

THE CHRISTIAN-MARXIST DEBATE *

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"Der Herr Pfarrer spricht weder von dem Cancan noch von der Polka, sondern von dem Tanze schlechthin, von der Kategorie des Tanzes, die nirgends getanzt wird als unter seinen kritischen Hirnschädel" Marx/Engels)¹⁾

1 INTRODUCTION

The notion of Christianity and Marxism confronting each other in endless controversy, rather like two quarrelsome brothers, has grown up over the past twenty years.²⁾ Christian protagonists justify the debate by pointing out that the original impulses of Marxism emanated largely from the Judaeo-Christian tradition, which contains certain early Christian motifs. Christians and Marxists should therefore apply themselves to their common mandate of shaping history and the future. Those who are opposed to such a debate maintain, particularly with reference to the communist experiment in Russia, that Marxism (in the guise of communism) plays havoc with "Christian western civilization", demolishes "religion" with its atheistic criticism, and violates the individuality of "man" with its collective approach.³⁾

Although one may not be in agreement with the justifications for either of the above points of view, one could well ask why a debate between Christianity and Marxism is necessary. The facile answer is that one must know the enemy to be able to fight him. But then, I would ask, why do Christians at South African universities see fit to embrace positivism, in all its variations, as their theoretical kindred? In my view positivism uses atheism as a practical hypothesis.⁴⁾ Both Marxists and positivists regard religion as an unscientific mode of explaining reality. Yet there is no statute for the suppression of positivism! Of course one could argue that positivism is not a danger to the state, but I believe that the debate between Christianity and Marxism is inhibited by the Suppression of Communism Act, whereas positivism is permitted to go uncurbed.

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Apart from thrust-and-repartee games such as the above there is no chance of any congress or forum of discussion with Marxism in South Africa today. The only feasible alternative is to establish how much cross-influencing there has been between these two traditions, or to make a fairly formal comparison between them. What I propose doing is to contrast Marxism with church-centred Christianity. In my view Christianity extends beyond the church, hence this distinction between church-centred Christianity and Christianity as a reality of diaspora in society. The former regards the church as a supra-natural enclave or island in society.⁵⁾ The latter does not. According to the former neither sociology nor any other -ology you could name - with the sole exception of theology - is entitled to analyse the church. The church as an institution may not be compared to any other social structure. According to this premise - one could call it the "protestant principle" - church, faith and theology float somewhat between heaven and earth.⁶⁾ By contrast real-life Christianity in its diaspora in society presupposes a church which is socio-politically embedded as a structure of society. It is not some supernatural abstraction within society, nor a metaphysical blanket term ("the one church of Christ") to be applied universally. On the contrary: the concept of the kingdom alone may be used as a limiting concept to regulate the constant critique of human works and ideas.

The main objections of Marxist critics to church-centred Christianity is that a theory or doctrine that purports to be quite dissociated from and independent of socio-economic reality must inevitably present an uncritical reflection of that reality. Whether such independence or dissociation purports to be "from above" (transcendent) or "from below" (immanent) is largely irrelevant. Once religion (a) represents a low level of uncritical thought, (b) alienates man from himself, and (c) impedes social and political progress, it must - for the good of mankind - be fought and abolished.

Church-centred Christianity's fundamental argument against Marxism is that it is built around an inner core of atheism which places it in diametrical opposition to the Christian faith. This means that no one can be both Christian and Marxist. But then we must ask: how come that a person is "permitted" to be both Christian and positivist, phenomenologist, capitalist, liberal, nationalist or even racist? The answer would appear to be that church-centred Christianity and each of these ideologies have, by an unspoken agreement, assigned each other a place where none of them can pose a threat to any of the

others. As a result we have a proliferation of hyphenated Christian hybrids, such as the all too familiar Christian-national syndrome.

I am not proposing a synthesis between Christianity and Marxism, nor to bridge the profound gulf that separates my views from those of my Marxist partners in dialogue. Nevertheless I consider it vitally important for our debate to distinguish between primary and secondary issues, no matter how close their historical interrelationship. Before I come to the factors that stimulated the debate, let us first dwell on what Marx himself had to say about "religion".

II MARX'S ABOLITION OF RELIGION

In 1841, in the preface to his dissertation (Marx did his doctorate on the difference between the natural philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus) Marx wrote the following:

Philosophy, while a single drop of blood continues to pulse through its all-compelling, utterly free heart, will continue to address its opponents in the words of Epicurus: the ungodly are not those who spurn the gods of the masses, but those who attribute to the gods the conceptions of the masses. Philosophy takes as its own the confession of Prometheus: Each and every God I hate! This is the dictum of philosophy against all gods, celestial or earthly, that do not recognize human self-consciousness as the supreme deity.⁷⁾ (our translation).

Prometheus's confession that he hates each and every God made him the cardinal saint in Marx's philosophical calendar. Does this not indicate that Marx, even at the age of twenty-three, was trying to dispense altogether with the question of God? Many authorities on Marx no longer feel that this was necessarily the case. Be that as it may, the point at issue is his contention that human consciousness must be acknowledged as the supreme deity. In the Germany of 1843 Marx was intent on launching a relentless critique of the existing order, fearful neither of the outcome of its own arguments nor of the conflict with the powers that be. What were the specific targets of criticism? Religion and politics, because these were the focal points of concern in the Germany of his day.⁸⁾

The fact that the main concern was religious and political, concealed an essential truth, namely the conflict in which ideologi=

cal principles were becoming increasingly remote from the actual concepts prevalent in Germany at the time. One of Marx's basic assumptions was that he could work out the truth about society by studying the conflict in the German state (as a specific political form). Just as the state and politics reflect the practical conflicts of mankind, so religion comprehends man's theoretical battles.⁹⁾ Thus to Marx consciousness meant entering into and identifying with real battles. More than that, reshaping a mystical, abstruse consciousness meant analysing it and couching religious and political problems in conscious human terms.¹⁰⁾ This is what Marx set out to do in two of his writings, both with the main title *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie*. The first, on Hegel's political views, was subtitled *Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts*. The second, on religion, was subtitled *Einleitung*.

In the first of these works Marx expressed his view that the state and politics reflect man's practical conflicts. He pointed out that bourgeois society is a presupposition for the existence of the state, and not - as Hegel would have it - the other way round. The state is not an act of the idea which Hegel made into a subject, but a product of actual subjects in bourgeois society.¹¹⁾ With this idea Marx not only repudiated the speculative conception of the state as the acme of all human processes. He also identified "bourgeois society" as the key to any understanding of man's historical evolution.

In the second work entitled *Einleitung* Marx's starting point is that in Germany the critique of religion was in effect over. The critique of religion is the premise of all criticism.¹²⁾ Man makes religion - religion does not make man. By this Marx meant that religion was a product of the consciousness and self-concept of man who had either not yet found himself, or had lost himself. Such a person who had not yet found himself looked for a superman in heaven but encountered no more than a reflection of himself in his earthly reality, a being that was no longer human.

