



# Saints & Sinners: An Account of Western Civilization

*Antti P. Balk*

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## **Saints & Sinners: An Account of Western Civilization** Antti P. Balk

It is said that history is written by the victors. Does that make them even partly right? Or, more to the point, even a little interesting? Of course not.

This unique look at history begins with an alternative *Genesis* as it were, elaborately recounting the birth of human civilization through the vehicle of ancient Egyptian deities, albeit in light of the most recent knowledge on archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, sociology, comparative religion, political science, and general history. It moves quickly but seamlessly to Greece via Crete, revealing the relatively young age of Continental European (and by extension, all Western) culture, science, art, and religion, and their highly derivative nature--a point subtly repeated throughout this stunningly wide-ranging work.

As the title suggests, this is a book of contrasts, constantly comparing not only the Saints and the Sinners, but the East and the West, be the issues dealt with political or religious; in most cases, the one cannot be separated from the other. The phrase "I come not to bring peace, but to bring a sword" certainly summarizes the history of mainline Christianity. But did Jesus even exist? And if he did, was he just re-enacting ancient myths and repeating old sayings? And what of Mohammed? Was he a false prophet, the Last Prophet, or just our for profit?

The author does not presume to answer such questions, only to relate the events as they happened, the facts as they stand, even if many of them are little known ones, conspicuous by their absence in standard school history books. He purports to offer a self-critique of Western culture by a cultured Westerner, a task made all the more challenging by the current, precarious world political situation. Factual without being dry, educational without being condescending, *Saints & Sinners* debunks myths without destroying the mystery.

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#### **Jerry Schooler:**

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