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ANGELUS

A JOURNAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION

Fr. Yves le Roux on

THE RETURN OF Attila

the consequences of protestantism

Marcel Lefebvre

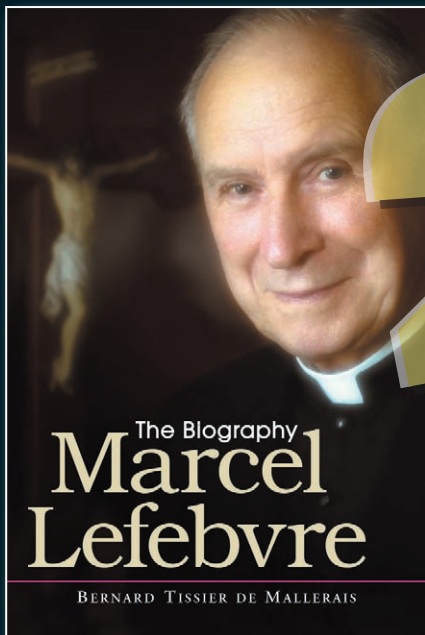
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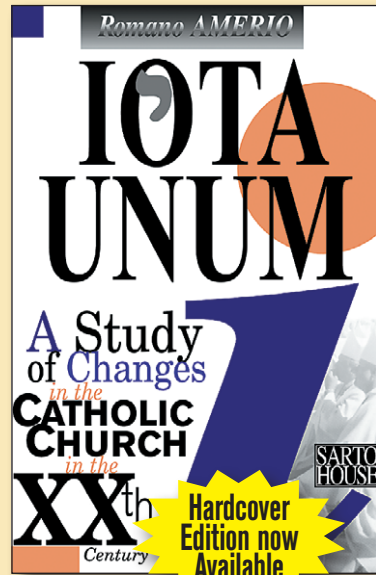
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—Pope St. Pius X

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Fr. Kenneth Novak

ASSISTANT EDITOR

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ON OUR COVER: Defrosted pork liver from the Regina Coeli House kitchen freezer. Photographed by Angelus Press on Friday, June 2, 2006!

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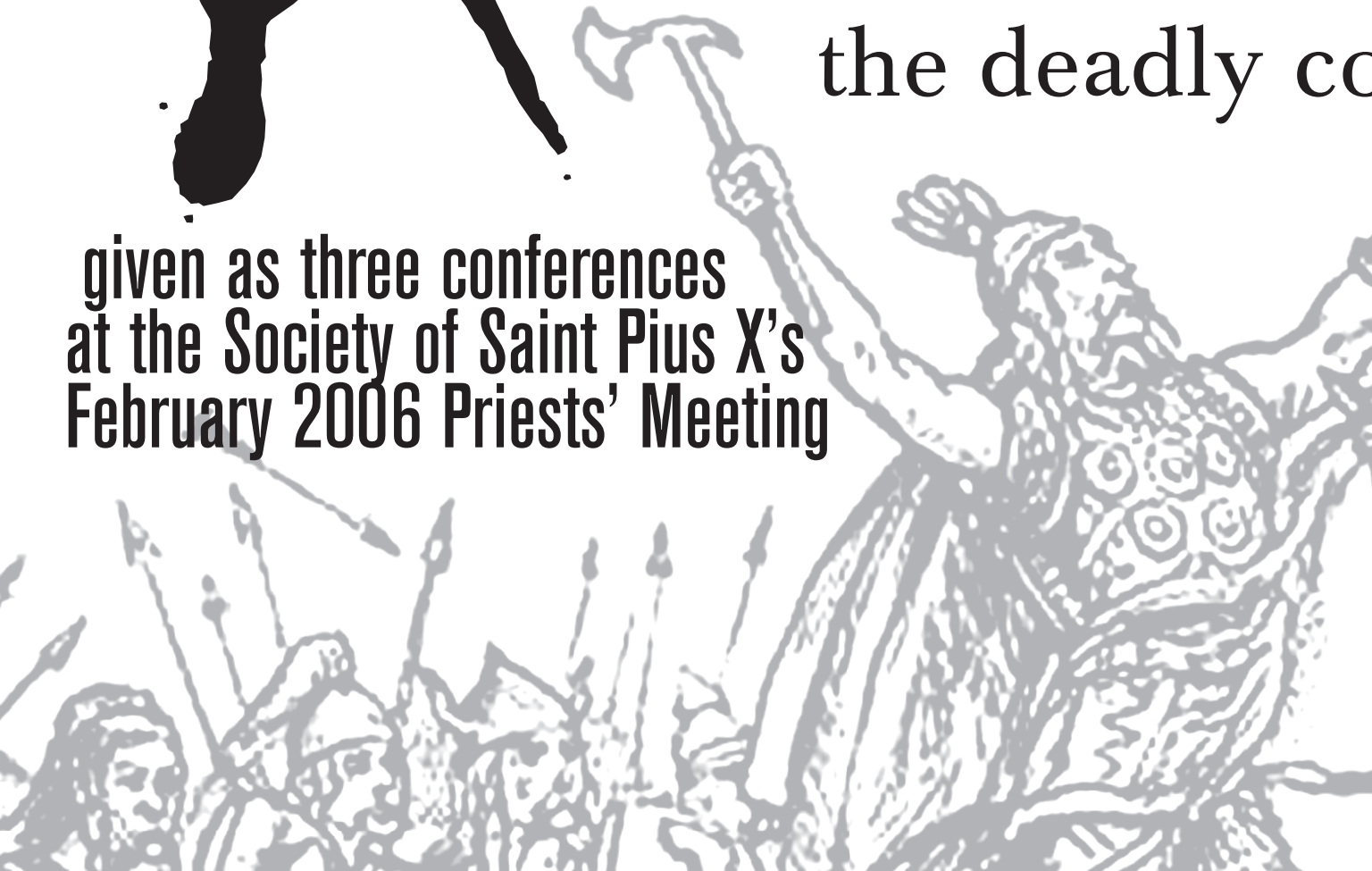
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FR. YVES LE ROUX

THE RETURN OF ATtila the deadly co

given as three conferences
at the Society of Saint Pius X's
February 2006 Priests' Meeting



I will not speak to you about Attila except to remind you that he was a barbarian, that his name Attila means “Little Father,” and that he was proud of his nickname, “the Scourge of God.” His famous line about himself was “Where I step, the grass no longer grows.” Attila is my metaphor for the deadly consequences of Protestantism.

It is impossible to adequately discuss Protestantism in a brief study. The subject is simply too vast; but, in fact, the actual subject of this article is the present consequences of Protestantism. Nevertheless, we will be obliged to consider Protestantism itself in order to discover the main traits of this error. In this way, we will be able to understand more deeply how our present world is the natural offspring of Protestantism, and how much this spirit has penetrated us, young and old alike, but particularly our youth.

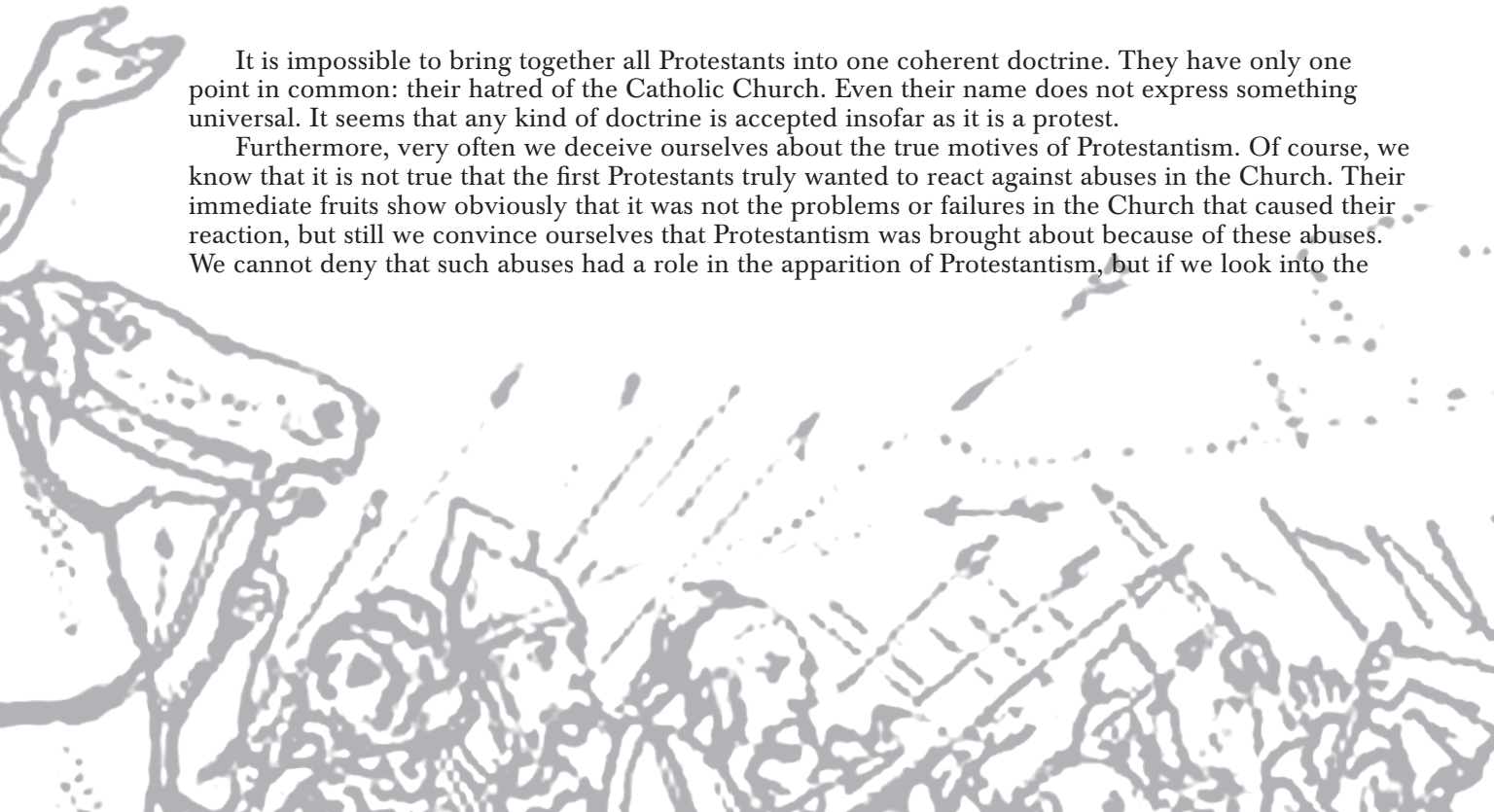
If you want to learn more about Protestantism, the best way is by reading *The Variations of the Protestant Churches* by Bossuet, or Maritain’s *Three Reformers*. *Le Sel de la Terre* has published some very good articles, too.

If we really want to know something, we must grasp its principle. If we know it, we will be able to know perfectly all its consequences. But regarding Protestantism, it is very difficult to grasp its principle. As Bossuet realized, nothing is constant in it. Its belief is always moving, uncertain, variable (we can find, at least, more than 20,000 Protestant sects in today’s world). Protestantism is constantly subject to variations. We can summarize the judgment of Bossuet in a short sentence: “You change; what changes is not the truth.”

Consequences of protestantism

It is impossible to bring together all Protestants into one coherent doctrine. They have only one point in common: their hatred of the Catholic Church. Even their name does not express something universal. It seems that any kind of doctrine is accepted insofar as it is a protest.

Furthermore, very often we deceive ourselves about the true motives of Protestantism. Of course, we know that it is not true that the first Protestants truly wanted to react against abuses in the Church. Their immediate fruits show obviously that it was not the problems or failures in the Church that caused their reaction, but still we convince ourselves that Protestantism was brought about because of these abuses. We cannot deny that such abuses had a role in the apparition of Protestantism, but if we look into the



times of St. Bernard or St. Peter Damian, we see that there were similar abuses and even worse. The existence of abuses is a constant phenomenon in the history of the Church.

The abuses of the Renaissance by themselves are not enough to explain Protestantism; their role is only secondary. They are more an occasion than the true cause. We should rather focus on the particular conditions, on the atmosphere of the Renaissance, with its deliberate break from the realism of medieval philosophy. The Renaissance marks the separation of the intelligence from reality. Its spirit of independence exploded with Descartes and all modern philosophy, but it existed already with the nominalism of William of Ockham (d. 1349), whose teaching influenced Luther. Since the Renaissance man made himself the center of everything, the Renaissance itself implies a true spiritual “Copernican revolution.”

In fact, we can apply to Protestantism the words of St. Pius X about modernism: the sewer of all the errors of the Renaissance. Nothing is original in Protestantism, but it was an instrument for the acceleration of the process of the destruction of Christendom. We may say that Protestantism is the heart of the Renaissance, its religion. Or better, that it is the Renaissance spirit conveyed into religion; I mean by that the religion of died-in-the-wool independence.

However, even this spirit of independence is not proper to Protestantism. It is the point of departure of all sects and their *reason* for rejecting the Faith. He who separates himself from Rome does it for this reason. Of course, this spirit of independence inherent in each error is multiplied by the libertarian tendency of the Renaissance and has some particular characteristics, as we will see later in our third point.

Notice that its only originality consists in not having anything truly original. We are indeed obliged to study the initiator of this error to be able to grasp the principle of Protestantism. Thus, a brief study on the life of the father of Protestantism is mandatory. As Maritain rightly points out, usually the whole life of a heresiarch depends on the error he professes. In the present case, we find the opposite: Luther’s life, and especially his problems, is the source of his error. This is why it is important to present, even briefly, his life.

As did Jacques Maritain in his book *The Three Reformers*, we could title this section “Luther” or “The Temptation of the Spirit.”¹ In fact, if Luther is known for his debasement, his true problem is of the spiritual order.

First of all, he received—as we already saw—a formation permeated by nominalism. In nominalism, our knowledge is something purely verbal and not a true apprehension of reality. Nominalism, or “terminism” if you prefer, is already idealism and cuts us from reality. Our intelligence, disconnected from what is, will withdraw into itself.

Furthermore, we know that, at the beginning of his religious life as an Augustinian monk, Luther was very fervent, but nevertheless was always worried and agitated. His romantic vocation during a violent storm already showed a feverish temperament. And, in fact, Luther forever looked for emotional consolations. His chief concern was to feel himself in the state of grace. He tried to find a false, disincarnated purity, and remained always unsatisfied, seeking a personal achievement rather than abandoning his sanctity to God. He fell into an egocentric mysticism. Counting only on his own forces, it is not very surprising therefore to see him falling into great crises of scruples. He invented a holiness in which human weakness has no part. He confused internal tension with attention to God.

Living intellectually and spiritually in a personal dream, in both cases cut off from reality, he was not ready to face any tests. In our life, a test is always a gift, an occasion for denying ourselves and finding refuge in God. But tests are also crossroads where we must choose between God and ourselves. We have to choose between fleeing from ourselves and fleeing from God. It is the famous phrase of St. Augustine: “If you wish to flee from God, flee to God.” Luther did not follow this advice, but, on the contrary, fled into activism.

This activism was, in fact, the result of his internal decay and played the role of an external compensation. It was a spiritual disaster the source of which was his despair in the face of grace, or, more accurately, his conception of grace, which was the projection of his pride in an idealistic life without weaknesses, faults, or miseries, a life in which I can feel that I am perfect. By temperament and formation, and also by the influence of his times, he was not prepared to make the required act of humility, which is to return to reality and to accept our true human nature with its limitations; difficult perhaps, but real nevertheless. Also, as his hypersensitivity inclined him, he reacted by pride and exaggerated reality.

His reasoning was as follows: Something is evil in me, therefore everything is evil. In fact, I am evil by nature: it is impossible for me to avoid evil. I must accept it, consent to be what I am. My being is intrinsically evil; I necessarily do what is evil, not because I am particularly evil, but because it is my very nature. And we have his terrible phrase: “*Pecca fortiter et crede firmiter!*—Sin mightily, but believe even more mightily!” Usually, we see in these words an invitation to sin, but it is something else, more subtle and dangerous. We are confronted with a perverse inversion of reality.

Keep in mind that Luther was frustrated because he was not able to be a saint by his own forces. Also, he affirmed that we are “walking sins” who can do nothing for our salvation (incapable even of cooperating with grace), and who must totally despair



Its very principle is a principle of dissolution, and not of life. It is free examination....Two roads open before us. In the first, man will consider that he receives his inspiration directly from God and he will fall into fanaticism....In the second, he puts all religious truth under the control of reason and he will fall into indifferentism. In any case, each man becomes a sect all to himself.

In fact, for him, grace is only a cover, a coat, nothing else. We are saved externally; we remain what we are deep within our being: putrefaction. That is what his second slogan—"Sola Gratia"—means. Luther totally refused any manner of cooperation. Everything is evil, especially our works. The "Sola Fides" doctrine opens the way to the "Solus Deus," because any intermediary can be nothing but human, not only useless but blasphemous! The Church, the priesthood, the Mass, and so on—everything is evil.

To summarize Luther's doctrine we must point out the doctrine of "Sola Scriptura." Once again, he did not want to have any intermediary between God and man. Divine revelation is given directly to men from God. He refused to accept the Church's authority for the determination of the canon of the Scriptures and for their interpretation. Behind this denial of any intermediary, we have already the whole drama of Protestantism, its refusal of true human nature, a nature that necessarily needs authority and intermediaries.

Protestantism does not possess any originality, but this does not mean that it does not have some distinguishing characteristics.

Luther's thought led him to deny the true state of man who, wounded by original sin, must fight constantly against the false attractions of his passions. The peace of man on earth is, therefore, the peace of the armed man, always vigilant, always on his guard. Luther refused this reality and our true condition of existence, and tried to obtain peace by his own forces. Of course, he fell. And—the temptation is classical—in his disappointment (which is a special form of despair), he preferred to blame everything else but himself. Permeated by his nominalist formation, permeated by the spirit of revolt of his times, permeated by self-love, Luther looked for a state of peace which would allow him to find some kind of peace. His conscience, obviously, bothered him much, especially if we remember his hypersensibility and his tendency to scruples. He had to find a system that soothed him. Instead of finding it, he created it by these four "soli" which are the pillars of his theory of justification (a term that teaches that we silence the warnings of our conscience), pillars of his justification for him, perhaps, but actually a deformation of the truth and, therefore, a stream of errors. Behind the terms used by Luther, which can deceive us, we must

of ourselves because our nature has been destroyed! According to Luther, this act of despair must be made. It is essential to make it, because it will lead us to "believe" (meaning "feel") that the blood of Christ has saved us. Willing to do anything else would be blasphemy. It would be claiming that it is possible to add something to the salvation obtained for us by Christ!

It is interesting to note the great difference between the Catholic notion of faith and the Protestant notion. The first one is a virtue by which we submit our intellect to a revealed doctrine. The second one is a movement of the heart, seeking consolation, as Melancthon [1497-1560] said, an act of confidence in the blood of Christ. (In passing, we may point out the internal contradiction: all our acts are evil because of our inherent corruption, but this act of confidence is good.)