Religion is the result of man's inverted conception of the world, or of an inverted world. It is the realization of man at the level of the fantastic in which human beings no longer possess any reality. The misery of religion is both an expression of and a protest against the sufferings of reality. Religion is the pining of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the masses.¹³⁾ Marx is postulating two ideas: first, religion as a projection of man, and second, as the flight of fancy of man who has for=

feited his true social being. Once alienated from his true nature he creates a superhuman being who in fact is no more than a reflection of himself.

Because religion offers people an illusory happiness it must be abolished so that they can find true happiness. To abolish the illusions one must abolish the conditions that demand them. The critique of religion disillusion man so that he can think, act and actualize his world like one who has reached man's estate. Religion is simply an illusory, extraneous sun as long as man refuses to be his own sun.¹⁴⁾

To Marx the important point is that man must reach maturity in the sense that he must be fully conscious of the foundations of his human state - in the words cited above, human consciousness is the supreme deity. Anyone who continues to seek his salvation in God is wasting his time, for the problem of God distracts him from the real issue - man's actual existence. To enquire into God's existence is to create an abstraction from the concrete realities of man and nature.

Marx subscribes to the critique of religion of Ludwig Feuerbach since the latter maintained that traditional philosophy is nothing but religion couched in philosophical terms. Hence, says Marx, it is merely one form of human alienation.

To Feuerbach the existence of God as distinct from man's is tautologous since God is merely individual man's projection of his own human nature.¹⁵⁾ A personal God disrupts the unity of man with nature, that is of man with man. Consequently, Feuerbach argues, Christians divide human life. Faith in effect means forswearing the world and reaching out for a denaturalized heaven, for eating, drinking and love-making are not part of the Christian heaven.¹⁶⁾ Feuerbach was trying to vanquish Christianity's supranaturalistic egoism by emphasizing the true association between man and nature (man).¹⁷⁾

In the second place Marx shows that Feuerbach laid the foundation for true materialism, the theory of which rests on the social relationship "of man to man".¹⁸⁾ Despite this Marx remains critical of Feuerbach because ultimately he reinstates religion, if only obliquely.

What did Marx mean by saying that for Germany the critique of religion is over, and that it is the precondition for all criticism? These questions must be seen in conjunction with the propositions he defended in the *Deutsch-Französischen Jahrbüchern*,

namely that religion reflects man's theoretical battles and the state and politics reflect his practical conflicts. In this we see an inkling of Marx's schema of infrastructure and superstructure. Traditional German philosophy had considered practical experience to be based on theoretical reasoning. In Marx's view this traditional philosophy was in fact religion in philosophical terms. It follows that the critique of religion would then be a precondition for all criticism. In Marxian terms this is inevitable, for to Marx theory is shaped by material praxis. When attacking the speculations of German philosophy he is at the same time attacking the religion it conceals. Thus, judging by the opening lines of his *Einleitung* (which concerns the critique of religion), his real target is philosophy. The task of philosophy, which is the instrument of history, is to expose man's alienation from himself in the ordinary earthly sense after having exposed man's self-alienation in the celestial sense. This implies two successive critical processes: first the critique of heaven, then the critique of earth; first the critique of religion, then the critique of politics. In effect, first the critique of theory, then that of praxis.

Accordingly Marx proceeds to a critique of the German state and jurisprudence. In the same way that the people of antiquity experienced their prehistory through mythology, so the Germans (among whom Marx included himself) experienced their posthistory in philosophy. To Marx German philosophy was the ideal extension of German history. The basic flaw in German philosophy was that it thought that philosophy could be actualized without being abolished.²⁰⁾ This is the second time that Marx uses the term "abolish" in the same work. First he spoke of the abolition of religion; now philosophy itself has to be abolished in order to be actualized. We observe that the abolition of religion and the abolition of philosophy are not the same thing. By religion he invariably means man's alienation from himself and from nature,²¹⁾ whereas the true philosophy based on human praxis and continually impelled through its own abolition is the philosophy of a particular class, such as the proletariat. The proletariat only emerged with industrialization. The causes of its poverty are artificial since there first has to be a middle class and only then a working class which does not possess what the middle class possesses.²²⁾

In demanding the abolition of private property the proletariat is simply elevating to a social principle that which is embodied in the working class, through no fault of its own, as a negative result of bourgeois society. The proletariat has the same right

to abolish private property as the bourgeoisie has to own it.

The proletariat provides philosophy with its material weapons, whereas philosophy provides the spiritual armoury of the proletariat.²³⁾ Hence the critique of religion is no longer an issue, for it ends with the doctrine that to mankind man is the supreme being - hence the categorical imperative that all relations in which man is humiliated, enslaved, rejected and scorned must be abrogated.²⁴⁾

The abolition of religion is a preliminary phase which need not be repeated for once the critical stage has been completed criticism proper can begin. Marx however acknowledged that at certain stages in history religion had acted as an avenue of liberation from immaturity. But mankind must grow more mature and this can only be achieved by abandoning these religious avenues. Once religion had been abolished Jews and Christians, for instance, will regard their respective religions merely as divergent evolutionary phases in human history. As Marx so vividly puts it, they will see the evolutionary phases as the skins the snake had shed, and man as the snake that emerges from these.²⁵⁾

Another important question is whether atheism is an essential part of Marx's philosophy. In 1844 Marx wrote that there is no longer any point in atheism since through its very denial of God the existence of such a person is recognized. Socialism in its purest sense has no need of atheism for it proceeds from man's theoretical and practical sensory consciousness and his social nature.²⁶⁾ Thus Marx. One could logically conclude that Marx rejects both theism and atheism, his approach being that the entire question of God is irrelevant. Why is this? Because it is unworthy of man, who is his own sun, to subordinate himself to a God he has himself created, thereby giving himself, in the name of this self-created Supreme Being a free pass to inhumanity. Religion is inhuman. Atheism, the denial of God, likewise remains trapped within the framework of his inhuman religious problem. This makes Marx a thoroughgoing humanist in the original sense of the word.

Marx is not concerned with the religious issue or the denial of God, but only with autonomous man who creates his own meaning and more specifically with man, the social being.

III WHAT MADE THE DEBATE POSSIBLE?

In the past the debate between church-centred Christianity and

Marxism has been too much in the nature of a ping-pong game. Very few spokesmen on either side of the fence were prepared to allow for the opposition's premisses in their own thinking. Up to some twenty years ago the only positive comments Christians made about Marxism was that its origin and existence indicated that the church had failed in its duty towards the workers in the nineteenth century because it either was or had become too much of a bourgeois institution.²⁷⁾ One of the very few positive remarks Marx ever made about Christianity appears in the memoirs of his daughter Eleanor, who recalls that he frequently said, "After all we can forgive Christianity much, because it taught us the worship of the child".²⁸⁾ As a result of the paucity of positive comments the "debate" in fact largely consisted in each side using the other as ammunition to demonstrate how a true Christian or a true Marxist ought not to live or behave.

