

Republicanism was never deemed by him to be incompatible with Anglo-Irish rapprochement.

The personal characteristics that enabled him to endure the slings and arrows of so long and hazardous a career are the same characteristics for which his opponents assail him. If he is logic-bound, a splitter of hairs, the proposal of external association was based on a precise set of metaphysics. If he is charged with inflexibility, he has had need of such armor against physical danger, sentence of death, long and repeated imprisonments, political rise and fall. If he is accused of trimming, his plan was overtly a compromise. Certainly he was born with little of what has been called the Celt's fatal weakness, the desire to please. Had he been more eager to win popularity, the charge of self-seeking ambition would be more credible. He is a man who, on the contrary, refused to adopt a course which he knew had a majority behind it, first in a small way in 1914, then in a conspicuous way in 1921, and again in 1948. On each of these occasions and on many less evident ones, he toed instead the straight line of his own making.

In the methods he has employed, his career is marked by a climactic change. From 1914 to 1923, he was willing to use force and violence, justifying this because Britain did likewise. He relinquished this method thereafter not so much because he disapproved of force under the circumstances, but because he became convinced that it could not succeed. Constitutional methods have for over a quarter of a century been his only recourse. Change in means has not meant a change in ends, and allegations of inconsistency against him must be ruled out as far as objectives go. External association was first conceived and formulated by him more than thirty years ago. He sacrificed power twice rather than surrender this principle. Although he was not able thereby to fulfill the whole purpose of his political lifetime, he consummated all but one of Ireland's claims. So far, no other formula has been found to end the partition of the ancient nation.

Oct.
1951

Review of
Politics
V.13

Marxist History and Sacred History

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FOR Marxism* history is the process by which man transforms himself by transforming the economic conditions of his existence through work. The expression of this process on the social level is the class struggle through which the rising class, corresponding to the economic infrastructure of the future, tends to substitute itself for the exploiting class which is the expression of the outworn infrastructure. To exist is to engage in this conflict and thus participate in the movement of history. Now very often Christians, in order to oppose Marxism, remain on the Marxist plane. They are satisfied to set up one social doctrine against the other. We propose to show in this article that while it is true that there is a Christian social doctrine, and one superior to that of Marxism, the true superiority of Christianity does not lie in this. Its superiority consists, on the contrary, in the fact that it has not only a social doctrine but very different dimensions as well and is thereby capable of giving an integral interpretation of human existence while Marxism only touches the surface of it.

We can show this by taking certain vantage points which will permit us to see, paradoxical though this may at first appear, that it is precisely in the most supernatural and the most essential realities, those most peculiar to Christianity, such as the sacraments, that we shall find the profoundest answer to the problems of the present world. All these realities will no longer then appear as *obiter dicta* in our lives, but, on the contrary, as at the very heart of life. They will no longer seem to be a sort of routine exercised so as to be in the good graces of God, but a real and total commitment.

It is characteristic of the mentality of men today to conceive the world they live in as one history. We find it everywhere. This is because humanity, with the increasingly great extension of its knowledge, is more aware of its growth and advancement. Science has also shown us that before our history there was a whole human pre-

* This article was originally published in *Dieu Vivant*, No. 13, under the title, "Histoire marxiste et histoire sacramentaire." The English translation is by James A. Corbett, Associate Professor of History in the University of Notre Dame.

history. Thinking which does not consider this unfolding in time, this new dimension hardly suspected by the ancients, is ineffective. First developed in the philosophy of Hegel, this idea has assumed more and more importance in our world of today, and especially in Marxism.

But the expression given to this awareness by Marxism appears to be very narrow. The essential idea of Marxism is that the reality of history is dialectics by which man creates himself, that is, builds up humanity little by little through the transformation of the material conditions of his existence. Consequently, the most effective men and the true heroes of the modern world will be scientists and workers; poets, artists, philosophers, and saints are of secondary importance. Thus, for Marx two categories of men are absolutely essential: the scientist who invents and the worker who produces the conditions which ought to improve the life of man. This philosophy is obviously a dynamic one for those two classes of men because it makes them the essential agents of history. The stages in the history of humanity are the great ages of stone, of iron, of steam, of electricity, of radio and of atomic energy. This is the only important reality. All the rest is suprastructure. The levers which guide human progress are techniques; the only way to develop humanity is to develop technique.

What gives force to this position is that it is not only a matter of making man aware of things, but of helping him to commit himself by showing him the reason and value of this commitment.¹ It is not simply a vulgar materialism, but a humanism, a conception of man. As such Marxism is the absolute contradiction of Christianity: man is the supreme value for man; he is his own creator. To recognize God is degrading and vilifying; to reject him is the essential condition of a realistic humanism.

