


Panning for Truth

Chair's report on the 21st annual commemoration of Charles Bradlaugh, MP for Northampton (1880- 1891), heretic, freethinker, and secularist, held on 24th September 2023.

Charles Bradlaugh Society presents...



Sunday
24th
September
2023

ANNUAL COMMEMORATION

TALK † Noon


'Free thought, from the Greeks to the 21st century'

Speaker: Emma Park, editor of Freethinker.
Venue: Charles Bradlaugh Pub, 1 Earl Street, N'pton.
www.thecharlesbradlaugh.com
Wednesday's 40% promo is available to attendees to support the event, thank you TCB. 30 free car parking spaces on-site. Opens at 12 o'clock.

STATUE † THREE

Join us at 3 o'clock in Abington Square, N'pton for the 21st Annual Commemoration. All welcome.
<https://charlesbradlaughociety.wordpress.com>

Visit: Freethinker @freethinkermag
Facebook: freethinkermag
Twitter @DrEmmaPark



Tributes began in [The Charles Bradlaugh Pub](#) with invited speaker Dr. Emma Park, editor of [The Freethinker](#), a journal Charles Bradlaugh contributed to, recounting the historic path freethinking has travelled since Greek times.

The hold religion had, and has still in some countries, resulted in Philosophy putting down roots in order to plant itself in firm opposition to the control religion exerts over *government*—a word derived from the Greek verb κυβερνώ [kubernáo] meaning to steer with a gubernaculum (rudder)—as defined by Plato's idea of a ship of state.

Within Christendom, in part thanks to Luther,

“It is somewhat remarkable that while on the one hand one man, Luther, was detaching from the Church of Rome a large number of minds, another man, Loyola, was about the same time engaged in founding that powerful society (the Society of Jesuits), which has done so much to check free inquiry and maintain the priestly domination over the human intellect.” C.B.

the link between Church and State has diminished since the Greeks. The orthodoxy of government persists however, now controlled by secretive, communitarian, and parasitical modern *faiths* that continue to prey on the people.

“Orthodoxy was well exemplified in the dark middle ages, when the mass of men and women believed much and knew little, when miracles were common and schools were rare, and when the monasteries on the hill tops held the literature of Europe.” C.B.

The diminution of religious influence over government has not resulted in a reduction of governmental authoritarianism over the people, but simply the replacement of one

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orthodoxy for another, as Solzhenitsyn wrote,

“You must understand. The leading Bolsheviks who took over Russia were not Russians. They hated Russians. They hated Christians.”

resulting in genocide during the Holodomor.

“But a Socialistic State, even if achieved, could not be maintained without a second (mental) revolution, in which the present ideas and forms of expression concerning property would have to be effaced, and the habit of life (resulting from long-continued teachings and long-enduring traditions) would have to be broken.” C.B.

Having the insight to appreciate that Socialism was simply a different orthodoxy that was usurping the function of government to suppress heterodoxy, Charles Bradlaugh wrote,

“Men are good not because of their orthodoxy, but in spite of it; their goodness is the outgrowth of their humanity, not of their orthodoxy.”

and

“Heterodoxy develops the intellect, orthodoxy smothers it.”

As the 19th century closed out, Charles Bradlaugh wrote,

“Liberty’s chief foe was theology”.

For Baby Boomers and Gen Xers, it could be said that heresy’s chief enemy was Marxism, having replaced theology,

“Communism and Marxist-Leninist dogma, according to some thinkers (Dr George Steiner for one), is another distorted form of faith, able to inspire martyrdom in millions. Substituting the traditional values of the Judeo-Christian heritage with this Marxist-Satanic faith is one of the basic principles of subversion at the stage of demoralization- the highest and most effective level of ideas.”

wrote KGB defector, Yuri Bezmenov, in his ‘Love Letter to America’ in the 1970s.

Thinking against authority needs to be cultivated in the home, at school, and in the workplace to ensure it does not die on the alter of theology, under the hammer of Marxism,

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or any other wolf in sheep's clothing orthodoxy attempting hegemony.

“Heresy is the star twinkle in the night, orthodoxy the cloud which hides this faint gleam of light from the weary travellers on life’s encumbered pathway.”

and

“The word heretic ought to be a term of honor; for honest, clearly uttered heresy is always virtuous, ..”

and

“The heretic philosopher was the one who had searched and found, who, not content with the beaten paths, had selected a new road, chosen a new fashion of travelling in the march for that happiness all human-kind are seeking.” C.B.

Defending liberty is a state of mind, an attitude described in Emma’s [interview with Jonathan Sumption](#), former Justice of the UK Supreme Court, one that should be so well practised it becomes akin to panning for gold, where piles of dirt are thrown into the gold diggers pan and submerged in order to wash away the detritus, exposing the valued gold. And so it should be with the golden truth. The unimportant and false is washed away to reveal the grains of pure truth we are all seeking.

