

## The “Tyranny” of Christendom

What of the charge that Christendom stands for tyranny by “absolute” monarchs in league with tyrannical popes? The charge is sustainable only upon a complete ignorance of European history and what the modern state system has wrought in terms of death, destruction and governmental impositions on the ordinary citizen. If anything, the monarchies of Christendom were characterized by a radical decentralization of political power in comparison with the massive centralized governments of the modern nation-states. They exhibited what the Catholic Church calls “the principle of subsidiary function” or *subsidiarity*, which assigns governmental functions in an organic manner to the lowest appropriate levels of society.<sup>4</sup>

In his *Democracy: The God That Failed* (whose very title suggested the title of this book), even the radical “anarcho-libertarian” scholar Hans-Hermann Hoppe concedes that the monarchs of former Christendom, bound by a complex web of ancient customary limits on their powers, were far more respectful of legitimate local and personal autonomies than present-day “representative” governments. After referring to the traditional limitations on monarchical power in Catholic Europe and the limited nature of the wars in which monarchs were involved, as opposed to the “total wars” waged in the name of Liberty, Hoppe observes that

3. Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2005 [1966]), 43.

4. Cf. Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), n. 79: “Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them.”

with the rise of universal Western democracy on the ruins of monarchy after World War I, as demanded by Woodrow Wilson, "private government ownership [monarchy] was completely replaced by public government ownership." With that development, "government growth, and an attending process of *decivilization* should have been expected to take off."<sup>5</sup>

In other words, the rise of "government by the people" coincided with the decline of the West. With the fall of monarchy, nothing stood in the way of the process by which the "democratic republicanism" that had replaced kings "produced communism . . . fascism, national socialism and, lastly and most enduringly, social democracy."<sup>6</sup> Curiously enough, it was Wilson himself—hammer of the House of Hapsburg—who exposed the myth of the "tyranny" of Catholic Christendom during a 1909 address republished shortly after his death:

Did you ever think how the world managed politically to get through the middle ages? It got through them without breakdown because *it had the Roman Catholic Church to draw upon for native gifts*, and by no other means that I can see. If you will look at the politics of the middle ages you will see that *states depended for their guidance upon great ecclesiastics*, and they depended upon them because the community itself was in strata, was in classes, and *the Roman Catholic Church was a great democracy. Any peasant could become a priest, and any priest a chancellor.*<sup>7</sup>

The limited powers of Catholic monarchs in comparison with the modern nation-state reflect precisely the Christian principle ignorantly denounced as a fount of tyranny when it is actually the greatest of all safeguards against it: the revealed truth, as seen in the teaching of Saint Paul, that "there is no power but from God . . . and therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."<sup>8</sup> Or as Christ Himself declared to Pilate: "Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above."<sup>9</sup> The ruler is not merely a human authority, but literally a minister of God accountable to Him as such: "The mighty shall be mightily tormented."<sup>10</sup> This truth is not to be confused with the Protestant error of the divine right (direct divine appointment) of kings. From the divine origin of all political authority follows the divine limitation upon its exercise. The ruler, be he a king or a democratically elected official, may not transgress God's law and is rightfully resisted whenever he does: "We ought to obey God rather than men."<sup>11</sup> Hence Saint Augustine's classic formula: *lex iniusta non est lex* (unjust law is not law).

On the other hand, Augustine, in line with the entire political tradition of Chris-

5. Hoppe, *Democracy: The God That Failed*, 42.

6. *Ibid.*

## “Religious Violence”

Finally, we address here—in the passing manner it merits—the master myth of the liberal meta-narrative: that religion was the cause of endless wars and suffering before the Enlightenment brought an end to religious strife by dispelling ignorance and bigotry and inspiring the revolutions, including the American, that produced peaceful democratic and pluralistic societies. The myth depends upon blindness to the historical reality that the bloodiest wars in Western history, the unprecedented genocides, “democides”<sup>20</sup> and “politicides”<sup>21</sup> that came after 1789, followed by the rise of the worldwide “military-industrial complex”—a perpetual war machine in perpetual preparation for war—were all the work of states opposed in principle to the very idea of Christendom.

To address a facile objection, the difference is not merely one of advances in the technology of killing, but rather a change in the very nature of war. As the distin-

19. Cf. Gerard, J., “Galileo Galilei,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1909). Galileo died in the good graces of the Church and was given an elaborate tomb in Santa Croce church in Florence.

20. A term coined by R.J. Rummel to denote the mass killing of unarmed people by governments without any necessary connection to a policy of eliminating a particular race or culture. Rummel, *Death by Government* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 31.

21. “The murder of any person or people by government because of their politics or for political purposes.” *Ibid.*



guished historian R.R. Palmer observes, before the French Revolution—that is, throughout the fourteen centuries of Christendom—wars had been “clashes between governments or ruling families, fought by relatively small armies of professional soldiers. Many people suffered, *but the people as such* was not vitally concerned. When governments became the people’s governments, their wars became the people’s wars, and their armies the armies of the nation.”<sup>22</sup> And so it has been since the Age of Liberty began. The rise of mass democracy introduced the concept of “the nation at war,” with men, women and children all playing their roles in “the war effort.” Compulsory military conscription, “a kind of blood tax by all modern states, signifies *the loss of freedom* enjoyed by ancient societies,” resulting from “the growing power of a state in the process of becoming a leviathan. . . .”<sup>23</sup>

In particular, but without limitation, we note the following immense slaughters involving conscripted national armies that would have been unthinkable during the Christian centuries, beginning with the hitherto unprecedented *levée en masse* (mass conscription) by the Jacobin regime:

