

## **Cat.6 # 4 Can Europe be saved?**

By Pieter Bos

Asking this question at the start of the year 2012, one would think of the euro, the debt crisis and the lack of decision power of the European politicians.

But Europe is more than her monetary system, more than the 27 EU-nations and their politics. Europe is the cradle and was for a long time the embodiment of Western civilization, a civilization rooted in the Christian faith.

The Creator God considers nations and peoples as corporate entities, even as corporate persons. We see this in the Bible, where He calls Judah "Virgin Daughter Judah," and Moab "Virgin Daughter Moab". He has a personal relationship with them. They have a destiny in Him as their creator and a responsibility towards Him for their actions.

In this article I will focus on the "Virgin Daughter Europe", her name, her sins and her EU. In that light I consider the possibility of her redemption.

### §1 The name of Europe

According to Greek mythology the Greek chief god Zeus fell in love with the human daughter of the Phoenician king, named Europa. In the shape of a white bull he abducted her, carried her off to Crete, and had three sons with her. In order to "make up" for his behaviour, she was honoured by having a continent named after her, Europa. Initially only a part of this continent was given that name, but that part extended till the whole continent was called Europe.

It may be only a myth, but myths go very deep, and if nations identify with such a story, they embrace their identity as "bride" however illegal, of this god. They accept the claiming, covenantal behaviour of Zeus. And giving names to territories is also covenantal behaviour. In other words: the god Zeus has covenanted "Europe". Zeus can be identified as Satan (Rev. 2:13.). Has he tried to have a legal claim on this continent?

In our time we saw the stubbornness of the EU in refusing to include the name of God and the Christian roots of our continent in the proposed preamble of the "EU-constitution", 2004. And when the Treaty of Rome was commemorated in 2007, in the hall of the ceremony the statue of Constantine was removed, but not the statue of Zeus. At the same time, we see the EU promoting the old Europe-on-a-bull-myth in images, statues and references.

In the summer of 2004 we saw the same dynamic in the context of the modern "idol", sports. The Olympic Games of that year, in Greece, were explicitly organized in the "authentic" pagan way, with the officially stated goal of reviving paganism.[1]

Who is this Virgin Daughter Europe? Does she identify with the claimed pagan roots or with the civilization that shaped her core?

### §2 Five major sins of Europe

From the name, the identity, of Virgin Daughter Europe we now move on to her actions.

#### a The sin of anti-Semitism

Very early in its history, the Church started to disown the Jews as the older brother in which she was rooted. The Church did not make the Jews jealous (Rom 11:11). Instead she developed all sorts of anti-Semitism, ranging from replacement theology, to Easter (!) pogroms in Russia, to forcing Jews to be baptized in Spain, to expelling them while confiscating their goods in Spain and Portugal, to banning them out of their territory, France and England, and to attempts to exterminate them in Germany. The Church accused the Jews of killing Jesus, notwithstanding Jesus' forgiveness (Luke 23:24). Instead of "comforting God's people", as is clearly commanded to those who can understand how Israel's "iniquity is pardoned" (Isa. 40:1-2), she made the nations of Europe and even the other continents commit the sin of anti-Semitism.

Through anti-Semitism, Europe is under God's curse of Gen. 12:3a. Only a very partial repentance has taken place.

#### b The sin of dividing the church

Out of Jerusalem the gospel quickly spread. Europe was the first continent to "be reached" (meaning: indigenous churches were planted and then grew to the stage where they could reach out to others). Was this for any other goal than to evangelize the other continents? But before long, theologies and territorialism led to the dividing of the Western church from the Eastern church. The first split (roughly after 1000 years of church history) was followed approximately 500 years later by the Anglican and the Reformation split. After about another 250 years, the Methodists split off, and after 125 years ... and so on, spreading like a disease with increasing speed. Now we have thousands of unashamedly "independent" congregations, priding themselves on the fact that they are "not against certain inter-denominational cooperation". This subtly but fatally undermines the vitality of the church, as it goes against Col. 3:11 and as it clouds the message of the church. This sin has been spread over all other continents, in many cases more explicitly than the content of the message of the gospel itself.