Henceforth we cannot confront Marxism with a more or less pale Christian humanism. If Christian thought sometimes seems weak alongside Marxism, it is because Christianity does not rely enough on its essential principle, on the fact that it is a religion of God, a divine conception of history. For the Christian it is not only a human society which is built up in history but a divine destiny of man. We shall only overcome Marxism when we realize that it is Christianity

¹ See Karl Lowith, *Meaning in History*, pp. 42-43.

which makes history real. Christianity is also fundamentally one history and not a conception of an ideal world more or less outside of human realities, and sort of added to them. As an interpretation of total history, Christianity gives history its definitive meaning.

The history of the world, in the Christian sense of the word, is essentially Sacred history, the history of the great works of God in time in which, with the irresistible power of His creative spirit, He builds the true humanity, the eternal City. Hence, if we wish to find the Christian meaning of history, we must know how to go beyond apparent and external history in order to penetrate to the real one which is built in the depths of man. Only the Holy Spirit can give us an understanding of this. We find the essentials of it in Scripture, an account of the great works of God and a description for us of the ways of God and of the manner in which He does things. It is, therefore, in the measure in which we live by Scripture as the true reality that we shall discover and understand the universe according to God.

Scripture begins with an historical affirmation of the creation, then shows us the continual action of God through events: He chose Abraham as head of His people and made an alliance with him to lead his people in His ways. And here we come to an important idea: this Sacred history which God makes is opposed to that which man wishes to make (the one that Marx discovered). From the beginning there are two histories. There is the one men wish to make because of pride, the flesh, imperialism and domination; it is the bloody history of wars, persecutions and captivities. For many men this is the only history. But beside this human history there is the history which God makes. Through it God builds His kingdom and leads men according to His ways. The Old Testament gives a typical example of these two tendencies in the conflict between the prophets and the powerful who always persecute them. The prophets have the Christian sense of history and, through the spirit which enlightens them, they act as though introduced by God to the veritable meaning of the destiny of humanity.

In the middle of history, the Son of God Himself, by His Incarnation, came on earth to assume humanity, to unite Himself to it, to purify it with His blood and to lead it forever into the kingdom of the Father after having liberated it from death and sin. What man seeks is precisely a liberation; he wants to shake off the captivity

which weighs heavy upon him. This captivity, however, is not economic but spiritual. Original sin is not capitalism, the essential evil for Marxism. Even a humanity freed of all social miseries would still remain in an integral misery: that of sin. When Marx said that once man was freed from his economic bondage he would be happy, Marx was wrong for there remains spiritual misery. Thus in Soviet Russia, people may be liberated on the economic level, but they exist,—and strikingly so—in a profound spiritual despair.

The Marxist effort is, therefore, superficial and does not descend into the veritable depths of human misery. Of course we should fight against social misery; but such misery is simply the repercussion of another much more profound and intimate one: sin, death, Satan. The one who liberates from this real captivity is Jesus Christ and He alone. The meaning of history as the Marxists say,—and we agree with them here—is to free man,² but we say that only Jesus Christ and those who live in Him can do it. These are the missionaries and contemplatives, the real saviors of humanity. As long as we fail to realize that social reaction against Marxism is inadequate, as long as we do not enter into the reality of Christianity and act accordingly, we shall retain an inferiority complex. Although we have our duties on the social and economic plane, they are not all. There is something more important and deeper: the continuation of the work of Jesus Christ in the salvation of humanity.

To be sure, Marxism does not deny absolutely that Christianity is a great and beautiful thing, that it brought a veritable revelation into the world. But Marxism says that what Christianity accomplished in the past is over and done with; now it is in a state of crisis and a new humanity is beginning. We are beyond Christianity on the road to a religion of the new times. The Christian of today answers this with a profession of faith: one does not surpass Jesus Christ for in Him the end of things is reached. He alone is the last, the eternal youth of the world. He is always the new beyond Whom there is absolutely nothing, in Whom the end of all things is attained. With Him the essential event of humanity has occurred; consequently we should not expect from *progress*, whatever it may be, anything which has the importance we possess in Jesus Christ. We have infinitely more in Him than any technique or any revolution can bring.

² Garaudy, *Le communisme et la morale*, p. 71.