Factors that changed the attitudes between Christians and Marxists include the following:

1 The ecumenical movement's concern about the East-West confrontation after World War II. In 1949 Karl Barth pointed out that the cause of the West is totally our cause. For that very reason it was not God's cause, just as the cause of the East was not God's cause either.²⁹⁾ The church which, according to Barth, represented God's cause stood midway between the two and against any form of totalitarianism.³⁰⁾ Although Barth in no way tried to condone Stalin's atrocities, he nonetheless pointed out that one would have to lack every shred of good sense if one were to liken Marxism to the ideology of the Third Reich - if one were to put a man of the stature of Joseph Stalin on a par with such charlatans as Hitler, Göring, Hess, Goebbels, Himmler, Ribbentrop, Rosenberg, Streicher.³¹⁾

Why did he judge Stalin more leniently than Hitler? Why mention East and West in the same breath? Because Soviet Russia, despite its blood-stained hands, was tackling the constructive idea of the social problem with greater energy than was the West for all its so-called "clean" hands.³²⁾ Also because Russian communism, being a godless affair, at least did not falsify Christianity, as did National Socialism, using the name of Jesus to embark on a campaign of anti-semitism.³³⁾ Barth's sympathetic evaluation was shared by many and was the church-centred basis for a more serious debate between Christianity and Marxism within the ecumenical movement after World War II.

2 The way in which the controversy about Marx's infrastructure-

superstructure schema was settled by the communists helped to change attitudes. More and more communists were inquiring how the diversity of forms of consciousness in the superstructure can possibly emanate from a relatively undifferentiated infrastructure. The dispute was settled by an apparently insignificant booklet on linguistics written by Stalin in 1951.³⁴⁾ In this Stalin pointed out that the cause and effect scheme, which is applied to the infrastructure-superstructure schema, is not sufficient since there are "neutral" phenomena in human life which cannot be assigned to either the infrastructure or the superstructure. Being part of both, they are not subject to changes in the infrastructure. He cites the example of the Russian language which remained unchanged by the revolution.³⁵⁾ This idea had an immediate impact on the sciences and law in the Soviet Union. The idea that there are phenomena which transcend the infrastructure-superstructure schema logically implied that these phenomena must also occur in noncommunist societies. The existence of such common phenomena meant that they could be a basis for the debate between Marxists and Christians.

3 A third factor was the growing self-examination among Marxists in the post-Stalinist era. During the fifties destalinization went hand in hand with a process of renewal both in Eastern Europe³⁶⁾ and in Western communist parties.³⁷⁾ The underlying feeling was that Marxism had become clogged: party bosses and bureaucrats had formed a new ruling class, obstructing the revolution. To counteract this the emphasis was now placed (albeit still in a Marxist context) on the worth of the individual human being. Human alienation still occurred in communist societies. In addition religion was far from being an extinct fossil in these societies - in fact, it manifested a remarkable degree of vitality. Marxists during this period displayed a certain ambivalence towards Christianity. On the one hand the survival of Christianity proved that Marxism had not wholly succeeded in combating human alienation, on the other they saw Christianity as a legacy from European history which could not be ignored and with which dialogue would be worthwhile,³⁸⁾ particularly on the point of the man Jesus. This made anthropology the basis of the discussion between Christianity and Marxism.

4 During the period of détente which coincided with the aforementioned post-Stalinist movement in the Marxist bloc, Christians abandoned the traditional church-centred standpoint that Marxism was the nineteenth century's unsettled account of the church with the worker. Instead they evinced a positive

appreciation for certain elements in Marxism. Whereas Gollwitzer still insisted that the de facto lack of Christianity of the Christian church furthers the rise of communist messianism,³⁹⁾ the American theologian C West pointed out that "both Christianity and Communism are living movements. Each, to be sure, has a theory, a system of doctrine, but neither is this alone. It is in the encounter of these movements that God acts".⁴⁰⁾

The following elements in Marxism drew positive comments from church-centred Christianity. (a) The relevance of values to all social action and scientific thought in Marxism.⁴¹⁾ (b) The concrete anthropology applied particularly by Marx in his earlier works. On the strength of this Christians have tried very hard to counter Marx's thesis that any religious experience alienates man from himself with a transcendence that is integrated with earthly reality. In effect this means simply that if Marxism claims that man alienates himself by his dependence on God, then man should be dependent on a God who operates through the collective principle of a socialist society. (c) They share their view of the future - to the Marxist a classless utopia, to the Christian a new earth. (d) Because from a church-centred vantage-point God's kingdom is seen as something "supernatural" in human life, these Christians lack a radical, comprehensive sociopolitical philosophy. Marxism supplies this deficiency with its searching sociopolitical analysis of society. Christianity offers a much more limited solution in that it merely refers society to its ecclesiastic and spiritual origins.

5 One must note the role of Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). Pope John's encyclical *Mater et Magistra* and Schema XIII of Vatican II opened the door to a new dialogue with Marxism, an opportunity that was seized by the *Paulus Gesellschaft*. This group was active in various countries in the mid-sixties and consisted of German, French, Italian and Spanish theologians and communists.⁴²⁾

6 The spirit of the times and world affairs favoured dialogue. Decolonization and the emergence of Third World countries coincided with the Vietnam war. The framework in which this war was fought gave capitalism the image of a nasty old man who bullied small nations. At the same time (neo-)Marxism superseded existentialism as the prevailing philosophical trend in Europe. Ever since the mid-sixties anyone who wants to be intellectually with-it has dealt in such vogue words as social structures, dialectical logic, survival and hope, détente and

developmental cooperation, social critique, consumer society, repressive society, class struggle, revolution versus status quo and human alienation. Since (neo-) Marxism offered a radically different society it was likely to find a readier market in the Third World than capitalist individualism, existentialism with its freedom in the sun, or a Christianity with its concentration on the church. This was particularly true of Latin America.