Yet Jesus said it would be by our visible unity that "the world will know that the Father sent the Son" (John 17:23). This is being acknowledged more and more, and a move of repentance and reconciliation is visible, but rather outside Europe than inside.

#### c The sin of mixing church and state

The church was designed to be God's "power tool" to reveal God's plan to the principalities in heaven and on earth (Ephesians 3:10, Matthew 16:18), and to be the means of reconciliation of (individuals and) peoples to God (2 Cor. 5:18-19). Europe has abused God's power tool in various ways. The emperor Constantine made the Church a state church; pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor; the Crusades used violence for religious ends; and the rule "so the king so the people" forced people's consciences, resulting in disastrous religious wars and church-supported nationalistic wars. Even worse, through all these abuses the Church gave God's power tool into the hands of the enemy, who seeks to have "nation to rise up against nation and people against people" (Matthew 24:7). Satan, with God's power tool as a catalyst and amplifier, causes religious wars to be extra fierce and extra bloody. Northern Ireland, Bosnia and Kosovo are only the latest examples of a long and tragic list.

This European sin, spread over all continents, is not blotted out by the present push towards the separation of church and state.

#### d The sin of rationalism

There were two basic responses to the Thomist teachings in the medieval Roman Catholic Church: Renaissance and Reformation.

Over the course of five centuries the Renaissance response led to Rationalism, developing into Enlightenment, giving way to Dialectic thinking. This in turn fed the development of science for the sake of science, which in the end led to materialism, including evolutionism, communism and functionalism. This development could only lead to nihilism, which in its turn is now invoking irrationalism and New Age spirituality. In the course of this development the Reformation response, which was in fact God's response, became more and more impregnated with the effects of the Renaissance. The so-called separation of church and state is in fact not only an attempt to end the influence of Christian faith, but also an effort to push Christian thinking out of public life.

In this way Europe, the cradle of Western civilization, is ignoring her roots and denying divine revelation, thus cutting herself off, humanly speaking, of the way of redemption.

#### e The sin of slave trade and colonialism

The biblical understanding of reality liberated Europe from the bondage to fear of the supernatural. This released her into scientific and traveling endeavours. However, the pride of the "civilized white man" deceived him to engage in slave trade and colonialism, crushing the dignity of indigenous peoples and even massacring them, claiming their land and stealing their "inheritance" (against Deuteronomy 32:8 and Acts 17:26). Instead of "advancing the Kingdom", sometimes given as a rationalization, this sin spread over continents, twisting and distorting the destinies of peoples.

Colonialism is like incest in the family of nations, leaving the victims devastated and hardly able to see their destiny, let alone to fulfil it.

a-e . In these five ways, Europe, the thinking continent, has not submitted her thinking to divine revelation. These five corporate sins have by now each re-shaped the character of the continent, or rather, distorted the identity of the continent. Europe has become “the prodigal continent”, spiritually impoverished, tired and in great need. In the present economic crisis Greece may seem weak in comparison to Germany, but both are, and in fact the whole continent is, in terrible need of forgiveness and restoration.

### §3 The foundation of her EU

The development of the EU, from Benelux to ECCS to EC to EU, has been explained by some as motivated by purely economic reasons, by others as motivated out of an idealistic hope of unity, reconciliation and enduring peace. However, neither economic survival nor enduring peace are achieved by men; only God prospers nations and only God can grant peace. When God is declared dead or excluded from the public arena, we block the very source of prosperity and peace.

Above and beyond this, the foundation of the EU was built on the only partially hidden rubble of layer upon layer of wars, hatred, bloodshed, intrigue, prejudice, pride, treason. Only some of these were brought to closure through formal peace-terms, truces, non-aggression pacts or reconciliation, and shorter or longer periods of peaceful coexistence followed. We must wonder: how fragile is such a foundation?