For the Marxist, history has not yet set its course: he looks toward the future. For the Christian, history is substantially fixed and the essential element is at the center, not at the end. There is thus no total risk. The acceptance of salvation given by Christ—which is not our work—is an aspect, in the eschatological order, of this recognition of our basic dependence, a dependence constituting the fundamental religious attitude. Does this mean that there is nothing more to be done? Yes, *if*, after the event of the Redemption, no fundamental task remained to be accomplished. But the Redemption is a reality of incomparable dynamism; for what is acquired by right for all humanity remains indeed to be transmitted to all men. There is the mystery of missions and the grandeur of the missionary ideal. Sacred history is the history of the present in which we live, of which we are the instruments as the prophets once were who worked to extend to all peoples what Jesus Christ brought to us.

In *Le Christ et le temps* Cullman observes that in war there comes the day when the decisive battle is won, afterwards the day of the triumphal march under the arch of triumph.³ Between these two events there is a certain lapse of time. The Resurrection is the Stalingrad of the Redemption, the day when the battle is won. But Christ wished to permit us to participate in the victory—and some battles remain to be fought. Total victory, however, does not depend on them; it has already been won. Christian hope is the certitude of this victory with the expectation of our coming into possession of peace. Present history is that of combats through which God deigns to associate us with His work until Christ has taken on His full stature in breadth and depth in all hearts. This is what fills present history, much more than the conflicts or the alliances between nations and classes. If we act often like worldly men and allow ourselves to be taken in by apparent history it is because we do not see things deeply enough.

The sacraments are the historical actions, corresponding to the particular characteristics of the time which extends from the Ascension to the Last Judgment, that is to say, of the time in which we live. What characterizes this time is the fact that it comes after the essential event of Sacred history by which the world has already reached its end and hence—as certain Protestants clearly saw—it can add

³ *Christ et le temps*, p. 100.

nothing to time. Jesus Christ is not surpassed. On the other hand, the glory of Jesus Christ has not yet been visibly manifested. This time, therefore, is characterized, secondly, by this non-manifestation, by this "hidden" aspect. And finally time's proper content is the extension to all humanity of the reality acquired by Christ.

Now these are precisely the characteristics which the actions of sacramental structure present. On the one hand, they are never anything but "imitations," "representations" of the Death and Resurrection of Christ: "We who have all been baptized in Christ Jesus have been baptized in death." The sacraments are simply a reproduction of the sacerdotal action of Christ by which all things have attained their end. Still, the sacraments have a hidden aspect. Only the sign is apparent; its reality remains invisible. For indeed the reality of the Resurrection is not yet visibly manifest. This is admirably explained by St. Paul (Col. III, 1-4): "Risen, then, with Christ, you must lift your thoughts above, where Christ now sits at the right hand of God. You must be heavenly-minded, not earthly minded; you have undergone death, and your life is hidden away now with Christ in God. Christ is your life, and when He is made manifest, you too will be made manifest in glory with him."

Thus the sacraments constitute the events of a time which is the tension between the Resurrection and the Parousia. They are a "memorial" of the Resurrection and the permanent "prophecy" of its manifestation. The Eucharist, as a "document" of the "New Alliance" prevents us from forgetting the essential event by which this alliance was definitely concluded: the union in the person of Jesus of the divine and human nature and the introduction of human nature purified by the Blood of the Cross into the sphere of the Trinitary life. And the Eucharist, as an eschatological meal, is the prefiguration of the heavenly banquet, of the communication by Christ of the fullness of His goods to His own in the House of His Father.⁴ Thus during the delay of the Parousia, the Eucharist prevents humanity, in this foretaste of celestial food, from tiring of waiting and from returning to terrestrial food.

But I have not dwelt so far on the last characteristic of our time. Between the Ascension and the Parousia its special function is missionary activity, begun at Pentecost and continuing until the return

⁴ Yves de Montcheuil, "La signification eschatologique du repas eucharistique" in *Recherches de Sciences Religieuses*, 1946, pp. 10 sqq.

of Christ, since, the Gospel tells us, the condition of this return is the evangelization of the whole universe. Now the sacraments are the essential instruments of this mission which is the reality of present history under the appearances of profane history. The mission of the Apostles is, properly speaking, to baptize: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Indeed it is Baptism which unites one to the messianic community, to the Church and which makes those who have received it participants in messianic gifts. Confirmation, participation in the anointing of Christ by the Spirit at the beginning of His public life furnishes the Christian adult, according to Cyril of Jerusalem,⁵ in a stable way, with prophetic charism which makes of him, by preaching and by witnessing, an active agent of the mission. And the Eucharist is the sacrament of unity which gathers about the Christ of glory, present in the community, all nations in order to offer them through His hands to the Father.