Actually, the only sin which is without remission is the sin against this faith-confidence. And Luther would go so far as to claim that sinning could be better than practising virtue! Why? Because it is an occasion for receiving the Blood of Christ; and also because when Satan tries to tempt us we must perform—as he did himself—a "good sin" to overcome and mock him! In fact the only true sin is the lack of this sentimental confidence in God. Luther taught that only faith can save us—not charity. It is his famous "Sola Fides." But what kind of faith is it? It is not faith anymore, but a feeling of consolation that, even though we remain sinners, makes us one of the chosen of God! Am I exaggerating? Listen to Luther in his commentary on Galatians: "Your sins [believing] are not now yours, but are Christ's." It is, at least, a literary commentary on the famous passage of St. Paul! And he added: "And you, you become the beloved child, and everything is fine, and all that you do is good." We are truly, as sinners, the chosen of God...if we believe even more strongly, of course! In fact, the one truly responsible for our sins is God Himself! By the laws that He imposes on us, "God covers the sin which is inherent in marriage" (Luther in 1538, in a marriage sermon).

discern the reality and understand that faith, grace, God, and Holy Scripture do not exist anymore.

In this way we find the first true characteristic of Protestantism. Its very principle is a principle of dissolution, and not of life. It is free examination. This free examination is the Protestant principle in matters of faith, either referring only to reason or appealing to direct and private inspirations from Heaven. This spirit of free examination is constant in Protestantism, and consists in the substitution of the legitimate authority by private judgment, or, as it would be more accurate to say, by private feelings.

This principle reduces religion to a school of philosophy, because if somebody rebels against authority he rises up against the principle of the unity of faith. Actually, by her authority, the Church defends the Faith and transmits it. In Protestantism the supernatural no longer exists.

In fact, since free examination gives us the right to reach our own decisions in religious matters, two roads open before us: In the first, man believes that he receives his inspiration directly from God, and we fall into fanaticism. History proves that Protestantism flatters the natural disposition of the human mind to reduce the world to a system that gives man an answer for everything, but cuts him from reality. In the second, man puts all religious truth under the control of reason, and we fall into indifferentism. As a philosophical system, Protestantism leads to deism and from deism to atheism because of its principle of free examination, which essentially means the mind being independent. Historically also, the expansion of Protestant sects spreads the poison of indifferentism throughout Europe.

Protestantism is truly a school of philosophy based on the principle of free examination. Nowadays, we must qualify this philosophy. And this qualification will be our second characteristic of Protestantism. What is this philosophy? Refusing any authority other than the authority of each individual, Protestantism reduces each man to be a sect all by himself! For the time being, it is enough to point out the absolute subjectivism of this philosophical school. As a conclusion to this brief survey of Protestantism, we may quote Blaise Pascal: "He who wants to act as an angel, in the end acts as a devil!"

PRESENT CONSEQUENCES OF PROTESTANTISM

By making man withdraw into himself, subjectivism cuts him off from any reality other than himself. Losing the relation to reality, man is confronted with the impossibility of knowing what reality is. Therefore, he can no longer reach the truth. Actually, when the person himself becomes the only

known reality, truth becomes something very subjective. We will not talk about truth, but about personal perceptions. It is no longer truth, but "my truth." It is obvious that this reduction of truth is merely its destruction. Truth is reduced to sincerity, which is by itself very changeable according to our feelings. Furthermore, the theory of external justification leads us to live on the level of appearances. Trying to go deeper would be considered a sin against "faith" in the power of the Blood of Christ.

Protestantism fathers a new race of men, one of men whose sincerity changes greatly according to the feelings and appearances of the moment. But it would be a mistake to consider this new kind of man as hypocritical; in fact, it is even worse! Hypocrisy is a conscious and voluntary attitude regarding truth, in order to give the appearance of loving and being devoted to it.

This new race of men does not have any relation with reality and truth. Totally focused on himself, fascinated by appearances, modern man lives a lie, but without knowing that he does so. For him, it is a permanent and "normal" state of life. Nowadays, man lives superficially in an absolutely artificial world. How has this come to happen? By successive destructions, of which Protestantism is the source.

Destruction of Religion

We saw that Protestantism is merely a philosophy based on private judgment and no longer a religion. This is confirmed by the total absence of the characteristic marks of religion in Protestantism. Religion, indeed, always possesses an altar, a priesthood, a sacrifice. Everywhere and at every time, these three criteria are the constant characteristics of any kind of religion, independently of its truth or falseness. They belong to the very essence of religion. But none of these marks exists in Protestantism. This absence is clear proof that Protestantism is not a religion. Nevertheless, since it is something social and philosophical, we must try to introduce some qualifications in this political philosophy.

To do that we must go back to the true principle of Protestantism, which is, as we have seen, free examination. In fact, this principle proclaims the absolute superiority of reason to everything, even in religious matters. Reason can judge all because it is sovereign and independent. Reason is the source of order, and not an instrument that gives us the means for subjecting ourselves to a higher order.

In social matters, this complete independence of reason has a very precise name: Revolution. Robespierre even created a cult of Reason! Beyond tragic or bloody events, whatever the particular circumstances are, Revolution is always "the hatred



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of any order that has not been established by man himself, and in which he is not king and god at the same time." This famous definition of Revolution given by Msgr. Gaume is also the most perfect description of free examination. Protestantism is not Religion but Revolution.

And, in fact, it is a very dangerous form of Revolution! It is hidden and continual. It is hidden, because it presents itself under the guise of religion and even under the name of Christian religion. Only a few people are able to discern behind it a revolutionary weapon. Satan advances disguised! And we know that Revolution is really efficient when the blood no longer runs. The bloody period is only an obligatory stage to destroy something. Revolution can penetrate deeply in the minds of people only during a time of apparent peace, because everybody relaxes his vigilance, thinking that the Revolution is over. The Quiet Revolution in Quebec is a very interesting example. No blood, no terror, nothing violent, at least externally, but, in fact, a total and radical apostasy of the Province.

Revolution is also continual. The name of Protestantism itself shows that we must protest, and if the first reformers believed that they would be blindly obeyed after they cut their ties with Rome, the revolt rose up against them, led by their own disciples! The process cannot stop. It belongs to the very essence of Protestantism. Reason should not have to recognize any authority and must be continually in revolt.

This is why Protestantism cannot have a body of doctrine and a solid faith. Doctrine and faith are reduced to a feeling of confidence in the Blood of Christ. What has become important for Protestants is to have a "good conscience," in spite of the internal reproaches of their sins. In spite of, and at the same time, as a result, because for Protestantism, we are unable to avoid sinning, and the true forgiveness of God does not exist at all. Protestantism is an awful blasphemy against the mercy of God and a permanent source of anxiety for its followers. Protestantism is a powerful instrument for the subtle destruction of religion because, appearing to be a religion for many people, it makes them slaves of sin and in constant rebellion against the order of God and particularly the order of His Mercy.

Destruction of Morals

We could say, if we want to absolutely preserve the status of a religion for Protestantism, that it is the religion of the worship of original sin. In fact, original sin seems so powerful that nothing and no one—not even God Himself—can do anything against it. Since we have sinned in Adam, nothing is good. Everything that we do is evil. That is why works are useless, and even evil: because they give us a false peace. It is impossible to make a distinction between good and evil, other than by law. That is why Luther, talking about marriage, accused God Himself of inciting us to sin. We fall into that legalism where only the law—and not virtue—can make us good.

Notice, in passing, a new contradiction: the principle of free examination exempts us from any authority and gives us the absolute power to decide what is good and what is evil. This principle should also exempt us from the power of any law—but, at the same time, it is the law, and only the law, that can make us good!

The refusal of any kind of virtue closes the door to happiness. To claim that nothing is good places an unbearable burden upon the shoulders of men. In fact, Protestants are not reputed for being joyful, and we can understand why. It is interesting to point out that, even among us, modern man, not having the desire for virtue, does not have the desire for happiness either. Sometimes the desire for happiness is even considered an evil inclination.

This pretension that it is possible to be at the same time a sinner and a beloved son of God is such a great contradiction that it is the ruin of morality. How is it possible to reconcile God and imperfection? Protestantism does not teach us morals, but how to appease our conscience, instead of fighting against our evil tendencies and temptations. About temptations, we already saw that Luther taught that the best way to fight against the devil is to try to find a great temptation and to propose to do it, in order to show the

devil that we are not worried about sinning. It is a very strange morality that leads us to follow the insinuations of the devil in order to fight against him.

Further, since doctrine is nothing, from where will morals spring? Morality is, in fact, rooted in doctrine; we can say that morality is the incarnation of doctrine. Without a previous doctrine, morality is only moralism. Moralism is the surest destruction of morals. Morality is not able to justify morals by itself. Moralism tries to do that. That is why moralism is so stifling and disgusts even those who are under its power. This inversion of morals and doctrine is the true essence of Puritanism. Puritanism belongs to the very essence of Protestantism. It is not only a horror, but a true danger, because of this deadly inversion of order.

Legalism, moralism, the loss of a sense of happiness—the way towards licentiousness is wide open. In the end, free examination is by itself a weapon against morality.

Destruction of Society

“Against the facts, there is no argument.” Man, living in society, is a fact, a necessity of nature. But now we know that Protestantism—which is naturalism—distrusts and despises nature, considering it entirely putrefaction. Furthermore, Protestantism, according to its principle of free examination, rejects any authority and considers it illegitimate.

However, historically speaking, Protestants were obliged to obtain the support of secular authority to escape the authority of the Church. They did it by proposing that the secular authority espouse its theories in order to help them become emancipated from the spiritual power. Of course, they received a favorable reception from the civil authority.

Here, it is impossible not to stop briefly in order to point out that the principle of free examination is

really a principle of the destruction of order. It allows man to become radically emancipated from any kind of authority. Applied at the level of political society, this principle emancipates the temporal power from the spiritual power. The civil power no longer has to be concerned by religion, except to allow all religions to live peacefully together under its tutelage. The principle of religious liberty—which is the real dissolution of a society unable to acknowledge its God, as every creature must do—is all entirely here.

Let us come back to the political men who accepted the proposal of Luther to emancipate themselves from the power of the Church. There is here a terrible risk, which consists in falling into a pitiless tyranny. There is no longer over the secular power another power that prevents it from overstepping its limits. However, this classical tyranny cannot manage to last for a long time. Here intervenes Protestantism, which is essentially a weapon for revolution. Having undermined all the natural foundations by its principle of free examination, Protestantism must find a support, an authority that will enable it to last. Tyranny is indispensable for the survival of Protestantism, but this tyranny must be of the same nature as Protestantism in order to help it effectively, and since Protestantism is a hidden but real Revolution, this tyranny must also be hidden but real. Also, this tyranny will be a soft tyranny; this soft tyranny is “democratism.” What is this neologism? It means considering democracy as a religion, a new messianism that is the universal solution for all evils.

How can I claim that the surrounding democratism comes from Protestantism? Of course, I do not deny some other influences, particularly Freemasonry. We can find a lot of similarities between modern democracy and Protestantism, so many affinities that we are justified in thinking that modern democracy is really the politics of Protestantism, and its necessary tyranny. In this new regime, we do not

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have the union between the spiritual and the temporal powers, but a confusion of them.

In fact, modern democracy is for society what original sin is for man. In the Garden of Eden, indeed, Adam and Eve were deceived by Satan in the name a pretended jealousy of God regarding His authority: "Take, eat; you will be as God, having authority to decide good or evil." Universal suffrage says the very same thing: "You can be as God, free-independent and equal-without any authority over you. It is not fitting to have over you a transcendent authority." It is the famous "neither master nor God," the modern translation of the "*Non serviam*."

In order to assure the smooth running of affairs, a representative must be elected, but he will have to give you an account of his work because you—and only you, by the simple fact that you are a man—possess authority on your own. This representative will be here only to apply the general will, which is the only thing able to decide what is good and evil.

In fact, universal suffrage is a denial of the Catholic principle that affirms that all authority comes from God. On the contrary, it fits perfectly with the Protestant principle that claims that authority comes from man and that only man can decide what is good and evil. Once again, we find the principle of free examination. And it imposes a subtle tyranny, where men think they are free when they are in fact slaves—slaves of other men who use this new principle of democratic election to lead people to hell in the name of the general will. Remember that after original sin, Adam and Eve thought they were also free.

Protestantism does not only reduce men into slavery by denying the true origin of authority, but it destroys society itself. Protestantism claims that nature is completely evil, but society is a natural need of human nature, therefore society is also evil and must disappear. We have in mind, of course, this slogan of Rousseau, himself formed by Protestantism: "Man is born good; society corrupts him." But it is impossible to destroy society physically. Actually, society will subsist under this form of democratism. But its end will no longer be the common good. Materially,

society subsists, but it is only a corpse—its formality no longer exists. Nowadays, the common good has disappeared and has been replaced by the search for profit. The essential attitude of man is to look out for himself—thus, only the individual counts, and from it arises individualism. It is exactly the opposite of what a society must have as its end, the good of the community.

Society ceases to exist, except on the purely material level, where there are only different techniques to help us to make money. Our world, the child of Protestantism, is as Marcel De Corte rightly said, a "*dis-society*"!

Destruction of the Family

If society no longer exists, then what happens to the family? Once we know how much Protestantism opposes any kind of authority, we have a family without fatherhood. The disappearance of the father and of his role in the family—a real disaster that we see today—is the result of Protestantism's hatred of order and rejection of any authority. A family without a father is a society without authority. Quite simply, the family does not exist.

In order to understand that the family does not exist when it is only an apparent family, I ask you to look at the problem of the lack of affection in our families. The family is a microcosm, in which man learns how to live. Later he will reproduce what he has received, and what he did not receive will be almost impossible for him to receive later unless he comes to belong to a family again, such as a monastery, seminary, or school (although these are less of a family). He could also receive it by undergoing some trial, but even this trial must be something truly hard, which will oblige him to face reality. But if it happens, there is a great danger that he will break down. In fact, to be effective, that trial must bring him back into a relationship with some kind of paternity. Nothing, indeed, can replace the family. In a normal family, the children receive affection, and through it their souls receive a deep imprint that gives them balance for their whole life, giving them the ability to judge reality later. On the contrary, it is medically proven that a lack of affection creates some grave psychological problems.

What is truly affection? It is a love of benevolence by which we want to procure the good of someone else. This love is not a passion; it belongs to the virtues, because only the virtues can help us attain the good. But now we have learned that in Protestantism the virtues—and the good, of course—do not exist. Therefore, affection is impossible within Protestantism.

If we remember that Protestantism reduces faith and grace to a feeling of consolation, it will not be too hard to understand that at this particular level, affection is, in turn, replaced by consolation. Actually, rather than giving the affection that trains the children's souls in the virtues, the parents give sentimental consolations, which is much more dangerous insofar as they think, in their sincerity, that they are giving something good. In fact, they spoil their children, because they provoke in them an inexhaustible need. Consolations are at the level of feelings; we must feel that we are loved. But nothing is as changing and short-lived as feelings; also, we always need an external manifestation of love, external proofs of consideration. In this case, we are close to falling into sensuality, and far from teaching true love. Consolations open the door to disaster—perhaps later, but certain nonetheless.

By “sensuality” I do not only mean sins of impurity, but our being unable to fulfill our responsibilities and to face any problems in our life simply because we do not receive our share of consolations! See how this “sensuality” affects obedience:

we need to be sure that our superior loves us very much and that a new assignment or task is actually a manifestation of his love for us. Then a superior has the duty to manifest this. Watch out! I do not say that a superior should lack humanity or kindness, but, precisely, consolations are not human, but animal! And they are not an end, because they do not give us anything for our soul. But, of course, the soul belongs to our internal nature and to the virtues.

In fact, this consolation creates a false atmosphere at home, an artificial ambiance of happiness, something stereotyped, where we are happy because we must be—it is mandatory. To correspond to this external mandate, we avoid tackling any deep subject and we stay at the level of things politically correct. Once again, also at this level, truth does not matter, the feeling of sincerity replaces it. We are happy because we must be, because of the consolations. It is totally ridiculous! But it really happens today—consider the *Barney* phenomenon! [“Barney” is a purple dinosaur famous for his jingle, “I love you. You love me. We are a happy family.”—*Ed.*]

The family is today destroyed by the spirit of individualism, which is a product of Protestantism, as we have seen. Do not think that we are free from this kind of problem. We are members of the present Protestant society and we carry its wounds. Our families are families of our dissociety, which is the soft revolution of our time.

Destruction of Man Himself

Dissociety destroys families. What remains? Man. Only man! But what is man alone?—A monster!

To live in society is a necessity for a man, more than for an animal. We need to be received into a society, our family, which will give us an education that will enable us to act as a man. But a man who is only an individual without religion, without society, and without family is actually less than an animal. An animal can

guide itself by its instincts, but man does not have the same instincts.

Also, he will be led by his passions or he will become the ideal prey of any system, as we can see in the modern world.

If we use what we said about the family, we can ask ourselves this question: what is a man without a father? A man handicapped for his whole life! He will remain forever a teenager, charming perhaps, but a very unbalanced person, not having a model for maturing. All his life he will be subject to his passions and never happy, never simply a man, unable to make decisions, unable to think, because he will be always a slave of consolations. Modern man is

a beggar for consolations, not an adult.

But we must go further and affirm that moralism is the destruction of the intelligence, and, therefore, the very destruction of man. Moralism is a perversion of order, an intellectual inversion of order, an institutionalized disorder that puts morals as its ultimate reason for being. Morals are no longer rooted in doctrine, as we have seen. Nothing justifies



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a morality that is justified by itself! In these morals, we do not have an inclination towards the ultimate end, we do not have to answer the question “Why?” The answer is obvious, systematical and fanatical: “Because it is the law!” But if we do not ask why, we no longer respect the order of the intelligence, of which the proper end is to know. We reduce it to living on the level of the “How?” question. Here is still an inversion: the “how” question comes *after* the “why” question. The intelligence cannot endure this constant inversion without being damaged. In this way, it becomes very difficult to use the intelligence and to know reality truly and deeply. The snare is that the inversion of the two questions does not impede us from making money, because we remain on the practical level, where the “why” question is not essential. But in this way we reduce man to being a machine, not a thinking being.

In Protestantism, this death of the intelligence is not accidental. In fact, it comes from the very principle of Protestantism: free examination. But this death of the intelligence is very dangerous, because we are no longer able to realize that we are suffering from this constant inversion in the present world and we become Protestants without even knowing it.

The principle of free examination gives all power to reason, which is sovereign and omnipotent; nothing is above it, especially not any kind of authority. In reality, this principle totally destroys the intelligence by flattering it with the sirens’ song of independence and by refusing to consider its frailty and its need to lean on a superior authority to overcome this fragility.

For Luther, reason is a weapon used by the devil to deceive men. His anxiety and his pride pushed him to find a system where he does not have to change but where, at the same time, he may have a “good conscience.” This manifest refusal to search for truth obliges him to deny any value to the intelligence. Everybody knows his words about reason, the “whore of the devil.” But we can quote also some other interesting phrases from him, either about St. Thomas: “...who never understood one chapter of the Gospel or of Aristotle,” or about Aristotle himself: “a child that we must put in a pigsty or in the stable of donkeys.” Finally, a general judgment about reason: “Reason is contrary to faith.” Actually, it is enough to remember that Luther, by his total inversion of things, already destroyed the intelligence, which cannot act upside down.

Furthermore, intelligence and will no longer have an object. Intelligence allows us to discover the truth, and the will, to attain the good. Nowadays, sincerity replaces truth, and the good is something created by our feelings. At least we can say that the intelligence and will are atrophied.

