

Rex Gentium: History, Nationalism and Christ

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The Church's liturgy calls on Christ as *Rex gentium*, 'King of the nations', the One whom they all 'desire', the Corner-stone that unites them. It appeals to him, therefore, to 'come and save man whom you made from clay'¹. In this celebrated Advent antiphon, the Church affirms the relevance of Christ to world history and, more specifically, to the fate of the many peoples of the world whose histories contribute to the single history which is that of the world as a whole. The text intimates that this history constitutes an implicit call for his Coming, and it states quite explicitly that only Christ can unify their different and (presumably) divergent histories, and make them one.

My concern here is a vast subject which, it is probably fair to say, historians and philosophers in England, even when believers, would by and large regard as taboo ... and in this they would doubtless be joined by the majority of theologians. The relevance of Christ to world history, and, in particular, to the fact of its multiple national differentiations, is, they would say, simply too large a subject to talk sense about. English historians, with occasional exceptions like Arnold Toynbee, do not think it a proper part of the historian's task to identify the structure of the historical process as a whole.² The philosophy of history is not, in England, the study of the wider meaning of that process but, rather, the justification of any limited statement about the past.³ English philosophers of history avert their gaze in horror from their Continental counterparts, whose vaulting metaphysical ambition has produced schemes like Hegel's (history as the coming of Reason to self-consciousness) or Marx's (history as the formation of a socialist society where the specific essence of humanity will be realised in uncoerced labour). Nor is theology in any very different condition. Theologies of history available in English tend to be translations from French or German of works by 'Neo-Patristic' authors.⁴ These figures—and here Jean Daniélou SJ and Hans Urs von Balthasar were especially notable—saw themselves as following in the footsteps of Church Fathers and early ecclesiastical writers who realised that the Bible tells a story from Genesis to Apocalypse, from the Beginning to the End, and wished to fill in some of the blank pages.⁷ But the bulk of their more fastidious modern successors have not wished to emulate such dogmatic naivety.

The English, it seems, are not natural practitioners of the philosophy and theology of history—not, at any rate, since the seventeenth century.

Lord Acton's *History of Freedom* lies scattered in a thousand fragments, a card index 'system' that no one, starting with himself, could put together. Would Acton, indeed, even have *begun* the 'History of Freedom' had he simply been a Shropshire squire, and not also half German, and born in Naples? The cultures which put forth Hegel, Marx and Gianbattista Vico could at least suggest to Acton his project, whereas left to himself, tramping his acres, he would probably have conceived history only as a set of limited, and thus manageable, frames—like the vignettes of A.E. Housman's poetry in *A Shropshire Lad*. But do the frames need a framework? Will they suffer one? Can such a framework assist exploration of the title *Rex Gentium*, relating history, the nations and Christ? These are our questions.

A philosophical history

Acton was Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. Another Cambridge professor, resembling Acton in his capacity to see the conventional limits of historiography through an oblique angle lens, is Ernest Gellner, whose *Plough, Sword and Book: the Structure of Human History*, was published in 1988. Gellner's Jewish background, Central European birth and Parisian upbringing give him contact with a more speculative tradition of historical writing, enriched, in his case, by philosophical and social-anthropological expertise.

The combination of Gellner's gifts and interests makes for an important book, for several reasons. First, *Plough, Sword and Book* suggests a suitable method for writing a philosophy of history, as distinct from a history of philosophy. Secondly, it enables us to take stock of the present state of play in world affairs—*toutes proportions gardées*—in a work of scarcely more than 200 pages. Thirdly, it might provide a model for a Christian version of itself, such is the sanity of its underlying doctrine of man, just as Augustine and Eusebius found models for their overall interpretations of historical development in the pagan writing, both chronicle and philosophy, of their time. Nevertheless, it has to be read critically, not least with the criticism of faith, rather than fallen upon with a glad cry (but this is ever a necessary caveat when despoiling the Egyptians).