Once a culture of free thought becomes a policy, its application becomes universal, and the fake is cleared out, leaving only the valued truth, be it climate change, COVID23, or Ukraine. Our enemies are not legion, but they are sadistic.

“Sometimes the mask slides: “If we were to put you to death, you would go to heaven, says one of the jailors to some christians imprisoned for their faith behind the Iron Curtain. But we don’t want that. What we want, is for you to curse God and go to hell!” “,

wrote [Richard Wurmbbrand](#), who spent fourteen years as a prisoner of the Communist government in Romania, where he was persecuted for his faith in Jesus Christ. Be in no doubt that heretics are not popular amongst the orthodoxy, whichever version it may be,

“Most religionists, instead of endeavoring with kindly thought to provide some solution for the difficulties propounded by their heretical brethren, indiscriminately confound all inquirers in one common category of censure;

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their views are dismissed with ridicule as sophistical and fallacious, abused as infinitely dangerous, themselves denounced as heretics and infidels, and libelled as scoffers and Atheists.” C.B.

All orthodoxies want you to curse free thought.

Truth is the daughter of time, not authority, wrote Francis Bacon, and so it may be that Charles Bradlaugh will return to his former status as an internationally recognised statesman,

“With few exceptions, the heretics of one generation become the revered saints of a period less than twenty generations later.” C.B.

Heresy is an infinite process.

“Heresy is the pioneer, erect and manly, striding over the forbidden line in his search for truth.”

New orthodoxy is presented as *progress*, but is nothing but. There is a dangerous and pervasive school of thought that goes by the name of *scientism* that threatens not only philosophy but also every other academic field and even threatens to undermine the legitimacy of science. In a culture of free thought where heresy and heterodoxy pervade leading to the infinite panning for the valued truth, then the future is more likely to make real progress through the radical centre no longer *believing* the fake news with which they are overwhelmed.

“The heretic is one who has selected his own opinions, or whose opinions are the result of some mental effort; and he differs from others who are orthodox in this: — they hold opinions which are often only the bequest of an earlier generation unquestioningly accepted; he has escaped from the customary grooves of conventional acquiescence, and sought truth outside the channels sanctified by habit.” C.B.

Following Emma’s talk and round table discussion amongst attendees a round of applause and Certificate of Heresy was given to Emma in appreciation of her good works. Fuelled by excellent beer and food, the day’s tribute moved to the Charles Bradlaugh statute in

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Abington Square for 3pm, sadly without Emma who had to depart. At the statue the traditional photo was taken and the society's officials gave an update on the past year and future events.



These were:

- The Society's support for the 'Association Internationale de Libre Pensée' efforts to raise awareness for Niger and African countries Independence.
- May is Local and Community History Month and the Society had surveyed all local Northampton schools on their inclusion of Charles Bradlaugh into the History National Curriculum.
- Progress on the restoration of 'Bradlaugh Hall' in Lahore and expected report from a Friend of the Society who was visiting the Hall.
- 2024 sees the 150th Anniversary of the 'Bradlaugh Riot' of 1874 when 7,000 Northamptonians rioted in the

Market Square. Efforts are underway to bring an Art installation to the town in time for the Anniversary that depicts a riot all contained within a shipping container.

- The topic of Charles Bradlaugh's inability to take his seat was raised following research in case law that may demonstrate it was unconstitutional and the people of Northampton were unlawfully denied representation.

Attendees were invited to speak. Jehovian stood up and made clear just how dangerous the world was with the war in Ukraine persisting and endorsed the quote in the leaflet handed to attendees,

"Free speech includes not only the inoffensive but the irritating, the contentious, the eccentric, the heretical, the unwelcome and the provocative provided it does not tend to provoke violence. Freedom only to speak inoffensively is not worth having."

Lord Justice Sedley, *Redmond-Bate v DPP*

Proceedings came to a close and everyone wished each other *bon voyage* and looked forward to meeting again next year.

"If special honour is claimed for any, then heresy should have it as the truest servitor of human kind." C.B.

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Become a Friend of the Society by visiting
<https://charlesbradlaughociety.wordpress.com> and
subscribing to news updates.

**The XXII commemoration will return on
Sunday 29th September 2024**

If you want to become involved in helping to promote Charles Bradlaugh's legacy within the town, then we would be pleased to hear from you via **charlesbradlaughociety@gmail.com**.

Facebook :- <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063905803443>

Twitter :- <https://twitter.com/CBradlaughSoc>

Rumble :- <https://rumble.com/user/CharlesBradlaughSociety>

Telegram :- <https://t.me/CharlesBradlaughSociety1833>

