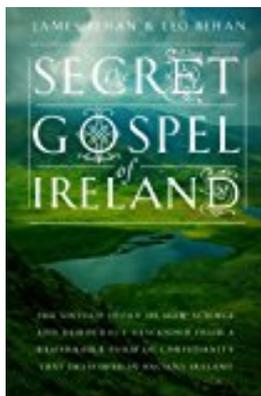


[PDF] The Secret Gospel Of Ireland: The Untold Story Of How Science And Democracy Descended From A Remarkable Form Of Christianity That Developed In Ancient Ireland

James Behan, Leo Behan - pdf download free book



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Description:

From the Inside Flap The Renaissance didn't just appear out of thin air. The revolutionary developments in art, natural philosophy, theology, and politics that began to appear at the end of the 13th century and which exploded in the 15th century were the result of centuries of Christian thought in the West.

The key to this revolution was individualism--the ability to conceptualize persons and objects in isolation, as individual things, against the background of empty, infinite, three-dimensional space. It enabled Renaissance and modern thinkers to abstract themselves from the world and observe it from the outside looking in. For the first time, it enabled men to see the world from the point of view of the Creator instead of as a creature within it.

Western art tells the story in pictures. In the space of 250 years (1250 - 1500), people and objects in paintings went from being nearly flat to being radically three-dimensional. The people and objects in Renaissance paintings stood out in an environment of three-dimensional space that had almost unlimited depth.

This change in how Western thinkers conceptualized space didn't change only art. It changed everything. Almost immediately following this change, certain axioms were derived from the principle that people and objects existed in an environment of empty space.

The first was that people and objects had no connection to a Creator that could be detected by the intellect or the senses (the corollary to this axiom was that the only source for knowledge of God is the Bible).

And from this idea, there came the following two axioms which are fundamental to modern thought: (1) that all knowledge comes from experiencing the world through the senses (sight, sound, touch, taste and smell); and (2) that physical objects tell us only about nature and nothing about God or heaven.

Hence the focus of intellectual inquiry in the West would shift from doing natural theology (examining objects to learn about God) to doing natural philosophy (examining objects to learn about nature). And these axioms would provide the touchstone for the later development of empiricism and the scientific method of inquiry by observation, measurement, and experimental testing (which would entirely supplant the scholastic method of inquiry by disputation as the primary method for ascertaining truth).

Furthermore, Enlightenment thinkers like Thomas Hobbes and John Locke would apply empiricism to the study of government to show that government is a creation of man, not God. This, in turn, would lead them to develop the central principles of all modern Western democracies--the sovereignty of the individual, inalienable rights, and the social contract.

But ultimately, the very idea of empty, infinite space was the product of Christian theology and nothing else.

It began with Genesis, with the revelation that God created and continually creates the universe and each thing in it "ex nihilo" or out of nothing. But as shown in "The Secret Gospel of Ireland," the key to entering that space was the dual nature of Christ, who according to Christian doctrine is both truly God and truly man.

It was a process that would see Christianity pass, by twists and turns, from Rome to Ireland and back again to Europe.

But why have historians and philosophers largely missed this piece of the puzzle? The reason is quite simple really. Everyone assumes that ideas are the products of other ideas.

Nobody looks for an esthetic cause.

Thus historians and philosophers have logically looked for the cause of the Renaissance in the ideas of ancient Greece and Rome. Indeed, this is why they have called it the Renaissance, which means "rebirth" in French. However, when one thing causes another, it usually precedes its effect close in time.

The notion that the ideas of ancient Greece or Rome caused Renaissance Europe's newfound interest in natural philosophy or realistic art is hard to swallow. It's like saying the events of 1787 caused our modern interest in the U.S. Constitution. People are interested in the Constitution because they are concerned about the role of government today, not because of anything that happened in 1787.

Likewise Renaissance artists and philosophers became interested in the ideas of the ancient world because of something which happened that was unique to their time.

That something was a profound change in how Western thinkers conceptualized space.

And it was caused by Christianity.

About the Author James Behan is a graduate of Harvard Law School and holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of California, Berkeley. He is a lawyer who specializes in international business transactions and has practiced law in cities throughout the United States and abroad, including New York, Tokyo, Palo Alto, and Chicago. He possesses a deep interest in the relationship between science and religion, as well as a passion for golf, which he enjoys sharing with his wife and family.

Leo Behan is a graduate of Boston College Law School and holds a degree in history from the University of California, Berkeley. He is a lawyer and a military veteran, having served in the United States Air Force JAG Corps. He is passionate about history and philosophy, as well as classical guitar.

James and Leo are brothers who originally hail from the San Francisco Bay Area. They have inherited their love of Ireland and the Irish from their father, who immigrated to America from Ireland many years ago.

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