

LECTURE 12

THE ROAD TO ROME

Early 7th century:

While Columbanus was doing his best to convert the Lombards from Arian Christianity, The British (celtic) and English churches were building in their conflict.

For half a century the independent, ingenuous and headstrong ways of the Irish vexed the Roman missions, matruing a will for requital.

The missionary work of the two groups went on with the Celtic/british Christians coming from the North to the south, and the Roman missionaries going from south to north. During those 50 years there was no outright breach, but there was animosity.

The task, in the main was to convert the heathen, ¹⁰⁰ since it often took more than one attempt. For example, Mercia (mid England) and East Anglia came and left the Christian fold with a suspicious volatility.

Even if a king could be convinced to accept Christianity, whichever brand, didn't mean the people would. The result was that both the Roman and Irish Christians found common cause and worked side by side for the most part.

Till 654, ten years before the council of Whitby, Penda, king of Mercia in the English midlands, was a real threat since he continued to worship Odin and Thor and his forces killed Oswald.

²⁰⁰ in 654 king Oswy succeeded in beating Penda. He was killed and the tide was with the Christians. For ten years there was pioneer work to be done there converting the tuetons.

The work had not been completed when the two streams of missionaries were again irritatingly close to each other. Controversies

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began to flare up, small points of ritual and doctrine were exaggerated into enmity.

BACKGROUND TO THE COUNCIL OF WHITBY

By the six sixties, it was necessary for separate kingdoms to make a choice between Celtic and Roman practices. Oswy, in a dilemma, called a council. Spokesmen for either side were to put their case to him and he was to be sole judge. ~~depend on his word~~ In 664, at Whitby on the Yorkshire coast, counsel began to gather to put their respective case.

The work of two hundred years was standing trial, and tho the effect of the verdict was not immediate, nor even dramatic, it had repercussions thruout the history of these islands.

Bede's account is the best of only a few sources but makes no attempt to dig beneath the surface. Ostensibly the Irish stood trial for a date and a tonsure. Underneath the patina it is largely for us to find the reality

In a sense this was the clash of two civilizations.

IRELAND stood for a small federation of social groups, as inept at centralising as they were biased against it.

THE ENGLISH mission stood for the Roman Church, an ecclesiastical empire that needed conformity to function properly.

It thus became a clash of culture, of philosophy, of doctrine, of temperment.

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ROME VS. IRELAND:

But the first consideration is the social one. ROME was powerful, responsible, and saw her spiritual purpose in terms of material ambition.

IRELAND was small, divided, and saw her spiritual purpose w/o reference to anything else. She was a self-sufficient country with an urge to advertise her message.

The rift was between an international system and a provincial one. The Irish persisted in their beliefs, even after two centuries of contact she was still impervious to continental developments.

In Ireland there had never been an issue between God and Caesar, for kings had been almost the first to accept Christianity. There had never been restrictions or persecution of Christians.

The Irish refused to see things in universal terms and kept doggedly to tradition. Their isolation and self-sufficiency gave them a pride in the past and belief in their present.

the Irish were grateful to Rome for bringing them the creed but what had passed since in the councils of the world was of little interest to them.

However much they copied liturgy, doctrine or symbols, they remained distinct, a church of individuals trying to do what was good and jibbing at the general acceptance of compromise.

It was in their view of monasticism, asceticism and martyrdom that they began to arouse anger among the Roman Christians. Ritual and liturgy in the Irish practice were both more simple than the Roman.

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The Irish temper was less restrained and sophisticated and more literal than the Roman. In every life of their saints occur those incidents drawn straight from gospel descriptions of Christ--the miracle births, the twelve followers, the feeding of large numbers from a basketful of provisions. the Idea of the chosen race is always present

for purposes of the Whitby trial, the Irish attitude to Rome that went with their convictions of sanctity included an attitude towards the pope that gave him friendly consideration but not the respect he felt he deserved. He resented this.

there is no trace of any abbey in Ireland during these early centuries ever asking Rome for permission or guidance on any point. In fact, their delight with their new treasures often made them offer advice to him. affronting him with their unsubtle generosity.

More directly, the clash at Whitby was precipitated by the attitude of the Irish to the Anglo Saxon, Roman dominated church and the temptation of the English church to confuse immigrant Irishmen with the native Celts of Britain, as they were often confused in English minds.