The remarkable thing was that dialogue between Marxists and Christians in the northern hemisphere centred mainly on philosophy and theoretical issues, whereas in the southern hemisphere (notably in Latin America) the issue of common concern was everyday reality - poverty, hunger and exploitation.⁴³⁾

In Latin America this rapprochement was not confined to dialogue: they joined forces (each side retaining its identity) against the ideology of national security expounded by the military dictatorships. The reasoning behind this ideology was roughly as follows: there is an international Marxist-Leninist conspiracy, whose thinking, being materialist and atheist, must be viewed as inimical to civilization; the Christian sector of the human race is particularly well qualified to see through this conspiracy and Christian countries must therefore lead the struggle against infiltration. Truly Christian nations are still to be found only in Latin America and in order for them to put up an effective defence the interests of the state must be paramount; human rights may have to be temporarily suspended to satisfy this requirement.⁴⁴⁾

Both Christian and Marxists oppose this view. They find one another on human grounds, with Christianity representing a theistic and Marxism an atheistic form of humanity. This is the belief of the famous Peruvian theologian of liberation, Gustavo Gutiérrez. Although opposed to any premature attempts at a synthesis between Christianity and Marxism, he insists that Marxism is a science rather than an ideology. If one accepts this, then religion need not be troubled by Marxism any more than by biology.⁴⁵⁾

This proposition (that Marxism is a science rather than an ideology) was widely accepted in South America. Originally it was postulated by the Frenchman Louis Althusser. The spread of his ideas in Latin America meant that some Christians were able to embrace Marxism. The remarkable thing is the uncritical way in which they did so. They maintained that Latin America had to find its own solution to the dire poverty, illi-

teracy and enslavement of people. This was accompanied by a flagrant reaction against anything resembling Western science or technology. Despite this reaction, they still upheld one of the fundamental tenets of a major trend in Western scientific and technological history, namely the alleged (positivist) neutrality of science. They argued that because Marxism, like science, was neutral, Christians could accommodate it in the same way as they accommodated all sorts of sciences in their daily lives. Thus the so-called "value-free" quality of science was used, counter to all Marxist intentions, to effect a loose synthesis between Christianity and Marxism.

Although sympathetic towards any attempts to ameliorate inhuman conditions anywhere in the world, I am nonetheless opposed to the uncritical approach of those people, whether in Latin America or elsewhere, who ignore basic Marxist premises for the sake of synthesis. This is to sidestep either the Marxist axiom of the sociopolitical involvement of science⁴⁶⁾ or the class struggle,⁴⁷⁾ or the materialist philosophy.⁴⁸⁾ Once the sting has thus been removed from the tail of Marxism, and it has been baptized by theology and the church, one might well ask whether one can still speak of Marxism at all.

Current dialogue about Marx extends far beyond the debate between Marxists and Christians. One prominent issue is the interpretation and comparison of the "young Marx" and the "later Marx". Some Soviet Marxists and non-Marxist scholars maintain that the views of the "later Marx" are at variance with those of the "young Marx" as contained in the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. Most non-Soviet Marxists deny this, claiming that the alleged discrepancy is contrived by Soviet Marxists in an attempt to identify their ideology with Marxism.⁴⁹⁾

IV COMPARISON OF A FEW THEMES

Thus there is an ongoing debate between classical and neo-Marxists on the one hand, and church-centred Christians and theologians on the other. Not only is it resulting in actual discussions, but there is also a measure of implicit cross-influencing.⁵⁰⁾ Such influencing by certain elements in one tradition may permeate the other so deeply that it often passes unnoticed in the general concentration on the differences between the adversaries.⁵¹⁾ I therefore propose comparing a few "pairs" of themes that are common to both traditions.

- 1 The first pair is idolatry (and sin) from the Christian

vocabulary, and fetishism (and alienation) from Marxist jargon. Idolatry means investing a *thing* in human life with divine pretensions. "Thing" could mean a person, an object, a word, concept or social structure. To idolise a thing is to sin against the One (Christ) through whom God created human life, and to whom that life is directed. Within the dualistic thesis of church and world postulated by church-centred Christianity, man's relationship to God is embodied in such "spiritual things" as Bible reading, prayer and church attendance, whereas his relationship to his fellow men is expressed through "everyday things" that require no more than common sense.⁵²⁾ Idolatry means that the "everyday" usurps the pre-eminence of the "spiritual", and sin is everything that disrupts man's "spiritual" relationship with God.⁵³⁾ That is why the church must not become worldly. What troubles me here is the failure to appreciate that by investing the church with an inherent pretension to divinity, the church is in fact - in terms of the above definition - being idolized.

Fetishism in Marxist tradition generally refers to the process in which man's products appear to acquire a life of their own and thereupon start to oppress man, their creator. Religion was the first form of fetishism which Marx attacked. Religious phenomena such as gods, although created by man, assume an independent existence, thus alienating man from himself. But religious alienation is merely a symptom of a far more profound alienation, namely that which occurs in the process of living. Religion contributes to human wretchedness and hence alienation, so it is far from blameless. The modern state in its various guises is another form of alienation. The Christian state - which, said Marx - is neither state nor Christian - is a mystification of the facts.⁵⁴⁾ Thus Marx arrives at a remarkable conclusion: Christianity has an innate need for goodness, and hence for a good state. But the state can only be good if it is not Christian. Therefore Christianity wants a non-Christian state. In other words, an atheist state is the best Christian state, and a Christian state is the Christian negation of the state.⁵⁵⁾

But the atheist state of bourgeois society does not escape Marx's criticism either, in that it manifests alienation even more patently than does the Christian state. Why so? Because the atheist state permits religion to flourish as a private concern, it demonstrates that it is not sufficient unto itself. Such states do not hesitate to invoke religion whenever it is expedient in the interests of public order or the functioning of social institutions.⁵⁶⁾ Marx maintains that the combination

of an atheistic, profane state and private religion implies a dichotomy of man. It creates a division between the citizen and the religious private individual, divorces man from state, group from individual and ultimately man from man.⁵⁷⁾

A third form of alienation concerns private property. In capitalist society man is alienated from his labour and its fruits, from his fellow workers and ultimately from his own true (socio-economic) nature.⁵⁸⁾ Marx mentions the fetishism of products (*Warenfetischismus*) specifically in connection with labour. Products, commodities or goods, although man-made, assume an independent existence and oppress man. The relationship between labour and its products is inverted.⁵⁹⁾

The second and third forms of alienation have brought us close to the fourth one. Marx sees man essentially as the ensemble of social relations,⁶⁰⁾ so that the individual is the realization of his social being. In capitalist society men are strangers to one another because each person is alienated from man's common social nature (*Gattung*). Marx sees communism as the solution to the conflict between the individual and his socially interpreted nature.⁶¹⁾

Marx's concept of alienation is based on his schema of an infra-structure and a superstructure. Human labour in society is inevitably characterized by production relations corresponding to the actual forces of production. The sum of these production relations constitutes the economically real base which determines social, political and spiritual processes (the superstructure).⁶²⁾

The root cause of alienation lies in the contradictions of the production relations in capitalist society. Here the harmony and unity between the two factors of production - capital and labour - have been irretrievably lost and in addition the owners of the means of productions and those who have only their labour to offer are alienated from one another and set in competition. Thus once alienation has set in in the socio-economic infra-structure of a society it must permeate to other forms of alienation. In my view this is a major problem in Marxism: production relations and forces of production are first abstracted from the process of living and then used as the primary vehicle for that same process.

