

Having entered the Britannica's article into document 33, I later discerned that the writer's conclusion was yet another effort by those who strive to diminish the impact of Protestant Christianity upon Anglo-Saxon culture.

There is no question that the monocausal explanation for the rise of capitalism is primarily the result of Protestant theology while other factors were not separate from but influenced by Christian doctrines.

An excellent analysis of the impact of the Reformation and Protestant theology on the West is a subject addressed by Dr. Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn in his book, *The Intelligent American's Guide to Europe*:

It is correct to say that the civilizations of antiquity revolved around Rome, Greece, North Africa, and the Near East—that is, around the Mediterranean—but Europe, within its geographic limits, has been basically fashioned and formed by Christianity. It has laid down thought patterns and emotional traits that will continue to have lasting effects. (p. 45)

Religion in Europe has proved to be a far more important factor than ethnicity or race. Let us first take a look back at the important psychological and intellectual elements brought to Europe by Christianity and largely missing in non-Christian civilizations. There is, for example, the notion of the transcendence of man, his unique personality and inescapable destiny independent of state, society, and "tribe," his dominion over nature; there is the concept of free will and man's responsibility for his fate on earth and in the hereafter. (pp. 45–46)

For many centuries it seemed that, culturally and intellectually, Christianity was going to be eclipsed by the Islamic world. Only in the Byzantine Empire, in Europe's southeastern corner, could the standards of a higher civilization be maintained. How long did it take until Christianity truly prevailed among these barbarians, until it fashioned and formed their ethical attitudes? The Arabs, who, in the early eighth century, had penetrated as far as central France (A.D. 732, at the battle of Tours and Poitiers), had rapidly assimilated much of the culture of antiquity. Only in the fourteenth century can Europe claim to have reached something resembling Roman standards; and in the fifteenth century we started to overtake the Islamic world. (p. 46)

In order to understand—psychologically and culturally rather than theologically—the more immediate reasons for the Reformation in the sixteenth century, it is important to remember that Luther’s basic motivation was his revolt against Humanism and the Renaissance.

To gauge the impact of the Reformation on the European mentalities, it is important to remember that Luther engineered a *conservative* revolution. The psychological moment of the Reformation was the winter of 1510–1511, when Luther, a thoroughly medieval, Gothic type, was sent to Rome by his order, the Augustinian Hermits.<sup>1</sup> Luther knew Humanism in a purely literary fashion; now, in Renaissance Rome, he was confronted with the great effort not only to recapture antiquity, but also to “baptize” it. He regarded all the sages of antiquity as unbaptized pagans roasting in the everlasting fires of Hell. He now saw the medieval concept of the universe as a circle, with God as its center, being replaced by an ellipse with two focal points: God and man. To him this was a betrayal of Christianity that he had to fight to the bitter end. (p. 49)

What we regard today as typically Catholic is embodied in the spirit of Humanism, of the Renaissance, and also of the Baroque (including the Jesuit style). Rome has forever remained basically a Renaissance city. The United States can be called a more medieval country than either Italy or Spain. D.H. Lawrence, in his *Studies in Classic American Literature*, has written of the Pilgrim Fathers that they were escaping the freedom of Renaissance Europe. Grant Woods’s brilliant painting “American Gothic” shows this transatlantic medievalism very clearly. In fact, neo-Gothic has been, next to neo-Colonial, the favorite Americans style for churches, colleges, and such. In the English-speaking world religion became identified with the medieval period; firms that wanted to sell candles or hymnbooks to ministers or monsignors printed their ads in Gothic letters. Thus the Gothic style long survived the Reformation in those countries that adhered to it, while in the *mundus catholicus* [Catholic world] the Renaissance evolved into the Baroque and Rococo styles, as in the glorious churches of southern Germany and Austria, which have rightly been called, “God’s ballrooms.” (pp. 49–50)

The term “Protestant” ... was a term of derision and contempt, invented by the Catholics. This is the reason why we (very ecumenically minded) Europeans speak of Evangelicals, a term that might, however, confuse Americans because of its somewhat fundamentalist-revivalist undertones. All over the Iberian world the Protestant missions call themselves *Evangélicos*, a word justified by their exclusive reliance upon Scripture and their rejection of the oral tradition. (p. 51)

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<sup>1</sup> Lutheranism grew out of Augustinian theology with its strong rejection of the “world.” The crisis of Christianity in this century has been caused by going blindly in the opposite direction” (429fn93).