The British Celts, displaced and decimated, felt no inclination to go among their new neighbors to convert them.

The future of the Northumbrian church, and consequently the northern and Scottish churches, would ^{hinge on the fact that} ~~the~~ the Anglo-Saxon roman church developed a phobia about the Irish and their brand of Christianity.

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HERESY OF THE IRISH

To begin with, the Irish followed what seemed to the Roman church to be common sense in preference to elaborate dogma.

Pelagianism, which had often broken out in Ireland, denying original sin and the divinity of Christ, was a rationalist heresy. There is no evidence that Pelagius' beliefs had a firm hold on leaders of the Irish church but plenty to suggest that they followed their own reason in preference to anyone else's.

The Irish pursuit of apocryphal works condemned time and again by popes, which nevertheless, continued in favour in the Irish schools. They ~~would not appreciate~~ ^{did not appreciate} the unapologetic delight of the Irish in pre-Christian literature and traditions.

NO The sagas, after all, were as un-Christian as the Old Testament. and the reading of the legend of St. Brendan is in one reading a cameo heresy in itself.

WHITBY TRIAL

The argument at Whitby revolves mainly around the dating of Easter, but in one curious passage the Irish abbot of Lindisfarne, Colman, claims that his system for dating the feast was handed down from St. John.

Little more is said of the matter, but it opens out a whole field of hypothesis. For St. John has been the guiding spirit in a strange near heresy that has existed all thru the life of the church.

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heresy associated with John

Connected with John's name was the mass of rumors that Christ had not in fact died on the cross, his place being taken by Judas just before the crucifixion.

More Important was the speculation caused by the mysterious words that conclude St. John's gospel. "Lord" said Peter to Jesus in John 21, "and what shall this man do?" The man referred to is John the disciple.

Jesus replied "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Eastern theologians began to read into these words the seed of another, inner church. They evolved a system² round the words.

The history of the world would ultimately be composed of three reigns.

FIRST: that of God the Father, was the reign of the Old testament and of fear.

SECOND: was that of the Son, placing his authority in Peter, the reign of the gospel.

THIRD: was to be the reign of the Holy Spirit and of love, with John the beloved apostle succeeding Peter.

It added bite to the mystical predictions of the millennia, resurrection and last judgment. It pleased the tortuous minds of sorcerer-theologians. And because Colman claimed John as authority for his Easter date, it was attributed to the Irish. There may have been no more reason than that.

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^{no} SIMON MAGUS: was considered an arch-sorcerer of New Testament times. The Roman church said that the tonsure of the Irish derived from this heretic who was the founder, according to some, of the Gnostic heresy. This was such a horrible heresy it was considered to be an inversion of the Christian order.

Tho a baptized Christian he claimed to be a god himself, practised magic in Samaria and as far as Rome, where he clashed with Simon Peter and later became the prototype for Faust in medieval legend.

Gnosticism may owe him nothing but what he had was essentially a continuation of sophisticated pagan lore under a Christian guise. It was queer and involved the juggling with mysterious symbols, cryptograms, auguries and acrostics that inhabits a permanent nether world of all western civilizations.

It claimed salvation thru knowledge, not faith, but the knowledge was so involved and convoluted that salvation was an esoteric privilege.

In its more grotesque forms it made God the found of evil and Satan the epitome of good. It was black magic, and it spread surely, tho stealthy, thruout the western world.

The Irish were victims of association. Overt omissions in their practices were replaced, in the minds of enemies, by crimes, seditions and the workings of the devil.

But these were not part of the indictment. King Oswy was to judge on technical matters, apparently free from criminal implication. These need and explanation.

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DATE OF EASTER

Calculating the date of Easter has always been difficult. It had been calculated on the repetition of solar and lunar positions that prevailed at that time in the year 32.

It was vital to commemorate the first day of the week as the day of Jesus's rising.

The Irish had learned their system in the fifth century from Roman contacts and held to it. Unfortunately Rome had meanwhile changed its mind about which Sunday, and the Irish in their hundred years of isolation had not been told the news.

Rome changed their theory twice while the Irish were happy with the first system. Even when it caused confusion they stuck to the old way, resisting new-fangled methods of mathematics and astronomy.