It is these sacramental actions which are the great events of the present world—much greater than great works of thought or of science, much greater than great victories or revolutions, which fill the pages of apparent history, but do not penetrate to the depths of real history. These are grandeurs of the order of intelligence or of the order of bodies. But the sacraments are the grandeurs of the order of charity. "Jesus Christ," Pascal said, "did not make any great inventions but he was holy, holy to men and redoubtable to the devil." This is what we have not sufficiently realized. And this is why we allow ourselves to be so impressed by the grandeur of the flesh or of the intelligence while forgetting that we are the trustees of the designs of Trinitary charity. By the importance we give them we make idols of human glories, of Science, of Money, of History, of the State; whereas the first commandment is: "Thou shalt love the Lord Thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength."⁶

Now the works of the power of God among us are the sacraments. We said above that there was a greater captivity than economic captivity and capitalistic enslavement, that the greater captivity was

⁵ "Le symbolisme des rites baptismaux," *Dieu Vivant*, I, p. 42.

⁶ In his last volume of poems *Tu aimeras l'Eternel*, Edmond Fleg shows admirably this apostasy from the one God and this cult of modern idols among the well-known Jews of the nineteenth century, Rothschild, Marx, and Einstein.

spiritual captivity, enslavement not to the powers of money, but to the Powers of Darkness. Now Baptism alone delivers us from this captivity. One alone indeed liberates us from spiritual captivity, Jesus Christ, Who by His Death descended into the kingdom of death, into the profoundest abyss of misery, and Who, by His Resurrection, crashed forever the doors of death and came out the Conqueror of Hell, opening up to all humanity the road of spiritual liberation. Baptism, St. Paul tells us, makes us die with Jesus Christ in order to arise with Him and ascend with Him to the right of the Father. Given in the first Christian century during the Paschal night, Baptism appears clearly here as the continuation of those great works of liberation accomplished by God in delivering His people from the yoke of Egypt in the course of the first Easter and in the deliverance of His Son from the yoke of Hell during the second Easter. And the third Easter is thus not a simple liturgical commemoration of the two others, but the effective continuation of the same reality.

The mystery of liberation, Baptism is also the mystery of "creation." It is, according to St. Paul, *palingenesis*,⁷ a second Genesis. At the beginning of the world, the Spirit of God, hovering like a dove over the primitive waters, raised up in them the biological life of the first creation. It is this same Spirit which, the Gospel tells us, covered Mary with His shadow, *obumbrabit tibi*, to raise up in her by His all powerful virtue the second creation,⁸ that of the universe of grace, of the world of divinized humanity of which Christ is the Orient, the eternally rising sun. Now Baptism is this recreation of each man. Plunged into the waters vivified by the energies of the Spirit, he comes out regenerated, reborn; recreated in Christ and, henceforth, belonging to the second creation. Marxism sees in man the demiurge of humanity which it creates perpetually by transforming through work his economic infrastructures. But it can no more liberate man from his more profound captivity than it can raise up a really new humanity, for Jesus Christ alone is the really New Man, the *homo novissimus*.

What is true of baptism is likewise true of all the sacraments and of the economy of all Christianity which is sacramental. I shall note only one other example: the Mass. This is essentially the pres-

⁷ Titus, III, 5.

⁸ "Le symbolisme des rites baptismaux," *Dieu Vivant*, I, pp. 37-38.

ence, subsisting under the sacramental mode, of the sacerdotal action of Christ. Now this sacerdotal action of Christ by which He glorifies perfectly the Father is the end of history, the fulfillment of creation, the success of the divine plan. The purpose of creation is indeed the glory of God, that is, the recognition of His sovereign excellence by means of spiritual liberties. It is to recognize the sovereignty of God that the sacrifices of all nations and of all religions have been made down through the centuries. But these were only figures, for in reality, the men who offered them belonged to the city of sin which, according to St. Augustine, is "built on love of oneself to the contempt of God." The Passion of Christ, on the contrary, manifests "the love of God to the contempt of oneself." He showed that the will of the Father is so lovable that everything is worth sacrificing to it, "becoming obedient until death and until the death of the Cross." The Father is thereby glorified for ever. Now the Mass is that sacerdotal action of Christ made present by the sacrament so as to hold human liberty in the movement which bears it to the Father and so to extend the glory of God. Again and again we discern the characteristic feature of sacramental times: it is situated within the end already gained which is the glory of God. God is glorified in Christ and nothing, surely no vicissitude of history, can alter this glorification. But this end must extend to all men and through Christ "all glory" must ascend to the Father.

