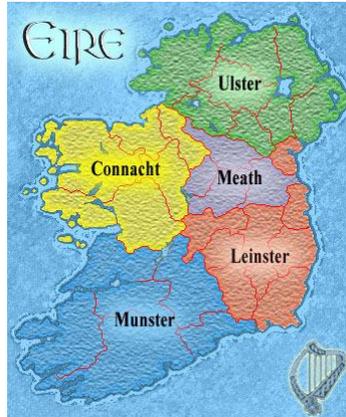




30. THE SECOND CONVERSION OF EUROPE TO CHRISTIANITY

Maewyin Succat, later known as St. Patrick, was born around 385 AD in Britain. His father Calpornius was a Roman patrician and his mother Conchessa a Briton woman of Druidic priestly descent. At the age of sixteen, he was kidnapped by Scots pirates¹ and brought to Ireland. During the period of captivity he became fascinated by the green island and its proud inhabitants.



1. The five Scot Kingdoms in Ireland

Ireland was divided into five kingdoms arranged like that number on a game die. There, the flourishing druidic religion was represented by the priestly castes of the druids, bards and filis. In addition to their ritual and sapiential functions, they were fondly dedicated to the arts: music, poetry and chanting above all. The knights, among whom the five Kings of Ireland were chosen, were a bellicose caste, impetuous, fond of every martial art, perpetually at war and, in peacetime, dedicated to piracy².



2. St. Patrick converts the King of Ulster in front of druids and knights

After a few years of captivity, Patrick managed to escape and made his way to Gaul (today's France), where, in the city of Auxerre of the Burgundians, he studied to become a Christian priest. Once a priest, he became a monk in the Hermitage of Lérins³ in an island off the coast of Provence, in southern France. His love for Ireland, however, prompted him to return there to preach Christianity. There he expounded his doctrine to the Kings of the island in presence of the druids. They recognized that the Christianity preached by St. Patrick was not incompatible with the ancestral tradition of the Scots. Therefore, the Kings decided to convert together with all their subjects⁴. The druids, the Celtic priests, became monks

¹ The Celts of Ireland were called Scots by the Romans. In the 6th century, the Scots invaded the north of the Briton Isles, founding a Kingdom known thereafter as Scotland.

² Cfr. <https://www.vedavyasamandala.com/20-celtic-tradition>.

³ Later the hermitage became a Benedictine monastery, and then part of the Cistercian Benedictine order.

⁴ In the Gospel, the recognition of the Messianity of Jesus took place through the simple village-to-village exposition of the doctrine. If the villagers accepted the "good news", then they would all become followers of Christ. If, on the other hand, the





and assumed all the exterior form of Christian exoterism. However, they kept within them the ancient Druidic initiation. Thus began what was later called the Culdean Church.



3. Culdean ermitage

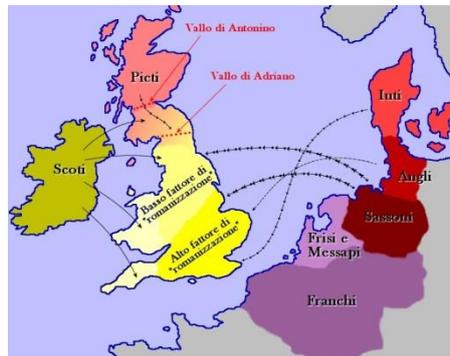
The Culdees¹, like their predecessors the druids, lived as hermits in areas far from population centers, cultivating knowledge and various forms of sciences and arts. Everyone followed his teacher's instructions, without there being a common rule². Few of them then assumed the priesthood, regarded as an excessive worldly and secular activity. The metaphysical and cosmological knowledge of the Celtic druids was thus preserved and handed down in the Christian form. With the Irish conquest of the current Scotland, the Culdean Church began to spread throughout the Briton Isles. When those islands suffered the disastrous invasion of the Anglo-Saxon barbarians, the Culdees played the same function of "ark" for the survival of the Druid-Christian initiatic tradition, just as the Latin monasteries were doing in Italy, Spain and Gaul³.