Man no longer exists. He is an individual without defense against the modern Moloch, not only because of this error, which is spread everywhere, but also because Protestantism, refusing to recognize the value

of the natural order, invented a system in which man is no longer a reasonable creature endowed with intellect and will.


A Barbaric State

A system created by an apostate monk to justify his behavior, Protestantism destroyed, by its principle of free examination, the whole natural order. Nowadays, we are facing a field of ruins. Our times are a return to the state of barbarism, and it is even worse because our age has apostatized. Protestantism can be compared to Attila because when it comes somewhere, nothing remains.

CONCLUSION

With this introduction, we have become aware of the extent of the damage and the present state of the whole world. If we understand the problem more profoundly, we will be able to understand that the true remedy is essentially metaphysical: we must recover the sense of reality, the sense of being. The true remedy is the study of St. Thomas, master of reality, of humility. We need to return to the soil, because the “soil does not lie” and gives us again the sense of reality and truth.

We must not despair. We know the passage of St. Thomas about original sin: “Robbed of grace, with a wounded nature, yet nature remains whole.” It is sufficient to apply it. Nature subsists, in spite of the error of Luther. It is, indeed, wounded by our own faults, but God’s grace can cure us and give us even more grace, as the *Lavabo* prayer says.

I think that the liturgy is a very efficacious remedy for ridding ourselves of the legalistic, Protestant frame of mind which, unfortunately, has also penetrated us. The liturgy incorporates us in Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and Life. Yet we must not reduce the liturgy to another legalism; rather, we must follow the example of our founder, Archbishop Lefebvre, who encouraged an active and intelligent participation in Mass. The liturgy is certainly the most appropriate remedy for our faithful, particularly for our youth, and also for ourselves. True contact with Christ in the liturgy is the best antidote against the pernicious and widespread error that is Protestantism. 

Fr. Yves le Roux was ordained for the Society of Saint Pius X in 1990 and is currently Rector of St. Thomas Aquinas Seminary in Winona, Minnesota. This presentation was given at the SSPX’s annual Priests’ Meeting held in February 2006 at the Seminary. It was transcribed by Angelus Press with minor editing by Fr. Kenneth Novak for clarity.

¹ This explication of Luther’s doctrine follows Maritain’s analysis in *Three Reformers: Luther, Descartes, Rousseau* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, n.d.), pp.3-50.



What is

THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X'S GENERAL CHAPTER?

On July 3, 2006, the Society of Saint Pius X will open its Third Ordinary General Chapter, during which, most importantly among all the matters on the agenda, the Superior General (currently His Excellency Bishop Bernard Fellay) for the next 12 years will be elected. What is a General Chapter? What happens during the Chapter? Who participates? What are the rules for the election of the Superior General? These are the questions you want answered.

The General Chapter is the supreme and *extraordinary* authority of the Society of Saint Pius X. (The *ordinary* authority, by the way, is the Superior General assisted by his council.) Such a meeting is given different titles among the Church's other orders; for example, the Society of Jesus calls theirs the "General Congregation." The General Chapter is the only entity—should there be a need to do so—able to amend the Statutes. The "ordinary" General Chapter

meets every 12 years. The Society of Saint Pius X being founded in 1970, the upcoming Chapter will be the third to convene in its history. Additionally, the Superior General is allowed to convene an “extraordinary” Chapter for exceptional reasons, though the occasion for one has never yet arisen. The Superior General may also convene a “consultative” Chapter to consider particular issues that arise. Such a gathering would be attended by the superiors concerned acting in an advisory role only. The first and essential goal of an ordinary General Chapter like the one to be held this year is the election of the Superior General and his assistants. Its second goal is to examine if the Society of Saint Pius X is conscientiously applying its statutes worldwide and is endeavoring to preserve their spirit.

The General Chapter is composed of people designated by their “office,” that is to say, their function in the Society’s work. By office they are the standing Superior General and his two assistants, the bishops, the former Superior Generals, the Secretary General and the Treasurer General, the District Superiors, the Rectors of the Major Seminaries, and the Superiors of the Autonomous Houses. It also includes in its number the most senior priests who do not hold the above mentioned charges or offices in number equal to one-third of the number of members by office.

There will be 40 members present at the 2006 General Chapter, 30 of whom will be there because of their office. The members by seniority are therefore 10 (one-third of 30) constituting numerically a quarter of the Chapter. These “elders” made their engagement in the Society of Saint Pius X between 1971 (the two eldest) and 1974 (the two most recent). They are not without leadership experience. Among them are three former District Superiors and one former Seminary Rector.


While gathering men holding high positions or with great seniority in the work, the Chapter nevertheless presents a varied human palette, giving an assurance of a diverse and wise view of reality. The most venerable of the Chapter members is 66, the youngest 32. The priest with the greatest seniority in the priesthood was ordained in 1972 while the youngest was ordained in 2001. Thirty-two members come from six countries in Europe: Germany, France, Austria, Spain, Great Britain, and Switzerland. This Chapter’s eight non-Europeans include representatives from Australia, South Africa, Argentina, Canada, and the US. The French comprise nine of the ten “elders,” testifying to the fact that most of the Society’s first seminarian recruits came from France. At this Chapter, the delegation from the US District of the Society of Saint Pius X will number four. Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa do not have representatives in this Chapter.

Before the proceedings the Chapter must be prepared. Well in advance, each member-priest of the

Society is invited to submit his suggestions, if any, for discussion. For their part, the Superior General and his Council prepare the matters to be presented to the Chapter as well as a report on the state of the Society of Saint Pius X during the past 12-year term, including its global financial status. Meanwhile, in accordance with the Statutes, the Secretary General draws up the list of capitularies (attendees at the Chapter), which is definitively fixed six months before the Chapter convenes (except for possible deaths). The same Secretary classifies and gathers in a single document the suggestions sent by the members to the General House in Menzingen, Switzerland, the Society’s international headquarters. The Secretary General then sends to all of the capitularies the list of the Chapter members and the Chapter agenda for their personal study and reflection. During this period, special prayers to implore the inspiration of the Holy Ghost over the future Chapter are offered by all the Society members. Upon their arrival for the Chapter, in order to dispose themselves to act according to the Divine Spirit, the capitularies make a spiritual retreat of three days.

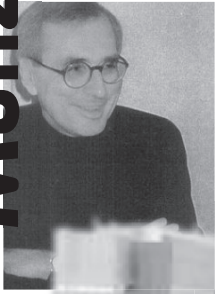
After these spiritual preliminaries, the oath required by canon law is taken, followed by the verification of the credentials of the members present to take part in the Chapter, the report of the outgoing Superior General, and various preparatory meetings. Then follows the election of the new Superior General and his two assistants by secret ballot. The Superior General must be elected by at least two-thirds of the ballots. The two assistants must be elected by a simple majority of the votes. All three positions must be filled by priests who are at least 30 years old and who are permanent members of the Society of Saint Pius X.

A Superior General can be re-elected. Archbishop Lefebvre mentioned this possibility in the first sentence of the Statutes dealing with the Superior General: “The Superior General and his two Assistants are elected by the General Chapter for twelve years. They may be re-elected.”...[Arguments in favor of re-election are] experience, continuity, and a Superior General with publicly known presence.... It will be for the capitularies, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, to choose the cleric (another or the current one) who will wisely guide the Society of Saint Pius X for the next 12 years.

The Chapter does not conclude after the election of the Superior General; it continues under the presidency of the new Superior General. The Chapter studies the questions compiled by the General House which were submitted by the Society’s members and those that come up during the Chapter itself. A simple majority of votes is required for passage of any resolution which will have force of law for the Society of Saint Pius X. 

The author is a regular contributor to the French District’s bi-monthly magazine *Fideliter*. This article was translated from *Fideliter* (May-June, 2006) and abridged by Fr. Kenneth Novak. The 2006 General Chapter will be held at the mother seminary of the SSPX in Ecône, Switzerland (pictured).

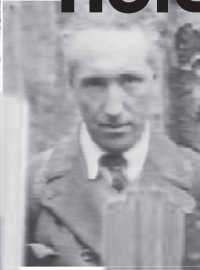
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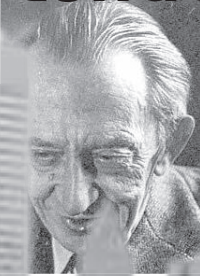


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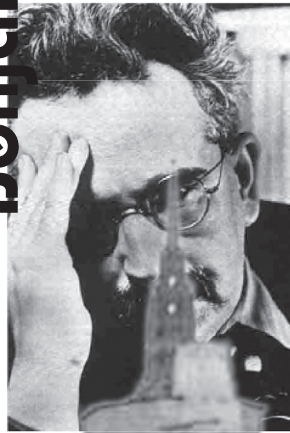
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THE FRANK
cultural revolution

An article recommended for publication by Fr. Franz Schmidberger, First Assistant to Superior General Bishop Bernard Fellay, reporting the ingenuity and perseverance of the children of darkness played out against the frequently gullible children of light.

Benjamin



Korsch



Horkheimer



Adorno



arcuse



KFURT SCHOOL

ARNAUD DE LASSUS

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In general terms, one can identify two types of Revolution. First, there is *political* revolution: the gaining of power through violence and the use of terror. The revolutions of 1789-93 in France and of 1917 in Russia provide a good illustration of this type. Second, there is *cultural* revolution in which one demolishes from within the basis of civilization in the country one wants to conquer—its culture, way of life, beliefs, morality, scale of values, *etc.* It is a long-term action undertaken without visible violence by applying the formula: “Modern forms of subjection are marked by mildness.”¹

Why is it important to study the process of cultural revolution, which is generally less known than that of political revolution? Because it shows itself to be particularly effective in Catholic countries. Poland gives us a typical example of this: Here is a country that for 50 years had resisted Marxist political power and, in spite of it, had preserved its religion and its morality. However, within a few years of a cultural revolution arriving from the West, morality and customs were penetrated by anti-Christian influences and were adapted to Western standards, which has made us fear a rapid de-Christianization of the country.²

Cultural revolution is not a new phenomenon. Joseph de Maistre, at the beginning of the 19th century, characterized it as follows:

Until now, nations were killed by conquest, that is by invasion. But here an important question arises: can a nation not die on its own soil, without resettlement or invasion, by allowing the flies of decomposition to corrupt to the very core those original and constituent principles which make it what it is?³

The cultural revolution has been systematized particularly since the 1920's, following an initiative of Lenin and the creation of what was called the *Frankfurt School*. We propose to produce some basic information about this initiative and the Frankfurt School, and to demonstrate how they contributed powerfully to the counterculture which triumphs today.

Marx and the Freemasons

In 1843, some five years before the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx wrote to a friend:

Here is what we have to accomplish: ruthless criticism of all that exists. Ruthless in two ways: the criticism should neither be afraid of its own conclusions nor of the conflicts with the powers that be.

Ruthless criticism of all that exists: by this he meant not only politics, religion, law and family, but all the elements of Western culture. These ideas

of Marx corresponded with those brought into play by the Freemasons at the same time. It will suffice to quote two texts by members of the Italian *Alta Vendita*.⁴

To propagate light, it is both fit and useful to set everything which aspires to move in motion. The essential thing is to isolate men from their families, to make them lose their morals. [Piccolo Tigre,⁵ (1822)⁶]

Catholicism is no more afraid of the sharp dagger than are monarchies; but these two bases of social order can collapse by corruption: let us therefore never grow tired of corrupting. Pervert hearts and you will have no more Catholics. [Vindice,⁷ (1838)⁸]

After the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Marxism concentrated on political and economic action. Its attack on Western culture moved on to the second phase. It was not until the 1920's that we saw Marxists methodically taking up again Marx's ideas of 1843.

Communist Failures and the Cultural Revolution Project

After the October Revolution in Russia, one of Lenin's ideas had been to export revolution to Central and Western Europe in order to save it in Russia. It was a failure. Revolution almost failed in Russia, but was saved thanks to American financial support. It failed in Hungary, too, where Bela Kun in 1919 was not able to maintain a Communist regime for more than 133 days. It failed in Germany, where the Spartacus League, founded in 1916, organized an uprising in Berlin in 1919, which was fiercely suppressed. It failed in Italy, where Communist parties and unions were subjected to a crushing defeat by the ex-Socialist Mussolini.

Reflection on these failures led to conclusions regarding methodology. First, Marx had predicted that industrialization would lead to intolerable conditions for the working classes and the elimination of the lower middle class. These predictions were shown to be erroneous. The increase in productivity improved the quality of life of all classes. Second, it became clear the proletariat could never be the tool to overthrow the industrialized West and allow importation of revolution there. Third, it was necessary to abandon any idea of a frontal assault against the bourgeoisie and capitalism in the developed countries of the West. Fourth, the West could only be overthrown after destruction of its living strength through the treason of intellectuals.

Thus, Communists were led to rediscover those intuitions that Marx had had before the *Manifesto* of 1848 and to begin a cultural revolution of the Marxist type by exploiting thoroughly all the forms of dialectic. To give concrete effect to the previous reflections, a meeting was organized at the end of 1922 on Lenin's initiative at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow. It clarified the concept of cultural revolution and the basis of its organization.

"It was perhaps more harmful to Western civilization than the Bolshevik Revolution itself," writes Ralph de Toledano.⁹ Participants in the meeting were Karl Radek, Lenin's representative; Felix Dzherzhinsky,¹⁰ to ensure that whatever strategy emerged would be integrated into the Soviet worldwide network of murder and subversion; Willi Munzenberg; and Georg Lukacs.

Let us consider the two most influential members at this meeting: Willi Munzenberg and Georg Lukacs. *Willi Munzenberg* played an important role in the creation of the Comintern.¹¹ He was a German Communist leader in the inter-war period who brought a sense of organization to the proposed cultural revolution. He was later murdered on the orders of Stalin.¹² *Georg Lukacs* (1885-1971) was of a Jewish family from Hungary. He was the People's Commissar for Culture and Education in Bela Kun's Communist government in Hungary. As a good Marxist theoretician he developed the subject "Revolution and Eros," in other words, to use sex instinct as an instrument of destruction. In the cultural revolution project, his role was decisive. He brought his ideas to it and it benefited from his knowledge of the cultural field and his relations with German-speaking artists and intellectuals.

The Power of a Small Number

Munzenberg and Lukacs both knew that societies and civilizations are not propelled by mass movements. The Bolshevik Revolution had not been brought about by mass demonstrations, but by the disintegration of Czarism, the corruption of the ruling class, and by the erosion of that class's faith in itself and its will to hold to power. Lenin's theoretical journal, *Iskra*, which was instrumental in bringing down the imperial regime, had a circulation of 3000—and all of them intellectuals.¹³

The success of a strategy which would bring about that disintegration, corruption, and erosion in the West, the cultural revolution could alone produce the pre-emptive conditions for a Communist revolution. The obstacle was Western civilization itself and the culture it engendered.

Western civilization was made up of many mansions—the morality that derives from religion, the family,

respect for the past as a guide to the future, the restraint of man's baser instincts, and a social and political organization which guaranteed freedom without inviting license. And of these obstacles, the two greatest were an immanent God and the family.

This was the message of the Marx of 1843, before he launched into pseudo-scientific economic history. His call then was for the ruthless criticism of everything existing, but particularly religion, science, and the family. Then, with Western man "liberated" of his humanity and rooting in the mud, the new, politically correct society would arise.¹⁴

How would it be brought about? The first key idea was to act upon the intellectuals:

We must organize the intellectuals and use them to make Western civilization stink. Only then, after they have corrupted all its values and made life impossible, can we impose the dictatorship of the proletariat.¹⁵

The second key idea was to exploit Freud's ideas in a Marxist way:

The start of conceptual debasement of man's sexual instincts had been begun by Sigmund Freud....Sex, the most explosive aspect of the human psyche, was to be unleashed. An amalgam of neo-Freudianism and neo-Marxism were to destroy the fragile defenses of Western civilization's immune system.¹⁶

The Frankfurt School's German Phase (1923-32)

To incarnate this worldview, an Institute for Marxism was founded at Frankfurt in 1923. It quickly took a more neutral label: "The Institute for Social Research."¹⁷ Frankfurt was not chosen accidentally. Since the Middle Ages, Frankfurt has been one of the most important centers of influence in Germany. Frankfurt was the city of origin of several financial dynasties. In the 18th century, Frankfurt was the center of the Bavarian Illuminati, of that High Masonry which played a key role in the preparation of the French Revolution. It was near Frankfurt where, in 1781, a Masonic assembly decided upon the death of Louis XVI and the King of Sweden. In the 20th century:

Frankfurt was the German city that had the highest percentage of Jews in the population of any German town; the Jewish community residing there was the best known and, after Berlin, the second largest Jewish community....It was a city in which the number of middle-class sympathizers with socialism and communism was unusually high.¹⁸

It is therefore logical that it was at Frankfurt that the research institute for the study of the planning stage of cultural revolution—the Institute for Social

Research, and which after 1960 was to be called the Frankfurt School—should be set up.

The Institute for Social Research

From 1923-30, the Institute was directed by **Carl Grünberg**, known and respected in academic circles, of Austrian origin and Marxist convictions. From 1930-58, it was directed by **Max Horkheimer**, a doctor of philosophy and of Marxist orientation. After having supplied the Institute with a good number of its basic ideas, it was said of Georg Lukacs, who left it afterwards, “Whatever the disagreements that separated them in subsequent years—and they were serious—the Institute and Lukacs spoke to similar questions from within a common tradition.”¹⁹

The other important personalities at the Institute were: **Erich Fromm** (1900-80); **Theodor Adorno** (1903-69), author of the book *The Authoritarian Personality*, which we will address below; **Karl Korsch** (1886-1961); **Wilhelm Reich** (1897-1957); **Friedrich Pollock** (1894-1970); **Walter Benjamin** (1892-1940); and **Herbert Marcuse** (1898-1979), who was accepted as a member of the Institute in 1932. It is important to note that Herbert Marcuse’s arrival strengthened the group of those within the Institute who had adopted “a dialectical rather than a mechanical understanding of Marxism.”²⁰ This means that the Marxists of the Institute held ideas more akin to Trotsky (revolution spread throughout like a virus) rather than of Stalin’s monolithism.

The Frankfurt School in the US

When in 1933 Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, the Institute closed its doors in Frankfurt and re-organized itself in the US. What follows is a description by Jeffrey Steinberg in his (as yet unpublished) study *Draft Report on Manchurian Children*²¹ on the installation of the Institute in the US and its fields of activity in the years 1932-50.

By the early 1930’s, the Frankfurt School²² abandoned pre-Hitler Germany, where they had already played a mighty role in the cultural decadence that fostered the Nazis, and, after a brief sojourn in Switzerland, settled in the US. Courtesy of Columbia and Princeton Universities, the London School of Economics, the British Fabian Society, education subversive John Dewey, the Rockefeller family foundations, and others, leading figures in the Frankfurt School were given privileged positions in the elite American universities.

Columbia University became the official “American home” of the Frankfurt School.

At Princeton University, Frankfurt School member Paul Lazarsfeld headed the Radio Research Project, an early social engineering and social profiling effort, bankrolled by the Rockefeller foundations and the U.S. Army. Frankfurt School leader Theodor Adorno became the head of the music studies unit under Lazarsfeld, where he wrote, in the 1930’s and 1940’s, about the prospects of unleashing atonal and other forms of popular music as a weapon to destroy society. In his seminal work, *The Theory of Modern Music*, Adorno advocated the use of such degenerate forms of music to promote mental illness—including necrophilia—on a mass scale. He wrote elsewhere that the United States could be brought to its knees via the use of radio and television, to promote a culture of pessimism, despair, and self-hatred.