First, let us hear what Gellner has to say about the legitimacy of the general enterprise on which we are engaged. He writes:

We inevitably assume a pattern of human history. There is simply no choice concerning *whether* we use such a pattern. We are, all of us, philosophical historians *malgré nous*, whether we wish it or not. The only choice we do have is whether we make our vision as explicit, coherent and compatible as we can, or whether we employ it more or less unconsciously and incoherently.... The great paradox of our age is that, although it is undergoing social and intellectual change of totally unprecedented speed and depth, its thought

has become in the main unhistorical or anti-historical.... The joint result of our inescapable need for possessing some backcloth vision of history, and of the low esteem in which elaboration of global historical patterns is at present held, is a most paradoxical situation; the ideas of nineteenth century philosophers of history such as Hegel, Marx, Comte or Spencer are treated with scant contempt and yet are everywhere in use. (pp. 11—12)

One can only agree. Gellner goes on to describe the method which he personally proposes to use in setting about this 'inescapable' task. It cannot be a matter of simple description. The richness and diversity of historical reality are such that a non-selective description could not be begun, much less completed. Instead:

one chooses the crucial and elementary factors operative in human history, selected to the best of one's judgement, and then works out their joint implications. If the resulting picture fits the available record and highlights the relevant questions, well and good.... The method is in principle very simple; its implementation is not. (p. 13)

In other words, the method involves three steps: *induction* of key factors in change from the imaginative scanning of particular historical narratives; *deduction* of possibly illuminating implications from the concurrent operation of these factors; and the *comparison* of the resulting schema with the empirical record. In other words, one returns to the starting-point with a fuller grasp of the original historical materials: in my (epistemological) end is my beginning.

What Gellner claims to have identified, using this method, is simply the fundamental principles of all historical development. He does not think of these principles in a deterministic way. History contains certain steps. Earlier ones are preconditions of later, but they do not necessitate the emergence of their successors. His key terms in describing these fundamental principles are: production, coercion, cognition, that is, labour, power, knowledge—the 'plough, sword, book' of his title. What I have called the 'sanity' of Gellner's underlying doctrine of man turns both on his integrated balance of determination and creativity in the relation of historical 'laws' to human subjectivity, and on his selection of these key factors. For him, as for the Christian doctrine of post-lapsarian man, humankind is engaged in transforming the earth through labour, involved in a mesh of power relations, and yet open, through intelligence, to the understanding of the real.

Gellner's trio may also be expressed as: economy, governance, culture. But while 'these three are one', his interest is focused on culture, which he defines as a constellation of concepts or ideas which guide thought and conduct. Much of his argument takes the form of consideration of the kinds of concept that are possible or likely in various sorts of social condition. Changes in the social economy and the political

order will probably, though not certainly, bring about and transmit to the future certain transformations of culture. From these transformations there result fresh understandings of the world, and of human living. (Better, such transformations *are* such fresh understandings.) Apart from the unwarranted omission of the realm of aesthetics—for understanding is carried by symbol and image as well as by concept—this account seems unexceptionable.

A theology of history

Gellner's work is an exercise in philosophical history: and how would a theology of history draw on its findings? Any philosophy undergoes baptism if it submits to the illumination of its own materials by faith in the redemptive activity of the triune God. A philosophy of history becomes a theology of history if it accepts that the source of history is the Father, that the norm of history is his Son, Jesus Christ, and that the fulfilment of history is the work of the Spirit, whom the Father and the Son send forth.