The Mass is, therefore, the presence already of the consummation of things. And he who unites himself to the sacerdotal action of Christ in the Mass fulfills the absolute action, that in which the totality of his being expresses itself and in which the reason of his existence is made clear. Thus the Mass is the end to which Baptism is ordered; it is not the beginning but the fulfillment of the mission. The ultimate aim of all this is to constitute the total community offering the unique Mass by which all spiritual liberties, having been turned toward God, would recognize His sovereign excellence and unite with the Trisagion. But this presence remains a presence veiled in the sacraments, *velatum*. This sacramental status is that of expectation. It corresponds to the delay of the Parousia. This delay causes anguish for some. Daniel Halévy recently said that it was a great difficulty for him: "Christ said he would return—and yet he has not returned. And so nations have tired of waiting and have turned to other guides." But Christ also said that before His return

His gospel had to be preached to the ends of the earth. The delay of the Parousia⁹ is that which the evangelization of the whole world requires. That is why the patience asked of individuals and peoples who were the first baptized is essentially based on charity. They are waiting for everyone to be there before entering. The Mass is the form of fulfillment of the human vocation appropriate to the time of expectation which is, as Pascal tells us, the order of charity.

Marxist history, Sacramental history—we have contrasted them as representing two levels of reality and we have tried to show that Sacramental history alone embraces the totality of human existence and reaches the extremities of it. Does this mean that there is no communication between them? Is this movement of history, this dialectic of infrastructures and suprastructures which Marxism describes for us, completely foreign to the movement of Sacred history? The Marxist interpretation certainly is foreign in so far as it pretends to be a total explanation. But it is not foreign in so far as the elements of reality it uses constitute a certain human datum. In other words, if we consider that the dialectic of economic history ought to bring a total response to the human problem, we say and hope to have shown that it is an illusion. There is no salvation outside of Christ and His sacramental work. Man is radically incapable of saving himself. No invention, no revolution can solve the essential drama of his destiny.

But if profane history does not itself save, it is part of what is destined to be saved. Christ did not come to substitute another humanity for the one he has created.¹⁰ He came to liberate this humanity from its spiritual servitude. Hence, vain as is the pretension of human history to achieve the salvation of man, absurd as it is to think that in participating in scientific research or political action we help the salvation of the world and are agents of it, it is, nevertheless, legitimate to think that we are cooperating to build what will be saved. It is quite clear that the man who will be transfigured in glory will be the one that we make here below. It is as true to say that we constitute what will be transfigured as it is false to think

⁹ Oscar Cullman, "Le caractère eschatologique du devoir missionnaire," in *Revue Historique de Philosophie religieuse*, 1936, pp. 210 sqq.

¹⁰ This is the nuance which should be given to the expression of Louis Bouyer "La nouvelle création, c'est la mort de l'ancienne." "Christianisme et eschatologie," in *La vie intellectuelle*, Oct., 1948, p. 36.

that we work for its transfiguration. What is true on the individual plane is also true on the total plane. Profane history, the history of civilization and culture, come into the realm of Sacred history in so far as through Sacred history, profane history constitutes the humanity which the sacraments heal of spiritual miseries and bear into the kingdom of the Son.

Thus profane history is assumed into Sacred history and the Church in this sense participates in its assumption. But profane history always remains of secondary importance. This is what Mounier does not recognize when he seems to make the "sacralization" of the new figures of the world the constitutive element of the Church,¹¹ and when he charges those who oppose the liturgical cosmos to the scientific cosmos with "confusing outmoded forms of representation with the eternal essence of the religious act." No one is less attached than ourselves to outmoded structures.¹² That is why we denounce the illusion which "sacralizes," unduly, momentary and dead structures in order to see in them the very finality of the history of our time. This is also the point on which we disagree with Father Montuclard when he writes: "We realize that the progress of the Church cannot be in the hands of purely spiritual men."¹³ If we understand by the progress of the Church its adaptation to changes of social structures it is quite clear that this is not properly the work of saints. But this conception of the progress of the Church remains on the surface of history, in the very zone in which Marxism moves and where the transformation of the economic infrastructures constitutes a progress in which the Church merely becomes incarnate. But the real story of the Church is not to be found there. The real progress of the Church is in the liberation of captive souls by Baptism and in the extension of the glory of God by the Eucharist. The real protagonists of this history are the saints.

¹¹ Emmanuel Mounier, *La petite peur du XX^e siècle*, p. 103.

¹² "Christianisme et histoire," *Etudes*, Sept., 1947, p. 166.

¹³ "Je batirai mon Eglise," *Jeunesse de l'Eglise*, VIII, p. 25.