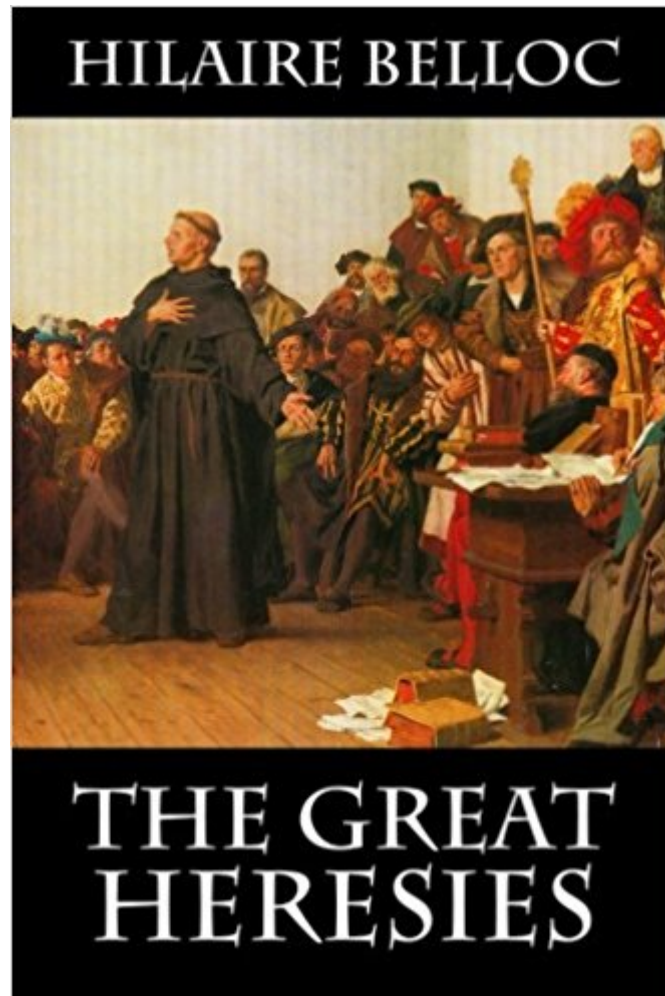




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The Great Heresies



Synopsis

Hilaire Belloc examines the five most destructive heretical movements to have affected Christian Civilization: Arianism, Mohammedanism (Islam), Albigensianism (Cathar), The Reformation (Protestant), and "The Modern Phase." Belloc describes how these movements began, how they spread, and how they continued to influence the world up until the time of his writing (1936). The Chapter on Islam is especially relevant in light of current events; in it Belloc accurately predicts the renewal of Jihadist aggression towards Western Civilization.

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Customer Reviews

"We live with the aftereffects of twenty centuries of heresies. If this book speaks to us as though it were written yesterday, it is because heresy is a perennial problem. 'All men by nature desire to know', said Aristotle, but many men are incapable of knowing well or of thinking clearly. The result is religious error. To deal with it, we must learn its origin and history. There seldom has been a better teacher than Hilaire Belloc." --Karl Keating, from the Foreword; Author, Catholicism and Fundamentalism
"The Great Heresies" is a masterpiece of intellectual history which takes us on a journey across the landscape of the centuries. With the inimitable Belloc as our guide we follow the path of the Church Militant as she passes, sure-footed with the grace of orthodoxy, through the quagmire of errors which characterize the prideful wanderings of the human mind and heart." --Joseph Pearce, Author, Catholic Literary Giants
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Hilaire Belloc was one of the most important and versatile Catholic writers of the twentieth century. A social commentator and a master of finely crafted prose, he wrote numerous books on social, historical and theological topics. His books include The Path to Rome; The Battleground: Syria and Palestine, the Seed Plot of Religion; and Characters of the Reformation. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The book would be worth it just for the examination of the concept of "heresy". Belloc is very easy to read, as his clarity of writing and brilliant establishment of the essential characteristics of each heresy allow the reader to glide through each section. A coherent and powerful history of the civilization that ensued from the establishment of the early Church through the industrial revolution. The last section, dealing with the modern assault on the Church is perhaps more relevant today than when it was written in the early 20th century. A must read and a fantastic overview of the world of the Catholic Church and her would be usurpers. The rise of the militant Muslim nations and the consequences of the modern era's attempt to blot out every teaching of the Church by falsely setting itself up as a replacement for, rather than an addition to, the greatest thinkers of all the prior ages is predicted with frightful accuracy.

What distinguishes Belloc as a writer is his ability to tackle tectonic shifts in history in such a concise manner. In about 150 pages the reader is given a view of the great sweep of European history and culture as no one else, to my knowledge, has been able to provide. So much of The Great Heresies, written in the 1930's, still resonates today. I pick two examples, but these are by no means the only ones, nor the most penetrating, but they come especially to mind. On the Heresy of Modernism: "It will be seen that I have, in the following pages, talked of "the modern attack" because some name must be given to a thing before one can discuss it at all, but the tide which threatens to overwhelm us is so diffuse that each must give it his own name; it has no common name as yet. Perhaps that will come, but not until the conflict between that modern anti-Christian spirit and the permanent tradition of the Faith becomes acute through persecution and the triumph or defeat thereof. It will then perhaps be called anti-Christ." On the Heresy of Islam: "These things being so, the recrudescence of Islam, the possibility of that terror under which we lived for centuries reappearing, and of our civilization again fighting for its life against what was its chief enemy for a thousand years, seems fantastic. Who in the Mohammedan world today can manufacture and maintain the complicated instruments of modern war? Where is the political machinery whereby the religion of Islam can play an equal part in the modern world? I say the suggestion that Islam may re-arise

sounds fantastic -- but this is only because men are always powerfully affected by the immediate past: -- one might say that they are blinded by it. Cultures spring from religions; ultimately the vital force which maintains any culture is its philosophy, its attitude toward the universe; the decay of a religion involves the decay of the culture corresponding to it -- we see that most clearly in the breakdown of Christendom today. The bad work begun at the Reformation is bearing its final fruit in the dissolution of our ancestral doctrines -- the very structure of our society is dissolving.....In Islam there has been no such dissolution of ancestral doctrine -- or, at any rate, nothing corresponding to the universal break-up of religion in Europe. The whole spiritual strength of Islam is still present in the masses of Syria and Anatolia, of the East Asian mountains, of Arabia, Egypt and North Africa. The final fruit of this tenacity, the second period of Islamic power, may be delayed: -- but I doubt whether it can be permanently postponed."

Heresies is easy to read....and worth your time! I learned so much I had never heard before. Was mostly interested in the Islam part....such a far off fellow, that Mohamad and quite unlikely to upset any world order...but Islam is here, by crackey. Not going away, but growing. I did not come away understanding the attraction, but certainly learned to respect its appeal. Odette Howard

Absolutely fascinating reading. He doesn't conceal where he stands. The Great Heresies

Great old book with a lot of insight to the different religious sects. Too bad it's no longer in print.

I'm not a big book reader, but this title I couldn't put down and underlined the heck out of numerous passages. Its analysis of Mohammedanism is particularly enlightening. Holy Mother Church has outlasted every heresy that tried to topple her, and some battles still wage. Arm yourself with knowledge of error if you want to know the One True Faith better! I can't see myself ever donating, tossing out, or recycling this book. It's a keeper.

Clear, concise explanation of the heresies of the last 2000 years. This should be in everyone's Catholic library.

Written with clarity and precision. You need bring no particular background knowledge of theology or Church history to this book to quickly grasp what's being talked about. Belloc's book is written in the manner of the very best personal essay - informal but not chummy.

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