

The roots of the current 'Woke' movement (so-called) that came from America, lie in the Frankfurt School of thinking and, in particular with the writings of Max Horkheimer, in 1930's Germany. Horkheimer condemned what he called 'Transfiguration Thinking,' which relies on faith and takes a supernatural worldview, one that seeks justice and peace beyond the current sphere. The avowed aim of Woke theory is social justice, and it regards Christianity, promoting a fulfilled life beyond this world as, therefore, a false way of thinking.

Fair enough, maybe. But one has only to imagine a world where Woke ideology is dominant, demanding absolute compliance in behaviour and attitudes, as well as rigorous thought control, and the censorship of all public discourse, in order to achieve total justice and equality.

But all political systems and ideas, like political careers, are destined to end in failure: '*Dreaming* of systems so perfect the no one will need to be *good*.' (TS Eliot, *The Rock*)

But the Woke movement is in a bind. It reminds me of a Song that many of you might remember. Recorded in 1960 by Harry Belafonte and Odetta, it is called, '*There's a Hole in My Bucket:...*' He sings that his bucket has a hole, she says, mend it. With what? he asks. With straw, she replies. The straw is too long: then cut it. Cut it with what? With an axe. The axe is too blunt: then sharpen it. Sharpen it with what? With a stone. The stone is too dry: then wet it? With what? Try water! In what shall I fetch it? In a bucket....There's a hole in my bucket...!

You see the problem: you end up where you began with the same problem. And it is the same problem for all human attempts at perfection. The problem is, of course, Human Sin, something about which Woke theory knows nothing. There is, indeed, a hole in the bucket. Godless societies are prone to leak; ultimately, they have no focus beyond their own selves and are subject to entropy.

In fact, the ironic truth is that, before Judaism and Christianity, concepts like social justice and equality were virtually unthinkable in the ancient world.

Today's feast stands as a contradiction against all those self-authenticating social justice warriors. So, when it comes to the Woke movement, we Orthodox Christians contend otherwise. Meanwhile, many of the denominations of Christianity have fallen under the spell of this heresy, and yes, it is a heresy. It now pervades education at all levels, industry, medical services, sport, the media, the police, and even the armed forces. At its heart it certainly wants to banish religion to the private sphere

But we contend otherwise. Christ tells us otherwise: turn the other cheek, give double to one who would steal from us, pray for those who wrong us, to let God be judge and avenger. This is no good for the social justice warrior; he thinks he can fix the hole in his bucket his own way.

'Wokeism' may well harbour a shadowy idea of an earthly paradise, lodged in the Collective Unconscious and left over from our Fall in Adam. But whatever they do, the hole in the bucket will still be there. All they can do is put their fingers in their ears and refuse to listen to any who would suggest otherwise.

But into a world from which they would banish the sacred, we have today's great feast. The Transfiguration of Christ, if it were to do nothing else, would manifest the mystery of that real connection between this world and the kingdom of God; the mystical interaction of the mundane on the one hand, and the life that is yet to be revealed.

As Christ unveils for a time His divinity before His Disciples, we, as well as they, are given a command from the Father: '*Listen to Him.*' In its fundamental approach Wokeism, of course, refuses to listen; it cannot discuss or even consider that it might be wrong. Yet it is here, in Christ, that the only lasting justice and peace are to be found; it is

here, in Him, that the hole in the human heart is mended, according to the mind of God.

The story of the Transfiguration is to be found in the first three gospels. I have often wondered why St John did not record the incident alongside the other signs of which he writes. Yet, in fact, what the beloved disciples experienced on Mt Tabor was described, if briefly and in passing, in the gospel that bears his name: '*And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*' [1Jn.1:14]