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Marxism and Christianity: From Anathema to Dialogue

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student of the University in Chapel Hill; Pat Cusick, a grandson of the founder of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama; their Negro friend and civil rights leader from Durham, Quinton Baker. Nor did their theory of "nonviolent resistance" at any cost detract from the narrative. If it affected the story at all, it added flavor.

Presented with potentially dynamic story elements, Ehle took full advantage of these and wove out of them a provocative story. In plain prose, he brings out the fact that for many, when the old order is challenged, deep-seated animosities long hidden are easily evoked and no irrational behavior is impossible to civilized man. Yet despite this, there are some who will willingly face up to the risks involved in fighting for a conviction.

That Ehle was no stranger to Chapel Hill brings added credibility to his story. That this same element could exact a painful price from him is no wild surmise. "I have written about my own town, friends and acquaintances in this book, and there are going to be hurt feelings. I'm sorry about that." But "I go along with the italicized statement which is published in each issue of the Chapel Hill *Weekly*:

'If the matter is important and you're sure of your ground, never fear to be in the minority.'"

And in his acceptance of the risks, he reveals that he too is one of the free men.

Through *The Free Men*, the uninvolved observer such as I can say with David Riesman "I myself have become engaged with these free men I have never met."

MARIA TERESA COLAYCO

MARXISM AND CHRISTIANITY

FROM ANATHEMA TO DIALOGUE. By Roger Garaudy. Translated by Luke O'Neill. New York: Herder and Herder, 1965. 124 pp.

With the Second Vatican Council, the question of the Church's dialogue with the world has gained more and more prominence among Catholic thinkers. Yet dialogue itself takes time, maturity and a great deal of security in what one is and has. Too often in the past, dialogue has been conceived of in terms of debate, the object of which was to win points over one's opponent. Such dialogue, if dialogue it can be

called, leads people to talk past each other rather than to each other. One of the outstanding merits of Professor Garaudy's little work is that it faces the demand of dialogue between Christians and Marxists openly and sincerely. Taking his lead from Fr. Gonzalez Ruiz, Garaudy distinguishes two levels in the dialogue: "the level of the conception of man, and the level of politics" (p. 37). But he feels it is legitimate to relate the two since "Marxism, like Christianity, does not separate social and political problems from philosophical principles."

The second chapter of the book is entitled "The Realization of What is Basic to Christians." Possibly, the most important point raised in this chapter is the question of the relevance of the Christian message or the possibility of its formulation in terms which will make it easier for modern man to understand. Here Garaudy is sympathetic to the work of Bultmann and Bishop John A. T. Robinson and their attempts to demythologize the Christian message, nevertheless he seems aware that the demythologizing process can be carried too far. Myth is uncritical and for that reason can be exploited but there seems to be no doubt that the neglect of myth can uproot the very consciousness of a transcendent God.

In treating of the problem of religion and science, Garaudy is very sympathetic to the views of Teilhard de Chardin, especially "the militant effort toward the future and its construction" implied in his view of Christianity.

Garaudy is most impressed with those theologians who show a genuine concern for a pastoral theology of witness and dialogue. "When John XXIII speaks about war and peace, when Pere Teilhard or Pere Dubarle speak about science, when Father Gonzalez Ruiz or Father Rahner speak about the future, they speak a language which can reach even us, can force us to ask questions, can stimulate intellectual rivalry and mutual enrichment. It is a language which not only makes dialogue possible but also makes it possible to have real cooperation in the building of a common future that our times demand."

In treating of what is basic to Marxism, Garaudy first indicates that for Marxists and for Christians, a fresh study of the sources is necessary. Such a study reveals that much misunderstanding has resulted from the confusion about the word materialism in Marx. There can be no doubt about the fact, and Garaudy documents this quite well, that Marxist materialism takes as its point of departure "the creative act of man." Man fashioning his own history. "For Marx, man begins with work. This specifically human activity is characterized by the fact that consciousness anticipates reality: starting off from the conditions of its birth and in terms of them, it puts forth its own ends, its own projects." Religion, therefore, is a project, "a way of breaking away from, of transcending the given, of anticipating the real whether by justifying the existing order or by protesting against it and attempting

to transform it." As project, religion is myth and, as such, will be abandoned with the progress of science. Yet its vision of charity, and suffering is beautiful. This is why Maurice Thorez says, "we can neither despise nor criticise the Christian for his faith, his love, his dreams, his hopes. Our own task is to labor and to struggle lest they remain distorted and illusory." In other words the Communist task as conceived by Thorez is to help the Christian find a beginning of his heaven here on earth.

For the Marxist, Garaudy informs us there are no dogmatic answers to such questions as the meaning of life, of death, of one's origin and end. All answers to such questions are bound up with a certain stage of knowledge which always bears the stigma of "the transitory inadequacies of the age and can never be offered as definitive. Though the Marxist asks the same questions as the Christian does, he feels no compulsion to provide an answer or to affirm behind the activity a being who is its source. For the Marxist freedom is man's creation, not a matter of grace and assent."

Perhaps the issue between the Christian and Marxist is most clearly stated in the words of Garaudy himself "Christianity teaches us to understand everything on the basis of what is in process of arrival." For the Marxist, "nothing is promised, nothing is waiting" and to tell man that there is something beyond is to impoverish him.

Garaudy recognizes the fact that Marxism like Christianity can be embarrassed by concrete historical embodiments of its basic vision. To concentrate on these embodiments, however, will not advance dialogue too far. Dialogue, if it is to be fruitful, must be based on a genuine respect for the sources of both Christian and Marxian thought. Garaudy's book is a significant contribution to a better understanding between Marxism and Christianity. Continuing dialogue will undoubtedly be slow in developing. In some areas of the world, it may never come at all. But at least Professor Garaudy's work holds out hope for cooperation and understanding between two world views which between them affect the destinies of two-thirds of mankind.

JOHN DOHERTY, S.J.

THE MISSIONARY TASK

THE CHURCH AS MISSION. By Eugene Hillman, C.S.Sp. New York: Herder and Herder, 1965. 144 pp.

Father Hillman is an American missionary in Tanzania, Africa. He was the first priest ever to be sent to the nomadic tribes of North-