Example: Because of incredible abuse of power and consequent bloodshed, during the last 150 years streams of hundreds of thousands of refugees have remade the map of Central Europe. In the 1990-ies the European Prayer Link (a network of prayer networks) sponsored three reconciliation conferences in Central Europe to make a start with mending the deep corporate wounds. The first conference stirred hope, the second conference less and the third conference showed the desperate need of reconciliation and also the tragic inability to take significant steps.

Through the terrible religious wars, through the Central European nationalistic wars, through the two world wars, through the atrocities during Stalinism, much “blood cries from the earth”, even until the time of judgment (Genesis 4:10; Isaiah 26:21; Matthew 23:35). That’s why old enmities can suddenly flare up.

What is the foundation under the EU? Three times, in 1914, 1939 and 1991, an explosion erupted in Bosnia, on the fault line of the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox sphere. But this can happen in Berlin and London as well. [2]

When we learn that Satan is after “wars and rumours of war, nation against nation and people against people” (Matthew 24:7), we need to understand that he has easy entrance in Europe. Even a debt crisis can trigger a total crisis.

### ***Can Europe be saved?***

Yes, Europe can be saved. The very address “Virgin Daughter” expresses God’s commitment and care. He even addressed Babylon with that title (Isaiah 47:1) when He wanted to admonish her.

When a sinner comes to Jesus, or when a Christian backslides and then wants to come back to Jesus, he must acknowledge his sins (committed since his conversion) and repent. The same dynamic applies to a corporate person, such as Europe. “Virgin Daughter Europe” was evangelized and has even evangelized other continents -this does not mean that Europe was truly disciplined-- . Over time Europe has backslidden and has defiled herself, has become a prodigal continent. So, she must repent. When she “humbles herself, prays, seeks God and turns from her wicked ways, then God will hear and forgive and restore” (2 Chronicles 7:14)!

There is this law: “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Hebrews 9:22). This law applies, whether recognized (by the French) or not, and it is quite as terrifying as it sounds. So, when the Church, with as broad a representation of its members as is possible, mediates between God and his Virgin

Daughter Europe, and identificationally repents of the national and the continental sins, appealing to the blood of Christ shed on the cross for ALL the sins of the world, she spiritually opens the way for the Virgin Daughter Europe to come before God (again).

Already church leaders have started to ask forgiveness for the disunity of the church. Already church leaders and government leaders of many nations have started to ask forgiveness for corporate historic sins, such as nationalistic wars and colonialism. Already the governments of Portugal, Poland and Germany have asked forgiveness of Israel for their anti-Semitism.

An exemplary initiative is "Towards Jerusalem Council II" (TJCII). Acts 15 describes the Jerusalem Council I, at which the apostles of the church recognized the believers of the nations. After the exclusion of the Jews and the subsequent anti-Semitism in the centuries following, a Jerusalem Council II should convene, the believers of the nations repenting of these sins to re-unite the Church at her core. The TJCII-movement seeks a high-level broad representation among Church leaders and Jewish leaders to achieve this. The progress so far is very encouraging.[3]

### **Can Europe be saved?**

Some cities and nations, outside Europe, have dramatically changed, have been "saved", after the local/national Church at large bowed her knees. Why should this only happen outside Europe?

*The church of Europe is in charge of her continent. In the eyes of the Creator God, Europe must look like "Prodigal Europe", even though He lovingly calls her "Virgin Daughter Europe". If the politicians do not and cannot understand Europe from that perspective, then let at least the Church have that perspective, and act upon it.*

[1] This paragraph is a summary of Helene Bos, "EUROPE, WHAT'S IN THE NAME?", <http://www.servingthenations.info/societyarticle.asp?ArticleID=106>

[2] See also "Spiritual Aspects of The European Union."

<http://www.servingthenations.org/nationsarticle.asp?ArticleID=82>

[3] [www.tjci.or](http://www.tjci.or)