In a *Theology of History* Balthasar wrote of the Spirit's work in world history:

the work which he undertakes, the shaping and fashioning of what the Son bequeathed to him, is a work of supreme divine freedom. He is presented with two data: the life of Christ, and 'world history'; and it rests with him to dispose of the infinite wealth in the life of Christ that it can blossom out in the variousness of history, and that at the same time history, thus made subject to this norm, shall be able to discover the fulness within itself. (p. 98)

As this account suggests, Balthasar stresses in the first place the transcendence of the Son and Spirit vis-à-vis history. They do not simply uphold the structure of history as it develops, via nature, from the Creator's hand. As divine persons, they are capable of relating history in a new manner to the God who is not only its Source but its Goal. As Balthasar puts it:

The Spirit ... makes history into the history of salvation ... prophetically oriented towards the Son ...

while the latter's

action is what history is for; his uniqueness sets it free to attain its proper character. (p. 59)

Yet at the same time, Balthasar is careful to underline that, in this, the redemptive action of the Holy Trinity does not just disregard, much less ride roughshod over, the natural pattern of history. The Spirit

leaves history its own immanent laws and structures, but orders it and all its laws in subjection to the laws of Christ. (p. 99)

The relation of history's natural structure, the 'structure' of Gellner's sub-title, to its supernatural structure, the structure disclosed by

Christian faith, is like that of nature to grace at large. Grace builds on the historical expression of nature, elevating it in the process. It does not overthrow it. The Spirit operates in the order of created spirit not, Balthasar insists, as 'another', but rather, echoing some words of Nicholas of Cusa, 'as one exalted above all otherness' (ibid.).

The Spirit, that is to say, is so transcendent that he can be wholly immanent, his divine creativity so utterly indifferent to maintaining its difference from our human creativity that his sovereign work can go undetected by the secular historian. Yet what he achieves is a real transformation, for he uses the natural structure of history as a means by which to attain his own goal.

The key to an appreciation of that goal is, for the Christian, the life of Jesus, since the Son made man is history's 'norm'. To cite Balthasar once again:

A situation in the life of Jesus must not be regarded as a closed, finite thing, delimited by other historical situations, previous, contemporaneous or subsequent. Since it is the manifestation in this world of the eternal life of God, it always has a dimension open to that which is above. Its meaning, the number of its possible applications, is, even at its own historical level, something limitless.... The richness of reference in each particular ... christological situation is so great that it can give birth to further situations of extreme diversity, sharply distinct from each other, yet not ... established in a relativistic autonomy, but finding their norm and governing principle in that particular Christ-situation which is their source and their context. (pp. 67—68)

If the distinctive form of Christ's temporality, his participation in history, lay in his unique receptivity to the will of the Father for the world, something which enabled history to reach its anticipated fulfilment in him as its personal norm, then the proper content of that norm lies in those exemplary responses to the human challenges of Christ's environment, in which the divine will was concretely expressed.

Jesus and foreigners

The 'Christ-situations' most pertinent to his role as 'King of the nations', are, perhaps, Jesus's dealings with those who were, to a Palestinian Jew such as himself, aliens or foreigners. The gospels contain a number of such allusions⁸. Here it is only possible to offer one general comment about this set of accounts. Jesus is consistently presented as treating foreigners with a sense both of their *difference* from those whom the Johannine prologue calls 'his own', and of their *unity* with them. He does not treat them in a universalistic way, as though their differences from Palestinian Jewry, or, for that matter, between themselves, counted for nothing—as though they were simply human beings, with no significant further specifications worth adding. And yet Jesus also

incorporates them, in ways suited to each representative individual or group, into the outreach of his own mission. It was, then, with a sense of identity-in-difference; or solidarity-in-distinctiveness; or of *differentiated unity*, that Jesus approached the Gentiles who stand around the edges of his mission to Israel.

These representatives of the nations are a significant penumbra in the gospels, even though the Light of the world, as shining there, falls first and foremost on and for the Jews. They foreshadow the turning of the Church to the Gentiles after Pentecost, and help give that turning its justification. These foreigners, these non-nationals, frame the gospel tradition: they appear at its beginning with the Magi, and at its end, with that other pagan centurion who, in the midst of the portents which follow the death of Jesus in Matthew, calls out, 'Truly, this was a son of God' (27:54b).