village refused the doctrine expounded by the apostle or the disciple, then the preacher would leave without insisting further. Another modality of expansion, which the primitive Church assumed, was the conversion of the Kings, just as it happened in Ireland during the period we are dealing with. Already in the first century AD the King of Edessa and the Emperor of Ethiopia had converted to the Christian doctrine, involving all their subjects in this decision. This second form of conversion became regular and lasted throughout the Middle Ages. The last attempt of this kind was probably that of St. Francis, who in 1219 tried unsuccessfully to convert the Muslim Sultan of Egypt. Subsequently, and with the loss of the initiatic tradition, the Catholic Church put into action the missionary movement, aimed at the conversion of the weak, ignorant and defenseless classes of non-Christian peoples, making unscrupulous use of any cunning means including deception, infiltration and extortion, dishonestly pretending to provide food to the hungry and medicines to the ill, focusing on the "social" and neglecting the "spiritual" domain. Missionarism, which pursues the goal of increasing the number of Catholics without worrying about their quality, represents a real cancer for non-Christian traditions and is, in fact, only an instrument of political and economic penetration in the hands of the most profane Western civilization. This phenomenon has also corrupted the Church from within, diverting ecclesiastics from all interest in God, in transcendence and in the posthumous destinies of their followers.

¹ Term of uncertain etymology: in Irish they are called *Ceile De*, "the people of God"; in Scottish *Keldei*, "the Celts"; in English *Culdees*, "the servants of God" (?); in Latin *Cultores Dei*, "the devotees of God". It is probable that the term contains a meaning implying a priestly wisdom. In more ancient times, the use of the title "Chaldeans" was attributed to the priests of Mesopotamia.

² For this reason, it has been suggested that they were not really monks. However, before the institution of the first monastic rule in the Western Empire by St. Benedict, every monk followed his own rule, as described by the Greek word *μόνος*, solitary. As far as Ireland is concerned, St. Finnian, founder and master of the abbey of Clonard, sent his twelve disciples to found other cœnobs in all the Briton Isles. Among them we mention St. Columba of Iona, who founded his school in Scotland, St. Brendan, protagonist of the initiatic journey in the work *Navigatio sancti Brendani*, St. Columban, founder of numerous cœnobies in the kingdoms of the Franks and the Lombards and, finally, his disciple St. Gallus. All Saints of the Culdean Church are also recognized by the Orthodox Church.

³ Also the Celtic chivalrous circles served as "arks" to overcome the barbaric flood. Thanks to their contribution, traditions in many ways similar to the *bhakta* and *śākta* of India were transmitted to the Middle Ages. In the next chapters, we will return extensively on this subject.



4. Barbarian invasions in the Briton islands

As described in 29th chapter, the situation of the clergy in the Christian Church dependent on the Pope had already lapsed to the maximum of degeneration. The priests often ignored so much as the rite of baptism and the required sacramental formulas. The clergy had no doctrinal formation and their conduct was exceedingly reprehensible. Since the establishing of the tithes¹, loafers became priests with sole the purpose of living without working. At that time, the celibacy of priests had not yet become a requisite, therefore they took advantage of the situation cohabiting with numerous concubines.



5. Corrupted priests: drunkenness, concubinage, abortion and infanticide

Moreover, the priests longing for an ecclesiastical career were committing themselves to making friends with bishops, with barbarian leaders, with the lords of the *villae*, becoming accomplices of the numerous abuses and crimes of that period of disorder that followed the fall of the Empire. The Latin monks defended themselves against such corruption by cutting relations with exterior clergy as much as possible.

In that way, the Culdean monks undertook a work of re-Christianization of continental Europe. During all the 6th century many Scot monks moved to the continent, thus making an example of a forgotten spiritual life. Like the druids in Ireland who had been closely tied to the knight families, these Scot hermits that settled in Europe tightened relations with Roman families and with Benedictine monasteries, becoming their teachers. Furthermore, with their techniques and artistic skills they contributed in the refinement of the new environments in which they were installed².

In the following century, an action of doctrinal correction of Catholicism was undertaken by Briton monks, disciples of Scot masters, and in the 8th century even by Angles, by then civilized³. Among

¹ Every believer had to pay one tenth of the annual income to his parish priest to guarantee his maintenance.

² Particularly, we remember the decorative elements in the miniated manuscripts and the Gregorian chant.