In the early 1940’s, the American Jewish Committee hired Horkheimer and Adorno, along with a majority of the Frankfurt School refugees, to direct a decade-long Studies in Prejudice, which produced five major works. The most famous of the Studies, *The Authoritarian Personality*,²³ trashed American postwar morality, arguing that, because the vast majority of Americans still believed in the virtues of God, nation, and family, America was ripe for a fascist authoritarian takeover. For the Frankfurt School social revolutionaries, any belief in a transcendent God was fascist. It was from this struggle against “prejudices” that “political correctness,” which triumphs today, was born.

Some leading Frankfurt School personalities, including Adorno and Max Horkheimer, had, by the late 1930’s, migrated to Hollywood, where they joined the ranks of Aldous Huxley, Christopher Isherwood, Igor Stravinsky, and Alexander Korda, in pioneering the use of the new emerging “mass culture industry” as a vehicle for mass cultural subversion and the furtherance of their “Cultural Pessimism” project. Not coincidentally, Korda was a graduate of the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Bolshevik Bela Kun government in Hungary, where he served directly under the Frankfurt School’s founder and top Comintern spy, Georg Lukacs. Englishmen Huxley and Isherwood were veterans of British Fabian psychological warfare projects.²⁴

Simple-minded anti-Communists, oblivious of the Frankfurt School’s Comintern agenda of “culture war” spent so much time looking for subliminal revolutionary messages in the Hollywood cinemas that they failed to take note of the fact that the movie industry was increasingly turning out trash films that glorified sex, murder, and drug abuse. Had they studied the twisted writings of Horkheimer and Adorno, or their Hollywood fellow travelers Huxley and Isherwood, they would have realized, long ago, that the name of the game was psycho-cultural subversion.

As early as the 1950’s, Adorno was writing, in various “critical theory” journals, that once the majority of Americans had been trapped into spending their leisure time in front of the television set or the movie theater screen, the process of destroying “bourgeois capitalist society” would be completed. Aldous Huxley described this process of brainwashing, enhanced by psychedelic

drug use, as a “kind of concentration camp without tears,” and as the “final revolution.”

At the same time that Hollywood was being invaded by Frankfurt School members and fellow travelers, the American educational system, from kindergarten to postgraduate, was also being assailed by the same apparatus. The authors of this report provided an in-depth account of how the Frankfurt School, in league with John Dewey and his cohorts at the National Educational Association, and Kurt Lewin’s National Training Labs, have subverted the American educational system (see *The Crisis in American Education*, 1995, by Jeffrey Steinberg and Paul Goldstein). The fact is, by the end of World War II, the transformation of our public schools from educational institutions dedicated to preparing young people to function as citizens of a democratic republic into experimental laboratories testing murderous theories of mass mind control and Marxist-Freudian social revolution was well underway. The University of Chicago, a hotbed of Frankfurt School and Deweyite subversion, contributed one of the seminal studies on how to transform American education, edited by Prof. Benjamin Bloom, called *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*.

Several years later, Lord Bertrand Russell wrote in *The Future of Science*, “I think the subject that will be of the most importance politically is mass psychology....The social psychologists of the future will have a number of classes of school children on whom they will try different methods of producing an unshakable conviction that snow is black. Various results will soon be arrived at: first, that influences of the home are obstructive. Second, that not much can be done unless indoctrination begins before the age of ten....It is for the future scientist to make these maxims precise and discover exactly how much it costs per head to make children believe that snow is black. When the technique has been perfected, every government that has been in charge of education for more than one generation will be able to control its subjects securely without the need of armies of policemen.”²⁵

Let us clearly understand what Jeffrey Steinberg is saying in the preceding text. It is not a question of attributing the totality of the subversion in the domains of music, film, television, and school to the Frankfurt School; it is a question simply of showing that, in these various domains, the Frankfurt School had explained in advance what must be done and then piloted it.

In 1950, three of the main members of the Frankfurt School, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Pollock, left the US to resettle in Frankfurt and to set up a new “Institute for Social Research.” The Institute pursued its activities until Theodor Adorno’s death in 1969. A part of the team, which included Herbert Marcuse, remained in the US.

The principal work of the Frankfurt School was therefore spread over a period of 46 years—from 1923-69. By 1969, the movement was well established and younger men would take charge.

Key Ideas of the Cultural Revolution

In the previous sections, we outlined the general concept of cultural revolution as it was conceived by the Frankfurt School. What follows is a more systematic explanation drawn from the works of Herbert Marcuse. Why Herbert Marcuse?—Because he has clearly explained the main ideas conceived and put into practice by him and his colleagues at the Frankfurt School. Marcuse had this to say about the concept of cultural revolution:

One can rightfully speak of a cultural revolution, since the protest is directed toward the whole cultural establishment, including the morality of existing society. The traditional idea of revolution and the traditional strategy of revolution have ended. These ideas are old fashioned...what we must understand is a type of diffused and dispersed disintegration of the system.²⁶

Regarding the process of cultural revolution, especially the fact that it is “quiet,” he writes that the cultural subversion will be wide-spread not through terrorist processes but slowly, subtly, peacefully. Hence the idea of a cultural revolution which would be a “quiet revolution.”²⁷

If classic class struggle is abandoned because the working class is no longer revolutionary, this will be to the benefit of a **new revolutionary sensibility**. The revolt will have to be developed in two new areas, those being *non-material needs* (of self-determination, human relations) and the *physiological dimensions of existence* (race, sex, etc.). In conformity with this new revolutionary sensibility, the ideas of Freud will be exploited from a Marxist rather than a bourgeois perspective. This system is called “Cultural Marxism,” the ideological part of which is known under the name of “Critical Theory.” Let us recall that the book already cited, *The Authoritarian Personality* by Theodor Adorno (1950) can be considered a sort of manifesto of “Critical Theory.”

We wish to emphasize this point, which constitutes one of the main basic ideas of the Frankfurt School. Marcuse summarized Freud’s theory as follows:

- a) The essence of being is “eros,” the search for pleasure, that is, “pansexualism”;
- b) The individual has to accept the cultural control of his instinctive needs, otherwise there is no possibility of civilized society;
- c) From this arises the conflict between the principle of pleasure (free satisfaction of instinctive needs) and the principle of reality (where needs are controlled).

The Marxist is interested in conflict, in the dialectic, and all that can incite these. His idea of civilization is different from that of Freud. In the

Freudian scheme of things summarized above, he will accept *a*) but not *b*). Freudian ideas will be used as a dialectical element to destroy existing civilization and serve to support “a civilization developing from libidinous relations and supported by them.” Pansexualism must be thus developed methodically with all its destructive effects.

Freud systematized pansexualism, but the origin of it goes back to the Cabala²⁸ and heathen religions. It is a rather complex theory, the main elements of which can be summarized this way: According to the Cabala, God can be considered in Himself or in His manifestations. In Himself God is an indefinite being, vaguely called En Sof (who has no limits) or Ayin (non-being). In His manifestations, God shows himself by “emanations” by which he perfects himself, whence comes the idea of an evolutionary God, and that of pantheism (the notion of creation being replaced by that of emanation). These emanations number ten and are called Sefiroth. Three of them are male, and three others are female. The Sefiroth Victory (male) and Sefiroth Glory (female) are concentrated in the Sefirah Foundation,²⁹ the symbol of which is the organ of generation. One understands, in these conditions, that the sexual principle, presented as an integral part of the divinity, has a tendency to permeate everything. Because it is rooted in the Cabala, the pansexualism of the Frankfurt School and of the cultural revolution to which it contributed so powerfully has therefore a religious connotation. [See Angelus Press English Edition of *SiSiNoNo*, *The Angelus*, May 2006, No.69–Ed.]

Exploiting the Male-Female Dialectic

“Pansexualism”—in other words, the unleashing of the base passions of man—constitutes the first exploitation of the difference between the sexes. Another aspect of the differences between the sexes will be systematically exploited to bring about the overthrow of the traditional relationship between men and women. This is to be accomplished by attacking the authority of the father, by denying the specific roles of the father and mother, by suppressing differences in the education of boys and girls, by abolishing forms of male superiority (hence the presence of the women in the armed forces), and by considering women and children as an oppressed class and men as the oppressors. In support of this overthrow, there exists an ideology—*radical feminism*.

Using pansexualism and the overthrow of the relationship between men and women, the founders of the cultural revolution have two powerful means by which to destroy the family. The Frankfurt School knew how to draw in a remarkable way on the scientific progress of its day—progress in the means of communication (its action in regard to music and films), and progress in the psychological sciences. In the field of psychology, Abraham Maslow, a protégé of the cultural revolution, played an important role in perfecting methods of psychological conditioning known as “group dynamics” and “sensitivity training.”³⁰

Results in the West

The principles of the Frankfurt School were embodied in what came to be called “counterculture,” the “cultural movement” that especially dominated the highly influential American left until the late 1960’s, and which has been described as follows:

Counterculture is the cultural basis of the new left. It includes the effort to discover new types of communities, new models of family, new sexual customs, new styles of life, new aesthetic forms, new personal identities opposed to power politics, the bourgeois lifestyle, and the Protestant work ethic.³¹

This description dates from 1968. But today, the counterculture characterized by pansexualism, the destruction of paternal authority, and radical feminism is not only the cultural basis of the American left but of almost the whole of society throughout the entire West.

Let us return to pansexualism. Given its religious origin, it is undoubtedly the most dangerous element. It has invaded society at large, accounting for indecent fashions, for titillating posters and advertisements, magazines, films, TV and radio broadcasts, for the degraded behavior of young and old, for sex education; pansexualism is supported by the State, and has its effect even in traditional Catholic circles. To give an example, here is the recent testimony of a priest exercising his ministry in the Lebanon:

It is important to look at the evidence: whether they are Catholic, Orthodox or Moslem, one does not have the impression that the religious authorities of this country (Lebanon) realize the galloping degradation of morals that has taken place, particularly through the means of language and American and Anglo-Saxon models.

At the very least, ecclesiastical authorities should react. But how does one publicly seek the censorship of squalid publications (for the greater part in English) or of disgusting television programs, when the pastors have the custom of remaining silent in their own churches

when faced with the glistening of bare flesh offered to their blasé parishioners, who are not averse to taking in what is on display?

But what is striking in the Near East, is that this tide of pornography, these dubious deviances and this display of vice appear only in “Christian” regions. It is not in the neighboring countries, with a Moslem majority, that one would find visa and residence permits granted to the 7,000 prostitutes who come from Eastern Europe and whose blond hair may lead astray some young (and not so young) Lebanese.

It is alarming all the same to be told in Damascus by a very holy monk: “Here, Islam protects Christianity because it does not allow the importation of moral corruption.” It would do good to read once more, in Apocalypse, what Our Lord said to the angel of the Church of Laodicea (Apoc. 3:14-22), and to concur.³²

Cybernetics

What is “cybernetics”?—It is defined as “the study of communication and control processes in biological, mechanical, and electronic systems.” This “science,” developed in the US, rests on the false hypothesis of the essential similarity of communication and control (understood in the sense of command) in machines and human beings.³³ It is presented as a mixture of well-founded *scientific theories* (mainly the theory of information) and of *materialist ideology* (man is only a sophisticated machine, and machines will allow us to reproduce the functioning of the human brain and even to surpass it).

It was in New York (1942), at a conference organized by the Josiah Macy Foundation, where the cybernetics brain-trust group was launched. It would be known later as the Cybernetics Group. The initial activity, called the “Man-Machine Project,” had as its object

to draw together a group of electrical engineers, biologists, anthropologists, and psychologists to devise experiments in social control, based on the belief that the human brain was nothing more than a complex input-output machine, and that human behavior could, in effect, be programmed, on both an individual and societal scale.³⁴

The group’s works took shape after the Second World War with the support of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).³⁵ Ten conferences organized by the Macy Foundation were held between 1953 and 1964 and marked its stages.

It is here that one sees the appearance of members of the Frankfurt School, who had, from the beginning, grasped the importance of the cybernetics project for their more general enterprise of cultural revolution. While directing the groups of studies on prejudices, Max Horkheimer, director of the Frankfurt School, collaborated with the

Cybernetics Group. In 1948, he participated at Paris at the foundation of the World Federation of Mental Health (WFMH), one of the more harmful projects stemming from the Cybernetics Group. Kurt Lewin, a fellow traveler of the Frankfurt School, played an important role within this same group. He had founded at MIT the Research Center for Group Dynamics, then created the National Training Laboratories, active in the same domain. With Karl Korsch, another member of the Frankfurt School, he had set up a foundation to develop artificial intelligence. Here is how Jeffrey Steinberg presents the role of the Frankfurt School and the associated group, the Tavistock Institute,³⁶ in the cybernetics project:

What Lukacs and his Frankfurt School protégés despised about Western Christianity was its belief in the sanctity of the individual soul, the idea that every individual human being was created by God in his living image, and that every individual had a divine spark of creativity that could serve the betterment of all mankind. Lukacs and company understood, all too well, that no revolution could succeed in the West for very long until the principle of “*imago viva Dei*” (man in the living image of God) had been destroyed and replaced by a far more bestialized and pessimistic notion of mankind.

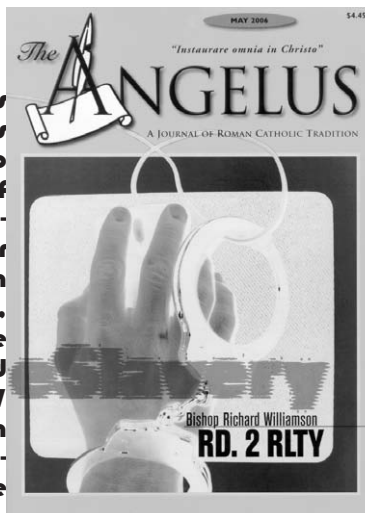
It is here where the “Kulturkampf” of Lukacs, Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse directly impacted upon the postwar technological revolution in mass communications. The convergence point was a little-known project, launched in the early 1940’s, by a virtually unknown tax-exempt foundation, the Josiah P. Macy Foundation. Macy bankrolled a decade-long “Man-Machine Project,” which came to be known among its initiates as the Cybernetics Group.

Although the two most famous individuals associated with the invention of the term “cybernetics” were John Von Neumann and Norbert Wiener, several other individuals were in reality the dominant figures within the group. The real “pioneers” of the so-called “information revolution” were Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson, Kurt Lewin, Max Horkheimer, and Dr. John Rawlings Rees—all pivotal figures in the Frankfurt School, Tavistock, or both.

The Cybernetics Group borrowed a page from Georg Lukacs’s game plan for social revolution. They argued that there was nothing divine about man. Indeed, man-made machines would soon be superior “thinking machines” to the human mind.³⁷

Cultural Revolution Today

Almost 40 years after the death of Adorno in 1969, almost 30 years after that of Marcuse in 1979, the cultural revolution continues by remaining impregnated with the ideas of the Frankfurt School, whose key idea was expressed thus by Willi



Since this article was first published five years ago, it is necessary to provide an update of the current global video-game market. (The author refers to the phenomenon on page 30.) In 2005, the sales of worldwide video-game software and hardware brought in \$27 billion shared between the big three home-entertainment-console producers: Microsoft's

Xbox versions, Sony's Playstation2, and Nintendo's GameCube. However, while the market has a large and dedicated following, it has been unable to entice new players, especially girls and the elderly. The result is a video game market which has actually become stagnant with the US itself stuck at around \$12 billion annually, virtually unchanged in the last five years. All three manufacturers will be releasing new versions of their gaming hardware in the next year with an eye to hyping bigger sales and attracting non-gamers.

The standard video-game controller/joystick is simply too hard to learn or makes one look too weird when playing, and this keeps people away. With its GameCube in last place among the Big Three, Nintendo is promising to change gaming by making it easier. Replacing the current controller will be something approximating a TV remote control, part laser pointer and part motion sensor. It will know what you're aiming at, how fast you move, and how far it is from the TV screen. Swing the controller to "... swing a sword....swat a fly, do squat-thrusts like a weight lifter, turn a key in the lock, catch a fish, saute vegetables, balance a broom on [your] outstretched hand, color in a circle, and fence with a foil...even dance the hula....[I]nstead of passively playing the games, with the new controller you physically perform them. You act them out. It's almost like theater: the fourth wall between game and player dissolves. The scene of immersion—the illusion that you, personally, are projected into the game world—is powerful." The sensors are so sensitive that in playing video-tennis, you can scoop under the ball to lob it or slice it for spin. No buttons to press for video-football. Gesture a hiking motion, and the ball's in the quarterback's hands. To pass the ball, gesture a throwing motion: hard and fast for bullet passes: slower, less forcefully to lob it. Sword fight: aim a bow and shoot an arrow: reel in a feisty virtual fish.

Cutting-edge design has become more important than cutting-edge technology, that is, what's important to gamers is not more power and more features, but how easy it is to play and how "cool" you look doing so.—compiled by the Editor from *Time* magazine (5/05/2006, pp.36-39).

Munzenberg, "We will make the West so corrupt that it stinks."³⁸

We have already addressed at length the subject of pansexualism, more popular today than ever. We shall confine ourselves to the cybernetic project and video games as another element of the current situation where the legacy from the Frankfurt School is demonstrated. As indicated above, the Frankfurt School had greatly inspired the Cybernetics Group during the 1940's and 1950's. In bodies stemming from this group, one finds the same inspiration. Here is the example of the Media Lab:

By the 1980's, MIT had spawned the Media Lab, another direct outgrowth of the Cybernetics Group of the 1940's and 1950's. Here social engineers worked hand in glove with the engineers and machine designers who were developing high-speed computers, computer graphics, holographics, and the first generation of computer simulators....According to the initial proposal the laboratory was to provide for the "intellectual mix of two rapidly evolving and very different fields: information technologies and the human sciences" (Steve Joshua Heims, *The Cybernetics Group*).³⁹

What was the state of mind of these researchers? In his book *The Cybernetics Group*, Steve Joshua Heims indicates that in the 1980's, the cybernetics milieu had created its own religion, a pagan system in full agreement with what Timothy Leary called "scientific paganism." The scientific paganism of the researchers was one thing, but more serious was that the results obtained by these researchers allowed them to develop scientific paganism on a grand scale and, more generally, the cultural revolution of which scientific paganism is an element.

The Media Lab of MIT and the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Lab were two of the magnets for this money and the research work which fueled both the Pentagon training-simulation programs and the evolving video-game industry.⁴⁰

The Frankfurt School, the Cybernetics Group, Media Lab and other bodies, the video-game industry: here is one of the relationships that enabled the technical perfection of one of the most effective instruments of the cultural revolution today—the video game. This is not to say, however, that Media Lab is responsible for the fundamentally immoral orientation of the greater number of video games.

The second generation video-game market in the US is expanding rapidly. According to Jeffrey Steinberg ("Draft Report," p.93), "point-and-shoot" video games bring in 9-11 billion dollars annually. These games represent the perfecting of role-playing games which have been developed since the late 1970's. They allow one to while away hour after hour in a virtual world where one can be anybody one wants to be and can act without having to suffer the consequences of one's actions. Any person—

young or not-so-young—can be habitually divorced from reality and easily manipulated in the direction suggested by the game. Even if the orientation of the game is good, it can still have an ill effect resulting from the time, often very long, spent in a virtual world.