The Reformed churches<sup>2</sup> retained their intellectual vigor for well over two hundred years. Relativist liberalism had no place. But then they faltered under the iniquitous attacks of rationalism and skepticism, of sensualism and relativism. To the forces of the enlightenment ... the Reformed churches lacked a magisterium to anathematize the inroads of “the World.” As a result, a nearly 180-degree turn took place and Protestantism became almost the opposite of what the Reformers had set out to achieve. One sees this best in the United States, where the original ideas of the Reformers have, in some places, survived better than in the Old World. The spirit of the Middle Ages as well as that of Milton, Knox, Cromwell, Calvin, and the Pilgrim Fathers still maintain certain local bulwarks in America. Talk to a preacher in a remote corner of Tennessee or Kentucky and he will tell you that the Catholics are pagan epicureans who enjoy lewd dances like the waltz, drink, smoke, carouse, play cards and bingo, and worship “stocks and stones.” In the fashionable churches of New York, on the other hand, one might hear that Catholics are “medieval,” that they suffer under the authoritarian rule of priests and infallible popes, are deprived of the pleasures made possible through contraception, abortion, and divorce, and, until recently, had to eat fish on Friday and starve during Lent. But it is the Hillbilly preacher who represents the views of the Reformers far better than the enlightened minister with a Union Theological degree. The latter really speaks for the Enlightenment and not for either Luther or Calvin. (p. 52)

Fleeing Calvin and his theology of man’s total depravity after the Fall, not a few Catholic theologians have sunk breathlessly into the open arms of Rousseau, the other Genevan, who taught that man was good and only society made him wicked. Change society and you get human angels! Here, too, is an important aspect of the American drama: God’s Own Country, whose great-grand-Founding Father is John Calvin, has become utterly Rousseauan, partly because of the inroads of democracy, the alien ideology imported from France. (p. 53)

It is true, however, that democracy works far better in the countries of the Evangelical faith because a well-functioning parliamentary government needs a strong community spirit, a common frame of reference, and a readiness for compromise, which is usually aided by a relativist outlook. The modern Evangelical nations are evolutionary, not revolutionary; they favor gradual changes .... (pp. 53–54)

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<sup>2</sup> “Those ecclesiastical bodies or denominations which hold to the system of doctrine and government or polity as set out by John Calvin in the sixteenth century, and expressed in various “Reformed” confessions. They include the Calvinistic churches deriving from Europe which are specifically known as “Reformed” as well as the “Presbyterian” churches of the English-speaking world” (W. S. Reid, “Reformed Churches,” in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. ed., gen. ed. J. D. Douglas [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978], 832).

Is not the Catholic Church a completely authoritarian structure, is it not headed by an infallible *Pontifex Maximus*, while in the world of the Reformation there are no “supreme authorities”? Why, then, are the Evangelicals so far more disciplined than the Catholics—why do their trains run on time? Why have they been the harbingers of technological civilization, of modern commercialism, which requires such rigorous obedience, punctuality, and coordination? Are we not staring into the face of a paradox? (p. 55)

The answer is fairly simple. It is not the ecclesiastical structures [organized denominations] that have formed and fashioned the mentalities and minds of the people, but the respective theologies [hermeneutics] or, more precise, the theological anthropologies,<sup>3</sup> the image of man and his role within the religious framework. According to Catholic teaching, man has not become entirely wretched through original sin; he has only been “wounded in his nature” and deprived of the gratuitous gift of life everlasting on earth. The glory of man—created, after all, in the image of God—is an indispensable part of Catholic theology, and it is crowned by the glory of the saints. Hence the different attitude toward the senses as well as toward reason. Intellectualism, together with the veneration of saints (living or dead), is sharply reduced in the Evangelical world. (pp. 55–56)

In the areas of industry and commerce, in the natural sciences and in military proficiency, the Evangelical nations visibly eclipsed the Catholic ones. According to Max Weber’s well-known theory, the free economy (capitalism) did not gain momentum until the Reformation, especially the Calvinist Reformation.<sup>4</sup> Only when Calvinism came along did free enterprise “take off”; the notion (taken from the Old Testament) that prosperity is a token of divine grace acted as a powerful psychological incentive. Puritanical notions, according to which most ways of spending money were considered sinful, almost automatically fostered the accumulation of wealth. Eventually the Catholic nations and regions, as a whole, were left behind: in mixed areas the Evangelical element took a front seat economically: it was favored not only by the free development of capitalism, but also by its work ethic.<sup>5</sup> (p. 56)

Dr. Leddihn published his book in 1979. Over the past 36 years, his analysis of the Protestant Reformation’s seminal and lasting impact on the rise and success of Western capitalism is being abandoned and exchanged for Renaissance humanism and its inherent socialism.

<sup>3</sup> “Anthropology: Theology dealing with the origin, nature, and destiny of human beings” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., s.v. “anthropology”).

<sup>4</sup> See Weber’s claims that the monocausal inspiration of capitalism was the “Protestant work ethic” and its rebuttal by Tawney’s multicausal claims in *Is Jesus the Messiah* document 33, pages 328–29.

<sup>5</sup> Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, “Religion,” in *The Intelligent American’s Guide to Europe* (New Rochelle: Arlington House Publishers, 1979), 45–46, 49–56 passim.

Deviation from standards that lend cohesiveness to a society with the intent to acquire equality results in loss of respect for one another.

The tendency in the environment of equality is the self-centered and, often, self-righteous desires to establish independent authority over others.

Those who have no authority over others, but assume the position, are considered bullies who browbeat, harass, and intimidate to seize or maintain power.

Those who have authority, but misuse it to accomplish a clandestine objective, are involved in rebellion. Such as, internecine intrigue in businesses, organizations, churches, clubs, et al.

Whereas individuals can form a conspiracy within organizations, political movements are designed to maintain the status quo or implement drastic change within a society.