The principle of identity-in-difference

The identity-in-difference approach, which is such a hallmark of the gospel presentations of Jesus's attitude to people of divergent origins, has its most important continuation in the structure of the Church, the community of Jesus's disciples. In the words of the Letter to the Ephesians, the 'middle wall of partition' has been brought down (2:14). The Gentiles, who until then were far off, being strangers to the covenant of the Promise, are now brought nigh, since Gentile and Jewish Christians form one body, although, as we see from the Acts of the Apostles, the unity of that body is itself of a differentiated kind. Whilst, unfortunately, such Jewish Christian churches as that to which the Letter to the Hebrews was addressed did not long survive the Roman Jewish wars of the later first century, the same fundamental pattern of unity-in-difference can be seen in the further development of the *Catholica*, the Great Church. For it is a characteristic of that Church to hold in the communion of a single doctrinal faith, governmental order and sacramental life a multiplicity of distinct cultures, whether liturgical, spiritual, intellectual or linguistic. In this, the Church reflects its own nature as a network of local churches each of which, however, can only be fully 'the Church' by opening itself to the rest, in a process of reciprocity and exchange, of initiative and reception (and sometimes, when the needs of communion in the one faith, order and life suggest this, of *non-reception*), over which the local church of Rome, with its Petrine office-holder, presides as guardian⁹.

But now the question arises: does the form of the Church as such an identity-in-difference have anything to contribute to the future pattern of human history—that changing constellation of cultures or conceptual interlinkings for the guidance of thought and conduct, that are themselves assisted in their rise to hegemony by changes in the social economy and political order in approximately the way Gellner has charted?

If the norm of history is the incarnate Son, whose attitude to others this principle of identity-in-difference describes, and if what the Spirit brings about, ultimately, in history (while respecting history's own principles of development) is the sovereignty of this same norm, then we should expect that the Church's experience will offer a key to the resolution of relevant tensions concerning identity and difference in *secular* history. Nor is this simply a matter of the Church as a model; it is also a question of the Church as an agent. For since Christ all history is at the most fundamental level sacred, because of the presence and testimony of the Church of the Word Incarnate in the single, all-inclusive history of the world. As Balthasar writes:

The Church, transcending history but acting as its content and medium, is the ultimate gift of the Creator to human history, given to bring it to its own realisation from within.
(op. cit. p. 137)

The particular problem in contemporary secular history to which this one-in-many aspect of the Church's being relates is that of the existence of nations. It is the problem of nationalism.

The problem of nationalism

In *Plough, Sword and Book*, Gellner offers, *inter alia*, a picture of where we are in world affairs at the present time. Basically, he describes five kinds of societies in different parts of the world.

First, there are Western pluralistic societies like our own. In such societies the free market extends to ideas and religions. Pre-industrial faiths survive, but are entertained in a 'semi-cognitive' spirit, along a sliding scale of 'Cupitt-isation'. Alternative 'world-stories', intended to re-endow a scientific cosmos sanitised of value with moral meaning sufficient for living, come off the production-line at a quick rate but as rapidly becoming obsolescent.

Secondly, there are Marxist societies, built on a nineteenth century system which holds together, after its own fashion, a theoretical description of the world with an ethico-political prescription for history. At least in Europe, however, the ideological zeal of such societies is, as we all know, fast ebbing away.

Thirdly, there are Islamic societies where, so far at least, a traditional religion, in its orthodox form, has shown a remarkable fit with the requirement of secular modernisation.

Fourthly, there are in the third world a variety of societies, for which that of India may stand as an exemplar, where paternalistic modernisation from above is combined with toleration of the ancient folk-culture still in place below, thus giving rise to an uneasy pluralism not unlike that of the West itself.

Finally, in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, relatively weak civil societies are dominated by a correspondingly strong State apparatus. Here ideological life is 'opportunist', an attempt to exploit

international competition between the Soviet and Western blocs, a phenomenon summarised by Gellner in the axiom 'Cuius military aid, eius religio' (cf pp. 213—233).