But very frequently the orientation of the game is bad. There is in them violence of various sorts. There are very realistic shooting simulations (useful for training soldiers, perhaps, but evidently dangerous for young people left to themselves), pornographic aspects (pansexualism is everywhere), incitement to indulge in magic (the spectator-actor casts spells which, on the screen, are effective), Satanism, and in a general way, the excitement of the lust for power linked to a materialist conception of life.

Here is an example of how a production company presents the video game “Gangsters” (which, according to some, seems harmless):

This gives you the opportunity to be a gangster in a Chicago-style city of the 1920’s, controlling an underground organization dealing in extortion, illegal liquor, prostitution, violence, intimidation, blackmail, gambling, gang warfare, bribery of officials, permanent elimination of individuals and a host of money-making activities.⁴¹

This gives a general outline of the game, but here is what the player must do:

The aim of the game is to build your gang and business empire to rule the city. To do this you will have to beat three other gangs operating in the city, and avoid arrest by the authorities.⁴²

A young person who actively plays in such a scenario for hours on end will be tempted to transpose some of his virtual experience into the real world.⁴³ This is what has happened in the US recently with the brutal murders of young people by some of their high school classmates. Inquiries have shown that the young murderers fired like professional marksmen and that they had acquired their mastery in shooting and the desire to put it into practice through the use of video games containing that type of simulation.⁴⁴ We must recognize that a great number of video games correspond well to the objectives of the Frankfurt School to spread a “culture” based on pessimism, depravity, sexual license, violence, and drugs.

Conclusion

It was in 1923 that the Frankfurt School began its work. Though it was not exclusively responsible, the cultural revolution which it inspired starting in the 1950’s developed in the US and then Europe. About 20 years later, the cultural revolutions of 1968, under the influence of Marcuse, mark an

important stage. About another 30 years after 1968 would be needed to see the triumph of the counterculture which began 80 years earlier.


We are dealing with a long-term, brilliantly conceived operation. The men of thought and action who devised it had the foresight to understand what had to be done and to carry it out consistently by selecting priority sectors—universities, music, media broadcasting, psychological and educational action—to put at their service the networks which were offered to them. They succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

How can we explain the fact that this plan met with the same success in Catholic countries as it did in Protestant countries? Without doubt this was because Catholics had another cultural revolution to face as well as that inspired by the Frankfurt School: the one which since the 1960’s has raged inside the Church. It was a general disturbance: a new revolutionary Mass, a new calendar, the abandonment of Latin and the religious habit, the organ and traditional songs replaced by profane music, transformation of religious art,⁴⁵ churches becoming conference rooms rather than temples of the Lord, and inconsistent catechesis proposing a formless and undemanding religion. The Catholic environment dissolved at the very moment when the faithful needed it most, hence the uprooting of Catholics from their culture, their abandonment of religious practice *en masse* and thus becoming all the more vulnerable to the cultural revolution which came from Frankfurt via the US. The parallel between the two cultural revolutions is remarkable. They occurred barely within ten years of each other. Political leaders favored the first whereas religious leaders supported the second or allowed it to happen. This begs the question as to whether there are not a number of connections between them.

What do we do if the mystery of iniquity is so very powerfully installed? It is necessary, obviously, to protect in our fields of action our Catholic culture, to keep alive the rest of Christendom which remains among us, and not follow the general train of things under the excuse that it is just the way things are. All this supposes a certain asceticism. It consists in suppressing what ought to be suppressed in order to avoid being contaminated by the counterculture, just as the Christians of the first centuries refrained from going to baths and the circus to escape the corruption of their time.

In conclusion, let us emphasize the usefulness of knowing—all the better to fight it—the process of destruction so intelligently implemented by the Frankfurt School and its followers. We must not neglect such facts, because, as Abbot Joseph Lemann remarked:

In history, he who does not take account, not only of Providence, but also of Hell, will only ever have

an inaccurate view and will only provide incomplete explanations. God and Satan fight for the heart of man: each of us knows that, but they also battle for the direction of society, its developments and its stages. The first page of the Bible reveals it; Christ reminded us regarding the Church that the gates of Hell will not prevail; and since then, the history of these eighteen centuries lets us clearly see, over and above our quarrels over cities, countries, nations, and races, the spectacle of these two immense forces in combat: Infernal malice devastating society, and divine grace repairing, supporting, and always advancing it.⁴⁶ 

This study first appeared in July 2001, published by Action Familiale et Scolaire, 31 rue Rennequin, 75017–Paris, France; the English version was originally published in *Apropos*, No. 21, March 2003. Permission to publish it in *The Angelus* was granted by the author, Arnaud de Lassus, and the translator, Mr. Anthony Fraser, Editor of *Apropos*. The photograph on pp.14-15 shows the Frankfurt riverfront (the Main River), 2003.

¹ A socialist formula from 1968. See further details of this subject, in Pascal Bernardin's *L'Empire écologique*, Chapter V, "Techniques of Non-aversive Control," and the commentary on same in "Ecology and Globalism" in the March 2003 issue of *Apropos*.

² See Maciej Giertych's article "The Political and Economic Situation in Poland."

³ Quoted by Philippe Ploncard d'Assac in *Le nationalisme français*, p.26.

⁴ The Alta Vendita was a high-level Masonry which, during the first half of the 19th century, dominated European Masonry.

⁵ The pseudonym of an Alta Vendita agent.

⁶ Letter of January 18, 1822; quoted by Creteineau-Joly, *L'église romaine en face de la Révolution*, XI, 104.

⁷ The pseudonym of an Alta Vendita agent.

⁸ Letter of August 9, 1838; quoted by Creteineau-Joly, op.cit., XI, 128. Cf. the AFS brochure, *Connaissance élémentaire de la franc-maçonnerie*, p.110.

⁹ Ralph de Toledano, *The Frankfurt School*, (manuscript, 2000), p.11. This study shows how the idea of cultural revolution was born and piloted by the Frankfurt School.

¹⁰ The creator of the Soviet Secret Police, the Cheka.

¹¹ Third Communist International, founded in 1919 by Lenin and dissolved by Stalin in 1943. It was reconstituted at Sofia in 1995.

¹² *The Marxist Encyclopedia* states that he was murdered in 1944.—Ed., *Apropos*.

¹³ De Toledano, *The Frankfurt School*, p.23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.4-15.

¹⁵ Willi Munzenberg, quoted by Ralph de Toledano, *ibid.*, p.5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.24. This point will be developed below.

¹⁷ Official date of its creation in February 3, 1923, by a decree of the Ministry of Education (cf. Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research*, [University of California Press, 1996], p.10).

¹⁸ Ralf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), p.17 (Wiggerhaus cites this among the reasons for the extremely favorable circumstances at the outset of the Institute for Social Research).

¹⁹ Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*, p.175.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.29.

²¹ A study on video games and their destructive effect.

²² Called in future the Frankfurt School Institute for Social Research.

²³ Published in 1950 by Harper & Brothers, New York. It was written by Adorno, along with Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, R. Nevitt Sanford, in collaboration with Betty Aron, Maria Hertz Levinson, and William Morrow.

²⁴ The Fabian Society: an English, Socialist movement founded in 1883. It was the origin of the Labor Party.

²⁵ Jeffrey Steinberg, Michael Steinberg, and Anton Chaitkin, "Draft Report on Manchurian Children," (unpublished study, 2001), pp.5-8.

²⁶ Text of H. Marcuse, quoted in *The Resister*, Summer-Autumn, 1998.

²⁷ At the same time as the work was being carried out by the Frankfurt School, these ideas were being developed in parallel by the Italian Marxist theoretician Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), who remained in prison from 1926 until his death.

²⁸ In Jewish thought, one generally associates esoteric and mystical education with the Cabala. In the widest meaning of a word, this describes the successive esoteric currents which developed from the end of the period of the Second Temple and which became the dynamic elements in the history of Judaism (*Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Judaism*, s.v. "The Mystical Jew").

²⁹ The sefiroth Victory, Glory, and Foundation are in Hebrew called Netzach, Hod, and Yesod respectively.—Ed., *Apropos*.

³⁰ Cf. *The Resister*, Summer–Autumn, 1998, p.54. On group dynamics, see the *Apropos* pamphlet "Elementary Knowledge of the New Age," pp.33-37. See also the book by Ed. Dieckermann, Jr., *Sensitivity Training and the Cult of Mind Control*.

³¹ Theodore Roszah, "Youth and the Great refusal," *The Nation*, on 1968. Quote by *News Weekly*, February 10, 2000.

³² "Repens-toi, Laodicée," *Bulletin de l'Association de St Pierre d'Antioche et de tout l'Orient* (Les Sablons, 61560 Bazoches-sur-Hoeur), No. 23, March, 2001. See the article having the same title in *Action Familiale et Scolaire*, No. 155 (June, 2001).

³³ P. de Latil, *La pensée artificielle*, quoted by Le Robert.

³⁴ J. Steinberg, *Draft Report on Manchurian Children*, p.86.

³⁵ Usually indicated by the abbreviation MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

³⁶ British Center of the Psychological Group, of which John Rawling-Rees was Director.

³⁷ J. Steinberg, *Draft Report*, pp.12-13. This author is not a Catholic. The above phrase, "Every individual possesses a divine spark of creativity" is a little ambiguous and should be understood as meaning, "Every individual can possess divine grace."

³⁸ Quote by Ralph de Toledano, *The Frankfurt School*, p.26.

³⁹ J. Steinberg, *Draft Report*, pp.90-91.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.93.

⁴¹ Quote by J. Steinberg, *ibid.*, p.55.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ One will find in the oft-quoted study of J. Steinberg other examples of scenarios of video games.

⁴⁴ See the study by J. Steinberg, second part "*The Killer Children: A Chronology*," which analyzes ten cases of child murderers of children, including that at Columbine High School, Littleton, Colorado (April 20, 1999).

⁴⁵ Cf. the A.F.S. brochure *A Sign of the Times: Evry Cathedral*.

⁴⁶ *L'Entrée des Israélites dans la société française* (The Entrance of the Israelites into French Society) (p.205). Abbot Joseph Lemann (1836-1915), a Jew who was converted at the same time as his brother Augustine. He is the author of remarkable works on the French Revolution.

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THE ANGELUS ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTICLE REPRINT

Let your speech be, "Yes, yes," "No, no"; whatever is beyond these comes from the evil one. (Mt. 5:37) • July 2006
Reprint #70

St. Pius X and the Duel Between Modern Thought and Catholic Theology

PART 2

PROFESSOR MATTEO D'AMICO

René Descartes (1596-1650), as is well known, is considered to be the founder of modern thought. This is certainly true, but it is true insofar as we think of Descartes as the first metaphysician who consciously sought to *found* science. It was clear that, even with Galileo, science depreciated sense experience, but it was not known what kind of metaphysics would be needed in order to be in conformity with this idea. Descartes was the

René Descartes
Friedrich Nietzsche
Gottfried Leibniz

Pope St. Pius X
St. Thomas Aquinas
St. Augustine

first to set off on this path, and he was to be followed by almost all the most important thinkers (or at least those considered to be such). Let us take the example of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804): his whole philosophy is an explicitly declared attempt to found Newton's physics. What makes science, this bizarre and abstruse image of the world, possible on the metaphysical level?—this is the fundamental question governing the first Kantian critique.

Thus, the thinkers begin trying to bend metaphysical discourse in order to make it coherent or in conformity with the image of the world that emerged from the magical and then scientifico-Galilean tradition. One might say that what began was a formidable torsion or wrenching of definitions and categories, with the goal of restating metaphysics in scientifically homogeneous and coherent terms. Classical thought was founded, as we have seen, on the principle according to which to think means to allow being to appear, to let something else appear by identifying oneself with the thing, such that the knowing subject becomes one, in some way, with the object known; thus there is not a nature of thought *per se* separate from the moment in which the mind allows itself, so to speak, to be filled by the signification of being. With Descartes, we watch the destruction of this principle. The idea becomes a simple *mental image* interposed between the mind or intellect and reality.

The outcome of such premises can only be *skepticism* and the methodological adoption of a principle which becomes decisive for Descartes, namely, the principle according to which outside the mind there might be nothing. This is exactly the sentence that Descartes writes in his *Discourse on the Method*: in a few lines, he puts an end to classical metaphysics:

Accordingly, seeing that our senses sometimes deceive us, I was willing to suppose that there existed nothing really such as they presented to us; and because some men err in reasoning, and fall into paralogisms, even on the simplest matters of geometry, I, convinced that I was as open to error as any other, rejected as false all the reasonings I had hitherto taken for demonstrations; and finally, when I considered that the very same thoughts (presentations) which we experience when awake may also be experienced when we are asleep, while there is at that time not one of them true, I supposed that all the objects (presentations) that had ever entered into my mind when awake, had in them no more truth than the illusions of my dreams.¹

The expression used by Descartes, “I was willing to suppose,” is interesting: “I was willing to suppose that everything that I had believed to be true was not true, and that beyond my senses, there was nothing real.” They are only a few lines, but they lay down the

foundation for this extraordinary castle—this *monstrum* [wonder or portent]—that is Cartesian thought.

Mind you, the sentences we just quoted would have made a St. Thomas or an Aristotle laugh, because if they are rigorously examined according to a classical or Thomistic metaphysics, it is almost unbelievable that someone would begin from a skeptical premise of this sort, for we know very well that every skeptical thesis, as St. Augustine clearly demonstrated, immediately gives rise to a vicious circle, so that radical skepticism is in fact impossible. Skepticism is scarcely more than a grotesque form of philosophical infantilism, and its depth is only apparent.

The skeptic should keep quiet, for if he speaks, he immediately enters into unsolvable contradictions. For when even the most radical skeptic speaks, he can not do otherwise than believe in the absolute truth of his skeptical premise. But Descartes is shameless, and has no hesitation at beginning from such a contradiction. I remind you in passing that he had a sort of disgust and hatred for Scholastic philosophy, which had been communicated to him during his years of study, and this detail explains many things. One sees at work here for the first time the *naturalist presupposition*, which is the philosophical expression which describes what we have just seen placed at the basis of Cartesian philosophy.

In other words, Descartes finds his mental strategy on a groundless presupposition, an undemonstrated and undemonstrable thesis, a totally unjustified postulate. And what is the essence of this naturalist presupposition? The naturalist presupposition says the following: Our mind does not grasp things, things as such, things in themselves, as Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas thought, but it only grasps the psychophysical modifications of our senses. For Descartes, to have a sensation means to have a relation, not with the world, but with a psychophysical modification that is produced within oneself: such is the Cartesian postulate, the “original sin” of modern thought, the source of modern metaphysical *immanentism*.

The classical postulate is also a postulate, but one postulate opposed to another postulate is not enough to refute it. And there is an even more important difference: the principles with which classical philosophy began were perfectly coherent and in continuity with common sense; their credibility was, so to speak, certified by an implicit and universal *consensus gentium*.

Thus, with this major philosopher, we are confronted with a dogmatic choice, a choice that is fideist in nature.² Descartes has confidence in his postulate. He does not behold reality with the wonder of which Aristotle spoke; rather, he has

unilaterally decided that what is real is the thing in itself understood as something physical and material, and that, consequently, I can no longer really know the exterior world in its essence, because I only know the psychophysical modifications that the thing imprints on my senses. From such a standpoint, one is moreover constrained to renounce the other key category of Greco-Christian epistemology, namely, the idea that the intellect, through the senses, reaches the form or essence of the being in itself such that the cognitive act is never just sensory, but always first and foremost intellectual. Since the materialist presupposition *a priori* only accords the title of real to material things, it is evident that it is obliged to banish from the new metaphysics any idea of *essential form*, and thus to renounce every harmonious ontology of substance.³

In these conditions, man no longer has access to being, as if he had shut himself up within himself: such is, ultimately, the discovery, so to speak, of Descartes's *cogito*. If I no longer have access to being, what is left to me as subject of knowing? I have left only the ensemble of ideas that nonetheless exist, because I see [or experience] that I have a mind that is criss-crossed by a flux of ideas that I govern, but also by which I am surpassed and possessed (Freud and Sartre are already waiting behind the door, as you see!). I only have within myself this stuff of ideas which is so easily confused with a dream, but I no longer have any possibility of thinking that my reason reaches and seizes being as such.

My mind only grasps its own thoughts, so to speak. The result is the reduction of the act of thinking to rationalism, subjectivism, and immanentism. Truth and meaning, if indeed they are to be found somewhere, do not and can not but come from man's own mind. If indeed truth is to spring from somewhere, it can only spring from thought. It is no longer being that founds and rules the mind, but it is the mind that will, by strange gyrations, refund being and refund God, and place in being all that is. All will proceed from the *cogito* enclosed within the self, forbidden an ontologically fruitful relation with the world.

Such is Descartes's fundamental act. If I can only trust the contents that I find within my *cogito*, then I must start from these contents and, by basing myself upon them, proceed to all the rest: the world, God, the absolute, the meaning of things; but it is my *cogito*, my reason, that constitutes the foundation. Such is the man-centered turn that, before it struck our poor Karl Rahner, had already stricken Descartes.⁴

Man-centeredness, or anthropocentrism, is the essence of the Renaissance, but it is also, in reality, the essence of apocryphal, Cabalistic gnosticism, and it ultimately represents a *deification* of man, a subject

to which we shall soon be obliged to return. With Descartes, we are faced with the great act of thought, the great sacrilege, that stands at the origin of modern culture and history. Indeed, with Descartes, one already has the affirmation, albeit implicitly, of this radical—and fatal—metaphysical distortion: if it is the *cogito* that founds being, being is no longer founded by God, and the mind no longer has a master to heed, namely, reality. Every modern philosophy is merely a variation on this theme.

There are other details from Descartes's history that are usually left out of accounts: In his history of the Rosicrucians⁵ Paul Arnold devotes a dense and important chapter to the relationship between Descartes and the Rosicrucians. It is a very interesting subject, even if certain aspects remain obscure: it is not known with certitude whether Descartes was a member of the "Red Cross" or not, or whether he only sympathized with this mysterious movement. But it is important to recall that the Rosicrucians had a major importance in the political and cultural history of modern Europe, and it is certain that Descartes had intense relations with the Rosicrucian tradition. The same observation may be made for Bacon (1561-1626, another philosopher of the "new science" and of the "new world"), Comenius (1592-1670), Spinoza (1632-77), and Leibniz (1646-1716). This observation about Descartes and the Rosicrucians seems to me to bring out a constant trait: when someone abandons the sure paths of Catholic doctrine, sound metaphysics, and the teaching authority of the Church (the magisterium), rarely does it fail to result, in one way or another, in the practice of magic and esotericism. This is true on every level, even the political: I am thinking of the relations between the Italian *risorgimento* and esotericism, between Nazism and magic, but also between Marxism-Bolshevism and Satanism and magic.

Basing ourselves on this understanding of the reasons for the subjectivist deviation of the Cartesian *cogito*, we are ready to look at the thinking that followed, which is nothing more than a great variation on this theme. The most immediate effect of Cartesianism was a kind of agnosticism, when it did not devolve into outright atheism. Indeed, Cartesianism—if its presuppositions are accepted—implies the radical destruction of natural theology and of the Thomistic ways leading to God, because, obviously, if knowledge is exclusively of the relation between my Ego and the stuff of its ideas, I can no longer, by starting from the world, by the contemplation of nature, ascend to God.

