" is in many ways just another form of religious creed.

[13] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 22. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[14] The word *babble* is similar to the name *Babel*, which is another variant of *Babylon*. The biblical story of the *Tower of Babel* states that before the building of the tower all the people of the Earth were a single united people with a single language. However, following the destruction of the tower God scattered the peoples of the Earth. Confounding their language so that they couldn't understand one another. Leading to all the various world languages.

So here again we see this *bar bar* babbling sound associated with both language and confusion. We also have *baby-talk* too, where babies string random sounds together in a similitude of real language. Or alternately where adults speak random "coochee-coo" type sounds when interacting with babies. So perhaps to be *in Babylon* is to be in a state of confusion or babyishness - i.e. in a state of ignorance or unknowing.

The word *bible* itself is also similar. It's said to derive from the Latin *biblia*, meaning *book/books*. However, given that books are used to record written language it seems reasonable to think there may be some relation to speech here too.

[15] *The First Epistle of St Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians. Chapter 7. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[16] *The Epistle to the Galatians. Chapter 5. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[17] Another passage of interest in this regard comes from *The Epistle to the Colossians, Chapter 3*. Where we find written;

*"But now put ye also away from you all things: wrath, fierceness, maliciousness, cursed speaking, filthy speaking out of your mouths. Lie not one to another, that the old man with his works be put off, and the new put on, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that made him, where is neither gentile nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarous or Scythian, bond or free; but Christ is all in all things."*

This strings together several of the dichotomies between civilised and uncivilised that we've been speaking of - Jew and Gentile, circumcision and uncircumcision, slave and freeman, Scythian and barbarian. Though in that last pair we are presented with something slightly new. The Scythians are generally viewed as being somewhat wild and unruly. However, in this example they're presented in counterpoint to the "barbarous". Suggesting that perhaps the Scythians were more civil than is often credited.

[18] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 6. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *The Gospel of Saint Matthew. Chapter 10. William Tyndale's New Testament. Wordsworth Classics of World Literature, 2002.*

## Chapter Ten.

[1] This line was famously spoken by Senator Robert F. Kennedy in his speech on the night of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

*"My favourite poet was Aeschylus. And he once wrote: 'Even in our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, until in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.' What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence and lawlessness; but is love and wisdom, and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or whether they be black ..Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world."*

The Aeschylus passage he quotes is from the play *Agamemnon*, as translated by the writer Edith Hamilton.

*For more information visit;*

*<https://birkhallsmiscellany.blogspot.com>*