While this survey brings out well the mobile, fluid nature of contemporary world society, it is remarkable that Gellner barely mentions what is, perhaps, the single most potent force, for good or ill, in world society: namely *nationalism*, a topic to which he himself has devoted an entire book, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford 1983). I follow a scholarly interlocutor of Gellner's, Professor Elie Kedourie of London University, in regarding nationalism as a European doctrinal export first marketed in the early nineteenth century. Nationalist doctrine may be summed up in three tenets: humanity is naturally divided into nations; these nations have characteristic features whereby they can be known; only national self-government is legitimate government. As Kedourie writes in his study *Nationalism* (London 1960; 1985):

Not the least triumph of this doctrine is that such propositions have become accepted and are thought to be self-evident, that the very word 'nation' has been endowed by nationalism with a meaning and a resonance which until the end of the eighteenth century it was far from having. (p. 9)

Kedourie traces the genesis of this doctrine to five factors.

At the head of his list is the French Revolutionary conviction that the principle of sovereignty resides in the nation, in such wise that no body of men, or individual man, can rightly exercise authority if that authority does not derive expressly from the nation. Secondly, Kedourie adduces the centrality which Kant gave to the role of self-determination, autonomy, in ethics: an individualistic anticipation, he believes, of the later slogan 'Better self-government than good government'. The third and fourth causes derive from another German philosopher of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic upheavals: Fichte. Fichte had insisted that the State is the creator of human freedom, not merely in an external or material sense but also in an internal or spiritual one, since only by merging their wills in the will of the State do individuals find their true freedom. Fichte also fathered the idea that it is by struggle that humanity ascends the ladder of culture. Lastly, there is the notion beloved of Herder and Schleiermacher which takes the nation to be a 'natural' division of the human race, endowed with its own peculiar character which it is the godly duty of its citizens to preserve inviolate.

Once nationalist doctrine has thus emerged from a fateful interplay of ideas, its anthropology and metaphysics are set to work in the re-interpretation of history. Kedourie stresses the ways in which nationalism exploits loyalties which a common religion has created over time. Moses becomes a national leader in a revolt against colonial oppression; Judaism, accordingly, ceases to be the *raison d'être* of the Jew and becomes a product of Jewish 'national consciousness'.

Mohammed, similarly, becomes the founder of the Arab nation, while Islam itself is transformed into a political ideology and used, as in the State of Pakistan, to mobilise the Moslems of the Indian sub-continent against their Hindu neighbours. Nor is Christianity safe from the contagion. Hus takes on the features of a precursor of Masaryk; Luther of Bismarck.

While Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* succeeds better than Kedourie's work in showing *why* such nationalist doctrine has appealed to so many groups in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (for Gellner, a modern industrialised state can only function with a mobile, literate, culturally standardised 'inter-changeable' population of the sort which nationalism engenders), Gellner does not really disagree with Kedourie's assertion that nationalism is necessarily disruptive of human amity. For they concur in the proposition that, on any reasonable calculation, the number of potential nations on the face of the earth is much larger than that of possible viable states. Kedourie, indeed, concludes his own account of the actual effects of nationalism in these words:

The attempts to refashion so much of the world on national lines has not led to greater peace and stability. On the contrary, it has created new conflicts, exacerbated tensions, and brought catastrophe to numberless people innocent of all politics. The history of Europe since 1919, in particular, has shown the dangerous possibilities inherent in nationalism.... What may be said of Europe can with equal justice be said of the Middle East, or of South-East Asia, wherever the pressure of circumstances or the improvidence of rulers or their failure of nerve made possible the triumph of nationalist programmes.¹⁰

What matters for Kedourie is not *national* government, but whether rulers are just and merciful. That is 'the only criterion of public defence'.¹¹ In the light of our theological reading of history, seen in the radiance of its norm, Jesus Christ, we can, however, take one further step. The criteria for the public defence of governments are not restricted to justice and mercy. They include also the promotion of identity-in-difference: the recognition of the unity of human groups even in and through their differentiated distinctiveness. But, given that the triumph of such identity-in-difference is one important specification of the 'christifying' of all history, does the natural structure of history's secular unfolding, drawn upon in the economies of the Son and the Spirit, permit us to hope for advance in this regard in our time?