- The French revolutionary wars following the 1789 uprising inspired by the American example: 2 million dead.
- The genocide of Catholics in the Vendée by the Jacobin regime: 300,000 dead.
- The Napoleonic wars following the fall of the Jacobin and Thermidorian regimes: 3 million dead.
- The Civil War in America, during which one-half of the nation laid waste to the other half: 600,000 dead.
- World War I, the second bloodiest war in Western history, fought to make Europe “safe for democracy,” whose direct consequences were the rise of the madman Hitler in a Germany starved, humiliated, and dismembered at Versailles, World War II, and the rise of Soviet and world communism: 16 million dead.<sup>24</sup>
- The Allied starvation blockade of Germany during and *after* World War I, whose express aim included starving the German population into submitting to the disastrous terms at Versailles: 700,000 dead.
- The genocide of Armenians by the atheist Young Turk regime from 1915–1917—complete with death camps, mass poisoning and gassing—following the “democratic revolution” of 1908: 2 million dead.<sup>25</sup>

- The Russian Civil War (1917–23) between the Red Army and the anti-Bolshevik White Army, assisted by the Allied Forces: 4 million dead, including civilians, from battlefield casualties, disease and starvation.
- The Bolshevik democides perpetrated by Trotsky and Lenin, who had been smuggled from Switzerland into Russia by the German high command during World War I in a successful bid to destabilize the Entente Powers and provoke Russia's withdrawal from World War I: 7 million dead, including the murdered Czar, his wife and five children.<sup>26</sup>
- World War II: the bloodiest war in Western history, causing incalculable losses to Western civilization, including the turnover of eastern Europe to Stalin, presented with a Crusader's sword<sup>27</sup> at Teheran by Winston Churchill in a grotesque parody of the Crusades: 70 million dead.
- The genocides by the Nazi regime: 20 million dead, including 6 million Jews.
- The carpet-bombing of Dresden and Tokyo and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, all in 1945: at least 500,000 dead combined.<sup>28</sup>
- The ethnic cleansing of Germans in the eastern provinces of Germany, delivered into the hands of Stalin by moving the Polish border westward at Yalta with the agreement of Churchill and FDR: 2 million dead in an orgy of "mass murder, rape and looting."<sup>29</sup>
- All of the democides, genocides and politicides by Stalin, the monster the

---

this genocide of Christians, the Young Turks were "practically all atheists," who dreamed the secular dream of "a new Turkey that would unite all enemies into one great nation . . . unweakened by rebellious minorities," and who "only used Islam to incite the Moslem masses against Turkey's Armenians." Rummel, *Death by Government*, 226.

26. The aptly named Alexander Helphand, a/k/a Parvus, who was also an advisor to the genocidal Young Turk regime, assisted the German high command in this endeavor. Cf. Dimitri Kolgonov, *Lenin: A New Biography* (NY: Free Press/Simon and Schuster, 1994), 78 ff.

27. Buchanan, *The Unnecessary War*, 370.

28. The A-bomb dropped on Nagasaki, the home of Japan's largest Catholic population, instantly incinerated Urakami Cathedral: "Fathers Nishida and Tamaya were hearing confessions again after the all-clear. The cathedral was only a third of a mile from where Fat Man detonated and was reduced to rubble in an instant. No one would be sure how many perished inside." Besides the A-bomb's lethal radiation, "there was its intense heat, which reached several million degrees centigrade at the explosion point. The whole mass of the huge bomb was ionized and a fireball created, making the air around it luminous, emitting ultraviolet rays and infrared rays and blistering roof tiles farther than half a mile from the epicenter. Exposed human skin was scorched up to two and a half miles away." In a concrete reinforced hospital a half-mile from ground zero "80 percent of the patients and staff perished." The surviving staff members "were shocked to find many of [the patients] dead, their bodies swollen and their skin peeled off as if they were overripe peaches." Paul Glynn, *A Song for Nagasaki* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), 19–20.

Allies needed to defeat the monster born at Versailles, and to whom they handed over eastern Europe at Teheran<sup>30</sup> and Yalta in the name of Liberty: at least 56 million dead.<sup>31</sup>

We must also include the genocides perpetrated by regimes that were the direct Asian and Southeast Asian sequelae of the exported Western ideology of Marxism, which began as a radical reaction by Marx, Engels and their adepts against the supposed bourgeois perversion of Liberty by the “moderately” liberal, post-Christian and capitalist social order of Western Europe:

- The Red Chinese regime: 35 million dead.
- The Pol Pot regime: 2 million dead.
- The North Korean regime: 1.6 million dead.

In his landmark study of the history of government-perpetrated genocide, R.J. Rummel compiles statistics for a total of some 150 million victims of “Dekamegamurders” and “Lesser Megamurders” in the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone.<sup>32</sup> Rummel’s study is entitled “Death by Government,” but the evidence he marshals of the worst state-sponsored atrocities in history shows that not one of them represents death by *Christian* government, but rather *post-Christian* or atheist regimes.

In response to the massive evidence that the Age of Liberty has been an age of death and devastation on an unprecedented scale, one inevitably receives the tiresome counter-reference to the victims of the Inquisition. But as Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddin has noted: “all of the victims of the Inquisition burnt at the stake through centuries did not amount to a tiny fraction of those cremated alive one afternoon in Dresden, when among 204,000 killed at least two-thirds perished fully conscious in the fiery flames . . . and this without inquest, without the slightest effort to establish real or even a subjectively imputed guilt, [and] at the very end of a war.”<sup>33</sup>

The renowned Jewish intellectual Dr. David Berlinski, a self-described agnostic who “cannot pray,” provides his own staggering enumeration of statistics on the unparalleled death, misery and devastation of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries in answer to the ludicrous contention of psychologist Steven Pinker that “something in modernity and its cultural institutions has made us nobler” and that “compre-