Church-centred Christianity and Marxism both err in abstracting a "thing" from human life and its processes, which they then claim precedes those processes. A "thing" which is merely one

phenomenon among many is isolated and becomes "extraordinary". In other words, church-centred Christians refuse to accept that the church is on a par with other social institutions. It has pre-eminence above all other social institutions. Marxism does the same in respect of the relations and forces of production.

2 The second "pair" to be compared is the church as an institution and the proletariat as a social class. Roman Catholicism has often been likened to Marxism: both have a sense of vocation with regard to mankind. Both strive for change and renewal. Both have an authority structure that instils discipline into its members and lays down a code for the faithful. Both have sacred books that infallibly guide them in interpreting new situations. Both claim to cover the full range of human experience: neither omits anything from its total synthesis.⁶³⁾ And what about this comparison between Marxism and Protestantism by R H Tawney?

"It is not wholly fanciful to say that ... Calvin did for the bourgeoisie of the sixteenth century what Marx did for the proletariat of the nineteenth, or that the doctrine of predestination satisfied the same hunger for and assurance that the forces of the universe are on the side of the elect as was to be assuaged in a different age by the theory of historical materialism".⁶⁴⁾

I should like to draw a somewhat different comparison.

To church-centred Christians the church represents God in and among mankind (the world). It is not merely his representative but also acts as the interpreter of his will and as his instrument of reconciliation in the world. It is not just the channel through which God deals with the world, for as long as the church faithfully and obediently heeds God's (primary) Word in the realm of the church it may also hear his (secondary) Words in the "secular" world - his hand in history, the signs of the times or some such. Religion in its sacrosanct position in the church may not be touched, for anyone who juxtaposes the church with other social structures is dabbling in some form of natural theology. To the church-centred mind that is anathema.

To these Christians reconciliation implies primarily regeneration of the heart (justification by faith) and not the regeneration of the structures in which men must operate. These latter can at best be sanctified (general grace) to render them amenable to common sense.

In the Marxist tradition the proletariat is the representative of society as a whole.⁶⁵⁾ It is believed that each generation and every historical situation produces a class which seeks to become the focal point of society's universal consciousness. This tends to make "class" a polarized concept in that a class can only exist in active opposition to another social class. Marx and Engels both maintain that when one class supplants another as the ruling group the newcomers must pursue the goal of realizing their interests as the common interests of all - in other words, the proletariat must couch its ideas in the form of a universally valid axiom. This class which is to accomplish the revolution must therefore from the outset act not as a class, but as the representative of society as a whole.⁶⁶⁾

How does Marx resolve the polarity between a class as representative of all society and that class's self-interest? The only solution is the simultaneous abolition of the proletariat as a separate class and the disappearance of all class distinctions in a classless society.⁶⁷⁾ The abolition occurs because it is the inevitable course of history. In Marxist theory the notion of the historical inevitability of the process of living is no less focal than the doctrine of providence used to be in theological dogmatics. In a letter to J Weydemeyer, written on 5 March 1852, Marx points out that the "bourgeois historians" had discovered the existence of social classes. What he, Marx, did was to prove that classes were associated with specific phases in the development of production, that the class struggle would culminate in the dictatorship of the proletariat, which in turn would herald the transition to a classless society.⁶⁸⁾ Hence he, Marx, had merely discovered the inevitability of it all. In this context reconciliation means that the revolutionary proletariat will abolish the class system through conflict, struggle and confrontation and install itself in the ruling position, the classless representative of all mankind. Reconciliation therefore means eliminating the others. One wonders to what extent Judaeo-Christian impulses regarding the election of a group influenced Marx's thinking on this issue.

Anyone who does not identify with the church, the "supernatural" mother of the faithful, is alienating himself or sinning against God. This is the view of church-centred Christianity. The Marxist viewpoint is: anyone who does not fight tooth and nail in the struggle of the proletariat, but who continues to cling to a God, the state, private property and capital, is alienating himself from his own human nature and all it ought to imply.

It is true that when a church assumes a "supra-creaturely" posture

man is alienated from his other experiential spheres since these are considered inferior in quality. It is no less true that when the proletariat in its role as representative of society is viewed as a whole, man is alienated not merely from other meaningful spheres of life, but also from any meaningful experience of transcendence. The "*a-hominism*" of church-centred Christianity alienates man from himself and thus indirectly from God, because man is no longer truly man; Marxist *atheism*, on the other hand, alienates man from God and thus indirectly from man, because man without God is no longer truly man.

3 The third "pair" of concepts concern the theme of social change. They are reform or revolution. Both these terms have deteriorated somewhat over the last few decades because of the dubious results achieved by reforms and revolutionary actions. Some people see reform purely as a patch-job to keep a system going, whereas the opponents of violent revolution point out that in practice and in theory revolution invariably culminates in a new dictatorship.

But how does church-centred Christianity see reform? Against the background of its dualistic thesis of *church* and *world* its hermeneutic procedure is as follows. Whilst it is claimed that the church should constantly be reforming itself on the basis of God's Word, Protestant dogmatic textbooks at the same time maintain that the church emanates from God's salvific acts in the world. But what is the point of God's Word controlling his own acts of salvation? After all, God's (written) Word could hardly criticize (incarnate) Word, Christ's earthly body - the church. Usually a distinction is made between the divine aspect of the church, which is above criticism, and the human aspect which needs to be scrutinized thoroughly in the light of God's Word.⁶⁹⁾ But in practice this separation of the divine and human aspects of the church culminates, counter to the original intention, in a mingling of the two aspects,⁷⁰⁾ whereby the human one is invested with divine pretensions. As a result the Church is placed beyond criticism or reform. Churches join in discussing, and even initiate, social change but this does not extend to their own internal structure. A good example of this would be a church that advocates a democratic dispensation for South Africa but feels not a whit perturbed about its own hierarchical structure which does not permit its members much say in the real issues. Why is this? The reason is simply that to the church-centred mind the church is of God and thus operates differently from "ordinary" social structures.

What is needed when it comes to discussions of church reform is

relativizing criticism. Anyone criticizing the church from within is very soon charged either with conniving with the enemies of the church of the Lord Jesus, or with joining forces with the world. After all, as God's "supra-creaturely" model to the world the church should not expose itself unduly to relativizing criticism. It would seem as if the churches have decided that the approach of the Middle Ages, when the church reigned supreme in every sphere of life, is the only possible way of dealing with extra-ecclesiastic sectors. Once this was no longer feasible the fact was perforce faced and the conclusion reached that then sectors will have to be relinquished to other agencies such as reason, common sense or public interest.⁷¹⁾ It has never reached a point of interaction with the plurality of differentiated social structures. While churches continue to apply the contrast between *church* (sacred) and *world* (profane or secular) relativizing, critical reform is not possible.