The social economy which is so vital a pre-condition, via the political order, for the moulding of culture cannot be fully described today without invoking factors which make for greater international co-operation. The revolution in communications and transport, and the emergence of such global problems as the inter-related issues of environment, population explosion and diminishing resources make not

only possible but imperative an overcoming of the nationalist ethos. The 'book' which 'plough' and 'sword' need today is the ethical and spiritual patrimony of the human race in so far as these subserve the principle of solidarity-in-difference, the foundation of any lasting international order.

Our common European home

Coming closer to home, it is the recognition of this principle which governs the attitude of the Holy See at the present time to the development of the European Community. Thus, in his address to the European Parliament on 11 October 1988, Pope John Paul II stated:

A common political structure, springing from the free will of all European citizens, far from endangering the individual identities of the peoples of the Community, will be a fairer guarantee of all rights, cultural ones in particular, of all the regions. These united European peoples will never accept the dominion of one nation or one culture over the others, but they will uphold the right, equal for all, to enrich each other through their differences.¹²

And the Pope went on to say that this Europe must include the East, without whose presence Europe cannot have the 'dimensions which history has given it'. He also suggested that the experience of such a reconciliation between divided European nations and blocs would be an education in, for example, generosity to foreigners, and to refugees (of whom there are at present some twelve to fifteen million world-wide), as well as an education in openness to the spiritual wealth of peoples in other continents.

The Pope used the same occasion to make an impassioned appeal in favour of the continued public relevance of Christian revelation. Insisting that the sins of historic Christendom were abuses, not uses, of its own beliefs, he said:

It is my duty to stress emphatically that if the underlying religious and Christian fabric of this continent were to be denied as an inspiration to morality or as a positive factor in society, not only would the entire heritage of our European past be negated, but the future dignity of European humanity—and here I am talking about all people, followers of Christ or not—would be gravely endangered.¹³

In other words, the principle of identity-in-difference (as one salient principle in the reconstruction of Europe), though it emerges from supernatural revelation, is necessary for the future of the *natural* structure of history in its European forms (as no doubt in others).

If the movement towards European integration is, in such a way, one of those 'signs of the times' of which the Second Vatican Council spoke—symptomatic manifestations of the work of the Spirit in world history—then a considerable revision of historical understanding must be

set in motion. A re-evaluation must be undertaken of those pre-nationalist polities which, for all their limitations, embodied the principle of identity-in-difference in some recognisable form. In a European Catholic perspective one obvious candidate for re-evaluation would be the Danubian monarchy, brought to an end in 1919 by a coalition of factors, one of these being Woodrow Wilson's doctrinaire nationalism. Is it altogether a coincidence that this particular moment in the history of Europe, constituted jointly as it is by the formation of the European Community in the West and the ending of the Soviet system as we have known it in the East, and the consequent prospect of what Mr Gorbachev has called 'our common European home', is also the moment when the Church authorities are preparing to raise to her altars the servant of God Charles of Hapsburg, the last Hapsburg emperor, under the title 'patron of peace'?¹⁴

The human mediators of the 'King of the nations' point to him by their failures as well as by their successes. For, as the Liturgy proclaims each year in Advent, even though the Spirit is at work in the world to raise up natural history to the level of the Kingdom of God, the final coming of the Kingdom, howsoever much prepared, is sheer grace, the free Parousia of the Lord, the stone of the corner who alone can make the peoples finally one.

Imbued with this 'catholic' hope, English Roman Catholics will not resent the continued aspersions on the quality of their patriotism. They can look to an older England, where a nation was neither so sovereign nor so competitive, as well as to an older Europe of which that England was part. They can look as well to that *patria*, the Kingdom of God, in which heaven, the locus of our most fundamental *politeuma*, 'citizenship' (Phil. 3:20), descends to earth, and that common City is set up where stands the Tree of Life whose leaves are 'for the healing of the nations' (Apoc. 22:2). The goal of history is a universal spiritual society. The Catholic Church will fulfil its own historical role by leadership in overcoming the divisions of humanity, and drawing the nations into that spiritual unity which is, we believe with theological faith, their destiny.