THE DEBATE ON EASTER: King Oswy sat on the throne provided and explained the issue: "all who served the true God should observe one rule of life. There should be no difference in the celebrating of the sacraments. Before the synod were two conflicting traditions, and it was the synod's task to determine which was truest. Their decision was to be accepted by all."

He asked COLMAN, the Irish bishop of Lindisfarne, to explain first the Irish side.

the Easter customs he observed were taught him by his superiors; not only they, but all his forefathers, men certainly dear to God, had observed the same customs. "and lest anyone condemns and rejects them as wrong, it is recorded that they owe their origin to the blessed

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evangelist St. John, the disciple especially loved by our Lord, and all the churches over which he presided"

The king than allowed Wilfred, the second choice, to present the Roman side. He pointed out that all but the Irish kept Easter as Rome had set. His temper rose and he said: "the only people who are stupid enough to disagree with the whole world are these Scots and their obstinate adherents the Picts and Britons, who inhabit only a portion of these two islands in the remote ocean."

Colman was not prepared for the legal arguments of Wilfred who even criticized St. Columba, who was w/o blemish as far as the Celts were concerned.

More debate, more calumny. The last word is with Wilfrid, before the king speaks again. He quotes, with climactic conviction, the words of Christ: "thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and to thee I will give the keys of my kingdom of heaven."

The simple words prevail more than long speeches, hard for any audience to understand. In some relief the king fixes on the quotation and resolves the issue around it.

Colman is asked by the king if it's true that the Lord said that to Peter. the answer: "it is true, your majesty."

The king then addresses both, and they agree that Peter was given the keys of the kingdom. So, king Oswy says he will go with Peter, ie

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the church of Rome since Peter may not open the gates to him if he disagrees.

In a little half-comic summing up the kindly king had quashed the independent aspirations of the Irish.

The narrow issue of Easter held undertones of all the differences between Roman and Celt, and the Irish took it as such, and went away.

turn poster over * * * * *

SIGNIFICANCE OF DECISION AT WHITBY

In the European context the immediate significance of Whitby was small enough. It was a victory on the periphery for Gregory's successors, trying to continue his campaign of expansion and consolidation.

The obstinacy of absolute governments in France and Germany were closer problems, and their efforts there meant more to him. But in England, whitby was a turning point, a necessary climax. It turned the scales in favor of Rome.

From now on the city of Peter was to be the center of civilization and the arbiter of religion. Those "few men in a corner of a remote island" were to wield their colossal and disproportionate influence now in infinitely diluted form.

it was harsh payment. In their way the Irish had restored the faith in Britain and in large parts of the continent. Their dramatic, awesome reputations had spread far from the trails that individuals carved.

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Now they were reversed, banished for the use of tonsure and calendar by men who were newer to religion than they, and were ostentatiously proud of their acquisition. On the continent they could be aware of an acceptance, from peasant, king and even Pope Gregory. In Britain they were beaten by the subtleties of dialectic, and nobody can calculate the loss to both parties.

Break ?

AFTERMATH

A plague broke out almost immediately after the synod and killed thousands, including all but one of the English bishops. The kings of Northumbria and Kent asked the pope for help and for a new archbishop of Canterbury. It took 5 years before one was sent.

The land was parcelled into bishoprics and new churches were built of stone, instead of wood, that were attached to the monasteries. The monasteries developed a progressive system of education and since kings and bishops were in agreement, religion became the fashion.

Kings collected relics, queens took the veil and the Benedictine order completely replaced the Irish, though not all the Irishmen of Northumbria departed.

Out of England streams of missionaries went to the still unconverted parts of the continent. The inspiration of the Irish example was a strong force but the new vigour was English.

The second half of the seventh century is sometimes called the "Northumbrian renaissance, for no part of England has ever occupied a

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position of such European importance. The two traditions of Celtic Ireland and Benedictine Italy fused into a burst of cultural activity.

Bishops who journeyed to Rome brought back a proud knowledge of Rome's artistic achievements. They also brought artisans who could reproduce it.

Music gained an importance the English had never given it and through a couple of eastern bishops, the influence of Byzantium was introduced.

As Islam spread in the 7th century, refugees fleeing the Arab armies brought oriental influence to most of the English art of the time, though in many cases it came through the Irish, whose contact with the east had been more thorough. Syrian motifs are seen in books, jewellery, etc.

Above all, England began to excel in literature. In their vernacular tongue, the Anglo-Saxons outshone all their contemporaries save the Irish. *BEOWULF* was written down for the first time in the 8th century.