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Modern science and Cartesian thought are based on the elimination of final causes and essential forms.⁶ If final causes are eliminated, we know that enormous difficulties of explanation result. Take, for example, the crisis of evolution, which refuses finality of Greco-Christian extraction, but which finds itself involved in extraordinary contradictions. By eliminating final causality in the wake of Galileo, Descartes denies any passage from the world to God, this passage which is so evident and so necessary that, even before Christian Revelation, it had carried the lucid, profound Greek thinkers from the world to God. This passage is no longer possible. Immanentist subjectivism (*subjectivism* because I have only the subject as metaphysical basis; *immanentist* because the true, the absolute, the foundation is located in the subject) has as a result the reduction of God to the world, or rather the reduction of God to man. God and man inevitably end by coinciding, as we shall soon see, and why this must be so. Either God is reduced to man and to the world, or God is totally excluded, which is atheism. Moreover, atheism is implicit in the refusal to acknowledge the original meaningfulness of the world, and the transcendence of truth and beauty in relation to the knowing mind: such is the veritable *hubris* that lies at the heart of modern thought.

The Enlightenment: The Right to Happiness and Barbarity

Now we must accomplish, even if by brief allusions, a decisive passage at the theoretical level to the age of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment was undoubtedly the daughter of Cartesian-Galilean rationalism. I shall even say more: The Enlightenment was the conscious attempt to apply the subjectivist, rationalist critique of the physical world to every domain, including religion.

Consequently, if I may be allowed a somewhat figurative expression, the Enlightenment was the spilling over of Cartesianism into every sphere of reality until it reached its logical conclusion in the theme of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789—the right to happiness. For if indeed it is the *cogito* that ultimately establishes truth, and not truth that determines the *cogito*, that means that the *cogito* is the Absolute, that is to say, in theology, God. But if man is considered to be God, it is obvious that he can no longer be subject to duties, but can only possess rights; and that no limit can be placed, at least in principle, upon his free will, no longer considered wounded and inclined to evil because of original sin, but “good” by nature, as Rousseau maintained. It is at this historic juncture that the great modern cultural revolution occurred, which the historian Ellul has

carefully reconstructed in his book *Metamorphosis of the Bourgeois*.⁷

Ellul demonstrates that the central idea of the 18th-century Enlightenment, which surely constitutes one of the most significant ruptures in relation to the preceding tradition of Christian thought, is the appearance of the category of *the right to happiness*. Such a notion is only possible, as we have seen earlier, if I have a divinized image of man, because thinking of a man who has by nature a right to happiness—or a right to *the pursuit of happiness*, as the American Declaration of Independence puts it, and as it is implicitly affirmed in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen of the French Revolution—means that I think of man as of God; I think of man as an absolute, as at the basis of the very meaning of his life. And this possibility of the divinization of man is equally the fundamental aspect, moreover, that unites the modern Revolution and ancient gnosticism. In both cases, we are faced with the attempt by man to decide for himself what is good and what is evil, in a self-sufficiency as absolute as it is gravely culpable.

What this means is the end of the immemorial tradition of Christian holiness, and more specifically Catholic holiness founded on the notions of duty and sacrifice, self-sacrifice. It is the passage from a society based upon duty and sacrifice to one laying claim to rights and happiness. It means the complete destruction of the very idea of sacrifice, and, as has been shown by Daniel Mornet in a very interesting study,⁸ the birth of the hatred of the Catholic Church and the Mass, which so clearly bears witness to the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ as the foundation of the world, of history, and of life: this idea was something that had to be destroyed. We know that the one thing Luther could not stand in Catholicism was the idea of the unbloody renewal and representation of Christ's sacrifice in the holy sacrifice of the Mass: this is what he desired to destroy, for he was convinced—and in a certain sense he was right—that if the Mass were destroyed, then the papacy and Catholicism would also fall.

Finally, I think that it scarcely needs mentioning that the members of the circles in which the new theology developed were very often members of a veritable spider's web of Masonic lodges that, throughout the 18th century, spread all over Europe, just as were the Jacobins and other groups of radical revolutionaries who were to seize power in France, unleashing the furious persecution of the Catholic Church during which the profanation of tabernacles, consecrated hosts, and churches was daily fare.

The *modern Revolution* (a term used in the wider sense to designate the whole process that began with the Renaissance and, through the Reformation,

the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the succeeding steps, that aimed at the dissolution of the *respublica Christiana*⁹) implies, in a way perfectly coherent with the metaphysical principles that have been set forth, the complete destruction of the Christian order, in particular the social reign of our Lord, and marches towards a conception of politics in which sovereignty comes from below, and not from God. The distortion of the basic principles of Greco-Christian metaphysics ultimately produces very serious consequences at every level, including the political domain. Indeed, politics is the arena in which the new anthropocentric philosophy that characterizes modernity, in its inhumane and anti-Christian potentialities, is most manifest.¹⁰

We better understand now the sentence with which Horkheimer and Adorno [see "Cultural Revolution: The Frankfurt School" on pp.14-16, 25-32 in this issue—*Ed.*] introduced their book *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, by saying:

The second excursus is concerned with Kant, Sade, and Nietzsche, who mercilessly elicited the implications of the Enlightenment. Here we show how the submission of everything natural to the autocratic subject finally culminates in the mastery of the blindly objective and natural.¹¹

Explaining the concept of Enlightenment, they affirm:

In the most general sense of progressive thought, the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant.¹²

Moreover, these authors are the first to clearly understand that the symbol and the ultimate result of Enlightenment culture is the totalitarian, pansexual universe portrayed in the novels of the Marquis de Sade, in which it appears that the culmination of reason considered as self-determining is barbarity and violence, and this also, not to say especially, in the political sphere:

...the established civil order wholly functionalized reason, which became a purposeless purposiveness which might thus be attached to all ends. In this sense, reason is planning considered solely as planning. The totalitarian State manipulates the people. Or, as Sade's Francavilla puts it: "The government must control the population, and must possess all the means necessary to exterminate them when afraid of them, or to increase their numbers when that seems desirable. There should never be any counterweight to the justice of government other than that of the interests or passions of those who govern, together with the passions and interests of those who, as we have said, have received from it only so much power as is requisite to reproduce their own.... Take its god from the people that you wish to subjugate, and then demoralize it; so long as it worships no other god

than you, and has no other morals than your morals, you will always be its master...allow it in return the most extreme criminal license; punish it only when it turns upon you."¹³

Behold the real program of the totalitarianism of dissoluteness, to use the famous category of Augusto Del Noce, prefigured by the fervent illuminist and revolutionary De Sade, which has been in the course of realization for 200 years.¹⁴

Idealism

The discussion to this point reaches a natural juncture with German idealism. Let us begin by noting that the German idealists are excellent specialists of ancient gnosticism: Schelling was a specialist on Marcion, Hegel was a specialist on Valentinus.¹⁵ Let us not forget either that there is a very tight link uniting Marcion to Luther by the intermediary of medieval heresies, then to the German liberal Protestant theology, a link which moreover explains a certain number of anti-Semitic deviations in the Germany of the 20th Century, for the refusal of the Old Testament and the alteration of the New inevitably culminate in a form of docetism, rendering futile the Incarnation, Passion and death of the Word and the redemption He brought, and that depreciates the belonging of Jesus Christ as man to the Jewish people.¹⁶

In idealism, God is dead. The first to clearly state this is Hegel ("The great Pan is dead"). Nietzsche was not the first to take the death of God for a certain metaphysical truth and to use it as a point of departure for a new philosophy, but Hegel, almost a century before. God is dead, and the Absolute coincides with the history of culture, with the incessant succession of historico-cultural and political moments. But then man, who produces these forms and their incessant change, is God incarnate; he is God in history, because either freedom—the *Geist*, the Spirit—is held to be created, or it can only be considered as the immanence of God in history. God no longer transcends the world, but coincides ontologically with the world and history, and thus, once again, God is man. But it is interesting to observe how, in perfect correspondence with the Gnostic conception of the original pleroma, man is conceived of as God: not man taken as an individual, but man conceived as *mankind in general*, collectively dissolved, we might say, in the whole of history and of culture, then with Marx dissolved in the whole of social class. In the idealist conception the ancient Cabalistic idea reappears according to which man, by

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attaining the profound knowledge of his I, encounters God.¹⁷ In German Idealism, as in Cabala, God and the world, God and man do not have a really separate life.

God needs man to be complete, God—and with this idea one can understand numerous aspects of contemporary theological thought—God is man actualized in history. Today we would say that he is man who redeems himself in history by bringing peace, by bringing the rights of man to the whole world, by destroying capitalism, by destroying modern science, which only brings evil (obviously there is a correct understanding of science, a Christian interpretation, which shows that science in itself is not an evil, but represents what has historically, starting from the Middle Ages, given a “superabundance” to a world seeking first the kingdom of heaven), by deindustrializing, with a ridiculous ecological enthusiasm, the Western world.)

But if God is man who actualizes himself in history, who redeems himself by his own power, then a humanity redeemed, pacified, and united would represent the final actualization of God. With idealism, which is the last really great step in Western metaphysics, not only are we in the shadow of a metaphysics that conceives of man as God and history as the locus where God actualizes himself, but we are also in a philosophy that, by taking its inspiration from ancient gnosis and from particular currents of the Neoplatonic tradition as well as certain representatives of the Renaissance esotericism, thinks that *nothingness* is the essence of God, thinks of alienation as the essence of God: God is alienated because he is not complete; he must make himself world, man, anguish, in order to then become laboriously himself.¹⁸ As in Hegel’s *The Science of Logic*, Nothingness precedes and founds Being.


I think that we are now able to understand in what sense idealism is a complete gnosis: An alienated God is “inhabited” by evil, by negativity; history is the locus where man redeems God from his alienation; man helps God become God, healing him of his suffering and incomplete character, his “unhappy consciousness,” his aimless and blind *kenosis*.¹⁹ No longer is it God who heals me of the leprosy of original sin, the inclination to evil, and of concupiscence. I no longer need to be healed; rather, it is I that must “heal” God, it is even I that am God, and my cure constitutes the liberation and full realization of God himself.

If idealism considers mankind to be God, then the history of mankind is the march of God towards himself, the becoming of God himself. We are on the one hand faced with the eternal gnostico-cabalistic idea according to which, as we have seen, man is necessary to God; but on the other hand, if there is no

longer any ontological difference between man and God based upon the idea of creation, if there is no ontological leap between creature and Creator, then the worth of the individual, the irreducible value of the individual, his uniqueness, his value as a person endowed with an interior life founded upon the Christian primacy of free will, collapses.²⁰ Moreover, in Hegel’s thinking, there is already an attempt to establish the primacy of the collective by dissolving the idea of person.²¹

In his *Phenomenology of Mind*, Hegel clearly affirms that there can be no I outside the totality that establishes it; what is true [or real] is the totality, but the individual man, on the contrary, is never true [or real]. This thesis is the key idea of Hegel, and even of Rousseau, a thesis that will subsequently be formalized by Marx, and that today holds sway over a certain ecclesiastical sensibility. Indeed, sentimental, participatory Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement that dominates and often penetrates Catholic movements—for the movements being propagated in Catholic circles arose in a Protestant milieu—all that is fundamentally a renunciation of the person, and opens the door to an unprecedented totalitarian domination of consciences. Eric Voegelin, one of the greatest political philosophers of the 20th century, affirms in this regard that with the modern revolution, because of the gnostic representation of the totality of individuals as but a single true moment, we find ourselves confronted with a new *passivization* of persons, which is a prelude to new forms of power.²²

People have now assimilated the idea that as individuals they are nothing, that they are worthless unless they belong to a totality, even if the whole be in ruins, or barbarous, or foolish: what matters is belonging. In such an ideological context, we see disappearing the very idea that gave birth to Christianity, namely, the very idea of *martyrdom* as an inevitably and irreducibly personal and individual witness. When Thomas More, for example, heard his accusers say that all the English bishops had signed the document acknowledging Henry VIII’s sovereignty over the Church of England, he answered that *his* conscience forbade him from signing it because it called upon him to remain faithful to the Church of Rome, and that the Roman Catholic Church linked him to 1500 years of theological and ecclesiastical tradition. It is he, a man who, though alone,²³ feels that he must remain faithful, that he must bear witness to the truth. In all of England the fall into heresy and Henry VIII’s schism was opposed by just a handful of persons (scarcely more than a dozen), plus the martyrs of the Protestant persecution that ensued (70,000 dead).

This has implications for us today, for the notion of a collectivist, communitarian ecclesiology dissolves the possibility of witness, which is always individual.²⁴ 

This lecture was presented by Prof. D'Amico at the Eleventh Congress of Catholic Studies held at Rimini, Italy (Oct. 25-26, 2003) on the theme: "The Modern World in the Light of the Magisterium of St. Pius X." *DICI* called this lecture "a masterly synthesis on the philosophic genesis of modernism."

The third and final installment of this article will appear in the September 2006 issue of *The Angelus* with a discussion of Modernism and *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* of Pope St. Pius X. This was translated exclusively for Angelus Press by Miss Anne Stinnett from *Courrier de Rome* (Dec. 2005 and Jan. 2006), the French edition of *SiSiNoNo*.

¹ René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason and Seeking Truth in the Sciences* (1637), Ch. 4. [English version from the Gutenberg Project on line at literature.org.]

² Fideism: *fides*, faith. A philosophical term meaning a system of philosophy or an attitude of mind, which, denying the power of unaided human reason to reach certitude, affirms that the fundamental act of human knowledge consists in an act of faith, and the supreme criterion of certitude is authority.

³ Now one can more easily understand why the fundamental weakness of Cartesian metaphysics consists specifically in this enclosing [of thought] within the unsolvable difficulties that are placed between the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa*, a philosophical problem referred to as *metaphysical dualism*. If one rejects the basic principles of classical Greco-Christian thought, one inevitably slides into either a rigid, indefensible dualism, or an equally ridiculous and hardly credible monism. Such a presupposition leads to the inexorable disappearance of the possibility of maintaining the ingenious Thomistic re-elaboration of the principle of the *analogia*, or degrees, of being.

⁴ Cf. Cornelio Fabro, *The Anthropocentric Turn of Karl Rahner* (Italian) (Milan, 1974), in which the author demolishes the false interpretation of St. Thomas made by German philosophy, profoundly influenced by its master Martin Heidegger, one of the protagonists of the 20th-century return to gnosticism.

⁵ Paul Arnold, *History of the Red Cross* (Ed. Mercure de France, 1955).

⁶ It is necessary to remark at this point, if only in passing, that from the standpoint of the faith, only a realist metaphysics makes sense for, among others, the following fundamental reason: Since everything is created by God, one cannot but think that God creates being on the basis of an idea of it, with a view to some end and of an ontological harmony linking the whole of creation into a solid unity (the contrary would imply an absurd "casual creation": a veritable *conradictio in adjecto*); being thus embodies the form that God assigns it; that is why the essential form proper to beings transcends the cognitive act of the man who seizes it by means of his intellect, since it is a property which ontologically founds the being itself. Thinking the contrary would signify, even implicitly, thinking of man's mind as creator, as a divine spirit: this is exactly the ultimate conclusion of modern immanentism with idealist thinking.

⁷ J. Ellul, *The Metamorphosis of the Bourgeois* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1967; Italian ed. Milan, 1972).

⁸ **Translator's note:** The author does not provide a reference to the study, however, in 1933 Mornet published what has become a classic study of the epoch, *The Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution*.

⁹ In a very rich, profound study, R. de Mattei very deftly shows the "tension wires" tightly linking the Protestant Reformation, and in particular its radical, sectarian developments (Anabaptism, etc.), to the development of Freemasonry, Jacobinism, and the Communist ideology (*Left of Luther* [Italian], Rome, 1999).

¹⁰ For the new conception of the relation between Church and State, with particular references to Rousseau, see J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian*

Democracy; P. Zaccone, *The Hidden Face of Democracy: The Totalitarian Rousseau*; and P. Pasqualucci, *Politics and Religion: An Essay on the Theology of History*. In the last work, the author unhesitatingly locates the heart of the modern vision of religion in Rousseau's teaching and in the fundamental thesis underlying all his thought, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly: Happiness—the veritable great myth of the 18th century (and of our own era)—can only be attained by man if man is made "one", beyond any shade of dualism or opposition between immanence and transcendence, between secular and religious, and thus between the socio-political sphere and the personal, private sphere. That means that only a man reduced to the pure political sphere will be happy, inside a system that we could qualify as biopolitical totalitarianism, and that revealed religion must be banished as a normative authority having a foundation in the transcendence of God. From a Rousseauist perspective, religion must in other words, be relegated to the internal forum of sentiment and subjective conscience, renounce any rigorous, rational structure, and adapt itself to the exigencies of the individual, to his needs and vision of the world, within a sentimental, aesthetic Christology perfectly described in the discourse of the Savoyard vicar of the *Emile*. It is at this level that the relation between Reform and politics is placed. It was Luther, as is well known, who, before Rousseau, opened the way to a sentimental and subjectivist tendency, which gave way to a deist and rationalist (at the age of liberal Protestantism) conception of Christianity. Religion is no longer based on man's effort to be open to the Word and the call that God addresses to him, but it develops "in proportion to" our conscience, in the immanentist and naturalist sense of the word. The struggle to heal the fracture between *bourgeois* and *citizen*, and to make of man a "happy" unity, pacified beyond the unhappy Judeo-Christian conscience, is also the red line, one must not forget, which developed along the axis Rousseau-Hegel-Marx, and which tightly links the two German thinkers to their Genevan predecessor. According to this idea, the individual I, understood in its moral and spiritual existence as unreducible to the class or society of which it is a part, is always a negative element, and the subject can only aspire to the truth if he loses himself in the whole, if he accepts being dissolved into the collective moment.

Be that as it may, if, based upon the Social Contract (but the real, conscious act of giving birth to this notion is older and must be ascribed, at the very least, to the *Leviathan* of Thomas Hobbes [1588-1679]), politics claims to be founded as something completely autonomous and source of its own sovereignty, then it inevitably follows, and this is Prof. Pasqualucci's second thesis, that an absolute ideological war must be joined between the new forms of democratic-totalitarian power (that is the formula that best conveys the notion of Jacobinism) and the Catholic Church, irreducible witness of the metaphysical primacy of Transcendence, that is to say, witness of man and of a world (even political) that, instead of discovering in themselves their own meaning and reason for being, acknowledge the primacy of God and set the eschatological problem of the last things as the center of gravity of both the public and the private spheres.

¹¹ Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (1944; New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p.xvi.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.3.

¹³ Marquis de Sade, *Histoire de Juliette* (Holland, 1797), cited in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p.89.

¹⁴ The quoted passage is interesting among other reasons because it reveals a certain prophetic anticipation of the "demographic plot" put in place by the United Nations and by other globalist organizations directly or indirectly inspired by the Freemasons during the 20th century (on the role of the U.N. in the great genocides of the post WWII period, cf. F. Adessa, *UN Massacres*, Brescia, 1996). The fact that the French Revolution, in the darkest phases of the Jacobin terror, was animated by deliberately genocidal acts was proven by Gracchus Babeuf in *La guerre de Vendée et le système de dépeuplement*; cf. also R. Secher, *Le génocide vendéen*. The analogies between the genocides of the French Revolution and the worst horrors of the Nazi and Bolshevik regimes are deftly developed in the popular but well-documented work of Jean Dumont, *Les faux mythes de la Révolution française*.