- 1 Antiphon at the Magnificat for 22 December in the Liturgy of the Hours of the Roman rite.
- 2 A.J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London 1934—1954). I ought also to mention here the work of Toynbee's contemporary, Christopher Dawson. See C. Scott, *A Historian and his World. A life of Christopher Dawson 1889—1970* (London 1984), with full bibliography, and F. Cervantes: 'A Vision to Regain? Reconsidering Christopher Dawson (1889—1970)', *New Blackfriars* Vol 70 No. 831, October 1989, pp. 437—449.
- 3 E.g. W.B. Gallie, *Philosophy and the Historical Understanding* (London 1964), p. 11.
- 4 With some exceptions listed conveniently in the bibliography of O. Lewry OP, *The Theology of History* (Cork 1969).
- 5 J. Daniélou SJ, *The Lord of History* (ET London 1960).
- 6 H.U. von Balthasar, *A Theology of History* (ET London 1964;) cited *idem.*, *Man in History: A Theological Study* (ET London 1968).

- 7 On this patristic background, see R.L.P. Milburn, *Early Christian Interpretations of History* (London 1954); L.G. Patterson, *God and History in Early Christian Thought* (London 1967).
- 8 Cf. Mark 7: 24—30; Matthew 15: 21—28 (the Syro-Phoenician woman); John 4:4—42 (the woman of Samaria); Matthew 8:5—13, Luke 7:1—10 (the Roman centurion); John 12:20—21 (the ‘Greeks’). See J. Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations* (ET London 1958); F. Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (ET London 1965) for full discussion of the significance of these references.
- 9 For an illuminating account of the Church as communion, by an Orthodox open to the notion of a (Roman) universal ‘centre d’accord’, see O. Clément, ‘L’Ecclesiologie orthodoxe comme ecclesiologie de communion’, *Contacts* 61 (1968), pp. 10—36.
- 10 Op. cit. pp. 138—9. See also idem., *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* (London 1970), pp. 1—152).
- 11 *Nationalism*, p. 140.
- 12 Published as ‘Europe Tomorrow’, in *Briefing* (Bishops’ Conferences of Great Britain) vol. 18 No 22, 11 November 1988, pp. 471—3, and here at p. 471.
- 13 Ibid. p. 473.
- 14 Born in 1887, became Emperor of Austria 1916, abdicated 1918, died of tuberculosis in poverty in exile in 1922. His short reign was dedicated to expediting the end of the First World War, improving the living conditions of his peoples (he instituted the first Health Ministry in the modern state) and, above all, to reducing inter-ethnic tensions by the promulgation of a new vision of multiple local self-expression (including republican forms) within an over-arching imperial polity. During his last years he prayed constantly for the cause of harmony in Central and Eastern Europe. See E. Feigl ed., *Kaiser Karl. Persönliche Aufzeichnungen, Zeugnisse und Dokumente* (Vienna 1984); E.J. Görliche, *Der letzte Kaiser — ein Heiliger?* (Stein am Rhein 1986 3rd edn.); also E. Feigl, *Kaiserin Zita von Oesterreich, nach Oesterreich* (Vienna 1986, 4th edn.), pp. 383—390.

Bastille Day, the Bible, and Mrs Thatcher

Graham Harvey

Last July, while in Paris for this year’s most widely-covered anniversary, Mrs Thatcher pointed out—correctly—that the French Revolution was not the first move towards Human Rights.

Whether this was worth saying (especially during the celebrations of that Revolution) is questionable. Previous moves towards Human Rights had been countered either deliberately or by neglect, so that the French Revolution was perceived to be necessary, and some of the previous moves towards Human Rights cited by Mrs Thatcher had never had any effect in France. This, though, is not the only question, nor even the most important one.