In Marxist theory revolution is accomplished in the dialectic interaction between *theory* and *praxis*, *philosophy* and the *proletariat*. The head of the liberation process is philosophy, its heart is the proletariat. Just as the proletariat provides philosophy with its material weapon, so philosophy supplies the spiritual weapons of the proletariat.⁷²⁾ Critical philosophical theory does not itself create a new reality. The dynamic force of philosophy is the praxis of the revolutionary proletariat, proceeding from the categorical imperative that to man man is the supreme being and must therefore abolish all relations in which men are enslaved, rejected and scorned.⁷³⁾

The living conditions of the proletariat are the most inhuman combination of the living conditions of bourgeois society, so that the proletariat, driven to it by utter exigency, must rebel against the inhumanity.⁷⁴⁾ To Marx this is historically inevitable.

The relationship between historical inevitability and free human initiative remains one of the trickiest exegetical problems in Marxist theory. The time must be ripe for revolution. Marx and Engels state that unless the material elements for total revolution are present (the typically capitalist forces of production plus the emergence of a revolutionary mass) it is quite unrealistic to contemplate revolution even though the idea has been mooted ever so often in that situation.⁷⁵⁾ Capitalism can only be abolished and the class struggle is in fact the greatest contributor to this process.⁷⁶⁾ In this class struggle economic struggle is a phase that must nourish the political awareness of the workers. Conversely, economic liberation is only possible

through political liberation.

Marx believed that capitalism was beyond reform. While the capitalist system of production held sway the proletariat would remain unfree. For the workers to be free the mode of labour of capitalist society had to be abolished. Since the state was the collective expression of capitalist consciousness the proletariat had to overthrow it.⁷⁷⁾

Marx is faced with similar problems to those that beset church-centred Christianity. The proletariat is historically predestined to be the standard bearer of the revolution on behalf of mankind. Lenin replaced the proletariat with the communist party, Western neo-Marxist with critical theoretical intellectuals. Each time, however, we come up against the group elected by historical determinism to propagate the revolutionary cause. The hermeneutics of such a viewpoint is open to question. Anyone who isolates a particular group historically for the good of society, must absolve the group elected to the task and the cause from all the trivia, mindless games and phoniness that beset the lives of the other group. First the "chosen" group must be absolved from the "historical sins" of human history. Secondly, the group designated to the role of opposition - however pluralistic it may be - must be forced ideologically into one monolithic block.⁷⁸⁾ In this way all relativizing criticism is smothered and the opposition's faults become the peg on which to hang his every action.

All social change - including that effected by the church and the Marxist group - must start with relativizing criticism. This is not just rhetoric but has a practical point. Firstly, it means that an extraordinary group or social structure should, through criticism, be placed on a par with other groups and structures. The minimum requirement is that human behaviour should not be governed by the pre-eminence assigned to any one social structure or group. Secondly the existing interrelationship between social structures and groups must not be considered absolute. The idea of society as a totality must operate as a regulatory limiting concept in a given situation. Thirdly reform implies both total acceptance and radical criticism of a society,⁷⁹⁾ and not simply system-immanent amelioration.⁸⁰⁾

It is remarkable that the missionary drive of the early nineteenth century, the emancipation of slaves, the emergence of women in society all originated outside the official church. By the same token the relativizing self-criticism in the Marxist

camp over the past thirty years did not originate from the party ideologists and system-boys, but from those whose privileges were first threatened, then taken away in communist societies.⁸¹⁾ It would seem to me that this is a societal "law": the moment one programmes a single social structure or group to act as the vehicle of meaning, paradoxically that meaning at once starts crystallizing outside the programmed action.

4 The *fourth* "pair" to be noted briefly is *eschaton* and *utopia*.

Whereas Feuerbach, against the background of nineteenth-century Christianity still claimed that there is no eating, drinking or love-making in the Christian heaven,⁸²⁾ few Christians today conceive of heaven as a "spiritual" realm for immortal souls. Whether we like to admit it or not, a change has set in partly as a result of the Marxist emphasis on a concrete future over the past century. Today it is fairly widely assumed that the new earth will be heaven, although opinions differ as to whether the new earth will evolve from the old or proceed from a totally new act of God.

Church-centred Christians define the future as God's acts and works directed at the Christian to summon him to primarily "spiritual" acts, oriented to the future, but, secondarily, relevant to "ordinary" everyday life. In another sense the future has already dawned within the community of the church. The church is a sign and an example to men of God's absolute future.⁸³⁾

To Marxists the future refers to a dimension of sociopolitical action which rises above man's present life, thus aspiring to his as yet unrealized being. It will not be a repetition of the past but something totally new. In one sense truth lies in the future, in another it is already present in the proletariat (or chosen group).

Church-centred Christianity attributes the name of God to this absolute future;⁸⁴⁾ the greatest name that Marxists give it is man. To church-centred Christians the future is an ineffable, infinite event of extra-terrestrial origin. To Marxists it is simply a categorical human potential, calculable and manipulable as man's own, earthly history. Church-centred Christianity battles to establish a credible relation between the concept of an absolute future and the immanent (relative) future with its implicit demand for human activity. Marxism is faced with the question of how a change in socio-economic relations can fundamentally change human nature. It fails to come to grips with

the problems of sin and death as human boundary situations.

The future is neither God, nor man's collective nature. The future is intraterrestrial because this world belongs to God. What is the use of speculating about an absolute future in the face of indefinable problems? Besides, how can one picture such a future? The absolute future, the future as totality or the end of history, can only be seen as a metaphor or regulatory (limiting) concept of hope which acts as a critical corrective to our analyses, actions and plans. It critically influences our activities, simply that we may open up a future for one another. A future in which hope proceeds to action for the very reason that there are still tomorrows is inimical to the idea of an absolute future, still used today to inspire pious paroxysms and as an analgesic to anaesthetize society to inhumanity and injustice. But it is no less inimical to the Marxist concept of a classless utopia, used to instigate the driving force of history - the proletariat, party or whatever - to stall its progress at a particular point for the good of mankind.

V CONCLUSION

Church-centred Christianity and Marxism share the same structural problem. Both assign a position of pre-eminence to one of the many phenomena of human life and then try to interpret everything else in terms of this chosen phenomenon. Church-centred Christians insist on the church and the faith as an open window on eternity before there can be any meaningful reflection, righteousness or anything else. Marxists must first reveal the true nature of forces and relations of production before there can be any meaningful thought, marriage, the state or anything of the kind. In the twentieth century these forces and relations of production (as the prime vehicle of meaning) have on occasion made way for a material messianic consciousness, for *Herrschaftsfreien* dialogue (Habermas) or the worth of the individual.