As late as the 10th century the English were the only race in Europe to possess the scriptures in their native tongue.

ENGLAND hardly felt the impact of Whitby as she was too preoccupied, first with disease and dissension, then with an expanding range of religious, political and cultural activity.

The unqualified welcome of Rome did not last. Before many years breaches began to appear in the bland alliance. In France, Spain and Italy these could always be patched or fought to resolution while in England the rift of disunity widened with the centuries.

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It is arguable that one cause of this was the wilfulness of the Irish church which lingered in England in spite of Whitby becoming part of the identity of the English church which was never to fall in line with Rome, even in its most submissive moods.

SCOTLAND: Bit by bit the Roman custom advanced thru Scotland. In the early 8th century an Englishman, who had been trained as a monk in southern Ireland (where the Roman rule had long been observed), arrived at Iona and put his case strongly enough to win the community over.

However, isolated communities were always being discovered clinging to the old and discredited ways. Wales did not come over till the middle of the 8th century. Devon and Cornwall were not won round for two hundred years after that.

IONA was looked on as a metropolitan bishopric and preserved a powerful position in the ecclesiastical affairs of Ireland. However, in 795 and more times thereafter, the Viking raids plundered and ruined the buildings and massacred 68 monks.

With the Scottish religious disputes of the reformation in the 16th century Iona declined and virtually closed until 1976 when a new abbey was built.

IRELAND herself after Whitby was far from spent, but the seeds of decline were already there. In some areas a spirit of waste and exhaustion took over the ebullient urge for expansion

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That there was never any central authority in the church had been an advantage at a time of spontaneous enthusiasm. Ultimately it caused the extinction of the old virtues.

Standards relaxed in the 7th and 8th centuries. Abbeys grew richer, and came to depend more on their riches, and on the kings and chieftains who provided for them.

The system of inheriting abbacies grew up and preserved in royal families. Abbots assumed the habits of kings, touring the countryside to collect tithes. Competition grew and battles between monasteries occurred as they perceived themselves as petty kingdoms.

The old missionaries and adventurers were forgotten. Zeal was sunk in torpor and piety in avarice. they were a harmless shadow of their former selves.

For a century the main issue was the Roman one, which affected the ethic of the church hardly at all but reorganized it on diocesan lines and strengthened it for deeper reforms of the next century.

Much of the confusion around St. Patrick is owed to the efforts of the Roman party. Patrick's two main biographies written in the 7th century, are at pains to show the antiquity of the roman tradition in Ireland, tho this had patently never been strong.

The resulting legend had little to do with the facts of the real but obscure, st. Patrick.

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CULDEES: FRIENDS OF GOD

Towards the end of the 8th century a group known as the Culdees or friends of God, began to make their influence felt. They revived the sternness of their forefathers, banished abuses, and gradually but with military thoroughness took over the running of the church.

Their discipline is characterised by the harshest rule in church history and there is reason to believe that the beatings, genuflections, recitations by the hundreds, spending the night by a dead body, etc. were carried out with far more severity than the earlier ones.

Through their agency a cultural revival did come about. It was in the 8th century that the written tradition really began to spread, though there had been isolated manuscripts before this time.

Poetry and the recording of old tales got under way, the beginning of that great mass of written Irish literature (including Brendan)

Art flourished also and the craft of illuminating manuscripts was studied and imitated diligently all over the continent. Ireland produced the Book of Kells and others and many works of Irish origin that ended up in continental monasteries.

The movement of Irish to the Continent was one facet of Irish Christianity that never abated. In fact, it was itself an indirect cause of the decline of Ireland.

The Irish seem to have a tradition of the young leaving their country for anywhere as soon as they are thru with their training, and

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sometimes before. Unfortunately, it was the gifted who immigrated leaving behind the conservative and passive temperments.

The steady exile of missionaries continued in the tradition of Columbanus, and the reputation they gained brought more and more continentals to the Irish monasteries to learn and train at the feet of the most famous masters.

in the ninth century the Irish were found en masse in the court of Charlemagne, some summoned by the king to enhance the quality of his court.

The tenth century saw them still scattered but Ireland herself had lost her character before this under the impact of the Norse invasions and English encroachment.

The Irish and the mountains were brushed to the periphery of north, south and west. The midlands and east were anglicised, flat and agricultural.