³ We remind the reader that the Scots and the Britons were Celts, while the Angles and Saxons were Germans landed on the British Isles with the barbarian invasions. The modern use of the term “Anglo-Saxon” seems to have forgotten its Germanic



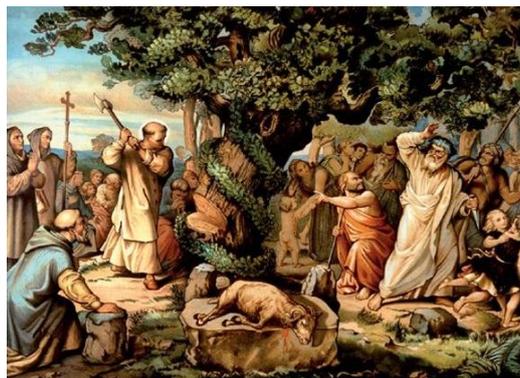


these we mention the famous Bede, the Venerable (673-735), a learned saint who knew Greek and Hebrew languages, as well as Latin. His writings were dedicated to the explanation of the initiatic symbolism of the classical texts, of the Bible and of Patristic literature. He also wrote of history, of science, but the most remarkable element is that in his theological writings the apophatic doctrines of Dionysius the Areopagite and the Severinus Boethius' Neoplatonism were resumed. In this transmission line (*paramparā*) must be included Scotus Eriugena (810-877), whose metaphysical writings will be followed later by the school of the Franco-Scot masters of the abbey of St. Victor in Paris, and finally by Dante and Meister Eckhart.



6. The Venerable St. Bede and Johannes Scotus Eriugena

The reconversion of Western Europe reached its full success with St. Boniface (680-754) a disciple of the Scot Willibrordus; the Angle Boniface (born Wynfrith) left towards Germany with some Culdean monks to convert the barbarian peoples who had settled there. The King of the Franks, Charles Martel, commissioned him to evangelize Hesse and Thuringia, which had recently become part of his kingdom. St. Boniface realized that the Culdean monks were disconnected from each other and that therefore their action, even if notable, proceeded slowly. Therefore, he went to Rome and requested the Pope to appoint him as bishop; soon after he entered the Benedictine monastic order. With this new office, and with the Benedictine structure behind him, he went back to Germany. There he organized the Culdees into the order of St. Benedict, enforcing his Episcopal authority. He soon appointed several other bishops and led the subordinated Celt monks with firm hand.



7. St. Boniface breaking down the sacred tree of the Germans

origin. Now, if the present English population is descendant of the Angles and the Saxons, this term is not appropriate to define the “white americans”; they indeed represent an indistinguishable mixture of immigrants coming from all over Europe.



The state of the ancestral religion of the Germanic peoples was severely declining, mainly due to the absence of their own priesthood¹. Boniface challenged the German Gods, demonstrating with prodigies and miracles the ineffectiveness of their religion. His action was carried out at all levels. King and Princes bent over his authority; he restored most of the laws of the late Roman Empire, adapting them to the new situation. He swept away the old corrupt clergy and sent his emissaries all over Germany, Gaul, Italy and Spain. In Rome the Popes, who were succeeding one after another, listened reverently to his teachings. And the entire Latin clergy of Europe, recognizing his spiritual supremacy, followed his wise injunctions. In this way also the Catholic hierarchy underwent a certain rectification. Furthermore, from his abbey of Fulda he restored Catholicism from the theological point of view, imposing on Christian exoterism the doctrinal positions derived from his initiatic knowledge. Without his action almost certainly Catholicism would have disappeared. He played a profound function on the esoteric, religious and temporal levels, which only St. Bernard could equal four centuries later².



8. Funerary monument of Charles Martel

Bringing together Charles, King the Franks, and Pope Stephen II, St. Boniface had carefully planned the resurrection of the Western Roman Empire³.

Petrus Simonet de Maisonneuve

¹ Strabo testifies to the existence of Druidesses among the Germanic peoples. From his descriptions, however, that appears to be a shamanic and not a priestly category. Therefore the greatest difference between Celts and Germans seems to be the total absence of priesthood among the latter ones.

² St. Boniface also instituted the use of the Christmas fir-tree which the today's catholic pseudo priests oppose considering it, in their ignorance, a pagan symbol!

³ *Vita e lettere di san Bonifacio*, translation, introduction, notes by Enrica Mascherpa, Noci, Bari, 1991.