Church-centred Christianity legitimizes the church as a spiritual realm "from above", in terms of God; Marxism legitimizes the forces and relations of production "from below", in terms of autonomous man. What I would like to ask church-centred Christianity is whether such a supra-creaturely church does not alienate man from his "worldly" relationships - does the categorical Marxist thesis that all religion implies alienation not apply in the case of church-centredness? And what I would like to ask the Marxist is: does all religion alienate man from

action, labour and struggle?⁸⁵⁾ Moreover, has Marxism really plumbed the full depth of alienation with its scrutiny of man in his socio-economic context, ignoring all other dimensions? If one accepts for argument's sake that the Marxist social utopia can in fact be achieved by placing economically selfless and problem-free people in a future society, would that be the end of human conflict and strife? I find it hard to believe.

I am not trying to be wise after the event, but our age demands a radically critical Christianity which will both accept and criticize society in its entirety without turning into a "one-issue revolutionary". What is a combination of acceptance and correction other than the ultimate dialectic of sin and grace, which itself cannot be logically codified? In my view dialectics are no excuse for the phenomenon that the biblical thesis - that the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord - is forever being split into new dualisms. It is as well that God's kingdom is greater than the church!

Because Christians are summoned by grace to have real concern for the whole of human life they should be able to appreciate the efforts of those who want to discover every aspect of the world with a view to changing it. The same applies to Marxism. Moralizing and anti-attitudes do not get one very far in the long run - and I am speaking of antipositivistic, antinationalistic, anti-Kantian, anti-Christian and anti-Marxist attitudes alike. Probe a tradition critically, then reject what must meaningfully be rejected. But also give honour where it is due. Anti-attitudes usually result in adopting an inverted version of the objectionable aspects of the ideology that is under fire - if such a version is not part of one's attitude in the first place.

Among the shortcomings and flaws of church-centred Christianity is the fact that religion, as a meaningful way of human life, is almost entirely superseded by the doctrine of faith and the activities of the church. When one decides to identify religion with the church, and moreover proceeds to separate it from politics so as to safeguard personal and corporate Christianity against political pollution, one is making a political decision which in practice always redounds to the advantage of specific social groups or classes. At least, that is what has always happened in history.⁸⁶⁾ Today, however, there is an interesting new trend. Churches and their members have largely lost their self-assurance and triumphalism. They keep their religious fervour alive by moralizing and bewailing the times we live in. The philosophy and programme of Marxism forcefully, if

indirectly, remind us of the full extent of the Christian tradition.⁸⁷⁾

When it comes to the debate between Christianity and Marxism, the point at issue should be not so much the role of either the church or the group (proletariat, etc) in society, as to answer this question: how to effect maximum transcendence with minimum human alienation?

FOOTNOTES

- 1 *Die heilige Familie*, Marx Engels Werke (MEW) 2, p 71.
- 2 Cf P Hebblethwaite, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and Beyond*, London, 1977, p 3.
- 3 Cf The anthology *Christendom en Marxisme* (Dutch translation of *Christentum und Marxismus-heute*), ed E Kellner, Utrecht, 1966 for divergent views on this debate.
R Karisch, *Christ und Dialect. Der Christ und der dialektische Materialismus*, Berlin, (1953) 1961⁴, p 175 maintains that Christianity as the church of God should be posited as the antithesis of communism, the church of Satan.
Cf also T J Blakely, *Christian-Marxist Dialogue and the other world*, in *Demythologizing Marxism*, ed F J Adelman, Boston 1969, p 190: "If the Christian Church is the Church of the Western World, Communism is the anti-Church of this same world."
- 4 This stems from the premises of August Comte who wanted to replace Christianity with the catechism of a positive religion without God. Cf his *The Catechism of Positive Religion*, (Eng translation by R Congreve, 1891) of 1852. Cf also R H Klein, *Positivism and Christianity*, The Hague 1974, on the problem of the verifiability of theistic statements.
- 5 The same thing happens to faith in anthropology, and to theology in university faculties. I know that I could be draped in the formidable vestments of the ogre of natural theology, but I still feel that the problems confronting us today and the context of our theological reasoning should transcend the dilemma of natural theology versus supra-natural (revelational) theology.

- 6 Even Tillich, who could hardly be accused of being a traditional theologian, sees faith as partly within and partly beyond human existence. (Cf his *Systematic Theology*, Vol. III, London, 1968, p 141). An impressive list of both traditional and non-traditional theologians could be cited in addition.
- 7 *Die Doktordissertation*, MEW Ergänzungsband I, p 263.
- 8 Letters from the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbüchern*, MEW 1, p 344.
- 9 *Ibid*, p 345.
- 10 *Ibid*, p 346.
- 11 *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Kritik des Hegelschen Staatsrechts.* MEW 1, pp 206-209.
- 12 *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung.* MEW 1, p 378.
- 13 *Idem*.
- 14 *Ibid*, p 379.
- 15 *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Leipzig 1849, 3rd edition, p 346.
- 16 *Ibid*, p 485.
- 17 *Ibid*, p 400.
- 18 *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*, MEW Ergänzungsband I, pp 569-570.
- 19 *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung*, MEW 1, p 379.
- 20 *Ibid*, pp 383-384.
- 21 *Zur Judenfrage*, MEW 1, p 376.
- 22 *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung*, MEW 1, p 390.
- 23 *Ibid*, p 391.

- 24 Ibid, p 385.
- 25 Zur Judenfrage, MEW I, p 348.
- 26 Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte, MEW Ergänzungsband I, p 546.
- 27 Karl Barth argues that the Christian church should not have insisted so stubbornly on its doctrine of the immortality of the soul, but should rather have testified to society that the resurrection from the dead is God's judgment and promise which concerns men in his totality and hence cannot be embraced in isolation from material economic realities (*Kirchliche Dogmatik* III, 2, p 467).
- 28 E Fromm, *Marx's concept of man*, New York 1966, p 252s.
- 29 *Die Kirche zwischen Ost und West*, Zürich 1949, p 17.
- 30 Ibid, p 20.
- 31 Ibid, p 22.
- 32 Idem.
- 33 Ibid, p 235.
- 34 *Der Marxismus und die Fragen der Sprachwissenschaft*, Berlin 1951
- 35 Ibid, p 115.
- 36 The best-known East Europeans are the Czechs M Machovec, V Gardavsky, L Prokupek, J Cerny, M Zuna, M Prucha and E Kadlecova, the Poles A Schaff and L Kolakowski, the East German Ernst Bloch who subsequently crossed over to West Germany.
- 37 The French communists R Garaudy, G Mury, J Colombel and A Gorz, and the Italian communist Lombardo-Radice are the most famous.
- 38 This ambivalence is a basic theme in the works of M Machovec, *Marxisten und Christen - Brüder oder Gegner?* Gütersloh 1978; *Marxismus und dialektische Theologie*, Zürich 1965; also the anthology *Marxisten und die Sache Jesu*, München 1974. It also emerges in V Gardavsky's *God is not yet dead*, Middlesex 1973.