¹⁵ On ancient gnosticism, cf. H. Jonas, *Gnosticism* (Turin, 1991); E. Innocenti,

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- Gnostic Influences in the Church Today* (Rome, 2000) and *Apocryphal Gnosis*, Vols. I and II (Rome, 1993-1999); J. Meinvielle, *Influence of Jewish Gnosticism on the Christian Milieu* (Rome, 1995); E. Samek Lodovici, *Metamorphosis of Gnosis* (for interesting bibliographical references on gnosticism and Western philosophy, and in particular for the influences on Schelling, Heidegger, Marx, and Bloch).
- ¹⁶ On the relationship between Luther, anti-Semitism, and Nazism, cf. A. Agnoletto, *The Tragedy of Christian Europe in the 16th Century: From the Judeophobia of Luther to the Humanists Jonas and Melancthon* (Milan, 1996), though the text is weak and of modernist orientation in the chapter devoted to the relationship between Catholicism and Judaism.
- ¹⁷ Curiously, it is permissible to think that a similar idea is to be found at the basis of Freudian thought. Psychoanalysis is basically a form of gnosticism: "I am liberated by knowledge," and what matters is to be initiated into the esoteric path that leads to the knowledge that saves. This gnostic, Cabalistic matrix also appears on the scientific level: "Freud's pansexualism has antecedents in Cabala, as has been shown by David Bakan in *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*. The gnostic heresy of Cabala, which infiltrated secret societies, envisions God himself as bisexual, Adam as androgynous, and all of us as dominated by hidden, demonic, or as Freud would later say, "unconscious" forces. Incidentally, his 'revolutionary' theories on infantile sexuality were immediately accepted by one particular Jewish association, the B'nai B'rith, founded in 1843 by Freemasons and divided into lodges [it is actually Freemasonry for Jews—*Ed.*]. The *Interpretation of Dreams* was also suggested to Freud by Cabalistic texts that see in the world of dreams nothing but sexual symbols. Bakan goes further, and sees in Freud's most famous book 'a pact with the devil.' The epigraph Freud chose was '*Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*—If I cannot bend the higher powers, I will move the infernal regions" (that is, hell), a quote from Virgil's *Aeneid* in which Juno speaks in anger (VII, 310-12). Psychoanalysis proposes an inversion: in the place of logical, conscious thought it places the unconscious, freighted with obscure sexual complexes, blasphemous and aggressive. To do this, all means are fair, especially mystification and falsification." (C. Gatto Trocchi, "The Restless Soul of the West," *Certamen*, No. 15, 2002).
- ¹⁸ A particularly profound and lucid analysis of Hegelian dialectic, and implicitly the theme of alienation, is furnished for us by E. Berti, in *Contradiction and Dialectic in the Ancients and Moderns* (Italian), Palermo, 1988.
- ¹⁹ "A term derived from the discussion as to the real meaning of Phil. 2:6ff.: 'Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, But emptied [ekenosen] himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as man.' ...According to Catholic theology, the abasement of the Word consists in the assumption of humanity and the simultaneous occultation of the Divinity" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Kenosis").
- ²⁰ On the primacy of free will, cf. A. Dalledonne, "Le primat thomiste de la volonté libre" in *Actes du congrès théologique de SiSiNoNo* (Condé sur Noireau, 1995), pp.56-66.
- ²¹ To investigate the lesser known aspects of Hegel's life that shed light on his relations with revolutionary circles and Freemasonry, cf. J. D'Hondt, *Hegel secret: Recherches sur les sources secrètes de la pensée hégélienne* (Milan, 1989; 2003).
- ²² Cf. Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago, 1952).
- ²³ In fact, the bishop John Fisher and a group of Chartreuse monks refused to swear the oath, but concretely, existentially, his feeling of absolute solitude, such as is conveyed in his letters from prison, was immense.
- ²⁴ With this evolution of ideas, we come up against numerous movements, even Catholic ones, in which membership in the movement counts, or at least seems to count, more than membership in the Church itself and more than personal faithfulness to Christ. When the faith reigns, then all personalism, sensationalism, or cultishness is excluded. The holier someone is, the more he makes those who approach him feel as if they are approaching Christ. A classic example of the degeneration of religious life due to membership in a sectarian movement is given by the Neocatechumenal Way, an heretical group that is spreading within the Catholic Church. The proof that we find ourselves confronted with a sect in this case is given by the ability of the group to wrest its adepts from participation in parish life by enclosing them within a parallel universe subject to significant manipulation. For an introduction to the mind-boggling theological distortions of the Neocatechumens, cf. L. Villa, *Heresies in the Neocatechumenal Doctrine* (Brescia, 2000).

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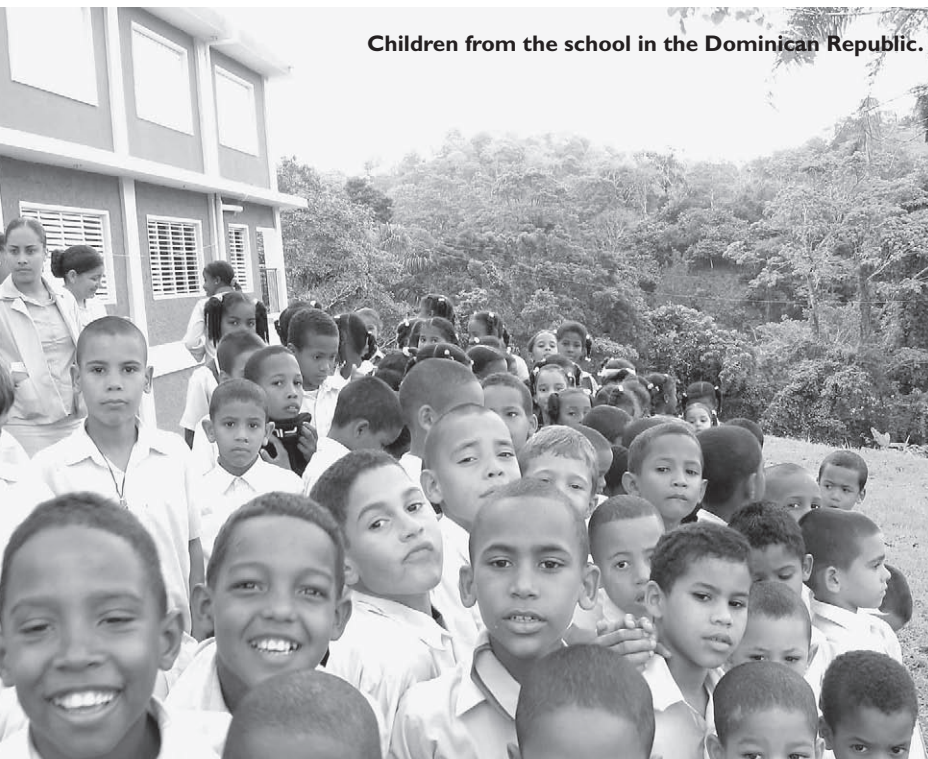
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Angelus Press Edition

Christendom NEWS

THE SOCIETY OF SAINT PIUS X IN SOUTH AMERICA



Children from the school in the Dominican Republic.

Fr. Christian Bouchacourt, formerly the pastor of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet in Paris and now the District Superior of South America, was interviewed by Fr. Alain Lorans, director of the official press bureau of the Society of Saint Pius X, *DICI*.

Frs. Martinez, Blanco, and Huber in Santo Domingo.



Children at the school of Vina del Mar, Chile.

Fr. Lorans: Father, you went straight from St. Nicolas du Chardonnet, in Paris, to Argentina. How long ago was it?

Fr. Bouchacourt: It will be three years this coming August. Yes, three years in the southern hemisphere. So today you are by the fire and we are basking in the sun.

Fr. Lorans: What is the current temperature?

Fr. Bouchacourt: Oh, it's terribly hot. It is summer time!

Fr. L.: I know you're in Paris at present, but you have been all over France. Argentina is a poor country, and you need to solicit the help of the faithful in France. Each Sunday, you visit a different priory?

Fr. B.: That's correct! I have been in France for a little over three weeks and I have already visited Nantes, Bordeaux, and Brest. St. Germaine's Chapel in Paris was first, of course; we must give honor where honor is due! Next Sunday I will be in Lyons, and in ten days I will end with a visit to the chapel in Versailles. In all, I will have visited six priories.

Fr. L.: What kind of welcome do you receive from the faithful? What support do they give...you can be frank!

Fr. B.: I always take my slides in order to introduce the District of South America, and I am surprised at how much this interests the faithful, who want to know how our congregation is missionary—if ever there was any doubt. Many people come, and I think they leave quite enthused to see our fellow priests over there commit themselves so generously to this marvelous apostolate, which is not always easy. Archbishop Lefebvre used to say that in the missions you need twice the effort for half the result. He wasn't wrong.

In France, you fish with a net, over there, you use a fishing rod. But, my goodness, it is a very beautiful and exciting apostolate.

Fr. L.: Are you discouraged at times?

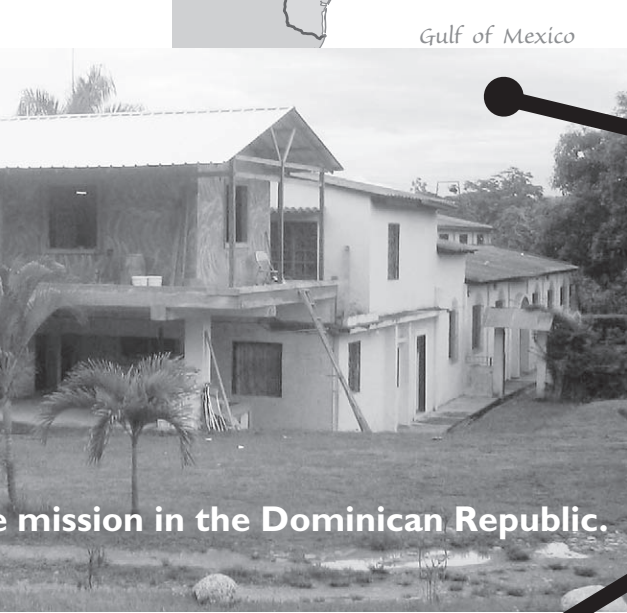
Fr. B.: No, absolutely not. Especially since the people over there are very receptive to the Catholic faith, because they have remained very Catholic, even if they have been touched by the crisis like everyone else in the world. I am moved and very grateful to see the interest French people show in our missions. Of course, they are not the only ones who help....

Fr. L.: There has been a serious economic crisis in Argentina. Did the country pull through?

Fr. B.: That was in 2001, and the country did pull through. But this crisis has really decimated the middle classes. The very rich survived, the very poor are still just as poor, but the middle class is impoverished. Our faithful come from the middle class and from the poor. Very often they have large families and do all they can to help us. But they are able to do very little, and are scarcely able, if at all, to pay school fees.

Fr. L.: As you know, every year in France there is a pilgrimage to Montmartre which draws crowds of traditionalist faithful from all over Europe, and indeed, the world. This year's pilgrimage is especially devoted to the missions. There are those who talk about the missions and those who work in the missions. Could you tell us exactly what life is like in the mission? You recalled that the Society is a missionary congregation, indeed was founded by a missionary, a Holy Ghost Father, Archbishop Lefebvre. As you are walking in his footsteps, can you tell us what is the missionary spirit?

Fr. B.: First of all, it's necessary to define broadly the mission in South America. South America is



Our mission in the Dominican Republic.



The Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Church in Bogotá, Colombia.



Asado, Argentinians' favorite barbeque.



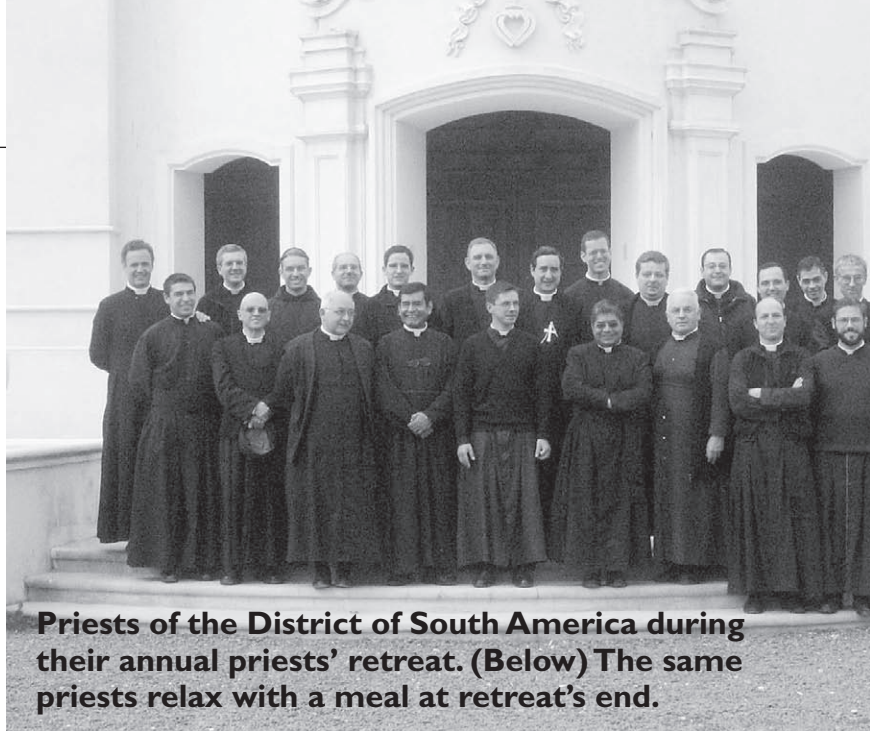


The South American District House in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

considered by many to have remained very Catholic. This is true, but it is on the verge of becoming completely false, since this sub-continent has now been taken over by sects, in Brazil especially, but in other countries, too. And it is awful because they attract very large numbers of people. It is alarming: let me give you an example. In Rio de Janeiro there is a huge (Protestant) church, large enough to accommodate ten cathedrals the size of Notre Dame de Paris, and it seats thousands of people. On Sundays, for the morning service, it is full. But who goes to these services? Catholics. What is even more astounding is that afterwards, when they leave this church, they go and touch the statue of Our Lady that stands in the street.

These are Catholics who have been completely confused by the conciliar reforms. The clergy took away their simple devotions, which were genuine. Yes, their faith is simple, but it must not be despised on that count, because it is profound. These practices were taken away from them. In return, they were given an absolutely empty liturgy, with sometimes even pagan practices introduced into it, which the faithful did not want. So what happens? Well, they leave the Catholic Church to join these sects which offer them the old devotions, which of course have been corrupted, but the faithful feel they've found them again. The Mormons have cleverly used the familiar tunes of Marian hymns, but with unbelievable texts. And everyone sings them at the top of their voices without realizing that they're losing the Faith. Statistics published this year reveal that in 1920 there were five million non-Catholics in the entire South American sub-continent; today there are 60 million.

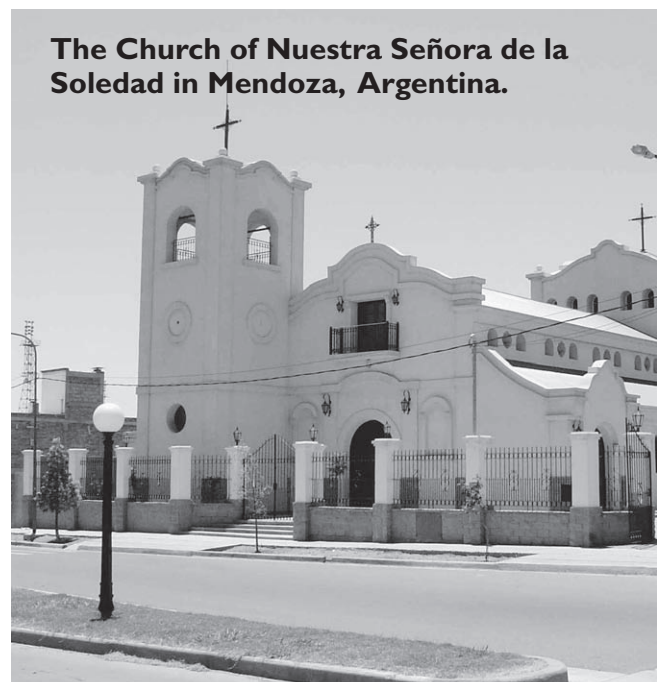
Now, to answer your question. What is the role of the SSPX? It is precisely to fill the void, because the conciliar Church did leave a void. And nature cannot tolerate a void. Thus when the Church retreats, the sects advance. The last time I went to a restaurant—yes, it does happen—the owner

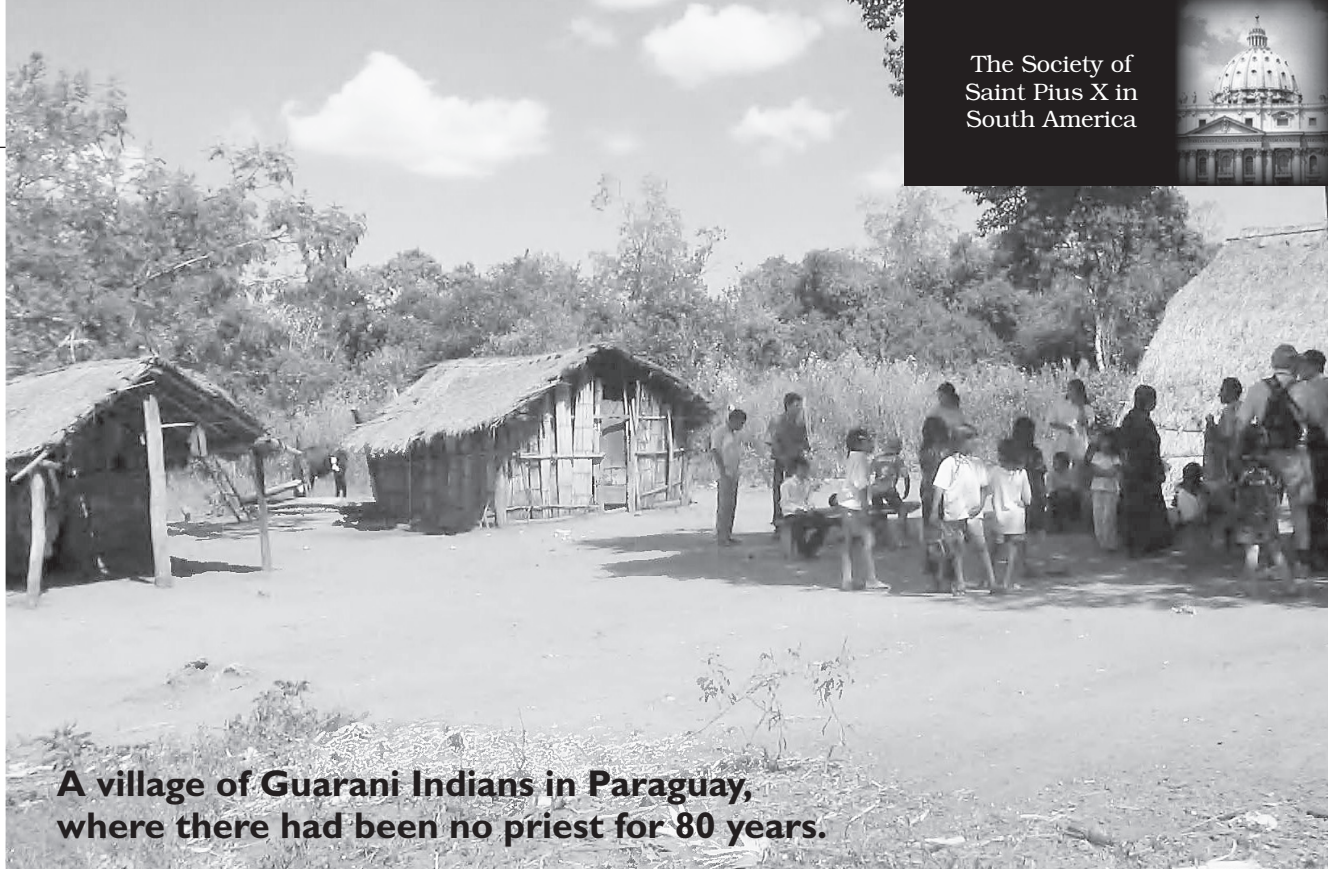


Priests of the District of South America during their annual priests' retreat. (Below) The same priests relax with a meal at retreat's end.