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CELTIC CHRISTIANITY II

BRINGING UP TO DATE:

During the middle Ages the surviving Celtic kingdoms fell one by one into the hands of their more powerful neighbors, England and, in the case of the Bretons, France.

This led to the widespread destruction of Celtic speaking societies, pushing Celtic tongues towards extinction. The English, for example, annexed Cornwall in Saxon times, leading by the 8th century, to the death of the Cornish language.

the destruction of Welsh, Irish and particularly Highland Scots societies in many ways echoed the breakdown of Gaulish society thru Romanization. This also caused the erosion of the ancient economic and social order.

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England imitated Rome's strategy for dealing with the Gauls by coopting Highland manpower and its dangerous military energy into the service of the imperial British army, to fight foreign wars on distant frontiers.

These fundamental social and economic changes, combined with the wider upheavals of the industrial revolution, pushed the remaining Celtic peoples into mass migration, to the new factory cities of Britain and to America in the biggest and last of all the Celtic migrations.

But the exile of so many Celts from the old homelands also coincided with an awakening to the Celtic past, and growing consciousness of identity, leading, eventually, to the reassertion of Celtic nationhood.

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MEDIEVAL AND MODERN CELTS:

IRELAND:

The Vikings, tho fierce, did not threaten Irish society any more than Christianity had: despite evangelical zeal, Ireland kept much of its earlier shape, with Gaelic-speaking Lords, warriors, bards and learned people.

The Norse settled as traders, building the first Irish towns including Dublin. Irish kings, like Brian Boru, who beat the Vikings at Clontarf in 1014, sought to control them.

From the 12th century, the Norman-french lords who had recently conquered England established themselves in Ireland, bringing castles but like the Norse, only limited change; Many Normans became Gaelicized, even speaking Irish.

English kings, following their enterprising barons across the Irish Sea, tried to assert themselves over Gaelic chief and Norman lord alike, but their power remained confined to a precarious area around Dublin.

OLIVER CROMWELL:

The turning point came in the 16th century when Henry VIII and Elizabeth I successfully enforced royal authority. The Irish chieftains now held their land not in their own right, but from the English monarch.

Conflict was heightened by the Reformation, resulting in a Catholic Ireland dominated by a Protestant England. Loss of autonomy led to unsuccessful rebellions.

The last real bid to maintain the old freedoms was made by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, who claimed descent from Ui Neill. When he fled to France in 1607 his lands in Ulster were confiscated and extensively settled by protestant

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Scots and English. This was part of a wider, long term trend of dispossession, especially of Catholic (and therefore largely Gaelic speaking) landowners.

A serious uprising of the dispossessed Gaelic and English speaking Irish in 1641 resulted in atrocities against the Protestants and the counter-horror of Cromwell's campaign which hardened Irish hatred for English rule.

The modern pattern of two nations in Ireland, Celtic-Catholic and Protestant-British, was set by the deposed Catholic James II's siege of Londonderry, and the new Protestant King William III's victory over him at the Boyne in 1690.

Dispossession and penal laws against the religion of the native Catholic Irish, led to the demise of Celtic speech among the ruling classes. By 1714, only seven percent of Irish land was owned by Catholics.

Following a disasterous uprising in 1798, Ireland was forcibly joined with Britain in 1801.

WALES:

The Normans, who conquered England in 1066, soon turned their attention to Wales, a struggle ending in Edward I's destruction of the principality of Gwynedd in the 1270's.

the last champion of Welsh independence, Owen Glendower led a ten year long revolt which was finally suppressed in 1410. He mysteriously vanished, later living in legend ready, like Arthur, to come again in Wales' time of need.

The Tudor dynasty began in 1485 and Henry VII was half Welsh. Under the Tudor dynasty Wales was politically united with England by Acts of Parliament from 1536 to 1543.

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Much of Welsh native culture disappeared in the 16th century, with the abolition of Welsh law. The long tradition of professional bards lapsed by 1700 and the decline in local musical traditions was hastened by the spread of Methodism from 1660.

the Welsh language was progressively, but far from completely, displaced by English.

BRITTANY:

The squabbling petty kingdoms of Brittany were defeated by Clovis, King of the Franks (reigned: 482-512), but he failed to impose taxes or government on them.