- 39 *Die Christliche Kirche und der Kommunistische Atheismus*, in *Forderungen der Freiheit*, München 1962, p 213.
- 40 *Communism and the Theologians*, London 1958, p 326.
- 41 The South African theologian A König, writes as follows in this connection: "I kept wondering whether there was any theoretical connection between the outspoken scientific bias of Segundo (and other political and liberation theologians) and Christian philosophy's view of the heart as the pivot on which science hinges" (our translation). (Review of J L Segundo, *The Liberation of Theology*, Dublin 1977 in *Theologia Evangelica*, Jr 11, 1978, p 83).
- 42 These discussions appear in the anthology *Christendom en Marxisme* (Dutch translation of *Christentum und Marxismus-heute*), ed E Kellner, Utrecht 1966.
- 43 Cf L Schuurman, *Een hemel op aarde?* Kampen 1980, p 62.
- 44 Ibid, p 635.
- 45 G Gutiérrez, quoted in James F Conway, *Marx and Jesus* p 136s in P Hebblethwaite, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and Beyond*, p 50.
- 46 Idem.
- 47 Cf the interpretation of Karl Barth by the German theologian F W Marquardt: *Theologie und Sozialismus. Das Beispiel Karl Barths*, München, 1972. This interpretation seeks to forge a close link between Barthian theology and Marxist praxis with the striking omission of the class struggle. Cf also the sympathetic interpretation of Marxism in *Ausverkauf des Christentums an der Marxismus?* by W Maechler, Hamburg 1980.
- 48 Cf the comment by the South American Dom Helder Camara: "I think we can avail ourselves of the Marxist method of analysis which is still valid, while leaving aside the materialistic conception of life", quoted in P Hebblethwaite, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue and beyond*, London 1977, p 51.
- 49 Cf E Fromm, *Marx's concept of Man*, New York 1966, p 69ss.
- 50 T J Blakeley, art, cit, p 188 maintains that "Christian-Marxist dialogue is the most popular intellectual exercise of our time".

- 51 Cf the comment by P Tillich, *Der Protestantismus*, Stuttgart 1950, p 304. "Mir scheint, wichtige Elemente der Marxistischen Denkweise sind in einem so hohen Masse in das theologische Denken eingegangen dass man ihnen ihre Herkunft aus dem Marxismus nicht mehr anmerkt."
- 52 H Gollwitzer, *Die kapitalistische Revolution*, München 1974, p 825 points out the dangers of such a doctrine of two kingdoms. Usually it results in the church becoming the puppet of all manner of ideologies.
- 53 Gollwitzer (op cit, p 114) points out that in this fairly widespread viewpoint salvation is reduced to a relationship to God quite dissociated from man's relationship to his fellows. Interhuman relations are not part of the renewal. Secondly, he says, sin is reduced to individual choices and actions that disrupt the system.
- 54 Cf article in "*Rheinische Zeitung*" 14 July 1842, in MEW I, p 101s.
- 55 *Zur Judenfrage*, in MEW I, p 357s.
- 58 Ibid, p 352s.
- 57 Ibid, p 356. Cf also S Avineri: "Like religion, which projects onto God what is lacking in this vale of tears, the state ascribes to itself (and to bureaucracy) those attributes which should have been part of every person as a subject". (*The social and political thought of Karl Marx*, Cambridge 1968, p 52.)
- 58 *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte*, MEW Ergänzungsband I, p 512-518.
- 59 *Das Kapital*, MEW 23, p 86s.
- 60 Cf *Thesen über Feuerbach*, MEW 3 p 6.
- 61 Cf *Ökonomisch-philosophische Manuskripte* (1844), MEW Ergänzungsband I, p 536-538.
- 62 *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, MEW 13, p 8.
- 63 Cf P Hebblethwaite, op cit p 3; T J Blakely, art cit p 188s.
- 64 *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Middlesex 1926 (1972⁸), p 120

- 65 Cf K Marx, *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung.* MEW 1.
- 66 *Die deutsche Ideologie*, MEW 3, p 47s.
- 67 F Engels/K Marx, *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei*, MEW 4, p 482.
- 68 Quoted by L Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, Vol I, Oxford 1978, p 352.
- 69 This is the viewpoint of J A Heyns, *Wie mag die kerk kritiseer?* (*Beeld*, 6 Julie, 1982).
- 70 Cf C Wethmar, *Dogma en Verstaanshorison*, Amsterdam 1977, p 162 for a remark by G Ebeling that any separation of God's Word and human word results in a mingling of the two.
- 71 Cf L Schuurman, *Een hemel op aarde?* Kampen 1980, p 111.
- 72 Cf *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung* MEW I, p 381.
- 73 *Ibid*, p 385.
- 74 K Marx/F Engels. *Die heilige Familie*, MEW I, p 38.
- 75 *Die deutsche Ideologie*, MEW 3, p 38s.
- 76 Cf Marx in a letter in the *New York Daily Tribune*, 14 Julie 1853, quoted by L Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, Vol I Oxford 1978, p 302s.
- 77 Cf. K Marx/F Engels, *Die deutsche Ideologie*, MEW 3, p 77.
- 78 According to J P Sartre the ties in Marxism are so powerful that anyone who secedes from the movement is asking to be killed. Sartre calls this the "Fraternité terreur". Each man is his brother's judge. The traitor is not really eliminated. His liquidation is merely an expression of group solidarity. (Cf *Critique de la raison dialectique* I, Paris 1960, p 455s.
- 79 Cf R H Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, Middlesex 1926, p 30. Cf R H Preston, *Religion and the Persistence of Religion*, London 1979 as a response to Tawney.

- 80 Cf H Gollwitzer, *Die kapitalistische Revolution*, München, 1974, p 90.
- 81 Cf M Machovec and V Gardavsky who as Marxists fell into disfavour in Czechoslovakia, R Garaudy expelled from the French Communist Party and E Bloch who left East Germany for West Germany without giving up Marxism.
- 82 Cf footnote 16 above on Feuerbach.
- 83 Cf K Rahner, Marxistische Utopie und christliche Zukunft des Menschen, in *Der Dialog*, ed F J Raddatz, Hamburg, 1966, p 23.
- 84 "Absolute Zukunft ist nur ein anderer Name für das, was mit ((Gott)) eigentlich gemeint ist." Ibid, p 15.
- 85 Cf the thesis of the French Marxist R Garaudy: "The thesis according to which religion in all times and places diverts man from action, work and struggle is flagrantly in contradiction to historical reality" (Christian-Marxist Dialogue, in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol 4, 1967, p 210).
- 86 Cf L Schuurman, *Een hemel op aarde?* Kampen 1980, p 113.
- 87 Cf J L Hromádka, *Het Evangelie in een atheïstische wereld*, (transl *Na Praher Dialogie*), Nijkerk s d, p 74.