The Church of Nuestra Señora de la Soledad in Mendoza, Argentina.





**A village of Guarani Indians in Paraguay,
where there had been no priest for 80 years.**

came to me and said: “*Padre*, would you bless my restaurant when you have finished your meal?” She showed me a doll full of pins someone had left there.

Fr. L.: A voodoo doll? You mean they put a spell on her?

Fr. B.: Yes, exactly. Of course, the role of the SSPX and of Tradition is to continue what the missionaries had been doing before: to preach the Gospel, to baptize, to care for and sanctify souls. And I can assure you, this is thrilling. On the occasion of his priestly jubilee in Paris, Archbishop Lefebvre spoke to us about the palpable transformations which would take place everywhere where the Catholic Mass was celebrated. For us, SSPX priests, we have not only our founder but also the present Superior General who give us this missionary sense. I feel that the Mother House is helping us in a truly wonderful way. It can’t do more because of the lack of priests and so on. But thanks to its support we manage to open new chapels and to organize communities.

It is long and laborious, but we are gradually seeing things move. Let me give you an example. We went to visit a community of Guarani Indians on the border between Paraguay and Brazil, where no priest had been for 80 years. Just six months before us a priest went there, but the community sent him away because he was in lay clothes: “We don’t want you, we want the men in black,” they told him. *We* were the men in black with our cassocks. It was so moving to arrive in a place where there had been no priest for years. In the *cacique’s* (village chief) hut, there was a little statue of our Blessed Lady (with no feet or nose), which they venerated. In the cemetery, there was a Jesuit cross, which looks something like the Lorraine cross. Where did they get that cross? From the Jesuits who went there hundreds of years ago. When they saw us coming, they opened their doors to us, saying, “This is what our forefathers did.” And I can assure you it was overwhelming.

Fr. L.: And the Jesuits, they’re no longer around?

Fr. B.: No, and it is unfortunate, as they were the cavalry of the Church. They did a tremendous amount of good; now they’ve completely lost it.

Fr. L.: You spoke about the disasters of modern liturgy. But has liberation theology also played its part in this catastrophe?

Fr. B.: Of course. It has caused resentment among the people: envy. The poor became jealous of the rich, and the rich who had deserted the Church forgot what their duty was. As Archbishop Lefebvre very rightly wrote in one of his letters, in the past, the poor man did not feel jealous of the rich man. He had his little plot of land, he could live. Now liberation theology has infected the class war with dialectics. It’s Marxism. To be sure, the influence of liberation theology is waning,



Lujan, the “Lourdes of Argentina.”

but its effects remain. Who has the upper hand these days? The cult of race: American-Indianity. With some heads of state, like Hugo Chavez [the current President of Venezuela—*Ed.*], all pagan practices take pride of place. After his election, the president of the Republic of Peru stood on a pyramid wearing a feather headdress and asked the sun’s blessing on his mandate; and the recently elected president of Bolivia, a torch in his hand, went to implore the help of the god of the Incas—and all this in countries which are 90% Catholic!

Unfortunately, in the name of religious liberty, the bishops never open their mouths. Since Vatican II, and at the request of Paul VI, the heads of Catholic States have had to write out of their constitution the Catholic religion as the State religion. And thus we saw a president of a Republic announce reluctantly the abdication of the Catholic Church in the presence of the nuncio who had requested it on behalf of the

Holy See. This renunciation of the authority of the Catholic truth opened the door to sects and paganism.


However, the bishops seem to regain some of their vigor when it comes to condemning us. Let me give you an enlightening example: we serve a tiny chapel with 25 faithful in Corrientes in the northeast of Argentina. The faithful, very happy, had an announcement put in the local paper for Midnight Mass at Christmas. The bishop read it, and the following day published a half-page article in the paper condemning us and the 25 faithful. And this while there are many sects in his diocese about which he never says a word! People are complaining, they come and tell us, “*Padre...*,” but they are afraid of the bishops, because the bishop still has some influence over there.

Fr. L.: You say *Padre*, so Spanish has become your second language. Are you good enough at it to dream in Spanish?!

Fr. B.: No! I’m praying for a little personal Pentecost! I have a hard time learning it and I have a terrible accent, but I have fellow priests and the faithful especially who are very indulgent.

Fr. L.: You have an immense district. How many countries do you serve?

Fr. B.: First, let me tell you its size. It is 6,800 miles north to south and 4,000 miles east to west. We are a group of 33 priests, 38 if we include the priests at the seminary, for this area. We go mainly to Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Colombia. Of course, we do not have enough priests and some chapels are served only once every three months, others once a month, and the people keep their faith heroically with no resident priest.

So, if some young men would like to help us the way young men used to go to the colonies in the old days, if they’d like to spend six months in the missions with us, they can send me an e-mail (fsspx.sudamerica@fibertel.com.ar). Be aware that things are a little bit different here. The school year begins in March and ends in December. All men of good will are very welcome! 

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Donations can be sent to the US District Office, Regina Cæli House, 2918 Tracy Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri 64109-1529 USA. The checks should be made payable to the Society of St. Pius X, but, please, do not forget to specify “for the South American Missions.” Also, donations can be sent to the Society of Saint Pius X’s international headquarters: Haus Mariæ Verkündigung, Schwandegg, CH-6313 Menzingen, SWITZERLAND. Again, specify that the donation is intended for the missions in South America.

Ten Minutes with Fr. de Chivré:



The Family Vacation

The topic of vacations is different from the topic of “leisure.” The scope we have given to leisure in modern life, to the point of enshrining its rights and expressions into law, is a paganism which a profoundly Catholic life can only condemn. There is a degree of duration and intensity of leisure which becomes a profanation of relaxation. The proof is that it becomes too often a source of demoralization and devaluation of the human person.

We need instead to adopt a meaning for the word “vacation” that connotes a certain aspect of reward for a life honestly tired, entitled to a conscious reinvigoration in the form of new activities serving as a diversion from work and labor. Vacations are not laziness, otherwise they would be a sin. They are an action made intelligent by the rhythm we impose upon them in order to foster a relaxation that will leave mind and confidence in a state of moral well-being.

To take a vacation is to relax; it is not to self-destruct. Now, to relax is to know the satisfaction of giving oneself over to activities that are varied no longer according to duty but according to our tastes, our preferences, and our qualities. Relaxation therefore involves a certain pleasure, but which remains under the command of the conscience and the heart. *A lesson in the theology of pleasure may be what is needed in our age of frenetic leisure.*

The mission of pleasure is to rebuild our wearied efforts and by so doing to restore psychological and physical balance, to effect a moral renewal more or less made difficult by the disproportion of efforts expended over the course of a year. Pleasure has a mission of re-creation. It therefore has a mission of assuring a new recuperation of physical and moral health, to obtain

for our higher faculties a greater ease of expression and governance. This is where *Christian* pleasure parts ways with *pagan* pleasure.

The role of Christian pleasure is to offer man and woman new occasions to rebuild a humanity worthy of God. The role of pagan pleasure too often *takes from* man at the expense of his humanity through the intermediaries of abuse, excess, and vice fostered and encouraged by laxity. The “pleasure” of “hanging loose” saps our energy. The “pleasure” of drink takes away our dignity. The “pleasure” of bad reading takes away our morality. The “pleasure” of laziness takes away our reason to live virtuously. [We must add today that the “pleasure” of TV viewing takes away our intellect. The “pleasure” of computer usage takes away Reality.—*Ed.*] Within pleasure, the higher faculties must never be dissociated from sensation. If sensation alone is flattered under pretext of reward, it will never repose, but feed on the destruction of the conscience, the heart, the mind, and the will by a moral malaise of sin, abuse, or excess—all things which *never* repose. On the contrary, we must know how to obtain for our mind voluntary initiatives in accord with the tastes of the heart, to maintain repose in a state of active elevation, enthusiasm, energy, admiration, or superior interest. We must maintain, within our pleasure, a reason for existing humanly, and not a reason for *animalizing* humanity.

I would like to quote a French statesman who, crushed under his official duties, said: “Relaxation is at my fingertips; all I do is shift the work I am doing.” The mission of vacation is therefore to re-create, that is, to rebuild by a repose at once governed and relaxed, and in which there is no abdication of the will. Intentionally

delaying one's hour of rising is not the same thing as lazily enjoying an immorally prolonged period of "vegging out."

Likewise, in a schedule, to recreate does not consist in abandoning one's time to the flux of sensations, foreseen or unforeseen, of a day governed by no intelligent goal, program, or project. Lost time bears in itself a threat of weariness and sin. We must always know what we want and what we are doing, or else our vacation will spiral into a tailspin of agitation, constant movement, and deliberate pursuit of doubtful company, turning it into a source of irritation and unbalance.

It is vital to understand that repose is far more an affair of the mind than of the body. The mind must be engaged in what reinvigorates. The contemplatives are smarter than we are. Whether it be question of aesthetic admiration, of adoration, of silence filled with love, of enthralled observation of a landscape bathed in calm, of an enthralling reading perfectly harmonized with our intellectual needs—the mind has greater need of vacation than does the body, and if modern society understood the fact, it would cut out its gluttonous wastage and make phenomenal progress.

There is a kind of "tourist virus" that is a strain of the materialism of repose; restless motion excludes and prevents any kind of psychological refreshment. We need to realize that a vacation holds a middle ground between work and the animalistic abuse of relaxation. Just as, sadly, there exists an animalistic and degrading use of leisure, there is on the other hand an understanding which chooses the place for a vacation for its wholesome benefits. That is to say, to choose a vacation destination for its noble pleasures, not for ignoble ones. A genuine vacation includes plenty of time for healthy and calm reflection. It excludes making oneself a slave to the car or amusement park schedule.

Husbands and Wives

Throughout the year, husband and wife live in a communion of cares. During their vacation, they should strive to find each other again in a communion of exchanges. Know how to find a little time alone, just the two of you, to refresh the spiritual vitality of those first engagements to one another, and this to the benefit of the problems of the heart relived and rejuvenated in the light of your experiences together. You are already growing more perfect if you are working to love each other better, if you are learning to repose in a renewal of affection, even one fostered by a common outside activity.

Vacations are as much a service of the household as they are in service of matrimony as a sacrament. That they are oftentimes planned and made separately by husbands and wives is to destroy their union as a couple, a union which also is compromised by a vacation amounting to constant worldliness. A married

couple's vacations are taken for a more prolonged time of exchanges worthy of God and the two spouses.


The Moral Sense of Vacation

Morality is much more a source of repose than of weariness, and by guaranteeing liberty of expression to the mind, it introduces to the heart a need to sing, a need to laugh with a frank vigor, a need to enjoy oneself without remorse, a need to experience a time of repose full of diversionary—but not frivolous—animation. For the children, family vacation must never lose its moral sense by becoming a period of laxity, messy rooms, late arrivals for meals, of frivolous company, and of calculated flight from the family.

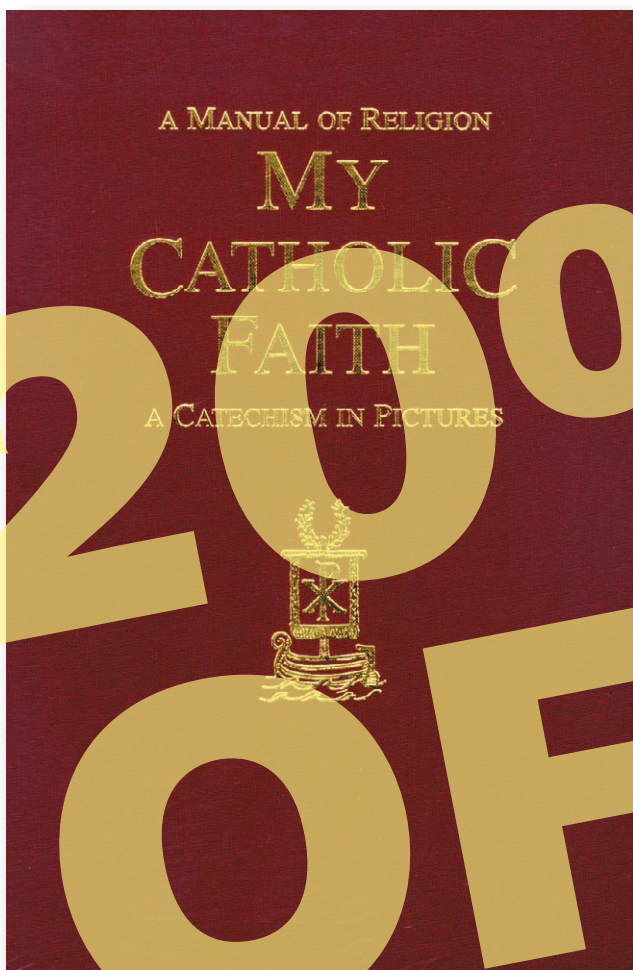
Parents worthy of their responsibilities ought to know what their children plan to do on their vacation. They must know where their children are. They must know the who their children are relating to and with whom they are forming relationships. [In other words, in these days of "traveling the world" via the Internet, of MySpace, Facebook, and Xanga, parents are duty-bound to know who's involved.—*Ed.*] Under no pretext are strangers to unhealthily distract from the children's vacations. If it has often happened that families, returning from their vacation, realize that brothers and sisters, parents and children have grown *apart*, the reason being that, instead of a period of rest and reinvigoration, the vacation was a time of sin (or introduction to sin) or of psychological dislocation for an entire family.

God in Our Vacation

True love does not rest otherwise love would not be love. Love strengthens our ties with those we love. If God is truly loved, there is no vacation from God. Between us and God, relaxation is meant to help us enjoy a greater facility to admire Him in His creation, to be aware of Him more consciously in prayer, or to receive Him more frequently in the Eucharist. In short, there is a spiritual courtesy in not denying God His share of our vacation by including a share of deeper encounter with Him.

How beneficial it would be to use our vacation time to emphasize a given religious feast, either local or liturgical, to which we might bring our generous collaboration [*i.e.*, a pilgrimage, an Ordinations Day, a volleyball tournament, *etc.*—*Ed.*]. The man who knows how to reserve a place for God in his vacation gives to it a guarantee, not only of perfection, but of happiness that goes far beyond mere pleasure. Catholic homes must overcome the tendency to make God a stranger to their periods of rest and human enjoyment. 

Translated exclusively for Angelus Press. Slight accommodations to the text by Fr. Kenneth Novak for clarity. Published as "Les Vacances," *Carnets Spirituels*, No.3, Association du R. P. de Chivré (Feb. 2005).



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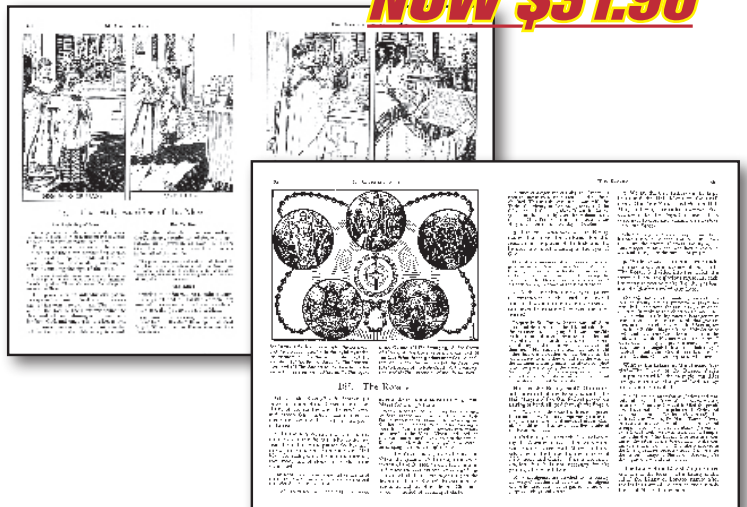
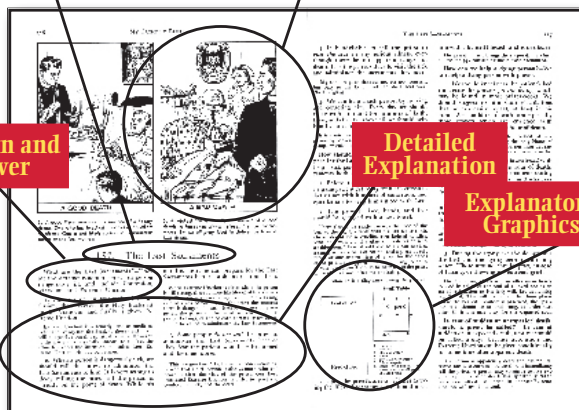
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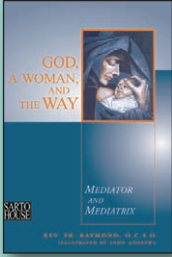
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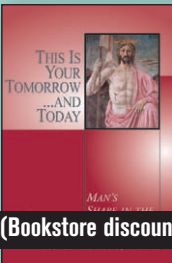
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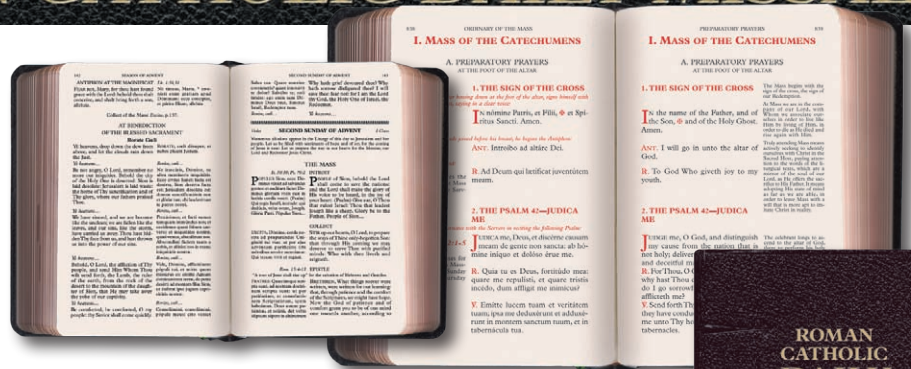
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