Unified into one kingdom in the ninth century, Brittany became one of several largely autonomous principalities owing nominal allegiance to the French Crown.

It was now a French medieval feudal state rather than a Celtic kingdom, it only lost its independence in 1488, union with France following in 1532.

SCOTLAND: THE HIGHLANDERS

The clans of the Scottish Highlands and Islands remained a law unto themselves for 1000 years, distinct from the Lowlanders in their Celtic language and way of life.

Scottish kings tried in vain to control them, until the overthrow of the Royal house of Stuart with the expulsion of James II in 1688. Many Highlanders remained fiercely loyal to the exiled house, and it was this commitment to the Jacobite cause which ultimately brought about their downfall.

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Rebellions followed the Union with England in 1707, culminating in the famous rising under Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745 which led at last to the military occupation of the Highlands, and the smashing of clan power.

The FORTY FIVE (as it was called) was followed by bloody reprisals, the banning of the traditional way of life --bagpipes, kilts, etc--were banned. One could not wear their clan tartan

This resulted in the collapse of the old social order: the autocratic chiefs no longer felt responsible for their clansmen. The fighting strength of the Gaelic-speaking clans was drained by the drafting of men in the thousands into the Highland regiments of the British army. Within a century the old culture was dead.

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THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: IMMIGRATION

The 19th century was a period of enormous social and economic upheaval, which affected the remaining Celtic lands as much as the rest of Europe. These areas became one of the main sources of emigration to the New world.

Scottish rebels had been sent as convicts to the Americas in the 17th and 18th centuries, and Welsh Quakers and Baptists also crossed the ocean, seeking religious freedom and a purer life.

Now events conspired to turn the trickle of migrants into a flood.

THE HIGHLAND CLEARANCES

A devastating symptom of the collapse of the old Highland society after 1745 was the fact the chiefs now found the large populations in the glens a financial liability rather than a source of armed strength and prestige.

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The native Lairds and incoming English landowners, systematically evicted most of the Highland population between 1800 and 1850, turning the land over to the profitable flocks of sheep.

Those who did not take ship for the colonies migrated to the growing industrial slums of cities like Glasgow.

IRELAND: STARVATION AND EMIGRATION

The destruction of the old social order led to distress among the mass of ordinary, gaelic speaking Irish, for the ruling classes in Ireland were even more callous and incompetent than their English counterparts.

Vast population growth didn't help with the population rising from five million in 1801 to eight million by 1840--mostly of desperately poor families subsisting on potatoes.

When Potato blight brought mass starvation in 1845-47 it affected only those relying on potatoes only. Ireland continued to export other foods while the poor starved.

It is estimated that about one million people starved and another million emmigrated. By 1940, about five million Irish had emigrated to America alone. Others along with Welsh and Scots, went to Canada and Australia, or to the growing industrial cities of Britain.

THIS CENTURY: since 1921 there has been an independent Celtic state, the Irish Republic, where the speaking of a Celtic tongue has enormous cultural and political significance, as indeed it still has among many Scots, Welsh and Bretons, even if they now mostly speak the languages of their more powerful neighbors.

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Radio and television broadcasts in Welsh and Gaelic, and the popularity of events such as pan-celtic festivals, offer renewed hope for the survival of these languages as a living link with the Celtic speaking cultures of the iron age.

TODAY: There are more people claiming some kind of Celtic identity than at any time in history, mostly descendants of the emigrants to the four corners of the world.

Among some of these groups, old Celtic traditions survive as well as they do in the homelands. Many from all these countries are very aware of their ancestors and the important days, activities, etc. and desire to keep them alive.

Celtic speech may still be in slow decline, but the contribution of the Celtic speaking peoples to European and world history is increasingly appreciated and it is also clear that most of the people of Europe are likely to number Celtic speakers among their ancestors.

The heritage of the Celts is not only around us: for many of us, it is also in our blood.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN:

If, in 390 BC the Celts had decided to hang on to Rome, at that time young and easily destroyed, instead of withdrawing with a ransom, things might have been very different in Europe. Without Rome, soon to develop unique skills in war and empire building--The Celts might still be a major power in continental Europe.

Without Rome, we can imagine a Gallic urban civilization growing north of the Alps, forming a great Celtic speaking medieval state in place of France. What then would have been the history of Europe, the Americas, or the rest of the world? Without Rome, this might have been a very different world.

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